

Ilea looked through the skill notifications while enjoying one of Keyla's creations. She smiled to herself as she smelled the spices, glad her abilities allowed her to bring incredible food into a wasteland like Kohr. It made the whole experience just that much more enjoyable.

This time she ate a stew with beans and various vegetables, the taste hearty and warm.

'ding' 'Eternal Sight [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 10'

'ding' 'Origin of Ash and Embers [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 9'

'ding' 'Ashen Wings [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 27'

'ding' 'Vision of Ash [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 7'

'ding' 'Embered Form [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 29'

'ding' 'Primordial Shift [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 6'

'ding' 'Primordial Shift [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 7'

'ding' 'Reality Warp [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 3'

'ding' 'Primordial Flesh [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 17'

'ding' 'Azarinth Barrier [Mythic] reaches 2nd lvl 2'

'ding' 'Azarinth Barrier [Mythic] reaches 2nd lvl 3'

'ding' 'Bulwark of Ash reaches 2nd lvl 10'

'ding' 'Drill reaches lvl 17'

'ding' 'Drill reaches lvl 18'

'ding' 'Arcane Magic Resistance reaches 3rd lvl 29'

'ding' 'Void Magic Resistance reaches 3rd lvl 21'

'ding' 'Void Magic Resistance reaches 3rd lvl 22'

'ding' 'Void Magic Resistance reaches 3rd lvl 23'

Not bad. She took her time to finish her meal, trying to share some with Violence. It touched a piece of carrot but decided it wasn't up to its Faen standards.

"High noble," Ilea spoke.

Peasant

"Mhm," she replied with a nod, looking through the last messages in her mind log.

‘ding’ ‘Following requirements have been met. Has enhanced ten or more skills as a human. Has fought and killed a being above level 1500 while alone and while below level 750. Is known by name or alias to at least 100’000 beings. Is seen as a god by at least 1000 beings.

Additional options have been unlocked

Core Skill Points available: 6

[3rd tier Class Skill Point]

[Stat Gain]

[Skill Boost]

[Add Class Modifier]

[Skill Enhancement]

[Locked]

[Derivative General Skill]

[Mythical Title]

Oh no. A thousand already. Ilea looked at the little Fae and frowned. And I’m not even doing anything. She hoped the Sentinels would keep up. If she fought primarily in Kohr or remote locations in Elos, her legend wouldn’t exactly grow. If it wasn’t for someone spying on me and selling the paintings.

[Mythical Title] – [Unlock the option to add a mythical title to your status. You will identify as such to all beings without specialized skills to gain more insight into your being. Provides additional benefit depending on title chosen. Titles can be changed once per week – Cost: 10]

Ten points. That’s quite a lot. But changing what I identify as seems like a really nice benefit. Could make me mostly anonymous again if it’s something different from battle healer or just healer. Then again she assumed the titles would stand out on their own. Switching once a week at least allowed her different options, if they were available. There was no way for her to see what kind of titles she’d be able to choose at all.

The requirement to kill a one thousand five hundred creature is insanely high though. Or is that something expected for a human at what, level seven fifty? I guess I’m a little ahead then. She smiled to herself. None of the humans she knew bar maybe Evan could even attempt what she had done, and it really depended on how he would deal with the arcane beams and void magic. He was good at evading things but these were abilities she couldn’t exactly match in sheer power herself. Not yet.

Maybe in a desert, he could at least try.

Ilea wondered what the additional benefits would be. Adding another Class modifier or simply getting stat points felt way more tangible, but the high requirements to even unlock this option allured her. Especially now that she had all her skills in the enhanced stage.

“Should I get a mythical title, Violence?” she asked her friend.

It looked up at her.

Yes

Myth

Good

“I see,” she murmured. *I guess that’s settled then.*

The little Fae landed on her hand and drooped down a little.

Violence?

“I’m done in a minute,” Ilea said and finished her stew.

Nathan watched the fight, shaking his head when Celeste lost her second arm against the fast moving Pursuer. *Too bold.*

The woman jumped back and grit her teeth, the wound on her arm already closing, quite a bit of blood still splattering to the stone floor.

Aki stabbed the severed limb with a silver spike like arm. “Arrogant. Still,” he said. “The last three steps were too bold. You should’ve stayed in range of your chains.” He flicked his arm, the limb flying towards Celeste.

She caught it with her chin and made it slide to the side, her other arm already half done with healing. The limb connected to her shoulder and she wiggled her fingers a few seconds later. “It’s boring,” she complained.

“Boring lets you survive,” Aki spoke.

“In the wild. Against things that will actually kill me. Not against you. Against you, I can try stuff,” she said and smirked.

“It’s a dangerous thing. Don’t make a habit of it. One wrong step and you could be dead,” the machine spoke. “Next.”

Nathan stepped up when the magical lights in the hall turned off, replaced by a deep red glow. *That’s.* He didn’t think about it, their entire team including Aki rushing out of the training hall and up towards the canteen.

Trian stood waiting, two dozen Sentinels gathering nearby, more appearing every second.

“Scouts and guards from various cities have reported Taleen machines moving close or attacking human settlements. Those of Hunter rank and above may participate in defense operations, anyone below will focus on healing and support. Nobody is obligated to participate, these are dangerous machines. Praetorians have been sighted,” the Headmaster spoke.

Nobody left.

“A state of emergency has been called out from Riverwatch, Stormbreach, and Dawntree,” he said and split the groups into three vague sections as he spoke. “Scout reports and reports on changing circumstances to me in Riverwatch. If the gates are cut off, act at your squad leader’s discretion. Now go forth, Medic Sentinels, and show that we are not without power!” He was clad in armor now, lightning sparking around him. “Aki, to me.”

Nathan signed to Luke and Celeste before they vanished, rushing up and out of the Headquarters. He burst into flame and spread his bright wings, watching the broad shouldered Luke spread his ashen wings with Celeste latching onto his arm. A moment later they were flying out and towards the teleportation gate in front of Ravenhall.

Why are they attacking?

Adventurers and Shadowguard soon followed as word was spread, orders shouted. Walls were mounted, enchantments and magic flaring up around the city with the Sentinels flying past the walls, people stopping in their tracks to watch the healers.

Nathan wondered if Ravenhall was under attack as well but Trian wouldn’t have sent them away if that had been the case.

Their squad landed near the third gate, the one directly leading to Riverwatch. Two teams had entered before them, already gone when Nathan and his group were let in by the Shadowguards at the gate. They stepped onto the gate.

The nearby guard gave them a nod and put an artifact into the control panel. Light flashed up a moment later, Nathan seeing a similar room appear in turn. Rushing out of the structure, they went past a distraught set of Riverwatch guards, the city itself visible just a few hundred meters away. They flew up and above, just like the other Sentinels nearby, more appearing at the gate platform behind.

“No machines in sight,” he said, flying past the city gates and towards the flashing light conjured by a mage at a large central square. Tables had been set up, maps covering them. Guards and officers arrived from nearby streets and houses, some halfway into their armor, others with their weapons drawn.

Luke set down Celeste and made a gesture. He would keep an eye out from above.

Nathan teleported to a group of Veteran Sentinels, another group of Hunters arriving at the same time. Celeste followed him.

“... scouts reported the machines moving through the forest north of the city. Estimated arrival is... about eight minutes if they keep the same pace.”

The ash clad veteran signed to his team. *Forest. Ambush. Move.* They vanished.

Nathan signed to Celeste as well. They would stay at the wall, fighting the machines that got through. He knew the others would fall back if they were about to be overwhelmed, and while their own team had recently reached the two hundreds, if Praetorians were coming, their presence could do more harm than good.

The Riverwatch officer glanced around, seeing the vanishing Medic Sentinels, more people arriving at the square as Captains organized their units.

Nathan spread his wings and flew up a few meters, prompting Luke to join him once more. “We’re at the northern part of the wall. A few minutes until they’re here. Grab Celeste.”

The man nodded and flew down, Nathan and his team standing atop the defensive structure half a minute later. Guards arrived nearby, joining ranks with the others as they readied their weapons and magic, uncertainty and fear in some of their eyes, others calm, some excited.

Nathan looked at them, feeling some of their eyes on him. He stood clad in flame covered ash armor atop the city wall. Next to him was the large form of Luke, heavy maul in hand. Celeste moved two chains around her arms, the dent in her stonehammer and bone helmet from earlier that day not yet repaired. A glint of joy was in her eyes.

They're looking to us. He saw other groups of Sentinels farther down the length of the wall, most of the guards looking to the treeline about fifty meters to the north, flat earth and stone rubble between. He smiled. *Medic Sentinels, hmm? I didn't expect this when I signed up.*

"They are machines only. Made for war. Their arms are swords and cannons, their bodies thin and nimble," he started to speak, his voice growing louder with each word. He gulped, clenching his fists. "Cripple their legs and destroy their cores. If you see shields, focus your efforts on one machine at a time. Stand your ground, defenders of Riverwatch!"

"If you are injured, call out for a medic!" a woman shouted from a distance somewhere to the left before she repeated Nathan's words.

"We will stand!" one of the guards shouted.

An explosion erupted a few hundred meters ahead, smoke rising a moment later.

Nathan glanced right when a large war machine flew over the wall, landing with a heavy impact on the field. Three more followed. He saw a floating spirit clad in shadow fly up to join the guards, two of them glancing at each other when the being summoned spheres of darkness.

The sounds of battle came closer, rustling leaves, fast moving steps. Green. Glowing eyes between the trees, followed by moving steel. Metallic green machines rushed out and towards the city, some crawling up the trees, projectiles fired with dull sounds from cannons in their arms. Shields flared up in response, a few guards struck immediately, lower level Sentinels rushing to their aid, some too late.

A dozen, then hundreds of machines rushed out, some larger and holding spears, most fanning out their six blades.

They can climb the walls.

"Hold your ground!" he shouted while signing for his team to attack. They teleported down to the field as one.

He could see others doing the same, mostly those armored in black or covered in ash. It was time to fight.

Fire spread on his armor, his fists covered in bright flame before he rushed forward, fire wings pushing him into one of the approaching Guardians. He spun past the blades and impacted the running machine with a heavy punch. Mana flowed through him as his fire exploded, the chest part of the thing dented as he spun around with his momentum, holding on to its head before he pulled. The thing collapsed as he teleported up. A sphere of fire formed as he held up his hands, spells and arrows rushing past, exploding in the horde of green metal. He dodged a flying spear and released his spell, teleporting back down before his sphere impacted the hordes.

Nathan dodged and punched, keeping his eyes on the line around him, some of the machines moving past and towards the walls. He heard his spell explode as he slammed his burning fist into and through the steel plating of a Guardian. He turned and watched a war machine flattening three of the machines that had gotten past with a heavy mace, the laughing dwarf clashing with a spear wielding Centurion that answered his call.

The line was no more, as chaos came to reign, spells exploding all over. The first cries of Medic came from atop and beyond the walls. Nathan teleported up and deflected a Centurion's spear about to pierce through a disarmed guard. He dodged the attacks and flew into the creature, his momentum sending them both back down into the fray. They came crashing down, explosions of fire flaring up as he punched into the green metal, the Centurion flinging him off a moment later. Nathan rolled on the dirt before he heard a loud explosion, the being destroyed by someone else.

The core explosion sent him tumbling before he came up with wings of flame, flying up as he looked for his team mates. He found them back atop the wall, joining after he sent another sphere of fire into a group of Guardians circling a single sword wielding Shadow, the latter using the moment to slash through three of the machines.

Nathan appeared with a flaming punch against a Centurion's head, chains keeping its hands and spear in place before a heavy strike of Luke's hammer dented in its chest. Luke signed upwards and Nathan followed, grabbing onto the dented machine before he pulled, the chains loosening before he was about ten meters above the wall. Layers of ash formed between him and the machine, Nathan teleporting right before the thing exploded, his ash gone as he was pushed aside, shrapnel digging into his burning armor before he rushed back down.

The first Praetorians had joined the battle.

He spotted the Headmaster circling one of the large scythe wielding machines, bursts of bright red lightning burning away its shield as dozens of spells rained onto the thing from atop the walls. More Guardians still came from the forest, some he saw were crawling on the ground, others missing arms or partially burnt. He joined the battle on the wall, destroying the last few machines atop before he helped heal the injured not yet tended to.

He stabilized a dying woman when a Guardian's blade struck his shoulder, scraping the ash before he sent it flying back down onto the field with a burst of flame. His team joined him before they jumped down, the growing numbers of war machines and Dark Ones having reformed a line as they fought the Praetorians and Centurions to a standstill. Sentinels flew above and around, bright beams of light and lightning burning through entire groups of the machines.

Slowly they pushed back, the first bright explosion of a Praetorian core sending war machines crashing against the city walls, the energies spreading as orders were shouted. Nathan deflected a Centurion's spear while Celeste used her chains to keep its arms in place. Luke broke through one of its legs, then another. A bright sphere of fire spread over the machine before its core burst.

All three of them teleported, Nathan not quite far enough away. Shrapnel punched through his armor. He ripped out the pieces, blood flowing out as his wounds healed, the bleeding stopped as he coughed.

Luke appeared nearby and gestured. *Wall, breached. West.*

They moved as one, past the slow moving war machines, burning shrapnel, and splintered trees. Nathan saw a robed man land among a group of Guardians, their forms flattened instantly. The man looked up, a mask covering his face before he vanished, appearing near a mace wielding Praetorian.

They reached the section Luke had mentioned, seeing three war machines in the breach, fighting dozens of the Taleen creations. Some had already gotten through and into the city.

He signaled to the others, doing a double take when he saw a nearby crawling machine. Half its form was covered in white flame, the green lights flickering out as it stopped moving.

They rushed into the city, finding a trail of destroyed machines. Screams resounded from nearby houses. He signaled again before they rushed in, teleporting into the rooms where Guardians had entered. Nathan appeared in front of a family protecting their child, the blades slamming into him before he pushed himself and the machine out and through the wall, landing in an alleyway. Three strikes destroyed the thing before he checked behind himself. *Not collapsed*. He saw the mother staring at him with wide eyes.

Silver.

A flash. He teleported, appearing down the alley. *Aki?*

The large machine moved. Too fast for him to react. Something impacted his side right before a thin blade could pierce his skull. He saw the armored form of Celeste standing next to him, the woman deflecting the thin blade with one of her daggers before the other arm of the large machine sliced through her stomach.

Two blades came for their heads.

And stopped.

Perfect golden barriers shimmered with power, the silver blades unable to penetrate through the magic.

Nathan took in a deep breath when he felt the familiar presence appear next to him.

Celeste cried out when her entrails and spine were connected once again.

“You are not welcome here, machine,” the new arrival spoke in a cold tone as her ashen wings spread, thrumming with power. She shot forward and impacted the being, pushing it away and upwards.

Nathan took a step forward to stabilize himself against the pressure of the wind, blood running from his nose. He saw them swerve up and to the left, gone from his vision in less than a second.

He checked Celeste when Luke jumped out of a nearby house.

“I’m fine,” she said.

Clear, Luke signed.

Wall. Nathan confirmed with a sign as they moved back out towards the battlefield. They had survived. And now she was here.