

## ~ Day 45 ~

Once I had reached my chambers, or rather cell, the thump of the cell door being closed sounded out from behind me as the guards who had escorted me had finished their duty. Of course, these silly cells held no true ability to keep me and my fellow slave fighters trapped inside as they weren't even locked.

But these cells and gates were more figurative restrictions rather than actually tangible ones. This was due to if we simply acted within the rules and limitations we would face no problems or punishments from our *superiors*. We had already long learned the lesson of following the rules, as on just the first day after the Mauling, one of the more arrogant slave fighters didn't respect the nightly curfew and decided to break down his cell door and go get some food from the canteen area.

This was not something that was tolerated even in the slightest, and the very next day an extremely strong female orc warrior came and savagely slaughtered the offender. After listening to the exited guards who simply looked on at the carnage while the orc woman *punished* the fighter, I learned that she was apparently one of the previous champions stationed under the warlord who had originally held the position that Mistress had now taken for herself.

As the champions under the previous warlord had suddenly become masterless, they had been relegated towards the city's policing force, the one under the King Maldrak. Ever since then, no other unruly and disobedient slaves had presented themselves.

Sitting down on the futon made of various cloths and fabrics, which were the only other furniture in the whole-cell other than a hole in the ground acting as a toilet, I couldn't help but have a smile creep up onto my face. Turning around towards the closest wall, I used the pointy claw on my index finger to pry open a sandstone tile sitting inconspicuously in place on the wall.

With the tile removed, a small and dark hole could be seen, just the size of my hand. For a moment I just stared into the hole, as if waiting for something. But before long, the small

squeak of a creature could be heard. Now standing in the hole, looking out into my eyes with its beady red eyes, was a rat.

Holding out my hand towards it, it promptly jumped onto my palm, almost as if it had been trained for it. Letting it down onto the ground, it actually began to scuttle around in weird patterns whilst performing a number of different odd and downright silly gestures and poses.

*No, I hadn't actually spent my time training a fucking rat.*

**I was controlling it with my mind.**

**-Appraisal!-**

Appraisal - Skulk Rat					
Information		Attributes		Traits, Titles, and Skills	
-Name-	"???"	STR	1	Skills	2
-Race-	Skulk Rat	VIT	2	Traits	1
-Sex-	Male	AGI	5	Titles	0
-Rank-	J	DEX	2	Resistances	
-Level-	2/5	INT	1		
Health	4/4	CHR	0.00	Physical Resistance	1
Stamina	2/2	WILL	0.45	Magical Resistance	1
Mana	0/0	MAG	0.00	Mental Resistance	0.12
<b>Afflicted - (Dominated)</b>					

Yes, I had actually used **Blood Plague's** ability to dominate infected creatures on the rat. My mana was still blocked by the Mistress' magic, having found no way of breaking loose of its grasp yet, but I had just yesterday found a way to circumvent it rather than break it. This was with the help of the skill I had found no use for a long time, ever since acquiring it all the way back at my life and death battle with Gurok.

## **Blood Conversion.**

No matter how much I attempted to use it or seek out some instinctual knowledge of how I should supposedly use it that usually comes with skills themselves, nothing worked. Surprisingly this skill was another one that hid its description whenever I tried pulling it up. The only other one I could remember doing that was the **Blood Plague** skill when I had first gotten it.

While I had some guesses and ideas as to what the skill did when recalling back to the fight with Gurok, and how just after a weird collection of sudden events I acquired the skill, it wasn't totally unreasonable to believe the skill should give the ability to turn blood into mana. The problem though was the fact I had no idea just how to invoke the skill.

I had numerous times cut myself and drawn my own blood, including stealing some of my opponent's blood back with me from some of my fights, to attempt any reaction. It wasn't before just yesterday figured out the trick. In an attempt to handle my unruly emotions other than simply forcing them down with sheer willpower or midnightroot, I had tried to meditate, sensing my inner self and the world around me.

After a few hours, in the dead of the night, I entered some kind of state. I wasn't sure when I had entered it or for how long, as I suddenly just noticed my odd state of mind. I felt some deep resonance with my **Blood Born** skill and magic, as my body and blood had been fused as one with the acquisition of the **Minor Blood Born Body** trait.

This allowed me to feel and sense the blood like a separate and living entity, drawing upon its essence to convert it into raw life force, also known as blood mana. Or at least that's what I call it. It's not exactly like normal mana, as I've found it to be more potent than simply pure mana. I also had my speculations that the potency was also reliant on the quality of the blood used, meaning my blood being super effective in tandem with the skill!

While in that state, I had without hesitation slashed my wrist, and focused my ethereal presence onto the sanguine liquid emerging. After just a few seconds, crimson mist began rising up into the air, swirling around me as the blood slowly lost its vigor and vibrancy. But I had clearly felt the sheer potency of mana swirling all about me, with the only thing dampening my elation being the fact that I could feel the blood mana bouncing off my core like hitting a solid core whenever it tried to enter.

This was the Mistress' magic at work, caging in my core, both from the inside and the outside. But one significant thing that had stood out, was while the blood mana was slowly dispersing around me as it had no place to reside within my body, I still had control over it and it counted towards my mana.

Looking at my mana on my status, I was elated to see that it said; 43(45)/43. I could actually cast spells and magic with what little mana I could summon forth from my blood. While the conversion was taxing not only on my mind but also my body, it meant I had a way to circumvent the Mistress' magic, however little.

It was also just after I had successfully managed to activate the skill when its description revealed itself.

Skill list		
Name	Type	LVL
<b>-Blood Conversion-</b>	Magic	1
Converts blood essence into mana.		

For now, I've only managed to convert my own blood, but I had a sneaking suspicion that other's blood would also be an option in the future, once I either level up the skill or my proficiency in magic. Once I had finally succeeded in creating mana, I hastily found a guinea pig for some quick experiments - or rather 'lab rat' for that matter...

Catching the little critter by using some food crumbs as bait, I had forcibly fed it with some of my blood, and then promptly dominated it with a single thought. Due to the rat's extremely poor mental defenses, coupled with my increased magical and mental capabilities, I simply needed to will it under my command before it instantly became a mind-controlled slave.

The cost of dominating this rat didn't even cost a full point of mana and didn't even show up on my status, but I could still distinctively feel it reserving some mana for keeping the domination going. This essentially meant that while I didn't have access to my mana, I could still reserve it, making use of it while not even drawing upon it myself.

Finding out about the properties of **Blood Conversion** and its inadvertent usefulness towards my current predicament, made my situation a *lot* less dire.

*Maybe I still have a chance of escape...*