

# CHAPTER 9:

## PARTNER IN CRIME

Something dawned on him. “Wait,” he said, staring at his cat. “You said you didn’t get Nomad for an option.... So that means you can pick a Job too?”

Komachi nodded. “Yis.”

“You are the *best* cat.”

His cat hopped onto the shelf, sifting through the boxes. “I need one for... well, either I’m going to be a Mage or a Cleric.”

“I’m going to go on an adventure with my cat,” Sam said, both in disbelief and amazement. “Who is going to level up with me...”

“Yis,” she said simply.

“What’s next? I’ll get a crazy cat lady trait?”

“You may wish to look at your hand, sir,” intoned the butler. “And, might I suggest, taking a deeper look at your abilities and traits?”

In his shock and surprise, Sam had risen to his feet with the claymore still in his hand. To his continued surprise, he held it up easily with one hand.

It had to weigh easily over a hundred pounds just based on it being made of solid metal and its gargantuan size... and yet he handled it as easily as a lightweight feder training sword.

Sam focused his attention on his Status sheet, trying to discern his abilities and traits.

He glossed over the ones he just received from [Fighter] and focused on the ones that appeared new to him.

[Heavy Weapon Handling]

(Incarnate Trait) (F-Class)

(★★ Uncommon I)

*Few of the core races are able to wield the heavier and more brutal weapons. These are generally reserved for monsters and oversized creatures who require something more robust. You, however, have tapped into the beginnings of the Incarnate powers of War who was legendary for wielding weapons no other living Divine could lift.*

[Inventory]

(Soul Trait) (F-Class)

(★ Primitive VI)

*Used throughout the Shadrune Realms, Inventory is considered a birthright. All new initialized people are immediately granted this trait.*

[Shard Common]

(Language Trait)

*All races of the Shadrune Realms grow up learning Shard Common, the ubiquitous language of the Shadrune Realms. Newly initiated races are given this language to ease their transition. Allows you to understand all forms of Shard Common, as well as write and speak the language fluently as your native language.*

Quest Updated: Initialization in the Nexus

Objectives completed: 2/3

Select starting Job (Complete)

Select starting equipment (Complete)

Select starting Legend (Incomplete)

*You have limited time remaining to complete this Quest.*

Time remaining: 5min 46s

“Oh shit,” Sam said, looking at the remaining time. “All right, five minutes to choose a Legend. Easy, right?”

“Your... cat also needs to select her Job, equipment, and Legend,” the butler pointed out.

Sam stared. “Excuse me?”

If he had taken nearly 10 minutes just to decide on his equipment and look through it, there was no way Komachi would ever be able to select a Job in just a handful of minutes.

The cat couldn't even decide if she wanted to go into or out of any given room!

He had one more quest objective completed, with just one to go. And far less time remaining. The ticking clock sounded even louder.

Once again, the butler guided Sam to another floating rock, this one smaller than most of the others linked together with the root bridges.

Worse, he had to double back and partially retrace his steps. At least he didn't fall into the endless clouds below.

No slew of boxes to pick from this time. Just a set of three Ascension Gems. One [Adventurer Legend Crystal], one [Artisan Legend Crystal], and one [Seeker Legend Crystal].

“What name will you make for yourself in the realm? What will its people regard you as?” The butler motioned at the glittering red, blue and green jewels. “Pick your Legend, and your journey will begin upon the First Layer.”

“We’re coming back later, butler,” Komachi said, threatening him. “You better tidy up the place, ya bum!”

Picking up each item, Sam read what was on offer. Now that he thought about it, the term Legend made quite a lot of sense.

### [Adventurer]

*An Adventurer’s soul yearns for exploration, freedom, and battle in equal measure. They possess a boundless yearning for pushing boundaries and discovering what lies beyond the next bend, whether that’s a monster or breathtaking vista. You’ll always find an Adventurer at the forefront of any wilderness. Their tenacity to push forward in the face of adversity gives them some of the fastest growth among the initial Legends. Adventurer’s gain the following stats per Level:*

**+1 to all Stats.**

**+2 Bonus Points**

Sam perked up at that. [Adventurer] sounded exactly like the sort of thing he was into. Not only was it the typical experience that you expected out of most games, but it gave a *huge* amount of stats.

Compared to [Fighter] which only gave a total of 6 stat points, [Adventurer] gave one stat point to each stat plus 2 bonus points, for 12 total stats. That amounted to *double* what his Job awarded him.

*So what’s the catch?* Sam had to ask himself. You didn’t just give somebody a gift *that strong* with no strings attached.

Altogether, that would be 18 stats per level which seemed insane, and he still didn't know how his Path or Profession factored into that.

As much as he wanted to take [Adventurer], he held off. Time was short, but he didn't want to rush it. Besides, the better he understood the Legends, the more he could help Komachi.

### [Artisan]

*Creators, inventors, and tinkerers, these gentle souls are always looking for ways to express themselves. Their creativity allows their Legend to bond with their Profession, mimicking the stat growth inherent therein and further enhancing their creative potential. The Artisan Legend provides slight bonuses to the success of crafting attempts, and in the event a willing Artisan lacks a Profession, the bonuses will be applied retroactively upon receiving one. Until that point, however, no stats will be granted per Level. Artisans gains the following stats per Level:*

**Equal stats to their Profession.**

**Requires: First Order Profession**

“Crafting,” Sam said in wonder. “So that’s what Professions are for. Technically requires I already have a Profession to gain an immediate benefit, but... I could still pick it, if I wanted to.”

“I dunno,” Komachi said, grooming her paw. She still was a little spooked from going into the Inventory pouch. “Can you wait that long to get somethin’ good?”

He mulled it over. When it came down to it, Sam wasn't sure what kind of crafting he would get into. Definitely something that gave his Fighter Job a direct benefit, but what? Smithing? Maybe Alchemy for potions to keep him going?

He didn't even know all the possibilities. Presumably if it existed, you could do it. For example, what if you could craft Dungeons?

Once again, it was all assumptions with little to no information to back it up. Even the Dungeon crafting was just a theory, if a really interesting one.

For a major decision that could shape the rest of his life, it would be a lot to bet on. Not unless you could change Legends later. Which, he also didn't know if anyone could do that.

New world, new rules.

Unsure, he moved onto the next option.

### [Seeker]

*While others are content to while away their lives, the Seeker is intent on procurement and discovery. They are the ones slinking into the most dangerous layers, the newest Skyshards, before many even know they exist. Always on the hunt for the newest discovery, the rarest nodes of ore, fresh Dungeons, and the most powerful natural treasures, Seekers are most often found in areas well beyond their Rank. But the rewards are worth the risk, and a Seeker is well-equipped with enhancements to both [Examine] and [Stealth] skills. Seeker's gain the following stats per Level:*

*+3 Awareness / +3 Insight*

*+1 Bonus Point*

While offering significantly less stats than [Adventurer], [Seeker] was rare in that it gave a bonus to two skills. Presumably it also *provided* those skills, or else it'd be pretty useless.

But what truly caught Sam's eye, was the reference to Layers and Skyshards. The butler had spoken about the First Layer, but provided no further context—which was becoming a standard annoyance—while this was the first time he had heard the term “Skyshard” so it immediately set off his imagination.

Looking out into the distance, Sam figured that what he was currently on would probably qualify as a Skyshard. An island that... was in the sky. Floating landmasses being a *thing* was definitely not on his list of what he might find once he was in this new world.

Sam picked up the green-hued [Adventurer Legend Crystal] and, like with the crystal, crushed it and activated the magic within.

Another Ascension Gem appeared in its place, identical in hue and likeness.

Unlike [Fighter], there were no epiphanies to be had, no sense of expanding his awareness or providing additional information that was otherwise inaccessible.

Just to be sure, Sam pulled up his Status sheet.

### [Status]

**Name:** Samuel Hunter

**Race:** Human

**Legend:** [Adventurer (Lv.0 - Unranked)]

**Job:** [Fighter (Lv.0 - Unranked)]

**Path:** [Void (Lv.0 - Unranked)]

**Profession:** [N/A (Lv.0 - Unranked)]

**Health(HP):** [50/50]

**Mana(MP):** [35/35]

### Attunements

[Void Mana] (F-Class Apocalypse Gate) (★★★★ Legendary III)

## Physical Stats

Strength(STR): 9

Dexterity(DEX): 7

Agility(AGI): 6

Vigor(VIG): 10

Awareness(AWR): 7

## Magical Stats

Arcane(ARC): 6

Control(CTL): 3

Resonance(RSN): 8

Mind(MND): 9

Insight(INS): 4

Sam folded his arms and frowned. Nothing had really changed except gaining everything but a Profession. Other than that... his stats hadn't changed at all. *I start at Level 0, huh?*

**Quest Completed: Initialization in the Nexus**

**Objectives completed: 3/3**

**Select starting Job (Complete)**

**Select starting equipment (Complete)**

**Select starting Legend (Complete)**

*You have limited time remaining to complete this Quest.*

*Time remaining: 2min 15s*

“I want to be a Seeker,” Komachi said, jumping down to the Ascension Gem. “I like treasures and gifts, and shiny things.”

“Don’t we all,” Sam said, trying hard not to pick her up and run her over to the island—or was it a Skyshard?—that contained the Job crystals.

“Yis,” she said, nodding. “Dunno what the stats do, but getting a boost to [Stealth] and [Examine] sounds real good to me.”

Despite the quest being considered finished, it was still there for no other reason than to stress Sam out and remind him of the time his cat had to choose a Job, equipment, and a Legend.

At least the latter she managed to choose quickly. Komachi, being Komachi, she simply ate the crystal.

“What’s in your—” Sam started to say, then caught himself. Not only was Komachi enveloped in a shiny aura of light, but if he wanted to make the cat sprint away at Mach-11, all he had to do was ask her “what’s in your mouth?” and she would be *gone*.

Sam scooped her up and sprinted toward the table with the Job crystals. “Okay Komachi, which one?”

Sitting down, Komachi lifted her golden forepaw and began to lick it nonchalantly.

*You have limited time remaining to complete this Quest.*

*Time remaining: 1min 22s*

“Komachi!”

The cat gave one more, obviously deliberate lick, before looking up at him with those large emerald eyes of hers. Her striped golden tail curled around a crystal, and she wasted a few precious seconds batting it around from one paw to the other before finally using the [Cleric Job Crystal].

*You have limited time remaining to complete this Quest.*

*Time remaining: 49s*

Tucking Komachi under his arm like a football, Sam ran for all his life was worth to where the silvery glint of a [Cleric Job Key] appeared. He didn't even speak as he set her right on top of the key and scanned the shelf for the coffer belonging to Cleric.

His heart sank as he realized there were not three coffers, but *seven*. "You've got to be kidding me."