

Patch notes for 172. Spoilerific, of course. Read the chapter first.

Lots of folks rightly pointed out that I was underselling the value of the info Emerton was bringing to Ascension. That significantly changes the equation when it comes to "buying" his way in. Made a change to address it. Details after the break.

Before

Rain grinned. *Finally, some good news.* He leaned closer, Vanna and Val bringing their heads in as well as he continued in a whisper. "And it's on our way, I take it?"

"It is, or else I wouldn't have mentioned it," Emerton whispered back. "It's rank nine. Heat aspect. I have one condition, however, before I tell you any more. I want to make sure that my accolades will be enough to earn me a chance at an Essence Monster, assuming we find one inside."

Rain frowned slightly, thinking out loud. "The codes have anti-buyout rules to stop rich dickwads from making exactly the kind of deal you're proposing. We'd need a council vote." He glanced at Vanna. "What do you think? I'm fine with it if you are, and I'm sure enough of the others would agree, given what's to be gained."

"I also decoded a recipe for some fairly delicious butter scones, if that makes a difference," Emerton interjected with a tiny smile. "It too could be yours."

Vanna chuckled. "Well, I wasn't convinced, but now I am. To answer your question, Emerton, yes, you should end up with enough credits to bid for a slot, especially if you're willing to take a priority class. Don't worry about the vote. I'll handle it quietly today as we march. It should be easy enough for me to get a majority."

"Priority class?" Emerton asked.

"It'll be in the orientation," Vanna said, leaning back quickly. Her tone became urgent as she continued at a normal volume. "Hakim and sons, incoming."

After

Rain grinned. *Finally, some good news.* He leaned closer, Vanna and Val bringing their heads in as well as he continued in a whisper. "And it's on our way, I take it?"

"It is, or else I wouldn't have mentioned it," Emerton whispered back. "It's rank nine. Heat aspect. I have one condition, however, before I tell you any more. I want a chance at an Essence Monster, assuming we find one inside."

Rain scratched his beard, thinking out loud. "The codes aren't set up to handle that. Awakening works on a credit system, and we have rules to stop rich dickwads from buying their way in. We'd need a council vote to get around it, but I don't see that as an issue, given what you're offering." He glanced at Vanna. "What do you think? I'm sure no one would disagree, given what's to be gained."

"I also decoded a recipe for some fairly delicious butter scones, if that makes a difference," Emerton interjected with a tiny smile. "It too could be yours."

Vanna chuckled. "Well, I wasn't convinced, but now I am. To answer your question, Emerton, yes, you'll end up with more than enough credits to bid for a slot. Don't worry about the vote. It's more about formalizing the precedent than deciding anything. Forget the accolades, you're bringing us fifteen awakenings. You're going to be rich." She glanced at Rain. "I'll handle it quietly today as we march. It should be trivial to get a majority. Emerton, I'll get you the list of priority classes a little later."

"Priority classes?" Emerton asked. "Wait, did you say *fifteen*?"

"It'll be in the orientation," Vanna said, leaning back quickly. Her tone became urgent as she continued at a normal volume. "Hakim and sons, incoming."

