

LLOYD: LV. 1, 35/50 HP

Egads!

That withered old map you dug out from the bottom of the Avros Guild was supposed to be a joke; you had surmised that much when the other explorers started chuckling and elbowing one another, as you retrieved it from the pile of daily quests. It was the sort of prank superiors notoriously played on newcomers, which you are. Surley, one of the staff put it into the pile to keep grunts like you busy, while the real tasks were taken.

And yet, remarkably, there it is. Kogo Varan, the archmage's tower. The one that legends all agree was *only a legend*. Supposedly abandoned over an eon ago, it was rumored to have been struck down by the gods, in retaliation for the archmage's blasphemous endeavors. Men would have killed other men just to be the ones to lay eyes on its ruins first—and here was the tower, still standing tall under slate thunderheads and whipping winds.

And here you are. *Alone*.

Its cruel shadow swallows you up as you approach, daring to venture out from the craggy exit of the Moddot Pass, nestled within a high mountain range to the East. You edge nearer, the scarlet spire seeming to get bigger and meaner with every step. The front doors loom so high, you already feel like a running leap *might* give you enough lift to grab one of its great brass rings. Jumping was not something you had a lot of stats for, being a first-level adventurer. For that matter, your HP was pretty weak, along with your Dexterity and Strength. Given how well you could flee, your Speed was actually decent.

Still, this was the sort of moment that makes or breaks adventurers—and *break* keeps coming to mind. You stare up at the door, think for a moment, then step off to the side near a gnarled old giant of a tree; you put up a tent, get inside, and save your progress, just in case.

Upon exiting, you realize you hadn't bothered to replenish your meager health before exiting, so you take out a small vial, down it, and then go back into the tent again.

There.

The doors of Kogo Varan part for you, the moment your shaking gloved hand touches their iron facade. They both part menacingly, groaning like disturbed colossi awoken from hell. Your sword shakes as it's brandished, tattling to the darkness within as you enter.

The darkness doesn't last, however, as a row of torches ignite up along the entry hallway, winding up a spiraling staircase at its end. With nowhere else to go, you proceed up along it, step by wary step, until you find the first of many landings, each one suggesting a floor of the tower.

Come to think of it...what should you do, now that you made it here? Are you actually mad enough to risk a full climb? Any adventurer knew that the higher-level monsters would be shuffling around in the higher reaches, eager to devour and crush.

Perhaps discretion was in order here.

You take a few calming breaths, then decide to try this lowest (safest) landing first. Clear it for any treasure or weapons, and the like. Stay alive slightly longer.

You will your sword to stop shaking as you step off onto the 1st floor, which is more well lit than you figured; plenty of torches quietly crackle and burn as you wander the circular hall, trying to suss out which one holds the least possible death. One by one, you're as relieved as you are disappointed, as every door seems locked—except one.

Already ajar, you stick your sword in and wiggle around, as though it might trip up or startle any lurking foes. Finding nothing but sinister air about you push to the hilt, then force the door completely open. Inside is a small holding cell, replete with a chain-and-board bed and a bucket that you will *not* be investigating. At the back corner you see a small, humble treasure chest; aha! Your luck might just be improving!

“Okay,” you mutter, finding it easy enough to open. “What have we, here?”

Your first real treasure, at last! The Avros Royal Guard wouldn't laugh at you for long, once you return to the Guild with loot all your own! What is it, gold coins? A King's long-lost scepter? Jewels, rare potions? A place to put the bucket, and stop that awful smell?

You open it all the way, then sigh.

A key. One key that likely opens one door, on one floor.

“Mm.”

Still, it's *something*.

A soft knock intrudes from somewhere nearby, making you nearly leap out of your modest leather-and-plate armor. It was definitely here, on the same floor, it was too near to be otherwise. Stepping back out of the cell, you look about the landing, before creeping back out, and quietly responding:

“Hello?”

Another *thud* replies, making you hold your breath, lest you cry out. A door across the way from your side of the circle rattles as something presses and batters against it, from within.

“Hello?”

The voice that follows is...far from frightening. Muffled though it is, it's surely female.

An imprisoned slave? Some princess, even?

“Hello!” you reply, taking the risk. “Are you alright, in there?”

“Oh, yes, thank you!” the voice responds, making you pause. “Just a bit stuck! The door swung shut while I was tending to things, and I seem to be locked in. Could you perhaps help me, please?”

You look at the key you took from the chest, and think hard. Mimics were common in dungeons, and towers were generally lumped in with them, by most adventurers. This does all seem too cute, on second pass.

“Who are you?”

“The Maid!”

Your heart sinks. This isn’t even a *good* phony story.

“The maid?” you repeat, trying not to let your balking show. “Here? In this dismal place?”

“You should have seen it before!”

“Pass,” you huff, turning to close the cell door behind you.

“Oh, please!”

It’s funny; that voice is so sweet, it seems harder and harder to believe anything malicious could use it. The more you hear it, the more compelled you are to be a hero, and help out. If it was a charm spell, it would have likely sounded more seductive or convincing. That it wasn’t convincing steadily made it easier to believe.

“Stand back, then, I’ll try a key I found,” you shout, as you cautiously make your way around the landing. “I don’t know that it’ll work.”

“Thank you dearly,” the feminine voice answers, delighted.

You mingle several mutterings into a mumble, none of which is decipherable as you approach the door, and slide the old key in. You twist, and instead of catching, it turns with a neat *click*.

Huh.

The door creaks open, defeated, and out steps...well, the general *idea* of a maid. There are the requisite white frills and straps over a tight black dress, netted leggings about the thighs, cuffs at the wrists, long white sleeves with an apron, even a trimmed cap. Two modest silk puffs cover the shoulders, with a choker about her neck, and even one on her tail.

At last, something odder than the presence of a maid arrives.

It’s a lizard. A chest-height, female reptile, gold-chested and bellied, with vibrant bronze covering the rest. Two violet eyes regard you as she steps into the torchlight, brushing her ample breasts clean of dust, her clawed toes tapping the stonework below.

“Thank you, Master!” she pleasantly trills, taking a bow low enough to let her bosom bob forth at you. It certainly beats a handshake. “You’ve saved me!”

“Oh, not at all,” you sputter, still taking everything into an unready mind. “Seriously, it was

nothing much, forget it. And uh, I'm Lloyd, not 'Master', okay?"

"Oh, but you *are* my Master," she gently corrects, a grin overtaking her stubby snout. "The former lord of this abode is long since gone, and I was placed here to clean it for as long as it takes, or until I can find a Master to relieve me of my post! And here you are!"

"You were...put here?"

"Yes! By the Gods. Kogo Varan was possessed of such a magnitude of evil that its presence in the world was too dangerous, so they formed the pass and mountains around it, closed it off, and tasked me with purification of every single evil here. My heavenly aura sanctifies and heals, and so I have done, gradually. But with you present, Master Lloyd, I am hereby transferred into your care!"

Your head swims.

"You want to join up with me?"

"Yes!"

"*Me.*"

"Yes!"

You almost feel as though you've perpetually engaged a village NPC, the way she just repeats her final line over and over. Lizard folk and the like were pretty common in cities and mountain regions, but this...this was all kinds of new. Still, she could heal, from the sounds of it. It wasn't anywhere near a bad deal.

"How are you in a fight, ah..."

"Arlei," the reptile finishes, curtsying humbly. "I've never engaged in battle! None of the creatures or undead around here ever bother me, so it's never been an issue, Master."

"Lloyd, just call me Lloyd, Arlei," you insist, suddenly embarrassed.

"Please, Master Lloyd, feel free to ask for anything," the female offers, getting uncomfortably close to you. "Consider me your loyal servant, from this day forward. Can I offer you anything? Food? Water? A soft bed upon which to slumber? There's one in this entier tower, and it's really quite nice—"

"Actually, you should know right now, I'm...not a high-level fighter. I'm pretty green. I think I've had enough for one go, today, so...I'm thinking of getting out now, while I'm still alive."

"Oh, I see! Then I shall see you out properly, Master Lloyd, I know the way!"

"S-sure, please."

You're already pretty near to the exit hall, so the gesture seems moot; still, there's no sense in arguing, and the sooner she shows you the door you already found, the sooner you get out, so you follow Arlei down the stairs. And down. And down. *And down.*

Your casual certainty falters, then snaps off like a dead twig as you realize just how far down you're both going. A minute's climb tumbles to two, then four, as torch after torch passes by. Worry springs anew as the torchlight fades, as though the foul darkness of the tower is choking it out, and finally it behooves you to check:

"Ah, where's the exit hall?"

"Gone," Arlei chirps, unfazed as she descends before you. "Kogo Varan is a sneaky place! It removed the exit when you entered."

"What."

"Oh, yes, it's a naughty realm! I suspect it locked me up, for trying to purify it all these years."

"Well, then," you stammer, gathering yourself, "where are we going?"

"The real exit is in the catacombs, Master Lloyd, fear not! I'll guide you."

"But, it's a dungeon area, that means enemies!"

"They tend to leave me be, so stick close, please!"

She seems too glad about this whole situation, no mistake. Still, it's that or stay put in the terrible tower, so closer you stick, indeed.

The catacombs make the tower look warm and soft. Green mists coil about jagged rocks and piles of strewn bones, the glow of the smoldering foulness the only thing lighting its cavern walls. Something with countless legs scuttles by, big enough to be heard, and your skin nearly crawls off.

"This way, Master," Arlei says, smiling wide, as if she were showing you around her Spring villa. "We'll have to go a ways into the cavern, before arriving at the real way out, by the Demon's Head. It'll be fun!"

"The demon's what?" you croak, freezing up.

"Worry not, Master, it's only the name of an area."

"Ah, haha, right. Okay."

"Where the demon slumbers."

There's no time to wonder if she just has a sense of nasty humor, as something lunges out from the darkness! It's a skeleton, brandishing a rusted broadsword!

Its slash narrowly misses as you stumble back, raise your sword, and swing hard, bouncing off of the foe's weathered wooden shield. Still, it's enough to stagger the monster, and on a second swing, you connect and cleave a battered skull from its spine. 16 DAMAGE appears as it spins and clatters to the floor, followed by the dull impact of crashing bones, as you step back and look your foe over.

Not bad! You felled your average garden variety skeleton!

“A mighty swing, Master!” Arlei cheers, the reptile bouncing up and down in her dress. “He was no match for you, whatsoever!”

“I...I thought no monsters got near you!” you huff, shaking from the shock.

“They don’t, Master Lloyd—I suspect they only wanted to kill *you*.”

As the skeleton crumbles to bitter dust a large blue-tinted EXP +10 rises up from its remains, before also vanishing, and you realize something incredible. Yes, even more incredible than freeing a reptile from the heavens: you won a fight.

“Ooh,” Arlei gasps, as the same blue glow that overtakes you washes over her as well.

“Party split, right,” you mumble, thinking. It’s hard to believe she’s with you now.

A small pile of money forms from the felled enemy, with the words 22 GOLD floating up in yellow, and you go in to collect the coins. When you finish bagging them and turn back around, Arlei is right there again, much too close. You can swear she’s...a little taller. Just the tiniest bit, even. Her scaly muzzle hovers at your chin, where minutes earlier she was up to your chest in height. Right?

“Is that what winning feels like?” she asks, blinking, batting her large eyes softly. “I like it!”

“You and I both. So, I’m still a target, down here. The *only* way out is the demon’s head?”

“Correct, Master Lloyd, well said.”

You dither as little as possible, there in the gloom. A shuffling of countless feet behind you helps to remedy that as you turn to see another skeleton shambling through the mist, halberd raised—then another, and another after. More silhouettes darken through the rolling smoke as an army of undead warriors surrounds the way back, making you turn back in spiking panic to Arlei.

“Fine, go! Let’s go!”

“Oh, yes, a fine choice—”

“JUST GO!”

The path narrows as you flee the horde, Arlei casually jogging up at the rear; her scaly chest bounces into a storm, barely contained by her stretching dress, her apron rustling as the frills dance one way and another. She hardly seems bothered.

“Which way?” you holler back, as the winding tunnel threatens a fork ahead.

“Left, Master L—”

Left it is.

You bank into a slight stumble as your boots catch upturned stones, righting yourself with your sword out, your backpack and bag jangling. Arlei's feet *slap-slap* the floor, splishing and splashing through puddles as you gain ground, vanishing into black.

Your body slams with a dull stinging ache against bars, bouncing you back, only for Arlei's soft frame to bump into you and push you back into it again. The dual impacts are enough to force them away as what must be a dungeon door swings open with a moan. It hits its reach, then bounces back to a close as you stagger ahead, panting and wheezing in the pitch.

"Ah, I can't see a thing," you cough, straightening back up.

"Allow me, Master Lloyd."

A snap of thick, clawed fingers is the last thing you hear, before a *fwhm* echoes out, and a large burst of white flame blazes, contained in mid air over her opened hand. Your eyes take a moment to adjust as Arlei's shape clears, then the chamber around you both.

"Is this..."

"The Demon's Head? No, Master, not yet. Given your level, I assumed you would naturally desire a safe point to stop at, before we attempt to breach its domain."

In the dead center of a large, cylindrical chamber of mortar, sits a gigantic treasure chest. Beyond it is, indeed, a save point. You get your breath back as you unsling your pack, open it, and find one more tent inside. She isn't wrong. From behind a huge metal door at the far end, a low, ominous growl rumbles out; great, a boss. Likely, the oft-mentioned demon.

"M...maybe. Yeah. Just give me a moment..."

You step toward the glowing light, tent ready...yet, you pause. That chest is gigantic. No mere key would be occupying such a promising space. If you want to have even a sliver of a chance of surviving further, having special loot would be critical. Arlei watches as you approach it, one gloved hand out, fingers extended. You touch the golden trim of the lid, gather your courage, and lift—only to find it closed tight. Locked!

"Curses," you mutter, drumming the trim with your fingers.

"Don't you have a key, Master Lloyd?" Arlei patiently asks, coming up behind.

"For your door, Arlei, not for this."

"Why not try?"

"Because that...ah, fine. I'll just show you, easier than explaining."

The key is taken from your bag, slipped into the chest, and turned. It clicks.

"WHAT."

The chest swings open, to your astonishment. Before you even think to inspect its contents, you stare at the key in your palm, stupefied. It actually worked!? How is that possible?

“You seem shocked,” the reptile coos, looking over your shoulder.

“I am. Yes. The key worked on two separate...things.”

“Certainly, Master Lloyd! You have a skeleton key. This tower is filled with rare items, after all, and you picked that one. I imagine it’s why the tower saw fit to keep it behind an unlocked door, right across from the room it trapped me in. As I said, it is rather a nasty place.”

You haven’t blinked throughout.

A rare item. A universal key. Yours.

“That’s why you thought I could escape.”

“Well, that, and you have me with you now!”

You half-hear her as you peer into the oversized chest, scoping three large jewels within.

“Oh, wow,” you say, looking them over. “Not specialty weapons, but still...these could fetch massive prices! I could just buy out the top shelf at the Avros armory!”

You grab them one at a time, and with each collection, words float up as you stuff them into your bag of holding:

BASE JEWEL RED
BASE JEWEL GREEN
BASE JEWEL BLUE

In they go, as you observe the words.

“Never heard of these...”

“I’m sure you can investigate them at your comfort, once outside,” the reptile offers, just before a loud *click* bounces out from the chest. It rattles, then mechanically sinks into the floor several inches.

“What was that?”

Your answer arrives in the form of a single teal slime, oozing up into a collective mass from the cobblestones. It wobbles to form, roughly basket-sized, and as it rolls sluggishly towards you another slime rises up, and another. A trap!

“Okay, these first, then the tent,” you growl, advancing on the nearest slime.

“Right!” Arlei says, nodding, taking up a battle stance. A large octagonal mace flashes into being, clutched in one clawed hand.

You slash the slime for 20 DAMAGE, and the creature withers and crumples in on itself, easily vanquished. +5 EXP appears overhead, and though it isn't anything major, it provides a slight boost to your energy and confidence, as you charge into another nearby slime, slashing it for another 20. Another +5 EXP follows, as you turn to see Arlei there, still striking her battle stance.

"Attack, Arlei!" you cry, as a nearby slime attaches to your leggings, and attacks with a small, unpleasant sting for -3 DAMAGE, slipping your HP down slightly.

"Very good, Master Lloyd!"

Did she really need to be told!?

"Hya!"

The reptilian female swings a mace half her size with staggering force, so much so that the attack doesn't harm the lunging slime—it *obliterates* it. Nothing but glowing sparks are left to wither in the air as another +5 EXP appears, a soft blue glow again starting to overtake you both as more and more slimes appear.

"Should have saved," you huff, putting your frustration into your sword swings. Another down, then another. The glow flares brighter, the more experience points you feed it; between swings, you turn to catch sight of Arlei, to see how she's faring. After all, you did somewhat get her into this—

GOOD GRIEF!

Arlei stands, legs spread in a wide striking stance, her dress pulled tight around swelling, scaly thighs. Yes, *swelling*. The demure maid is rapidly inching up larger, your eyes aren't tricking you! It's only perceptible with the benefit of repeated looks, but you can tell: Arlei is getting *bigger*.

In your shock, another slime attacks, damaging you a little more. Another takes advantage, piling on to your other leg, and as you stumble back you can hear the heavier and heavier thuds of Arlei running up to assist.

"Master, stay still!"

Even the mace seems to be bigger as it sails down, blasting a group of slimes away to nothing. The attack is so close that your nose itches from the rush of displaced air and flying fluids. At least eight +5 EXPs float around you, and with a strange tingle, you feel your health swell back up to 50, then continue to push up to 75, as the words LV 2 pop up.

You just crossed the threshold into level two, at long last. The dizzying reality nearly matches that of Arlei as she huffs, then shudders along with you, the same thing appearing up over her rising head and cap as she levels up.

"Ooooh," she rumbles as her apron pulls tighter, her breasts swelling up against the top of her stretching dress. "That...that feels g-good!"

More slimes begin to emerge from the walls as you back up against your faithful maid, finding you only stand as high up as her shoulders now. She must have put on a solid foot in height, pushing

her to just over 7 feet tall! Though your time with her has been brief, the memory of her having to look up at you already seems far off, from a simpler time. It wasn't entirely untrue.

The glow fades as she rolls her shoulders, making her fluffed silk pomps jiggle in preparation.

"Go and save, Master Lloyd, I'll handle these!"

"Ah, it doesn't work that way, parties need to save together! And these slimes just keep appearing out of the ether, it seems!"

The chest *click-clicks* again, and you understand. As Arlei attacks you back over to the chest, then simply close the lid. The moment you do, the clicking stops, and the trap deactivates. Yet, when you turn back, you see that the entire second wave of slimes are attacking Arlei altogether, clustering over her, around her, merging into a gigantic, 10-foot slime!

"Whoa!" you balk, taking up the sword again. "Hold on!"

The enlarged reptile struggles against the encasing mega-slime as you see her HP dwindling from its new maximum of 90 HP down to 89, then 88, 87...they hardly seem to damage her! Rather than mull the point over, however, you strike at its exterior, and the gigantic slime trembles and shudders, pulling back into a retreat.

"Th-thank you, Master Lloyd!" Arlei gasps, the tall lizard maid shaking the attacks off.

"Are you hurt?"

"Not at all, Master! Observe!"

With one hard blow, Arlei strikes the giant slime, the force so massive that you can see the thick mace bend at the stem. -50 DAMAGE appears as the huge slime is again knocked back, flashing dark red all over. It wasn't dead, but nearly!

"SMASH 1!" she bellows, calling out the selected skill attack.

You charge in and stab the slime while it's still staggered, killing it instantly. The beast fades away as +30 EXP rises up, the glow overtaking you both once more. As good as the intake feels, Arlei seems to be having an even better time of it:

"YESSSS..."

Her speech ejects in a thick, warm huff of pleasure as you watch her expand again, getting even bigger. Her dress stretches loudly as the net stockings dig slightly into her inflating legs, her thighs spilling slightly over their edges as her skirt spreads tighter, her breasts pumping stubbornly out against her apron and top, pulling its straps. Inch by inch, you watch her grow, the mighty maid stretching up to 8 feet, then 9, stopping at 10, even. Her tail pushes further out behind her dress as her rump bulges against the skirt rim, revealing a flash of frilled panties therein.

Now, you hardly stand at eye level with Arlei's huge chest. Two mounds tent hotly against the tight apron from within, where her nipples would surely be. The maid's ensemble has grown with her,

but still seems to be having more and more trouble keeping up. You stare longer—just to be sure.

“You really are growing,” you exclaim, finally admitting it aloud. You step around her giant body, looking her huge curves over in wonderment. “I wasn’t sure, at first. Clearly, you react differently to experience gains!”

“I wouldn’t know, Master Lloyd,” Arlei rumbles, her grown voice sing-songy and kind. “But you don’t appear to hate it, so I shall take it as a positive!”

You nod dumbly, then take in her stats on a pop up menu screen. There is some eye-widening.

ARLEI, LV 2, HOLY MAID

HP: 85/90

MP: 50/50

STRENGTH: 25

DEFENSE: 60

DEXTERITY: 100

SPEED: 40

HEIGHT: 10’02”

WEIGHT: ????

SKILLS: AURA, SMASH 1

NEW AUTO-SKILL UNLOCKED: BRUNT!

Your stats, even at level 2, were perhaps half of those. Close to the same, for height.

“How’d you do that?” you wonder aloud. “How’d you swing for that kind of damage!?”

“I’m not sure, Master,” she huffs, giving a final shiver. “I only used my mace to clear cobwebs and open stuck doors, in my years purifying Kogo Varan.”

“Really?”

“They were big webs.”

You don’t doubt it.

“So, we had still better save, real quick,” you start, trying to keep focus. “Who knows what sort of terror the boss will be, in there—wait. Come to think of it, why were these lower-level creatures hanging around in a place this terrible? I honestly thought I was going to be swatted right away...”

“Oh, well, I have been purifying the area for many many years, Master Lloyd,” Arlei supposes, turning to face you, so that her huge bosom swings into your face. “The more terrible fiends were eventually relocated to the highest levels of the tower, leaving the lower realms more harmless.”

“Oh. Oh, yeah, I suppose that does make sense. You’re really something!”

Arlei seems to bulge a little more, glowing at your praise.

“Thank you, Master Lloyd! You know not how happy that makes me!”

“Well...you’re uh, you’re welcome. And unless that demon moved away as well, I think I’ll still need to rely on your help a little more. Staying here and leveling up to stand a better chance would be smart, but...with low level enemies around, it might take a year or two to get where we need to be.”

“Oh, no, Master, I said I’ll get you out, and I mean to! I won’t have you wait that long.”

You narrow your eyes at the sentiment, not because you don’t trust her silky words, but rather that you have no idea how she means to pull such a thing off. Against lower foes, she proved terribly strong, indeed, but this was a boss. A dungeon boss, no less.

“Well, let’s save, and I guess give it a try,” you murmur, still uncertain.

You set up a tent, and easily sit inside—only for Arlei to cram her huge, soft, scaly body in tight, wedging her ten-foot bulk and bouncing chest against you as the tent walls warp out into her general shape. Surprised, your gloved hands flail and thump and stroke her hot sides, her body heat filling everything as a boom-giggle escapes her rumbling throat.

“T-that tickles, Master!”

“I can’t move, Arlei, what are you doing!?”

“We’re saving, are we not?”

Her bosom rolls over your head, mussing your shock of hair as her belly presses your face and chest, her humongous, bulky thighs caging you in completely.

“I pack single-use tents, n-not party tents!”

“Dear, my apologies, then, Master Lloyd!”

The tent rips slightly as she wriggles back out, deflating its ruined frame down onto you. You crawl back out, the rush of cool dungeon air almost refreshing, versus the hammering heat of her giant body against yours. Nonetheless, you have successfully saved. The key and the brand new level up are all yours, now!

“Right, then,” you sigh, seeing your health and stats all cleared and normal, the same for hers. “Let’s go and try not to die in there. Maybe we can evade our way around it.”

“I shall protect you either way, Master Lloyd!”

“Lloyd. And thanks.”

The door groans noisily open, dashing your hopes for a stealth creep as you steal into the heart of the catacombs. It’s another circular room, a dome of carved marble and large divots, out of which a foul light pulses.

You saved. You saved, it's fine.

A door at the opposing end shudders, as something huge butts against it, making you freeze.

"That must be the demon," Arlei gathers, the tall maid readying her mutually-large mace.

"We need to hide, Arlei!" you hiss, as the doors quake, the impacts getting harder, a horrid and demonic growl raging through it. "There's no place to...gah, it's all open! Where can I sneak through?"

The doors blast away, rocked open by means of a colossal crimson beast shouldering through. A streak of red smoldering steam surges behind it as the demon barges in, muscles tensed, and throws its skull-head back in a thunderous bellow of hate. A bull skull with massive horns lowers back down as the feral thing stamps and rages in place, as the unwanted redout appears over it:

BOSS: DEMON, LV 59, DEMON

HP: 15,999

MP: 500

Your knees buckle like wet paper, at sight of it. It was a boss that could eat other bosses.

"Oh, no, no," you mutter, backing away in unfettered terror—which, of course, makes you the first thing it sees. "His l-level!"

"Yes, he is there, for players too afraid to face the Archmage," Arlei says, not helping any.

The gigantic beast towers at 30 feet, up on both legs, looming over even the newly-grown Arlei. Hook claws crack the marble flooring as it flexes its incalculable red muscle and tears off at you, only for Arlei to intercept with a hard crack of her mace to its temple. For all her bother, despite the crashing force of the lizard's swing, the demon only grunts and twitches a bit to the left, before batting her away. She grunts considerably harder as you see her fly into and crash against a wall, cracking it.

-2,590 HP

You look back at the demon:

BOSS: DEMON, LV 59, DEMON

HP: 15,998

MP: 500

One point. *One.*

Your sword lowers in despair as you slump slightly. The Demon snorts, even angrier now that it's been struck, and it comes crashing at you with renewed, evermore intense speed!

You don't want to even look at Arlei. She's surely dead, many times over, from that one hit.

"WEAK," the Demon booms, its foul voice shaking the dome. "WEAK!"

By the gods, why did you do this? Why in the world did you go into the tower!?

The Demon's clawed hands pound the floor as it advances, big as a house. Just as its black jaws unhinge to devour you whole, a massive mace bears back down, smashing its skull so hard that you see it twist sideways, snap, then pop back into place, as the behemoth is hurled into the other wall with a great explosion of smoke and sprayed marble.

There, on your side, is Arlei, a mace bigger than a whole boulder smoking from the sheer force of its blow. She stands, her head bumping the great dome, the huffing she-lizard towering at over 60 feet in size—and she's still getting *bigger*.

“FOUL THING!” she blast-chides, her voice pure thunder and hot velvet.

You take only the most requisite of glances to the Demon, to see -3,000 HP appear from the smoke and clattering debris. Then, it's right back to the ever-growing female, whose head bulges into the dom harder, mashing her growing cap and its frills. Her shoulders swells bigger, the poofs stretching against a sudden roaring burst of muscle as her arms detonate in mass. Biceps heave out, straining pulling scales loudly as she snorts, her thighs ballooning with pure power as they stretch her net stockings tighter and tighter. A monstrous tail slams the ground as her neck bulges into a column, her back muscles spreading wider and wider.

“A...Arlei!” you cry, your mouth hanging open at the sight of the 70-foot giantess booming stronger and stronger before you, power overflowing from her trembling body. “You're alive!?”

“I SHOULD PERISH, FOR LETTING THIS NASTY BEAST ANYWHERE NEAR YOU, MASTER LLOYD! FORGIVE ME!”

Her enormous bosom swells even larger, starting to tear her ebony bodice at its struggling seams. Fat, bulbous nipples inflate against her dress, one popping up over the taut apron and its snapping straps, as she takes on booming step forward, readying for another blow as the Demon staggers and shakes the attack off. He's glowing orange, but heaven knows why, exactly.

She stoops her huge head lower, forcing her reptilian chin into her expanding, scaly cleavage, and the slight room it affords between her and dome allows you to see:

+2,590 HP

HP: 2,680/90

How was this possible!?

“SMASH...I!!”

Right, she had leveled up, returning her 1 current skill point allotment! The speciality skill strike connects just as the demon rises to full size, now only as tall as the 80-foot giantess' hips, and when the meteoric smash attack hits, the entire chamber is battered from the displaced air waves!

You're blown back as Arlei smashes the swiping Demon, smashing it to the floor, smashing the floor open, and burying it halfway into the rock and dirt below the marble!

-7,800 HP

The Demon's health is down to its last third! Incredible!

"STRIKE, MASTER LLOYD!" Arlei bellows, as the orange glow around the Demon intensifies. "WHILE HE'S WEAKENED!"

Emboldened so much that you're too drunk to think on how insane it is, you indeed raise your sword, and strike its exposed elbow.

-10 HP

"Uh," you begin, only for the Demon to start moving again.

"KEEP AT IT, MASTER LLOYD!"

You can see Arlei's battle gauge filling up, meaning you were on your own for about ten seconds. You slash again, then again, needing much less time to ready your swings, and sure enough:

-100 HP

-400 HP

-900 HP

Whoa!

The Demon's body turns a terrible shade of darkening red as its life slips down lower and lower, coupling with the orange glow about it. The Demon still has some left, and should be rising to smash you to pulp with one blow...but it stays frozen, shuddering in place, its eyes blazing in fury at its plight.

-1,400 HP

You understand now. It's so rare, you've never had the privilege of seeing it in battle:

STAGGERED

The boss was hit with a critical blow, followed by a flurry of physical attacks, staggering it! If you just keep at it before the stagger state clears and it can move again, then you'll have a chance! You'll actually have an honest-to-goodness—

"RAAAAAAAAAAAAAAGH!"

The enraged behemoth rises up with an earsplitting wail of anger, and over its head you see *staggered* vanish. It still has 2,388 HP left. And damn, is it mad.

"HELLFLARE!" it seethes, uttering its own spell. Just as the chambers begins to drop down into a blood red glow, before it can finish, Arlei interrupts.

"SILENCE!"

The mace doesn't come down. This time, Arlei's entire body does. Her gargantuan rear and overtaken underwear fill your view as the colossal maid twists about, sticks out her amply rump, and uses it to body slam the stunned Demon back down, cratering out and expanding the previous impact point so far that it basically annihilates the floor altogether.

-9,000 HP!

You go flying as the 80-foot mega-lizard's rump bashes the shattering turf apart, the Demon bellowing its last as it bursts into a sea of sizzling embers underneath.

With that, impossibly, it's over. You were only able to assist a little bit, but somehow, you did it. The Demon...is slain!

"Huh, huh," you pant, getting back up on two shaking boots. You break into laughter. "That...was amazing! Wh...why would...how did you do that!?"

You run up weakly and hug Arlei's thick, warm ankle, making the massive female look back over her bulky shoulder at you. Her intimidating glare melts into the softest of smiles as she chuckles, and clears her huge throat with a pleasant rumble.

"WELL, MASTER LLOYD, I SIMPLY USED MY NEW SKILLS."

You think about it, then remember to look her stats up again.

"Oh, right. Let's see, let's...Smash 1, right. Aura? Brunt? Brunt's an auto-skill?"

You investigate further:

BRUNT: Allows user to absorb the first enemy attack in battle for HP/STR boost. Automatic.

"You took its first attack..."

"AND MY AURA IS THE SAME THAT'S CLEANSED MOST OF KOGO VARAN. PROXIMITY TO ME AT HIGHER POWER WAS ENOUGH TO GRADUALLY WEAKEN IT."

"Which is why my attacks hurt it, after a while. I mean, not as much as you did."

"MASTER," she purrs, "YOU WERE THE ONE THAT STAGGERED IT. HAD IT ATTACKED US DURING MY GAUGE RECHARGE, EVEN WITH SUCH POWER-UPS, YOU AND I WOULD HAVE BEEN CRUSHED. EVEN WITH ALL THE BOOSTS, IT WAS TECHNICALLY STILL MUCH STRONGER."

"So, dumb luck saved us?"

"IT WAS HALF THE BATTLE, DEAR MASTER."

At that, the BRUNT buff wears off, and you watch Arlei huff and dwindle down, down, down in size. Her bulk evaporates as she slips down to her previous base height of 10 feet, dusting her clothes off as the rips and stretches heal back to form.

“Looks like it’s a battle-only buff, too bad,” you chuckle, before the last of the Boss’ embers flitter away, and with a bright flash a small pile of gold coins magically blinks into existence.

600 GOLD

You’ve never seen that much gold at once, ever. You rush over and scoop it gladly into your bag of holding, beaming like a fool. That, plus the gold from the skeleton, along with your Guild allowance of 30...that left you sitting pretty, with 652 gold coins!!

As you reel from the payoff, something else rises up from the defeated Boss:

+10,000 EXP

With the party split in effect that halved your reward to 5,000 each. At level 2, the both of you might have needed, what, 100 EXP to clear your next one? Well, the effect is instant as a brilliant blue hue overtakes you both, making you gasp in surprise, and Arlei groan in pleasure.

LV 3

As you see and feel your HP and MP climb higher, Arlei takes a more literal approach. The 10-foot female grits her teeth with a scale-penetrating blush as you watch her start to rumble all over, then swell up bigger, again. Her base height surges messily, spurting up a few more inches per second, putting her at 11 feet almost right away. Still, she trembles, groaning and bulging all over, her breasts expanding noisily against her complaining top.

“M...Master!”

“I, I know!”

LV 4

Arlei cries out as her entire body strains and swells, hot pressure inflating her heaving chest and rump as her tail lengthens and fattens at the base, her arms growing longer, her thighs swelling with a low rubber squeal of growth. 12 feet, now, then 13, in mere seconds!

LV 5

She thuds down onto all fours, panting openly as she grows onward, throbbing bigger by an entire foot this time. You move to her and put a reassuring hand on her back, feeling each warm scale swelling bigger, tighter, under her thick dress.

“W...we need to move! We’re not done yet, and the exit door—”

“Y-yes, of course, Muh-Master Llo—AHHHH!”

LV 6

Her body balloons out with another messy heave of size, her sides blowing up into your chest

and arms as you try to help move the growing powerhouse toward the smashed-open doors. As you help her squeeze through, halfway past, she grunts and shudders violently...

LV 7

“HUHHHH-HUAAAAHAH!”

Arlei explodes larger, her throbbing supple curves pulsing out bigger and bigger and bigger, mashing and cracking the unhinged doorway as her rump balloons too big for it, still wedged inside the chamber. Even on all fours, she now reaches 13 feet high, higher than you can possibly help to reach!

LV 8

Her hands alone are as big as your entire torso, and still growing, as the chamber rattles and quakes from the vibrations of her growth spurt. She pulls herself even harder, making the cracks at the door web out and blast apart, letting her huge body burst through!

There's a tumble into a dark hallway, which you drive her to crawl up, harmlessly spurring her on by thumping your scabbard against her huge, still-swelling rear.

“Almost there, keep pushing!”

“Yessss, Muh-Master!”

LV 9

Even your thumps are feeling stronger than ever; some more brash part of you imagines each thump could defeat a skeleton now, a mere tap; the problem here is, Arlei is not that. Her moans echo throughout as you feel her blow up even *bigger*, her gigantic thighs mercilessly pumping into you, starting to grind you against the rock face as you feel the hallway stuffed full with her breasts and bulk alike. She strains, then cries out:

“S...SMASSSSSSH 1!”

Her levels restored (and then some), she is certainly free to reuse it, and with an automated swing her growing arms and mace clear the rock, shearing the bottom of the tunnel away as the exit and some of the mountainside itself are suddenly and violently blasted away.

She *plops* out onto the grass, panting and groaning, as you're forced to climb up her growing legs and belly, grabbing fistfuls of her stretching apron to scale her huge body. You pull yourself up over the swell of her billowing breasts and their warm plates, swinging your legs around, holding onto a towering nipple, and then sliding down her collarbone and shoulder, to the ground.

By the time you get back up, Arlei is done, and so are you. She wobbles and shakes her head, before sitting upright at a startling 23 feet—sitting down.

“That was intense,” you wheeze, as you turn to see her, then yelp in shock. “You...you're huge, again! I mean, not as huge as the buff made you, but...still!”

You pull up the stats again, and your jaw drops:

ARLEI, LV 9, HOLY MAID

HP: 395/395

MP: 150/150

STRENGTH: 65

DEFENSE: 120

DEXTERITY: 300

SPEED: 140

HEIGHT: 38'11"

WEIGHT: ????

SKILLS: AURA, SMASH 2, BRUNT

NEW SPELL UNLOCKED: HEAL!

LLOYD, LV 9, ADVENTURER

HP: 285/285

MP: 90/90

STRENGTH: 44

DEFENSE: 95

DEXTERITY: 160

SPEED: 160

HEIGHT: 5'09"

WEIGHT: ????

SKILLS:

NEW SKILL UNLOCKED: CONFUSE 1, STEAL!

"We're almost level ten," you gasp, taking it all in. "Double-digits! I never thought I'd get past single digits, ever! Hah...hahahaha! This is the best day, I can't tell you! I just! Whoo!"

You leap in place, and even the leap feels great.

"I'm glad to see you so happy, Master Lloyd!" Arlie soft-bellows, her huge voice beyond powerful and thick. "It's my pleasure to help you!"

"Oh, you did more than just that," you laugh, patting her looming thigh gently, thankfully. "You're incredible! I don't know how you're this powerful, even at level one, and now? Think of all we can do! I mean, yeah, we only survived that super-boss out of luck, but we can build ourselves up! Wait until I show the Guild!"

You undo the bag, and rummage through it, through a glorious mess of coins and jewels—wait, the jewels! The ones from the special treasure chest!

“Oh, right, these,” you murmur, as Arlei’s shadow spills over you and the grass. “Wonder what these do, exactly? There wasn’t quite time to check...”

The menu appears.

BASE JEWELS: Rare gemstones that allow transference of stats between party members; effects vary from color to color.

“Holy smokes, really?” you balk, cackling. “These could be worth a small fortune!”

“Moreover, Master Lloyd,” Arlie offers, a leg-thick finger politely coming in to touch them, “I do believe these can pass my own stats along to others, should we ever form a larger party! That makes them even more precious than gold, if I may say.”

You think on it.

“True...that is very true, good point. Maybe I’ll hang onto them, then. Smart thinking.”

Arlei’s scales stretch the tiniest bit at your praise, as though one more kind word will make her blow up. For that matter, you keep waiting for the moment to hit, but it doesn’t: you just aren’t afraid of her, at all. Despite all that mammoth size, she radiates calm and goodwill.

For a moment you stop everything, and look out, and smell the air. Dead trees and boulders abound, but the grass persists through the arid region of the pass.

“Where to, then, Master Lloyd?” she gently asks, rising to an imposing stand on two cart-sized, scaly, clawed feet. “Please, do lead the way! I’ve never been out in the mortal world!”

“Never? Oh, right, the tower. Well, let’s see...”