***Verse 2: Universe Askew to You Not Me***

When he awoke in the Kist Village with Lumiko hovering over him, he thought he might have died. He quickly checked his stats. Whew! He was still a Lord and a Tier 2 badass with a huge problem that would solve itself given time!

[EDIT]

***You have been Cursed.***

***Before you were able to kill the Lich Lord, he cursed you to eternal damnation. You will become a Nothing – unable to live and unable to die – you will be stuck for eternity helpless and feckless.***

***Update: You have delivered the final death to the Lich Lord, but this curse hangs over your head for 7 days regardless.***

***Time until curse expires: 2 days, 8 hours, 3 minutes, 8 seconds***

Two days left… he could do it. He’d just have to survive for 2 more days and change.

He reviewed his status information. That usually cheered him up.

Name: Zev

Race: NPC/Human Chaos

Class: Puppeteer

Level: 28

Health Points (HP): 726

Mana Points (MP): 535

Stamina Points (SP): 298

Attributes:

* Strength: 32
* Dexterity: 40
* Constitution: 28
* Intelligence: 45
* Wisdom: 25
* Charisma: 28
* Luck: 20

Skills:

* Puppetry: Master
* Shadow Magic: Level 30, 50% to next level
* Stealth: Level 24, 69% to next level
* Traps: Level 19, 88% to next level
  + Trap Disarm: Level 19, 97% to next level
* Archery: Level 12, 40% to next level
  + Imbue Arrow: Level 8, 75% to next level
  + Focus: Level 5, 98% to next level
  + Double Shot: Level 5, 38% to next level
  + Drill Shot: Level 3, 90% to next level
* Swordsmanship: Level 4, 55% to next level
* Small Blades: Level 6, 67% to next level
* Unarmed Combat: Level 3, 22% to next level
  + Pressure Points: Level 3, 68% to next level
* Dual Wield: Level 3, 89% to next level
* Light Armor: Level 10, 45% to next level
  + Grace in Combat: Level 7, 68% to next level
* Shadow Ensnare: Level 2, 78% to next level
* Shadow Lasso: Level 1, 10% to next level

Talents:

* Master Puppeteer
* Shadow Meld
* Mark of the Shadow
* Limitless
* Gift of Tongues
* Fast Learner
* Bounty of Life
* Psi Bond

Marks:

* Master of the Shadow Guild
* Mark of the Mysterious Stranger

Resistances:

* Shadow: 60%
* Mental: 20%
* Spiritual: 25%

## Name: Zoctor Age: 24 Level: 48, 36%

## Health: 383 Mana: 445 Stamina: 210

## Attributes:

## Strength: 29

## Agility: 24

## Dexterity: 34

## Constitution: 25

## Endurance: 21

## Intelligence: 37

## Wisdom: 21

## Charisma: 24

## Luck: 15

## Abilities:

## Limitless

## Gift of Tongues

## Fast Learner

## Bounty of Life

## Psi Bond

## Skills:

## Herb Lore (Level 39, 22% to next level)

## Alchemy (Level 1, 0% to next level)

## Analyze (Level 6, 7% to next level)

## Pierce the Veil (Level 23, 45% to next level)

## Stealth (Level 6, 14% to next level)

## Traps (Level 21, 87% to next level)

## Trap Disarm (Level 21, 99% to next level)

## Archery (Level 10, 24% to next level)

## Imbue Arrow (Level 5, 18% to next level)

## Focus (Level 3, 78% to next level)

## Double Shot (Level 3, 31% to next level)

## Drill Shot (Level 2, 40% to next level)

## Swordsmanship (Level 2, 15% to next level)

## Small Blades (Level 4, 43% to next level)

## Unarmed Combat (Level 1, 10% to next level)

## Pressure Points (Level 1, 15% to next level)

## Dual Wield (Level 1, 37% to next level)

## Light Armor (Level 8, 18% to next level)

## Grace in Combat (Level 5, 38% to next level)

## Air Magic (Level 6, 37% to next level)

## Life Magic (Level 5, 82% to next level)

## Earth Magic (Level 4, 92% to next level)

## Water Magic (Level 5, 47% to next level)

## Dark Magic (Level 5, 22% to next level)

## Light Magic (Level 4, 48% to next level)

## Fire Magic (Level 5, 9% to next level)

## Map Making (Level MAX)

## Trade (Level 14, 86% to next level)

## Healing (Level 1, 38% to next level)

## War Leader (Level 2, 43% to next level)

## Enchantment (Level 1, 44% to next level)

## Portal Construction (Apprentice)

## Lore (Level 1)

## Marks:

## Master of Kist Village

## Blood Oath

## Resistances:

## Air: 50%

## Earth: 20%

## Life: 50%

## Mental: 15%

## Spiritual: 15%

## Race: Human (Chaos Seed)

Lumiko, the village Doctor, didn’t skip a beat in her scolding tirade even though he had been gone and lost for days.

She checked him over to make sure there wasn’t anything she missed, then began to scold him for everything from being lost in the depths to being alive and not here sooner.

It was comforting to know he had been missed and needed. However, his injuries had delayed him enough. He could not wait any longer.

He’d missed everything so much. He was elated, to say the least.

The curse had expired while Lumiko was patching him up.

He’d missed his fam. He’d missed his familiar, Zadana.

There was so much to do, but first, the Bonding of Chaotic Souls has begun! Zoctor and Zadana meld into one magnificent being.

Zoctor, the newly evolved Chaotic Lord, and Zadana, his Chaotic dragonling familiar, merged, body and soul. Transforming into a Chaotic Man-Dragon.

Their combined form afforded wings of Chaos magic and physical scales that unfurred to their full width of fourteen feet.

Their bodies and souls entwined becoming one sound on the wind.

They flew swiftly southwest from the Village to inspect the new Harbor and freshly installed Dungeon entrance.

Closine, the Kist Village professional Dungeon Keeper, had installed the alluring entrance soon after the guards reported the approaching caravan of ships.

As expected Mama’s caravan of several hundred new refugees. Working with the Town Administrator, Fendy, they put the new professionals to work under the same conditions as the first villagers. Many of the refugees pledged allegiance as soon as were allowed if only to be under the protection of the Kist Village. Others did so because they had already heard tales of this strange Lord in the forest that cared for his people like no other ruler.

In the Dungeon, Closine had done jaw-dropping work in the last few days following the battle and the huge influx of dungeon resources did not go wasted.

The Potato Battery Room needed some polish but he had done an impressive job of improvising from the Mana Storage Blueprint that they were not able to build yet due to requirements.

The Fey Factory Room was going to be a surprise, but there was no chance of that since the Dungeon was constantly being harvested now by villagers and Adventurers. The secret was out and Fey realm’s magic was in. The fairy water and Fey Portal were already feeding the Soul Stone Generator.

Zoctor thought he was so smart.

He figured out how to have the Dungeon create the Soul Stones using Fey magic and spit them out near all the surrounding Dungeon defenses.

Anything caught by the Dungeon defenses would give up the ghost and fill the empty stones sitting at the outside edges.

The filled Souls Stones could then be collected by a villager. It would probably be the same person that collected the eggs from the Egg Genesis Room.

It was a pretty good plan and he couldn’t wait to gloat when he saw his best friend, Cryon.

Inside the Village, together, with Cooter, the Sprite Master ranked Professional Engineer sent by Misako, Keslie the Village Professional Builder, and Bea the Professional Scholar, they created several new blueprints.

The Full Service Tavern, dubbed the Fiddling Rooster, Market, Crafting Hall, Library, and Bath House; all lined up, ready for construction teams.

Construction was almost complete on the Saw Mill and Mason’s Shop which would make the next steps possible.

The new Library would be completed soon. The Magic Core would be added for a surprise reveal to create the Shadow Library of Hidden Secrets, Treasures, and Quests if the Lore was right.

The real shocker to all except maybe the Scholars will be the elevated building once it aligns with the Dark ley line; It will hit level 3 at least and the Dark magic bonus will greatly benefit all the newly created Dark mages, sprites, and pixies.

The tree-apartment complex foundation was being prepared. And the Marketplace was starting to take shape under Mama’s stern watch.

He could not wait to astonish his people with the Magic Core and Core Upgrades. His plans would rock the world!

After these quick inspections, he could get on with upgrading the village. It was time to give birth to a Kobold Emperor, arrange a marriage between Alora and the baby Emperor (to be commenced in 50 years hence), invite a god to ensure the Kobold societal stability, and LEVEL THIS BITCH UP!!! And so, they began…

The joy Zoctor and Zadana felt at this moment made it hard to believe that only a few days ago, he was stuck underground.

Only hours ago, had he arrived back in the Village. He had left Zev with his Chamberlain to get acclimated and prepared to join Beyan in Vergut Kunig and the Sepulcher of Death. His talents would be useful there and being a Vassal had its privileges. Beyan could learn to share, right?

**Nearly 3 Days Ago…**

His voice rang out in the battle cavern. “Any of you fuckers know how Bond takes his Martini?"

Zoctor stood in the cave, staring down the Orcs, fire, and squelches of battle death in the background; grim and salty. His blood was roiling and barely holding back; his urge to kill more was powerful. As he glared about the cavern and before anyone could say another word, a sound that had not yet been heard in the Land. It echoed and broke the tense silence of the death scene.

This awful noise tickled a vague memory that wasn’t wholly unpleasant …

It was epic BACK-QUEING[[1]](#footnote-1)! Wick-Wick-Wac! Skritch-Skritch-Skratch! Rattled the bloody and smoldering cavern with the sound of records scratching.

***Secret Quest: A New Sound?***

***What’s the noise? How unusual! The Land is filled with Magic and Wonder yet this annoying sound didn’t make it here… until now!***

***You have “discovered” a new sound. Don’t get cocky. You were just there. Just be happy nothing bad happened to you.***

***Reward: A new sound that you can amuse and annoy everyone with. You aren’t getting more. As I said, you didn’t do anything special to achieve this. XP: 14***

Just after the DJ note, a booming voice echoed through the cavern. Not too loud but loud enough for the 7th row in an old rocker Metallica concert.

“What?? Change it up! Goin’ Old School!”

The voice started as one and each sentence was a different voice. I thought one sounded like Bootsy Collins…. It was fucking odd.

Zoctor sent messages to his “party” to stay alert.

Sloth grunted to Zoctor’s left and a man came out of a hidden passage in the shadows.

He wasn’t shambling exactly, but he was meandering and holding his hands in front of him like a god-named Zombie. His fingertips hung lazily and occasionally you could see a finger twitch.

The voice rang out again - this time sounding a bit like Rob Bass maybe?

“Ddd Dddd Drop the beat!”

DMX, “X Gon…” blares, and all the Orcs start doing fortnight dances???

What the fuck is going on!! Zoctor’s head was on a swivel looking for the source. All the while looking at the man that was creeping closer. He stopped about 15 feet away and smiled. His teeth shone in the firelight.

The Orcs didn’t advance on him but continued to do flips and tea-bag each other. It was pretty funny as long as they stayed in their triage area.

Regardless, it was clear this man had some interesting abilities to be able to puppeteer 5 Orcs at once… yup, he’s a Chaos seed, Zoctor convinced himself.

The music began to recede and the man spoke.

“My name is Zev and I know what you are. To answer your question, Bond takes his Martini…”, his voice trailed off only to be met midway with an even louder remix… it sounded like James Bond, straight out of the movies, bellowing, “Shaken not stirred” by all his incarnations.

Zev wasn’t holding it in. It was a long 8 years to get to this moment. He was excited!

Zoctor looked at the man and the “feel of chaos” sang in his body. A ping rang out and a quick prompt told him what he needed to know.

This Zev was a Chaos seed and had only 3 lives left. [MATH]

So, this was the source of the Chaos he’d sensed? Or was it…

“Zev, I appreciate the candor. I’ve had trouble with our kind in the past”, Zoctor’s grim disgust was evident.

“I know what you mean. I’ve already died 32 times in the last 8 years. Most of those times were at the hands of others like us.”, Zev said in a calm and unassuming manner.

“You’ve been here 8 years? What year was it when you left Earth?”, Zoctor’s curiosity got the better of him while his blood magic still coursed through his veins.

“That was a long time ago. The Land messes with time. You probably don’t know the half of it.”, Zev continued.

Zoctor nodded knowing full well that Nexus could manipulate time.

“I left Earth in 2084. The Labyrinth had already fed on the weak and about 15% of Earth’s population was still standing their ground against the Labyrinth monsters that wandered in and out of the portals that were littered about the world.

A few of the most resilient human factions have taken control of Portals on Earth and have begun to make bases off-world.

I came voluntarily. I walked right into the Portal and was transported to a void space where I met an Alien that said I would have to hurry and I would have a hard time.

It said that I would have to seek out help once I was in a town. Then I appeared at the entrance to that Dungeon.”

Zoctor took all this in and breathed slowly to calm his blood. At least this guy seemed upfront and honest.

He used Analyze and found he couldn’t see much.

Zev looked at his feet, obviously pensive. He looked up and made eye contact with the Blood-soaked Chaos Lord and smiled.

“So, I just gave you a lot of information that might make me seem vulnerable but I want to assure you that I am not. Now that we have spoken more than 5 words together, I have an Ability that gives me the option to set a curse on you that harms you 4x as much as you hurt me”, Zev explained.

Zoctor quickly checked his logs. Sure enough, there was a curse. It was simple and clear.

“Now that’s out of the way, I want to share with you my desires and intents.”

Zev walked a bit closer and landed in front of the Orcs who were still performing.

Zev put his arms down and the Orcs relaxed and continued their triage; most of their previous work having been undone by the antics.

“I think I might have been the first one.” Zev began.

When I got here it was 8 cycles ago including that last massive Age change in the global announcement.

I only recently figured out what happened. You see, when I left Earth, it was 2089. The Labyrinth monsters had taken most of the planet but in the last 10 years, small factions of humans 1000 people or less started to fight back. A few of the more assertive camps took a portal after slaughtering the monster invasion exiting The Labyrinth.

It was said that one popped into the portal and found a node; ran back and everyone followed. They control that portal and node now.

I was part of the 4th wave to find them and in the 1st wave to enter The Labyrinth.

But you probably know, that place is wicked and soon I was lost and running for my life from monsters unheard of.

I got lucky and found a new node. This one took me to a Dungeon. I was only on level 1 and so I just left.

I’ve been running and learning ever since… I just got level 10 in Lore.

1. A DJ record scratching technique commonly used in beat intros or transitions [↑](#footnote-ref-1)