

# BLAKE 3 PUDDING

## CHAPTER 15

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### APEX

Reforming my eyes, I found myself back in my usual state—goo! However, this time, I awoke luxuriating in a pool, bathing in a feast of chimera. A gory landscape surrounded me: blood and chunks of meat scattered across the ground, melding seamlessly with my darkness. It resembled a sea of blood in the aftermath of a shark’s feast on a surfer, mixed with the aftermath of the Valdez oil spill. *Mmm, a perfect blend of chaos and deliciousness—yummy!*

Everything around me had flattened when I unleashed Astral Graviton with all my might. Yeah, I know—I’d been holding back every other time I cast it. Or at least, I think I had been. But not this time! Actually... I wanted to use its inverse, hoping to blast skyward through the beast like a rocket. So, yeah, it’s pretty clear I have no clue what I’m doing. *Ha!* You could say instead of winging it, I flat-out improvised! *Okay. Okay. That was a lame joke. My bad.*

However, it turns out not everything can withstand the force of gravity. So much for relying on a skeletal frame to withstand it.

Blinking my eyes from my flattened position, I realized, to my slack-jawed surprise, that something had withstood Astral Graviton’s formidable might. There, in all its eerie glory, my skeleton stood, frozen with a sword raised high in one hand, striking a heroic pose that would make any movie poster jealous with utter envy.

Pulling an eyeball up with a now-forming tentacle like a periscope, I glanced around, getting a full view of the destruction. When I said I awoke in a pool of blood, well, I wasn’t far off, considering the crater I had created with my skill. The crater I had created with my skill was not as deep as it was wide, but it was filled with all the gore and viscera from the chimera. Looking back at the castle, I noticed Aurelia’s relieved face when she saw my tentacle poking up within the red and black of the impact zone. *Goddess, I love her!*

As much as I enjoyed one-shotting that bastard with my skill, I don’t think I should rely on it too *heavily*. Suppose I were in a battle and someone survived by being outside the epicenter of Astral Graviton’s force. In that case, I’d be as helpless—or should I say, as useless—as a purity ring on an OnlyFans streamer until I regain my bearings.

*Hey, being on OnlyFans doesn’t mean they’re having sex with someone.*

*Oh, my bad, Dream. You’re right. There’s also solo content like that creator who focuses on prolapsing her a—*

*Okay, we’re done here! Geez, I was thinking along the lines of feet pics. And here I thought you were the prude one out of the two of us. Instead, you’re a closet freak with some twisted kinks.*

*Hey, I resemble that remark!*

*Oh, I know.*

*...Do you think Aurelia would be okay with—*

*NO!*

*But Dream, she has vampiric healing.*

*Nightmare? I said no! Ugh, and here I thought I had a butt thing—waaaait, she does have vampiric healing, doesn't she?*

*Riiight!*

Finishing up every mouth-watering morsel of meat and viscera in my makeshift kiddie pool, my mind wandered to the system notification I had received. I unlocked two new skills—well, skills I had once lost: Acid Breath and Poison Spit. I suppose I should take the time to master them before something ridiculous happens again, and I lose them—yes, that's a very real possibility, given how insane my second—third... or fourth?—life has become. *Yeah, I know, I die a lot.*

Anywho, I took a quick peek to remind myself what those two new—old—skills actually did.

**[ACID BREATH]**

ACQUIRE THE SPELL TO UNLEASH A CLOUD OF **[ACID]** UPON YOUR ADVERSARIES.

TYPE  
**SPELL**

ACTIVATION  
**CAST**

**[POISON SPIT]**

ACQUIRE THE ABILITY TO SEND A PROJECTILE OF **[POISON]** AT A TARGET.

TYPE  
**ABILITY**

ACTIVATION  
**CAST**

After rushing to lap up every drop of my meal, hoping to outpace the gluttonous Phantasia, I finally finished cleaning our makeshift crater/bowl with a satisfied tentacle lick before oozing my way over to the epicenter of my blast zone. There, my skeleton stood like a superheroine, sword held high—well, more accurately, like an undead conqueror, since it's a skeleton, but that's beside the point. Deciding to reform my body over my skeleton, which probably looked quite terrifying, judging by the startled expressions of the vampires watching. I may have deliberately taken my

time with it, tendrils by tendrils as if knitting muscle fibers together, all to increase the shock factor. *What?* If I'm going to perform in front of an audience, I might as well make a spectacle.

While putting on my little horror show, I took a moment to glance at my system sheet.

<p><b>NAME:</b> BLAKE  <b>RACE:</b> ELDRITCH PUDDING  <b>CLASS:</b> PHANTASM</p> <p><u>TITLES</u>  <b>DESCENDANT OF THE END</b>  <b>SCION OF DREAMS AND NIGHTMARES</b></p>		
<p><u>RACIAL SKILLS</u>  <b>[DEVOURER]</b>  <b>[DISINTEGRATION]</b></p> <p><u>SPELLS</u>  <b>[ASTRAL GRAVITON]</b>  <b>[WEAK FIRE WARD]</b></p> <p><u>ABILITIES</u>  <b>[PHANTASMAL SURGE]</b>  <b>[POISON SPIT]</b></p>	<p><u>VULNERABILITIES</u>  <b>[FIRE]</b>  <b>[HOLY]</b></p> <p><u>IMMUNITIES</u>  <b>[ACID]</b>  <b>[CHARM]</b>  <b>[DARKNESS]</b>  <b>[DISEASE]</b>  <b>[POISON]</b>  <b>[SLEEP]</b></p>	<p><u>UNIQUE</u>  <b>[BIRTHRIGHT]</b>  <b>[SOVEREIGN HEIRESS]</b></p> <p><u>SELECTABLE</u>  <b>[ACID BREATH]</b>  <b>[PHANTASMAL DOMINION]</b>  <b>[PHANTASMAL MIST]</b>  <b>[WEB OF WHISPERS]</b></p>

Yes, you read that correctly. I've just swapped out Phantasmal Mist and Web of Whispers for Poison Spit and Weak Fire Ward.

Why, you might wonder? Well, I desperately needed some kind of defense against one of my major vulnerabilities, so it's time for some fire practice. Regarding Web of Whispers, I've pretty much got the hang of it, so now it's time to experiment with poison. And let's just say, I already have some experience with it, that I'm aiming to master it, pretty darn quickly. My goal is to modify Poison Spit in such a way that I regain a version of my old Venomous ability. While venoms and poisons aren't exactly the same, their similarities give me confidence in learning how to apply a passive poison skill to myself without the system's help, much like how Disintegration works.

If that doesn't pan out, I might consider combining it with Blight and Necrotic Flame. Oh, now that's a horrifying idea—an unholy trifecta of necrotic burning, plagues, and poisons. And just imagine tossing a cohesive cloud into the mix! That would be an unholy quadplex of a spell. I've been dreaming of a more powerful range spell—it's a shame it's not lightning. It's also a pity I can only have two system skills from any category active at a time. Um, well, except for immunities—thank Death for small mercies. Seriously, she's already nerfed me plenty.

Yeah, that's my plan. I'll start by practicing some fire protection before moving on to merging my four ranged spells into one badass spell. I'll keep my tentacles crossed that it works! I have too many spells to manage as it is, so blending them into one spell that combines the full effects of my

worst affinities—necrosis, disease, poison, and acidity—seems like an ingenious move. Only after that will I attempt to turn myself into paste in my dream of flying. Yep, I haven't given up on that yet.

Oh, and I still need to explore what I can do with Phantasmal Mist. Perhaps I'll try merging it with Phantasmal Dominion. I'm not sure if that will work. That being said, if it turns out I can combine magic, I'll give it a whirl. However, I know I'll have to do all that outside of the system. I'll save that for last, as there's already too much on my plate, making that a tomorrow problem—well, maybe more of a next-century problem with the rate I'm moving.

Reopening my eyes, I could feel Phantasia merging with me as I finished reforming the last bits of my body over my skeleton, including a simple silk face. I started humming a tune reminiscent of a happy little Elm Street jingle as I began skipping toward the castle entrance, where everyone watched me with slack jaws—well, all but two. Von Von was glaring at me, which was pretty normal for her. As for the other, Aurelia gazed at me with a look of lust-filled hunger in her eyes.

However, I didn't quite reach the entrance when a system notification popped up before my eyes, abruptly halting my merry tune and skip.

<b>SYSTEM NOTIFICATION</b>
<b>CONGRATULATIONS!</b>  YOUR BOND WITH A SOULLESS ELDRITCH REMNANT HAS REACHED ITS APEX.
PLEASE CHOOSE FROM THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS:  <b>GRANT SELF-AWARENESS:</b> Offer a piece of your soul to the entity, granting it self-awareness. <b>WARNING:</b> If a failure occurs, you will lose the offered piece of your soul, regardless. (APPROXIMATE SUCCESS RATE AT 80%)  <b>MERGE WITH THE ENTITY:</b> Merge the entity completely with your soul, making it an additional facet of your subconscious. <b>WARNING:</b> If the entity resists or failure occurs, you risk losing a piece of your soul. (APPROXIMATE SUCCESS RATE AT 60%)  <b>CLAIM THE ENTITY:</b> Claim the entity completely as another aspect of your body, making it an additional facet of your will. <b>WARNING:</b> The process carries the risk of destroying or irreparably shattering the entity. (APPROXIMATE SUCCESS RATE AT 40%)

I stood frozen, staring at the notification, completely stunned. The choice before me should be clear to anyone familiar with my penchant for selfishness. Yet, the implications of claiming Phantasia—risking losing her or shattering her—gave me pause. Having been shattered myself, I couldn't bear the thought of inflicting that on her—maybe someone else, but not upon my little bundle of terror.

*Hey, Dream, do you want your own body?*

*Absolutely not! I'm not risking my half.*

*Yeah, me neither, but it was a nice thought.*

*...Which part?*

*Losing you.*

*Fuck you!*

*Love you too, sis.*

No, I wanted to keep Phantasia if possible. However, what truly surprised me was learning that she was soulless, which ignited my curiosity about whether all Black Puddings shared this trait. My eyes then shifted to Aurelia, who wore an expression of concern. Following her gaze, I noticed they were staring at something behind me. Turning around ever so slowly, I came to a halt, stunned by the scene before me. Dozens of airships loomed on the horizon, seemingly poised to unleash hell upon me—oops, there goes my selfish side again. I meant to say, upon all of us.

Despite the unfolding scene, a smile of dark delight crept across my face. At that very moment, I selected the third option, staking my claim over my pet pudding. After all, my life had already been riddled with enough soul fuckery, so options one and two would never have been on the table if I had a say.

*Here's hoping Phantasia survives.*

*Umm, Dream... If I read it correctly, option three didn't include her survival.*

*Wait—what?!*

*You didn't fully read it before we selected it, did you?*

...

*Either way, we'll get over it.*