

The Crafts 115

Chapter 115: Oder Family

Before 9 am, Lucas left his lodging and located the EVL head branch in Baylands City's Central Prefecture district.

Staring at the skyscraper that towered over one hundred floors, Lucas couldn't help but admire the stunning building like a piece of art. Although he had seen even more massive and impressive buildings in his past lives, the architectural style of the Eretrian Vestige-smith League main branch was of a different taste.

"What a stunning sight to see. Am I right?"

A voice interrupted Lucas' thoughts.

Lucas glanced sideways to discern the speaker. It was a young boy about eighteen years or so of age. He had brown hair and amber eyes with a light smile on his face.

"I'm Havos. Nice to meet you." The young man extended his arm and introduced himself.

Shaking his hand, Lucas replied, "Lucas."

"What's a human like you doing here?" Havos asked his question after they were done with the pleasantries.

"I'm participating in the exams. I've been a vestige-smith for a while now, but they won't let me get registered, and so, here I am." Lucas explained his situation.

"Oh. A human vestige-smith? Is that even possible?" Havos stared at him astonished.

"Why shouldn't it be?" Lucas countered.

"Haha. You're right. You're one funny guy indeed." Havos laughed right after.

Suddenly, the duo turned towards the side, where they noticed a young man walking towards the building. He looked to be of the same age as Havos, but unlike the latter, he had a cold bearing and an arrogant look on his face. His eyes seemed to say that all existences were beneath him as the young man ignored the bystanders and made his way forward.

"He's here too?" Havos suddenly appeared uncomfortable.

"Who is he?" Curious, Lucas asked.

"Maximillus Oder. He comes from the famous Oder family, which is a family with a deep vestige-smith history. It is said that their ancestor had studied under the guide of a Tier 1 Grandmaster vestige-smith from the Bernin continent for a while. He then relocated to the Groeten continent during the expansion phase of Baylands City, some three hundred hundred years ago.

"Maximillus is said to be a genius in blacksmithing with a high education degree in engineering. He even completed college at a Pure School at the age of 18. It's rumoured that he's already made his first vestige at the age of seventeen, but this hasn't been confirmed yet.

I'm guessing it's true but he held back the information because he wanted to participate in the tests and stand out." Havos said with a sorrowful expression. Competing against such a talent meant that there would be no competition for first place.

The exceptional basis exam had a ranking system. The whole point of the exam was to permit geniuses to be registered under the EVL, even if they couldn't vestige-smith yet. At the same time, it also allowed for one to be registered as a vestige-smith in the EVL even if they had yet to meet certain standard requirements.

The ranking system was included to identify people with better potential and talent worth investing in. It also made the exams competitive for the applicants and made them give it their all.

As for the Oder family, it was a very influential family with a deep background. Tracing their lineage up to three hundred years in the past, and to a student of a Tier 1 Grandmaster vestige-smith, was a boastful heritage to be proud of. Although the Oder family wasn't among the top four families, it was still a famous and powerful family.

The Oder family had records and training manuals from the time of their ancestor and controlled a vestige-smith company as well as owned shares in a couple of vestige dealerships. They were somewhat of a behemoth in the industry.

During the Silver Fig Trade Convention in the Central Prefecture district, the Oder family's Prestige Star Ltd. made a masterpiece which managed to clinch the second position. At the same time, Prestige Star Ltd was also a member of the Silver Fig Consortium.

From this, one could see how powerful the Oder family was in the vestige industry.

Lucas only stared once at Maximillus before turning away.

So what if the young teen was a genius and had a college degree at 18? When he was still in his mother's womb, Lucas was busy winning international prizes and more Earth. Before Maximillus' father was born, Lucas was already a grandmaster. Before the Oder family's ancestor was even born, Lucas was already a famous blacksmith; one much better than a Tier 1 Grandmaster vestige-smith.

Maximillus Oder might be a genius, but Lucas had seen even more absurd geniuses. A college degree at 18? He has seen someone swallow a star at 12. A college degree at 18 doesn't sound as cool again when compared to that.

The duo walked together without needing to make a verbal agreement. Havos kept talking about the exam and even the building, but Lucas noticed that his tone had a bit of disquietude in them. It was clear that Maximillus' presence added a bit of pressure on him. Regardless, Lucas didn't bother to comfort him or anything.

Inside the building was a large waiting hall with many people present. As it turns out, Lucas, despite leaving early, was still later than most. Many were either anxious about the exam or, for one reason or another, had decided to make it to the venue extraordinarily early.

Some of them were as young as Havos and Maximillus, while others were as 'old' as Lucas, and some even older, although not exceeding twenty-four (24) years of age. Even though there were many vestige-smiths, there were many more who failed to succeed in wielding the title. Despite that, they still wanted to gain some benefits from the Eretrian Vestige-smith League.

As long as they could pass the exams, they would gain access to the library of the league, which was a large pool of information that could increase their odds of being a successful vestige-smith.

For the blacksmiths in their early to mid-20s who wanted to advance in occupation, the exceptional basis exam was their best option unless they had some sort of connection or enough financial resources and talent to apply to a Pure school.

After waiting for a while, a man walked out from a door by the side of the hall. Lucas didn't sense a sign of life from them and reached the conclusion that this was a robot. Robots were pretty common and used for menial tasks and roles, as they were cheap to maintain and required neither wages nor breaks.

"Welcome everyone. As you all know, today is the day of the exceptional basis exam. For the first-timers, if you check your communicators now, you will see a message with the rules and format of the exam. You'll be given ten minutes to go through it, after which the exam will commence."

The robotic man went silent right after, and the first-timers like Lucas and Havos, began to check their mail. However, not all first-timers were like this, as some already knew the rules and format. For instance, Maximillus Oder.

'So the exam is a two-part exam, both written and technical. Well, crap.' Lucas thought.

Engineering was not his major on Earth, and he didn't study that here either

Luckily, the exam was made with consideration of the various branches in vestige-smithing: the weapons vestige-smith branch's Forger faction and the Multiplex faction; the School of Analytical Reasoning's Methodical faction; and various other branches.

There was no one-size-fits-all in vestige-smithing, so the exam had to be done after proper consideration. The result was to test the basics of vestige-smithing. Stellar matrices and runes knowledge, inscription skills, analytical skills, forging techniques and so on were tested.

When it comes to stellar matrices and runes, Lucas didn't know any, as such knowledge was kept tight and one could only learn such in a Pure school or to study under a vestige-smith, neither of which Lucas has done.

'Whatever. I just need to pass, right?' Lucas thought as he turned off his communicator.

Soon afterwards, the ten minutes was up and the robotic man spoke up once again,

"Any questions?"

After waiting a short while and no response, the robot continued,

"You should all now be familiar with the procedure of the exam. Please comply with the rules and not cheat. The punishment for cheating won't just be a simple failure, but you will be banned by the Eretrian Vestige-smith League from practicing vestige-smithing. If it is discovered that you have broken these rules, you would be imprisoned or have your stellar refinement crippled."

While the Vestige-smith League didn't control vestige-smiths, they protected their interests, and in exchange, most vestige-smiths just went with their decisions as long as they were fair and weren't extreme.

The group of examinees walked behind the robotic male, who led them to a different hall for the first part of the exam, which was going to be a theoretical exam.

As a science major, vestige-smithing had a lot of emphasis on theory. Just like engineering, it relied on physics, material science, chemistry and more, depending on one's area of expertise. Apart from that, there were still the stellar energy courses like matrix and rune inscription, material refining methods, vestige-smithing techniques and so on.

In summary, being a vestige-smith didn't just rely on skill, but also a wealth of knowledge, and the theoretical exam tested just this.

For many of the participants, this was the exam they were least worried about. For Lucas, this was the exam he was most worried about.