

The Crafts 145

Chapter 145: Trouble

"We're back."

Nafir said right after he stepped into the sare with Lucas following close behind.

The sare wasn't designed like a private vessel, so there were only two areas: the cockpit and the bay area, which was the area where the others stayed. The separation between the cockpit and the other area wasn't significant, so one could even speak to the pilot from the bay area.

As they walked in, the group glanced at Lucas, and those who were meeting him for the first time couldn't help but take a longer glance at Lucas.

Just as they had heard, Lucas was a human, but it was still surprising that their lieutenant paid attention to this human. Although he had the rare black hair, there were still others with a similar hair colour. Appearance-wise, Lucas couldn't even be compared to the models on tv or those second- and third-generations in the Central Prefecture district [1].

"What are you doing here?" Lily stared at Lucas.

'Ohhh, it's starting.' Barry grinned as if he were watching a soap opera.

"Is there any rule that says I can't be?"

Oblivious to the thoughts of the Red Fangs crew members, Lucas was getting irritated with the incessant questions.

Nafir's presence made it difficult for him to lie, but telling the truth might raise unnecessary suspicions.

If he were to say he was after a desolate beast, they would think Lucas was either being delusional or suicidal. If it turned out that he came back alive, misgivings would arise about Lucas' identity, as after all, it was impossible for a human to win against a desolate beast. The only exceptions were with a powerful cold-type vestige or they were from Digress city-state.

Supposing they went with the second scenario, Lucas would be arrested and put under surveillance while they try to contact Digress. Once the city-state denies knowing about his identity, Lucas would be killed.

If it were the first situation, misgivings would still be brought to his identity. The notion that he was a spy could be speculated by the others.

"This place isn't safe. You should have just stayed at your store." Lily said.

"Don't worry about it."

After Lucas' reply, she said nothing else and gave the order for their shuttle to depart. As they were on an official job, the platoon had their permits with them as well as clearance.

The border gate wasn't anything majestic or the sort. It was just a simple barricade gate. The true security was the invisible forcefield that detected any movement in the air or below. It was a foolproof technology that couldn't easily be bypassed even by anti-radar vehicles.

A couple of minutes after passing the gate and heading into the region, the shuttle received a signal.

"Lieutenant, we just received an emergency signal." One of the men, the pilot at the cockpit, said.

"Connect."

Following Lieutenant Lily's command, the pilot picked up the signal and connected it to the shuttle's speakers.

"Mayday, mayday. Re-sshdhs. Requesting-shshhshshh-kup. Request-shhhh-re. Shhhhhhts sstshhh backup- shshshhh."

The speakers suddenly went silent.

"What's going on?" Nafir couldn't help but frown. It wasn't that he didn't understand the sound, but he found the contents to be unbelievable.

Requesting backup.

What could have happened for a unit to request backup? The desolate beasts wave was being monitored. If there was any movement, the outpost station should have already found out by now and notified everyone else. Discover exclusive tales on empire

"Pinpoint the source of the signal and move towards it. Norman, connect to HQ and inform them of this. Then reach out to the outpost and ask them for details on any forces stationed out here and their current status. Everyone else, prepare for battle." Lily hurriedly gave out commands.

Although the signal was jammed, they could still hear bits of it and understand the situation somewhat. The frequency the signal came through was a coded frequency, used only by security operatives of Baylands city-state. Based on the contents, It looked like a squad had encountered trouble and were requesting for help. However, there was something eerie about all this.

After the region around Garena town was isolated, an outpost was built by the security forces to serve as a rapid-response base. The base organized the forces here and communicated with them, while also handling logistics. It also monitored the desolate beasts wave from a close point.

Logically, they should be able to reach out to anyone within the region through their communication network, no matter how far the receiver was from the base.

Despite that, there was no sign or notification from the outpost about this matter, which meant that they weren't aware of the situation with the squad that sent the signal.

Unless the squad was a fake, there could only be one answer. Something was preventing the signal from getting far out, and this could be seen from the fact that it was jammed.

But then came another problem.

There was no record of any desolate beast with the ability to interfere with signals in Baylands city-state. Also, the frequency the security personnel communicated with was one known to be least affected by desolate beasts with such abilities. Despite all of this, the signal was jammed

and its range limited. This could only mean one thing; the jamming was artificial and done by someone, but who.

Lily narrowed her eyes as her team members followed her commands.

Lucas was surprised that he would be in such a situation, but he wasn't worried about it. If anything, staying with the Red Fangs was much safer than moving on his own, although he would have preferred the latter option more.

Lucas wasn't privy to how the military worked, but he knew that Baylands city-state didn't have a desolate beast that could interfere with signal transmission. This was all thanks to one of his first rewards from the system, "An Adventurer's Manual", which gave him a lot of information about desolate beasts.

Since this wasn't the work of a desolate beast, it could only mean two things from Lucas' perspective. The first was that the equipment was damaged, but he was unaware of the fact that the military's equipment was high tech and couldn't easily be damaged.

The second conclusion Lucas thought up came from a previous known fact. During the incident with Greendale Highschool students, it was said that the terrorist attack was connected to some underground gangs in the city, with Ramirez's group being one of them. That incident had also led to a weird behaviour among the desolate beasts in the area, while the abominations were left unaffected.

Ramirez is currently in Alleva district. There is a desolate beasts tide in Alleva district.

Although there wasn't substantial evidence to connect the two facts, and there was also the part where the beasts appeared out of nowhere, Lucas felt that if someone could have an answer, it would be Ramirez.

Also, this signal jamming was done by an individual and based on the previous conjecture, it was possibly related to Ramirez, or at least his terrorist buddies.

"Full speed ahead." Lily suddenly said, her face with a strange expression.

As Lucas stared at her for some reason, he felt that she had reached the same conclusion as he was. No. It was possible that she had even been suspecting it long before.

Lucas was aware of Ramirez's location thanks to the underground network of Calvin Petri. From what Ardeen told him about the top families in the Central Prefecture district, Lucas believed Calvin found out about Ramirez thanks to the Petri family's connections in Alleva district. Regardless, he refused to believe that the Red Fangs similarly couldn't find out about this information.

This wasn't 1960 or the 1100s, but a futuristic world way ahead of Earth.

It was very likely that the Red Fangs knew, but couldn't do anything to Ramirez due to the nature of Alleva district. Yes, he was a suspect of cooperation with terrorists, but there was no hard evidence, except the confession statement Lucas tortured out of one of his men.

Without concrete evidence, it would be difficult to make such an arrest in Alleva district, especially if the local forces were to protect him. Hence, they still monitored Lucas, hoping to use the latter as bait to get to Ramirez. However, that didn't work out.

Nonetheless, that was all a thing of the past. The current focus now was to get to the source of the signal and understand the situation. For some reason, both Lucas and Lily felt that they would get the answers they were looking for once they got there.

While the sare was speeding towards the destination of the source, which as tracked down by the shuttle's artificial intelligence, Lucas suddenly had a weird thought. It was a new conjecture that could explain the situation better.

Although he didn't know much about the military's arrangement, from how things usually worked on Earth, there would be an outpost closeby to help with command, logistics and communication. But from Lily's reaction and commands, the outpost didn't seem to be aware. This made Lucas' blood suddenly run cold with a thought.

What if the problem wasn't that the signal was jammed or limited? What if there was a spy in the outpost?