

The Crafts 158

Chapter 158: Lucas Versus Ramirez

Being aware that there was a pack of desolate beasts on the way, Lucas knew that he couldn't afford to dull a second longer. It was now or never to escape.

"The 'Retrieve' command has been upgraded. You can now recall more than one item from the inventory without needing to repeat the key word as many times."

Lucas recalled a notification the system had given to him a while back. He then dropped the little girl for a second as he said,

"Retrieve."

Immediately, Lucas became clad in a special suit of armour. On his arms were the pair of gauntlets from before, but this time around, there was a pair of vambraces on his arms as well as cuirass. There was also a pair of boots with greaves, a helmet with a visor and so on. All in all, it was a suit of armour, but didn't appear to be the same as mediaeval ones. Rather, the armour appeared a bit more futuristic. If one were to imagine how it looked, it appeared a lot similar to a certain superhero from a superhero movie franchise on Earth.

This suit of armour was Lucas' self-made and designed Stellar Circuit Battle-Armour, or SCB for short. It was a combination of vestiges that could either be utilised individually, or paired up like a set to form the SCB. Just as its name implies, the suit was powered by stellar energy, a feat Lucas had achieved using the stellar circuits he had learnt about.

It worked by using a stellar energy gathering circuit, which constantly absorbed stellar energy from the atmosphere into a storage unit within the armour. The various vestiges were then powered by the stored stellar energy.

Lucas had achieved this feat of vestige-smithing by using precious items like Red Iris stones and Violent Sun ores for the stellar energy flow-path; Gretac-Titanium alloy for the main framework of the individual vestiges, giving them high durability, hardness and strength; and other precious metals or materials. This set of vestiges was Lucas' greatest masterpiece since coming into this world, and it was something he had been working on ever since, only recently completing it after months.

The original design was more flawed and didn't have a main stellar energy storage mechanism, instead relied on individual small storage containers in each vestige. However, after learning about stellar circuits, Lucas made adjustments to the design and created the main stellar energy storage, while still retaining the initial concept of the suit.

The main stellar energy storage was a device located at the upper right side of the suit's chest area; which was pretty much parallel to where the human heart is. The device's function was to provide supplementary energy to the various vestiges, increasing their duration and power. It could also act as a main power system, taking over the role of supplying stellar energy from the built-in storage containers in the vestiges. All this sounded complicated, but in summary, one could think of it like the main battery of the suit.

It was a feat of engineering that had taken Lucas a month of testing and designing to complete. This might not sound like much, but this was only because Lucas was a genius. If it were anyone else, they might need at least half a year of research just to design a prototype, and another half a year of testing; which totals at least ten times the amount of time Lucas had used.

Once the armour had fully covered him, Lucas picked up the little girl and jumped.

The boots on his feet let out a blast of ocean-blue aura as he took to the air at high speed. That's right; the suit was capable of flight, albeit not for long. It wouldn't have made sense for a futuristic armour to not be capable of flight, now would it?

While in mid air, Lucas stared through his visor and at a projected image that served as a map, navigating his way back to the outpost.

A few minutes later, he could hear loud noises from behind. The vanguard portion of the desolate beasts tide had arrived and they were close.

'To be able to reach so soon, they should at least be third level desolate beasts, if not fourth level.' Lucas frowned.

He immediately dived down and flew at a low altitude, hoping not to catch their attention. However, it was too late as one of the avian desolate beasts made a loud noise before moving towards his direction.

With a grim look on his face, Lucas immediately landed on the ground and began running with his two feet. The armour was designed in such a way that even with the weight of the vestiges,

there was a stellar circuit that created a weightless effect on them. Although the effect wasn't perfect and didn't truly make the vestiges weightless, it did drop their weight by at least eighty percent, which was well enough for Lucas to move around in.

Lucas found a dark spot behind a few trees and hid there, waiting for the desolate beast to give up and leave.

The monster flew around and scanned the area, but as there was a forest below, it failed to find Lucas. It then dashed in a different direction, which was the route to Amer city. The outpost was in a different direction than Amer city, so as long as Lucas could keep going forward, he would eventually be safe.

"That was close." Lucas sighed with relief.

The little girl who hung behind him was shivering at the moment, but Lucas comforted her. He could guess that her previous experience was too traumatic for her, and the sight of the monster would trigger that trauma.

Clap *Clap* *Clap*

"Spectacular. I can see why you were able to survive all those numerous assaults."

Lucas was shocked and hurriedly turned to the direction of the speaker. There he saw a figure that he had never met before. However, not having met the latter didn't mean Lucas didn't know who it was. On the contrary, he was very familiar with that face as he had burned the image into his memory.

"Ramirez." Lucas grimaced.

Stay connected through empire

"You know my name. As expected of you." Ramirez smiled.

The distance between the two was at least one hundred metres, but Ramirez treated it as nothing, staring calmly at Lucas despite the gap between them.

"You see, you've cost me a lot of losses; so much so, I can't even cover for them. To be honest, I'm still surprised I am alive after all of that. Maybe this is the universe giving me a second chance or hinting at something. Regardless, I will be making sure that today, you do not leave this place in one piece."

Lucas remained kept his composure cool, bringing the little girl down and keeping her by the side.

"Just give me a sec." Lucas said to her, before turning his attention to Ramirez.

"You shouldn't have come here." Lucas uttered with his gaze fixed at Ramirez.

"And why is that so?" Ramirez mockingly smiled at him.

"Because you won't be leaving here alive." Lucas disclosed.

Ramirez chuckled before spreading his arms wide open,

"I don't know how you did it, taking care of those men I sent you, but I can tell you this; the only one who would be leaving here alive is me."

A sword appeared in Ramirez's two hands, one blue and the other red. They both glistened under the miniscule sunlight that made its way down through the canopy of trees. The two weapons were Grade 3 vestiges that had previously appeared in the Silver Fig Trade Convention vestige rankings for the West Wing district. In other words, they were top class vestiges.

Together with his own strength which stood at the fifth level of the Apertures Opening stage, Ramirez was easily a terrifying opponent for any average freelancer. Even geniuses such as the two vice guild leaders of the Autumn's Gate guild had to be on their toes against him, as any slight flaw could cost them their lives in combat.

Ramirez was fully aware of his strength, hence very confident in this battle. No matter what Lucas' unique abilities may be or the mystery behind the death of his men—one of which included a second level stellar practitioner—Ramirez was unbothered. He believed that with his strength alone, Lucas would fall to him this day.

Standing face to face with a ferocious Ramirez emitting a bloodthirsty aura, Lucas didn't say a word, merely tightening his fists.

What he wore was his tour de force of vestige-smithing. It was a vestige created from a set of multiple individual vestiges, each very powerful on their own. Take the peak Grade 3 gauntlets for instance, which could allow Lucas to go toe-to-toe with a second level Apertures Opening stage stellar practitioner. When various vestiges of the same grade as the gauntlets were all assembled into one set, one could imagine how powerful this one set became.

Grade 3? Peak Grade 3? No.

That's right; through combining multiple extremely powerful Grade 3 vestiges, some of which were very close to being Grade 4, Lucas was finally able to cross that bridge that held him back for so long. The Stellar Circuit Battle-Armour in its complete form was without a doubt, a Grade 4 vestige; Lucas' very first in this world.