

## The Crafts 174

### Chapter 174: New Announcement

"But that's not all. It's about time we took advantage of this opportunity to strengthen ourselves." Lucy said.

Lucas nodded, believing she was right.

Since they had managed to kick the opponent down, just letting them go wasn't enough. If care wasn't taken, it would be no different from releasing a tiger back into the wild. As such, the duo had to launch an attack that would get stuck with the companies.

What Lucy had in mind was to secretly acquire the companies involved. This was a normal response in corporate warfare and was very common. If one couldn't easily put the other out of business, why not just acquire them? It was a good thing that the companies affected by the entire event were public companies, which meant that their shares could be acquired through the stock market.

Opening the stock market, Lucas browsed through some of the top stocks, but kept his attention on the fellows who had gone after him under the alliance. The majority of them were victims of Novanio Tech's hidden move, but there happened to be just a few who got away either entirely, or lightly.

Speaking about Novanio Tech's ploy, with a shield like Lucas' Seven Sparks Forge seizing all the attention, very few would consider the possibility that Novanio Tech had modified their stellar processors. This would allow the company to be able to reuse this plot somewhere else.

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With his newfound wealth, Lucas could place bid for the stocks and began to buy them in bulk, taking advantage of the drop in stock price. However, he didn't.

Lucas currently had around one hundred fifty thousand (150000) federal coins with him. Compared to the multimillion FeC value of these companies, Lucas' wallet was like a drop in the ocean. Although this plan was a slow and long term one, which would bore fruition in time, it wasn't worth doing so at the moment.

Instead of purchasing the stocks, Lucas bet against them. This was something Lucy had taught him. Lucas placed a prediction that the stocks would drop even more and bet one hundred thousand federal coins on his prediction. After that, he returned to the peace and quiet of his workstation.

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Three days later...

The financial world was just recovering from the damage caused by a series of announcements a few days ago. Vestige-smith companies were some of the most valuable companies in Baylands city-state, so when the top fifteen experienced a drop in stock price, it affected the entire city-state economy.

One should understand that the reported crimes of the executives weren't just limited to acts like contract theft and so on. There were embezzlement cases, bribery, and even more heinous crimes like rape, sexual assaults, human trafficking ring association, and even three executives were found to be associated with terrorist activities. The crimes were so heavy that the companies got dragged in for harbouring such individuals.

Luckily, the actions were only limited to the individuals themselves, so, some of the companies managed to salvage the entire situation.

Just as everyone was preparing to look past it, the Legacy Crafts dealership came out with an announcement. The store, Seven Sparks Forge, was announcing a new line of vestiges and the Legacy Crafts dealership had gotten a sole distributor contract with them. All the details were to be made in a conference scheduled for the next day.

Naturally, this news set off a storm as one of the involved parties had already trended a few days back.

Seven Sparks Forge was involved in a controversy a few days back, detailing how the store had somehow come into existence without being registered with any official agency. There was also the fact that an alliance of vestige-smith companies called them out for creating a twisted monopoly which would supposedly harm the economy of Baylands city-state.

Coincidentally, some of the companies in the alliance were affected by the event from three days ago. Many people naturally drew conclusions from this significant fact, but with no strong evidence, they could only have their suspicions remain as such.

"Seven Sparks Forge? I thought they were closed down?"

"Yeah, but the owner has cleared all the issues so they reopened two days ago. Well, not all of them."

After the incident where the store was given notice after notice, the Seven Sparks Forge had done the needful and registered with the required commissions of Baylands city-state. However, they had snubbed the EVL and the alliance, which raised some eyebrows. The latter wasn't exactly surprising, but to have ignored the EVL made many feel that whoever ran the store was either proud or very confident in himself.

The EVL might not be an official organisation for vestige-smiths, but it was a recognised contender for the role. As such, many did their best not to offend this organisation.

"Are you going to check it out?"

"Sure, why not?"

Many people were interested in what the Seven Sparks Forge was preparing to bring out during the conference. Apart from the fact that this was most likely the Seven Sparks Forge making a comeback and retaliating against the alliance of companies against them, it was already a well-known fact that the store's standards and quality was a lot higher than other vestige-smiths. Just the Blue Spear and Dark Dagger, which despite being Grade 3 vestiges, were revolutionary and had power rivaling some of the weaker Grade 4 vestiges were enough to display the quality of Seven Sparks Forge products.

Although they were quite pricey, they were known to be worth every single coin.

"Boss, we received a few messages from some other companies. I've already made sure to filter out those from the alliance." Kelvin said to Lucas.

"What do they want?" Lucas asked while feeding Melissa some porridge.

The little girl now looked considerably better and healthier than when Lucas found her. Back then, even though she was already eleven years of age, Melissa appeared like a seven year old due to malnutrition. However, with Lucas now taking care of her and giving her all that she could eat, she was now looking a lot healthier compared to over a month ago. She had even grown a bit in height, which made sense as she was hitting puberty.

"Some of them are interested to know what we have planned for release tomorrow, and are hoping to sign an exclusive distribution contract or even a nonexclusive agreement." Kelvin said.

Having worked in Toman's Workshop with his father during the peak of its popularity, Kelvin was familiar with how corporations went about with their businesses. However, this was the first time he had seen those behemoths of the industry all flooding the mailbox of a small store. What's more, they were all pleading for a contract, offering the most lucrative and beneficial options to the store, just to become a verified supplier.

"Are they dumb? Don't they know we already have Legacy Crafts dealership for that?" Lucas was surprised.

'It can't be that they're damaged their brains or something?'

It was already a well-known information that the Legacy Crafts dealership was the exclusive and sole official distributor of Seven Sparks Forge products, which were now known as SS vestiges.

While other companies could try to purchase the vestiges directly from the store, Lucas didn't sell in bulk to customers and it would cost these companies a lot to have different individuals frequent the store and buy the vestiges. When the costs were finally factored in, it would be impossible for them to resale the vestiges at a price more affordable than the Legacy Crafts dealership.

What's more, if they tried to resell these vestiges in their stores, it would attract a lawsuit from the Legacy Crafts dealership which was the only official distributor for the SS vestiges in Baylands city-state.

"That's the thing, boss. They don't want distribution rights for Baylands city-state, but for other city-states." Kelvin explained.

"Interesting." Lucas smirked.

The distribution rights to other city-states was indeed available for bidding. Novanio Tech had only recently launched the Legacy Crafts dealership and it was a semi-independent company from Novanio Tech. The dealership was to start out in Baylands city-state before slowly expanding using the profits it generated. As such, it couldn't export vestiges to other city-states at the moment.

However, the allure of the SS vestiges was sure to surpass just Baylands city-state. With Legacy Crafts dealership not being able to carry out export activities, it would only be logical to consider other companies for the role.

'These foxes are really good at thinking ahead.'

Lucas smiled.

"Don't respond to them yet. Or better yet, let them know that we would be considering the prospect." Lucas said.

It would be best to let Legacy Crafts dealership know about this and see their reaction first. After all, the two sides were now closer partners, so there had to be a significant level of mutual trust and respect.

"Melissa, how about we go shopping for new clothes tomorrow, just before the conference, okay?" Lucas smiled at her.

"Hmm." Melissa nodded with sparkling eyes.

Just then, Lucas received a message on his communicator.