

The Crafts 189

Chapter 189: Caught In A Web

Lucas calmly sat down and began arranging his thoughts.

First, the Stygian Abyss had clearly planned this scene. They had arranged for their members to use a modified SS vestige during the attack, and planned to purposely get caught by the security camera and satellites active at the time. After browsing through the forums and news networks, Lucas found at least four similar videos, so it wasn't a fluke.

This was probably the Stygian Abyss' retaliation against Lucas for killing Ramirez and interrupting their plans.

Secondly, a malicious party made use of this video evidence to begin attacking Lucas and the store. They didn't care whether it was false or real, and controlled many media networks to report on it, ensuring that all posts made Lucas appear to be a spy.

The most likely suspect was the alliance, but Lucas doubted that. During the short war he had with the alliance, he realised that they didn't have a strong hold on the media, and only controlled a couple of channels. The Legacy Crafts dealership had even managed to get some others to report against them.

However, this incident was reported by over eighty percent (80%) of all media channels, so it was clear that this wasn't the work of the alliance. There was a possibility that they might still be involved, but they weren't the orchestrator of this conspiracy.

Third, the main orchestrator was either of significant influence and power, or was backed by someone or some force that fulfilled those conditions. In other words, Lucas' opponent was more or less one or even more of the top powers of Baylands City. The most likely candidates for this were the top four families.

The top four families didn't just wield massive wealth or a strong hold on the economy. They also possessed real power.

From what Lucas knew, the city lord was decided by the Cabinet, which was a legislative assembly that had some executive powers. However, they were below the city-lord in terms of

true power and authority. Despite that, the Cabinet had the authority to impeach the city-lord, although such has never happened in the past.

The Cabinet was made of sixty (60) representatives, of which twenty (20) of them were voted in to represent the twenty districts. As for the remaining forty (40), they were unequally split amongst the top factions in Baylands city-state. The top four families, in particular, had the largest slots for cabinet seats. The combined number shared by the four families was twenty (20) seats, which was evenly split into five seats for each family. Meanwhile, the remaining twenty (20) slots were hotly contested by more than fifteen factions.

From this, one could see how much influence and power the top four families had; and this was already aside from the insane amount of wealth they possessed.

If it were these families, it wasn't impossible for one of them to influence the majority of the media channels as long as they were willing to bear the cost.

But the issue was, Lucas had never crossed paths with them, besides from the Mertens family's younger generation, Vergil and Laura Mertens. But that was only a greeting, and there wasn't much interaction for hatred to form.

'Greed.' Lucas sighed.

He wasn't dumb, and he could already figure out why one of the top four families was after him. What other reason could it be than the fact that Lucas was in control of a technology that could redefine the vestige-smith industry?

The amount of wealth that could be generated in a year would be astounding.

Just from the twenty pieces each of the Blue Spear and Dark Dagger vestiges —totalling forty vestige— Lucas had sold to the Legacy Crafts dealership, he made almost one million federal coins in revenue. He still had a four-year long contract to supply them ten of each vestige, totalling twenty.

That would mean that in a month, Lucas would make almost half a million federal coins in revenue. In a year, he was making five million, five hundred and twenty thousand (5520000) [1] in revenue. By the end of the four-year contract, Lucas would have made a bit over twenty-two million federal coins in revenue. Even with the system reduction rate of sixty-five percent

(65%), Lucas would still have earned more than seven million and seven hundred thousand (7700000) federal coins.

Such a staggering amount could get him into the list of top one hundred richest in some districts, and the top five thousand in Baylands City; and this was without considering the profits he made from selling the two vestiges on his own, or even the three new vestiges Lucas had released recently.

It was only natural that even a top four family would lust after the cash cow that was Lucas' store.

However, if it were one of the top four families, that erased the possibility that they were working with the Stygian Abyss. Doing so was tantamount to damnation, and no family head would be so stupid. It was more likely that they decided to take advantage of the situation, and the Stygian Abyss had predicted such would happen.

'But I'm not such an easy target.' Lucas' eyes flashed as he tapped the table as he began considering how to respond to the three points.

'Even though the vestige appears to be a Blue Spear, everyone knows that the store only produces blue coloured ones. The fact it appears to be modified could vindicate me. However, they should have figured that out. I'm guessing they would use the fact that each vestige could easily be tracked, then investigate the owners. As long as they can't find the exact ones that appeared on the videos, the suspicion would come back to me, and it would seem as if I sold some vestiges through a secret backdoor.'

Lucas sighed.

Suddenly, his eyes flashed.

'Is that actually one of mine?'

Lucas had originally been thinking that the vestiges used in the videos were bought by the Stygian Abyss through a proxy. If that were the case, an investigation into all the customers who got one would eventually lead to something and Lucas would be found innocent. But if it were that simple, the orchestrator of this incident wouldn't have been so confident as to attack right away.

The event occurred yesterday and it might seem like there wasn't much time, but over twelve hours had gone by. Due to the gravity of the situation, all security agencies were working overtime and diligently. As such, twelve hours was enough for the Baylands City Patrol Corps to do a background search on all the customers that got an SS vestige, and even go through their activities from the previous month until now.

A top four family would be able to get their hands on that information, especially since it was mentioned in the news that some of their seating representatives were murdered yesterday. That would give them more justification to be privy to confidential information.

This meant that the customers were clean. By logic, it would mean that the terrorists got their hands on the vestiges from the Seven Sparks Forge. However, Lucas was confident that such had never happened. There was no transaction carried out in his store discretely.

So, the only explanation was that the SS vestiges used in those videos were all fakes. But then came another question, did the orchestrator of this plot know about this? What if they knew, but didn't care?

For some reason, Lucas believed that they knew, but didn't care. It was his words against theirs, and it was quite obvious who the public would believe.