

The Crafts 196

Chapter 196: The Mertens' Invitation

Upon opening the door, Lucas was confronted by a young teen with black hair. Although the newcomer wasn't quite who he had expected, Lucas had correctly guessed his identity.

"Yo, boss man. Been a while." The famous playboy of the Central Prefecture district, Vergil Mertens, walked into the store with a wide grin on his face.

"You're the one you're family sent?" Lucas raised an eyebrow, surprised by his presence.

The Mertens was the only member of the top four families that had yet to pay Lucas a visit. Seeing as each of the top four visited him once a day, Lucas guessed that the Mertens family's representative would arrive today; and he was right, just that it turned out to be the playboy.

On one hand, Vergil's presence seemed like a disrespectful move, since the other families had sent someone of the older generation with an appropriate position to meet with him.

For instance, the Bergs family had sent their advisor and aide for external affairs, Calhner Bergs. The Dufour family had sent the family head's youngest step-brother, who was the sixth in-line to the title in that generation. The Ross family had also sent someone of an appropriate identity to meet with Lucas.

However, while the Mertens family's decision might seem disrespectful, it actually wasn't. Although Vergil was known to have a bad track record and name on the streets, he was also the family's second-most talented figure of the younger generation. At the same time, he was placed on a pedestal and identified as the one to help the family step into the vestige-smith industry.

Finally, he was the next in-line for the title of family head, since his father was the current family head.

All this added together made Vergil to be of a higher rank than the previous visitors Lucas had met with.

"Hey, don't be like that. The young master is here, and this is how you greet me?" Vergil smirked.

He was an easygoing person who didn't have the same inherent pride as Maximillus Oder. To Vergil, everyone was the same, whether human or hyuman. In their two encounters, even as strangers, Vergil had treated Lucas better than the others.

"So, what's the special visit for? Here to relay your proposals?" Lucas glanced at Vergil with a questioning look.

"Nah. Pressuring innocent people isn't my thing." Vergil waved him off.

"I'm here to send you an invitation. It's from my father. He wishes to meet with you at the family house this evening."

Vergil immediately took out an envelope and handed it to Lucas.

Lucas was immediately stunned.

It seemed like the Mertens family worked differently from others. If it was a simple invitation, they could have sent it to him through his contact details; for the Mertens family, it shouldn't be difficult to get that. Even if they wanted to hand Lucas a physical invite as a form of respect, they could simply have someone else do so rather than Vergil. To use the family's successor as a deliveryman, it could only mean that the Mertens family wanted to display their sincerity in cooperating.

But then again, why invite Lucas to the family house for that?

The question couldn't help but make Lucas wonder.

"What makes you guys think I would show up?" Lucas stared at Vergil as he released a bit of his aura.

Although Vergil was at the second level of the Apertures Opening stage, he was still quite young and didn't have as much battle experience as Lucas did. All he had to do was release an appropriate amount of ferocity and bloodlust, and Lucas could mess with Vergil's psyche.

"You said previously that you don't like pressuring the innocent. Then you should know my situation, as well as the truth. Now I wonder, does your family have a hand in this? If they do, doesn't that contradict your earlier statement?"

Each question struck Vergil directly, making him hesitate how to answer. Together with the aura Lucas released, he began shuddering.

"...I understand your concerns." Vergil said as he gritted his teeth, while withstanding the aura.

"But believe me when I say this; my family has no hand in this."

Lucas stared at him for a second more, before recalling his aura and accepting the envelope.

"Evening, huh? I guess I'll try to make it."

Vergil, who was recovering from the shock he had just received, smiled bitterly at Lucas' words.

Lucas was the only one he knew who would respond in such a way to an invitation from the Mertens family head. Even the current city lord, Noah Bergs, would treat the invitation seriously.

This wasn't to say that the city lord was scared of the Mertens family head, but an invitation from such a figure could only be for a serious matter.

"Alright." Vergil sighed before leaving the store.

Why would he want to remain after that horrendous experience that almost made him wet his pants?

One should know that the Mertens family ran a company in the desolate beasts parts industry. At the same time, they also controlled their own private force; a freelancer guild that was very popular in Baylands city-state.

Due to the nature of the Mertens family's business, family members —especially of the direct line— would participate in a one year service at the freelancer guild once they turned seventeen (17). During the service, they didn't just do physical exercises and sit back in the freelancer base;

rather, they also participated in desolate beast hunts. They were even made to take down a desolate beast in groups with other seventeen year olds from the family.

This helped the Mertens family build a sense of cooperation as well as survival and battle skills from a suitable age.

Despite having completed his service a few months ago, and still fresh out of the Wastelands, Vergil had been suppressed by Lucas' aura. Naturally, this evoked a sense of fear and respect towards Lucas, whom he previously once thought to be a weak human talented in blacksmithing.

'That guy is one scary hell of a being.' Vergil breathed out and calmed himself after he had left the store.

'Those guys might one day regret what they did.'