

The Crafts 20

Chapter 20 : Vestiges

After separating from the elderly man and the young girl, Lucas began to check some other stores. His experience in the clothing store didn't dampen his desire to explore the other stores. This trip was vital to the success of his store, after all.

In the next few hours, Lucas checked out some other clothing stores, jewellery stores, and a blacksmith shop. Unlike his experience in the first store, Lucas didn't encounter any 'special treatment ' again.

Although some of the customers and staff were surprised that there was a human, they eventually moved on from the shock; after all, humans were almost no different from hyumans based on their external appearance alone.

In fact, the only notable external difference was the fact that hyumans were born naturally with coloured hair and eyes, unlike humans that were limited to brown, blonde, red and black for hair, and blue, amber, brown, black and, very rarely, grey, for eyes.

After checking out a few stores, Lucas finally reached his last stop for the day. It was a Vestige store.

According to what he learnt during his seclusion period indoors, vestiges were special products that had stellar energy within them; this world's equivalent of magic weapons. The advantage of having mystical energy within an object was that they would become much stronger, durable, and powerful than their regular counterparts.

Most vestiges were weapons or armours as the main reason vestiges were made was to combat alien species who could utilise stellar energy.

The production of vestiges was even rumoured to have come about before the first generation of hyumans, after all, humans were still exploring their star region but they faced threats from other alien species. Regular firearms and weapons couldn't compete with the enemy, so they had to make improvements and that was how vestiges came to be.

Stellar matrices, which was the core of vestiges, were created during this period as well.

Blacksmiths dealt with regular items but the smiths that crafted or created vestiges were usually called Vestige-smiths. The title wasn't just for those who made weapons, but those who made spaceships, jewellery and any object that contained stellar energy.

Considering that the system intended for Lucas to be the Crafts-God, there was no doubt that its intention was for him to be a vestige-smith. As such, Lucas had to be familiar with the standards of this world.

Just as Lucas stepped into the store and glanced around, he noticed a familiar figure browsing the items in the store. It was the female cop he met when he first came into this world; the lady that had intervened when Lucas first clashed with the kidnappers.

Despite seeing her however, Lucas made no attempt to meet her nor greet her. Both parties were strangers, and based on her behaviour back then, Lucas knew that trying to be friendly with her might backfire at him. For that reason, it was best that he stayed in his lane.

Lucas glanced around and noticed that apart from cold weapons like swords, axes, and the likes, there were surprisingly hot weapons too. Lucas saw an assault rifle on display, but unlike the ones from Earth, this has some strange carvings and groove marks on the barrel and other parts of the body. Even the cartridge[1] that was kept beside it wasn't spared.

There were a few other rifles in this section with differing designs.

Both the weapons and the cartridges, especially the latter, were made of special metals and had either runes or stellar matrices on them. One of the guns by the side was marked with stellar matrices while its corresponding cartridges were carved with runes.

There weren't just guns though, as other popular hot weapons like grenade launchers, RPGs and so on were on display.

Lucas was surprised to see hot weapons here but not so much. This was a technological world so it was understandable. In fact, despite seeing the designs and appearance, Lucas had a feeling that the principle of operation for these weapons were probably different from those on Earth. In other words, while it looked like an RPG, it might be a laser-type weapon.

"Hey system, what's going on?" Lucas asked mentally.

The system understood his question and replied, "As host levels up the system, new blueprints would be available. For more information, please open the store for operation."

Lucas nodded as it made sense. If he were just to get access to everything right now, he would have almost no need for the system. At the same time, some of them might be too complex for him at the moment, and being a training system, it wouldn't make sense for the system to grant him access to these blueprints right now.

Despite being a grandmaster blacksmith in his last life, Lucas wasn't so self-invested or prideful to think that he could make anything and everything in this world right away. Just this past week of working on the blueprints from the system already widened his perspective and taught him a lot.

After looking around a bit, Lucas prepared to leave. He had tried purchasing one of the vestiges but found out that he needed to have either a freelancer license, a permit or a recommendation from a registered freelancer. This wasn't like a certain country in his past life on Earth where one could walk into a store and easily get a rifle as long as they were above 18 years of age.

There was a strict system here that prevented vestiges from easily getting into the hands of an average individual.

The difficulty of purchase aside, Lucas had already checked out the cold weapon-type vestiges and made some mental comparisons with his own creations as well as the vestige he took from the corpse of the kidnappers. This comparison made him more confident in his skills, with the only problem being his lack of knowledge on stellar matrices and alien runes.

Although he could find some sort of replaceable information on the KSSI (the solar system intranet), it couldn't compare to that of reputed vestige-smiths or companies. One could learn the meaning of certain runes and stellar matrices online, but the tutorial on inscribing them was different.

Because runes and stellar matrices were closely related to creating vestiges, they were classified information of sorts and confidential to individual vestige-smiths and companies. Even getting access to the basic and standard tutorials required one to be influential of sorts, or have passed certain exams by the city-state government.

However, Lucas wasn't worried. He had done a few experiments and found out that the magic runes from his first life worked out just fine here too, after a few changes. Being the only one familiar

with such runes would make his products unique, and this was intended to be one of his selling points; a branding strategy, if you will.

Just as he turned around to leave, Lucas overheard a conversation from a couple. They seemed to be lamenting about the absence of a certain item they wanted. As he caught sight of this, a thought crossed Lucas' mind and slowly solidified into a plan.

A man and a woman left the vestige store and began to walk away into the distance, however, after going a few metres, they stopped and turned around. Behind them was a young man who looked to be between 21-23 years of age. Despite being so young, his eyes gave off a light of wisdom and calmness, something that an average young adult shouldn't have so soon.

"Who might you be, and why are you following us?" The man asked.

Lucas, who had been following behind the couple, calmly replied with a smile.

"I mean you no harm. In fact, I can't harm you. As you can see, I am a human." Lucas answered.

"As for why I was following you, I overheard your conversation in the store. Something about looking for a spear at the third grade."

The couple visibly relaxed after Lucas' reply, but they still kept their guards up, but not by much. It looked like the line 'I am human' worked a lot to Lucas' advantage.

"And what about it?" The man asked with a plain look.

"I happen to know a friend who's a vestige-smith. I went over to his place just the other day and saw a really nice spear. It gave off an intimidating vibe, and looked quite powerful, too. I could hook you up if you are interested."

Saying this, Lucas opened his communicator and projected an image right away, not giving the duo any time to react.

The couple glanced at the image and were quite surprised by it. The spear in the image was well made from an aesthetic viewpoint. Even without seeing the real deal in front of them, it looked like

a marvelous work by a blacksmith. However, what they wanted wasn't regular metal work but a vestige.

One couldn't judge the value of a vestige by mere images, so there was no telling whether the spear was as powerful as it looked. Otherwise, it might as well just be a ceremonial weapon[2].

The man frowned and prepared to reject, but the lady replied just then.

"Can we have a look too?"

"Well, not now. You see, he just moved into town and plans to open his store tomorrow. At the moment, none of his works are for sale until then." Lucas sighed.

The woman stared at him for a while, before asking for the address of the store to which Lucas gave her. Right after that, the duo left.

As for why Lucas lied and claimed the store was ran by a friend, it was simple. The duo were much stronger than him and having seen the value of a vestige in the previous store as well as knowing the importance of a vestige-smith, Lucas didn't plan on telling them lest they kidnapped him and forced him to hand over his weapons as well as his secrets.

Who knows, they might even lock him up in a secluded location and force him to make vestiges.

This wasn't impossible as human trafficking was a thing even with the government's attempts at stopping it. As for whether those attempts are genuine or not, it wasn't Lucas' place to say.

Lucas was currently weak, so he didn't intend on drawing attention on himself at the moment. Unless he was in the store, he was as weak as a chicken in the face of any freelancer out there. Nonetheless, even with the risk, Lucas still decided to give it a shot and invite them over for his launch the next day.