

## The Crafts 211

### Chapter 211: Russell Meets The City Lord

No matter how one looked at it, barging at Jonathan with the intent to take him down was a dumb move especially for a peak Body Strengthening stage human. After all, Jonathan Oakval was a peak fifth stage stellar practitioner; forget about winning, even landing a punch was impossible for a Body Strengthening stage practitioner. However, Lucas wasn't an idiot or one who would let his emotions get the best of him.

Although two days ago, he had retaliated against the Baylands City Patrol Corps because of Melissa, he had chosen his opponents carefully and had already made up a plan to escape. Unfortunately, the system had interfered, which Lucas had yet to find out why.

The reason for his attack on Jonathan wasn't to get a hit in, but rather, to leave a mark on him. While Jonathan was ahead of Lucas in terms of stellar refinement, when it came to the usage of this mystical energy, Jonathan could not compare. Lucas had confirmed it that night and was confident his plan would pull off.

As for the details of Lucas' plan? It was simple; to set a tracking mark on Jonathan. The tracking mark was a unique one that could help Lucas have an idea of the layout of the place. It was very sensitive to changes in direction, and by monitoring all of Jonathan's turns and footsteps, Lucas could visualise a portion of the map of the area.

The tracking mark was powered by mystical energy, which meant that Lucas could use either his blood energy or soul energy for it. For this, Lucas had chosen soul energy, because it would be less likely to be discovered by an inexperienced fellow such as Jonathan. Although Blood energy would be difficult for the latter to sense, chances were that Jonathan might notice something off. After all, he had experience in bloody situations. The Soul Dismantling Technique, one of the four forbidden techniques [1], was what Lucas had used to generate soul from a portion of his soul.

While pretending to have been knocked out, Lucas sensed the movement of the tracking spell and was able to visualise the correct path in the area. This would become necessary when he needed to escape.

At the same time he was doing so, Lucas suddenly called out to the system.

"System, explain to me why you did what you did."

On the night of his arrest, Lucas had resorted to using the gauntlets of the Steller Circuit Battle-Armour to resist his opponents, but that was not enough. He then decided to use a fourth level Apertures Opening stage Bronze Grade card, but the system had blocked that action without any explanation.

"System does not understand what the host means." The system's static voice sounded.

"Are you playing around with me? You obstructed me when I was about to use a Bronze card two nights ago." Lucas frowned.

"System has no intention of messing around with the host. There is no information in the system's database matching the host's description. Also, by the basic rules, it is impossible for the system to interfere directly with the host's actions as that would be categorised as unfair. The only exceptions are with system-generated missions."

Lucas became even more confused.

For one, he knew that the system wasn't an entity to make jokes on serious affairs. It also wouldn't lie to him. The reply from the system sounded a lot like what the system would do, since in every occasion he had faced death, the system had just watched. At best it would comment on how it would find a replacement for the Crafts-god title once he was dead, but it had never directly intervened in Lucas' matters.

"Sure." Lucas decided to let the matter go.

Although it was strange, with the system denying the incident, there was nothing Lucas could do. The only thing he could think of was to make preparations just in case the same event repeated itself.

For the moment, Lucas' focus was on his situation. By tracking Jonathan's actions, he could plausibly find the exit of this building. Lucas was confident that Jonathan won't be here all day long. The latter would eventually go far, and by tracking his movements, Lucas could estimate the right direction to leave.

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At the centre of the Central Prefecture district was a large complex that spanned the size of two football fields [2]. The building was a unique work of architecture, seemingly consisting of three different buildings connected together to form a single complex. This was the famous City Lord's Office, which also had the name, the City Lord Manor.

When the original Baylands City was first founded, the then city lord operated from a two storey building that appeared like a manor and was called the City Lord Manor. Even after the original city had expanded to become a city-state and the building was renovated to become even larger, the name was still retained.

The City Lord Manor was the administrative centre of Baylands city-state and the concentration of power, somewhat similar to the presidential houses on Earth. The building by the left side was where the cabinet gathered to hold meetings. In present day Earth, it was the same as a diet building, a parliamentary office, Congress or senate building.

The building by the right was the city-state's supreme court, where all the highest ranked officials of the judiciary perform their duties.

As for the building at the centre, it was made from the original City Lord manor. The manor was expanded from a two storey building into a five storey building, and at the top floor was the city lord's residential area. Right below was the administrative area, where the city lord performed his duties.

The floors below serve as the administrative area of the City Lord manor. Here, citizens could file complaints about the economy or governance, meet with top government officials, file taxes, and so on.

Today, the City Lord Manor covertly hosted a very influential and powerful figure.

"To what do I owe this wonderful visit, Sir Russell. I hope it's not something problematic." The city lord and most powerful man in Baylands city-state, Noah Bergs, smiled at the man who sat before him.

The guest was a famous individual and someone Lucas had recently gotten acquainted with; the head of the Mertens family, Russell Mertens.

"You jest, your excellency. Nothing much. I just needed to confirm something." Russell calmly said as he picked up the cup of tea before him.

Tea was Russell's favourite drink, and as one of his close friends, Noah knew this and made the latter comfortable.

"And what might that be?" Noah raised an eyebrow.

"Two nights ago, the BCPC's Central Prefecture district department invaded my compound. I was wondering whether I'm guilty of any crime that warranted such humiliation." Russell said.

"Oh? I'll do well to question the director about his motive. I am very well aware of the unwritten rule and privileges granted to the top four families, and I don't plan on breaking those rules during my tenure." Noah replied.

There was nothing wrong with what he had said, but for some reason, Russell felt it was strange.

Although Noah Bergs was the city lord, it didn't mean that he would know every single activity that went on in the city. There was so much to organise, which was why every administrative department has its supervisor. The Baylands City Patrol Corps was under the commissioner of police and the chief of police. Whenever a director needed to carry out an operation, they only needed to report to any of them, and not the city lord. So it made sense that Noah was unaware of this.

However, the operation was a high profile one and targeted a top four family. At the same time, it took place within Baylands City, what's more, in the Central Prefecture district; the home of the city lord. It was quite difficult to believe that the city lord was unaware of this.

Seemingly having read Russell's thoughts, Noah added,

"Now that I think about it, I think I heard about this incident earlier. Nolma had reported that he was about to carry out an operation to arrest a terrorist spy to Munroe, but he failed to specify when and where. It seems like he was planning this in secret." Noah frowned as his aura turned cold.

Nolma was the name of the director of the BCPC's branch in the Central Prefecture district, whereas Munroe Bergs was the commissioner of police. Although he was a member of the Bergs family, he operated under Noah's faction.

"I hope your excellency could help me get an explanation from him." Russell bowed.

Even though he was one of the main figures that had helped install Noah as the city lord, the latter was not only stronger than him, but he held more power. As such, it was only right to be respectful towards him no matter what the relationship between them was.

"Don't worry about it. I can never forget what you've done for me. I'll make sure to get to the bottom of this. It seems like I've been letting them operate too freely." Noah said with a cold voice.

It was clear that he was incensed by the matter, after all, a subordinate had orchestrated such a high-risk operation without properly informing him or the commissioner. No ruler would tolerate such an insult.

"Thank you, your excellency." Russell stood up and bowed with a smile.

"Since the matter is settled, I'll be taking my leave."

"What's the rush? It's been a while since we've talked like this." Noah said.

"While that is true, your excellency is surely busy with running the city, and I myself have to handle the effects of the incident. Please do understand." Russell apologetically replied.

"No problem. You may go."

"Thank you, your excellency."

Russell then left the office.

After a short while, a silhouette appeared behind Noah from his shadow.

"It seems like, he's on to us." The shadowy silhouette said.

"I would be disappointed if he wasn't." Noah smiled.

"However, it doesn't matter. Proceed as planned."