

The Crafts 222

Chapter 222: Ronny's Request 2

Lucas arrived back at the shop's main area where he met with Ronny and his teammates. Previously, just before he left, Lucas had displayed the price rates for services and products in the Heavenly Demonic Shop for the group after one of them had requested for it. As he returned from the work-station, Lucas could clearly sense that there was a different air amongst the group members.

"This much for a custom Grade 3 vestige? I might as well rob a bank."

Lucas overheard the comments from the men, but he remained unbothered by them as he arrived at the counter.

"I'm done. Here's the evaluation."

Lucas tapped on the screen of the display, thereby transferring data from his communicator into the display. It was a document which contained the summarised details and functions of the ring. Lucas had drafted the document on his way back up and had an AI edit and format it. All of that took a few seconds and by the time he had arrived at the counter, the document was ready.

Ronny glanced at the display and browsed the information on it.

At first, he had no reaction to the document. But as he kept on reading, Ronny's expression changed from a plain face to one of interest, curiosity, confusion and finally, astonishment.

The document was quite detailed and it explained the functions of the ring as well as the nature of the materials used. The only thing missing was the name of the materials as well as the dating of the artefact's creation and its history. But Ronny was already quite satisfied with this, after all, no one else had given him such a detailed writeup.

What was left was to confirm the veracity of this information.

To do so, it wasn't exactly complicated. All Ronny had to do was ask Lucas to restore the ring back to its original form. However, this came with a huge risk.

Vestige-smithing was an occupation born from the combination of three independent occupations: engineering, blacksmithing and inscription techniques. Every one of these occupations required an immense level of skill, talent, experience and knowledge for one to succeed in them. With vestige-smithing being a combination of the three, the degree of difficulty was even higher.

This was pronounced both when creating, upgrading, or even restoring a vestige or artefact.

If the wrong inscription and restoration methods were used on a vestige or artefact, not only would it not function any longer, but the existing inscriptions on it might be destroyed. It would essentially become a spoiled product that could only be sold for scraps. One had to use the appropriate method and inscriptions when fixing a vestige, otherwise they could risk damaging it. After all, vestiges were products of complex calculations, high manufacturing precision and a high degree of skill.

Usually, when restoring or upgrading a vestige, when it came to the inscriptions, the vestige-smith had the option to either layer new inscriptions, erase the existing ones, or fix the inscriptions.

Layering was a technique that required the vestige-smith to add in a new set of inscriptions without interfering with the existing ones. This was immensely difficult with only Tier 1 peak Masters or Grandmasters capable of pulling it off.

As for working on the origin inscriptions, this was the true method used for restoring artefacts, however, not anyone could do it. It was very difficult as not only did it require a high degree of skill to pull off, but also the relevant knowledge about the existing inscriptions.

Hence, the most common option used by vestige-smiths for upgrading or restoring was to erase the previous inscriptions. Even Lucas had used the erasing method back in Baylands City whenever he wanted to upgrade a vestige, albeit because it was the only method he could use at the moment.

With the previous vestige-smiths he had encountered, Ronny didn't take the risk of letting them restore the ring since their appraisals were lacking. This implied that they knew too little about the artefact's manufacturing method, so they couldn't use the second method and would have to resort to erasing the original inscriptions.

However, once that was erased, not only would the value of the ring drop, but there was no guarantee that the new inscriptions could perform the same function as the old ones since the vestige-smiths didn't understand it completely.

Because of that, even though there were six vestige-smiths that had successfully appraisee the ring to be an artefact, Ronny didn't have them attempt to restore it.

However, Lucas' appraisal report tempted him to give it a try. Nonetheless, the risks were too much.

As if sensing his hesitation, Lucas spoke up,

"I can restore the artefact, but it would cost you."

"You can?" Ronny was surprised.

"Indeed. I learned from my master." Lucas responded.

The excuse of a master was once again used, as Lucas felt he needed a believable explanation to be able to use vestige-smithing techniques in public.

In Belfargos city-state, there was no lack of stores with human employees. Some humans had even worked under Tier 1 Grandmaster vestige-smiths and successfully breached the impassable boundary, becoming Tier 1 Apprentice vestige-smiths.

A Tier 1 Apprentice vestige-smith could make vestiges below the Apertures Opening stage and attempt creating a Grade 1 vestige.

With Belfargos city-state being accepting of humans, it was inevitable that some of the stellar refinement methods used in Digress city-state had been smuggled here. Hence, humans could possess stellar energy, albeit only until the second level. Any more than that and their body would explode. The true secrets to going beyond that remained in Digress city-state.

"How about your master, can't he help me instead?" Ronny asked.

Although Lucas said he could fix it, Ronny felt more confident giving the job to Lucas' 'master'. After all, chances were that the mysterious figure was a Tier 1 Grandmaster, or at the very least a Tier 1 peak Master. Someone at that level could make Grade 5 or peak Grade 4 vestiges, and had an abundance of experience and knowledge. Chances were they could aid him.

Previously, Ronny had avoided stores with such figures since the cost would be unimaginable, but the Heavenly Demonic Shop was new and the prices of the services were cheaper than other stores; a sharp contrast to its vestige prices.

Since the appraisal only cost twenty federal coins, Ronny felt the artefact would not be too costly to restore.

"I can't. He's away on a trip and I don't know when he would be back." Lucas nonchalantly replied before returning to his meal.

While it was true that he ran the store, from the very beginning, Lucas wasn't too interested in doing this job. If it wasn't for the system, he would have shut down long ago.

"Ronny..." Ando glanced at him.

He knew how desperate Ronny was over this ring. The others in their circle didn't get it, but Ando did.

Pioneers earned a lot, but they also spent a lot more. In Ronny's case, he was currently in serious debt and needed to find a way to pay before the deadline. That was why he began exploring relics. Although hunting desolate beasts would pay, the difficulty and dangers involved was very high. On the contrary, exploring relics was a mix of occasional dangers and safety. The reward could even be as high, if not higher, than a level four desolate beast corpse's value.

Ronny had found this ring in a unique relic that was said to be from a certain era. Many valuable artefacts had come from that relic, although there were duds as well. However, this didn't dampen Ronny's hope that this ring was definitely valuable.

After hesitating for a while, Ronny took a deep breath.

"How much will it cost?"

Lucas raised one finger as his mouth was currently munching on a piece of meat.

"Ten federal coins?"

Lucas gave Ronny a look of disgust and shook his head.

"One hundred?" Ronny asked again, slightly embarrassed for his earlier guess.

Lucas still shook his head.

"...one thousand federal coins?" Ronny widened his eyes.

Lucas nodded at the price.

"Ro-" Ronny suddenly held himself back.

The price of one thousand federal coins might seem high, but it necessarily wasn't. At the same time, the price for restoring an artefact depended on the difficulty. Since the price was at one thousand federal coins, it was quite possible that the artefact would cost more than that. However, there were also some duds that were difficult to restore.

Once again, Ronny was faced with a gamble.

"Here." Ronny fished out his credit card once again.

Lucas passed it to Melissa who was previously showing the other guests some of the vestiges on the screen. It seemed like she had gotten better with talking to people which made Lucas feel glad.

After wiping his mouth clean, Lucas told Ronny,

"Three hours."

Then turned to leave with the ring.

"Hey, hold up." Ronny called out to him.

"What would happen if you fail?"

One thousand federal coins was not a small money to him, as it already exceeded what he had spent on previous appraisals. As such, Ronny wouldn't tolerate a failure in the restoration so easily.

"Like I said before, failures and errors don't exist here."