

The Crafts 249

Chapter 249: Aura Breaking Stele 2

The East Brafftford relics was one of the most dangerous relics in Trundel City's surrounding area. But at the same time, it was one of the major tourist attractions of the city, because of the Aura-Breaking Stele.

The stele was termed the Aura-breaking Stele, because according to researchers who had studied it, the stele possessed the ability to negate and suppress aura. This was quite confusing since a name like 'Aura-suppressing' stele would have been appropriate. However, there were some archeological records and remains of the Sunil civilisation that spoke about their aura-breaking pillars, which could suppress aura, destroy barriers and even create them.

Considering the stele functioned a role in the relics similar to those of the aura-breaking pillars mentioned in the Sunil records, it was given the name Aura-breaking Stele.

Because of the hidden risks that relics possessed, entry into them was free. This was to draw freelancers and pioneers to help explore them and quell the risk within.

However, the region where the Aura-breaking stele was located was different.

Not only did the stele possess a ton of value to the city, but it was also an important cornerstone of the relics and couldn't be excavated. As such, there was a need to watch over it and protect it. The path towards the stele had been cleared out by the city's military, and a patrol team was kept there to secure the stele from freelancers and pioneers who might get too greedy.

However, doing this meant that there would be an increase in the city's budget. Although it wasn't something the city government couldn't handle, they pursued a resourceful system in their practice. Together with the fact that there existed a faction in favour of destroying the relics, it wouldn't be easy to approve a budget increase just to protect the stele.

Hence, a brilliant idea was thought up. Anyone who wanted to go to the safe region and view the stele would have to pay an entrance fee. This fee would then be used to pay for the resources and manpower needed to protect the stele. If it wasn't enough, it could be supplemented by the city as long as the excess was below forty percent.

After the guide brought Lucas to the region, he left as there was security in front and he would have to pay an entrance fee to go further in.

Fifty federal coins might have seemed like an expensive charge, but life in Belfargos city-state was costlier than other city-states. Every piece of land was valuable, and in turn, affected other prices.

This was because Belfargos city-state didn't occupy the entire Bernin continent but only a small part of it. The remaining land was occupied by desolate beasts. As a result, there was limited land to develop and use for agriculture.

Although other continents had around 2-3 city-states sharing the land, due to the proximity of the city-states, they could engage in trade using their various resources; thereby solving food shortage with each other. At the same time, they didn't have as many desolate beast domains as the Bernin continent did. In the case of the Bernin continent, the closest continent to it was an ocean away, with a distance spanning thousands of kilometres.

Also, the Belfargos city-state was the centre of the planet and the place with the highest quantity and quality of vestige-smiths. This naturally increased the population as many factions and individuals wanted to be based here. The population increase puts a burden on the existing fixed resources, leading to a rise in price.

After paying the guide, Lucas walked towards the entrance.

The East Braftford relics wasn't some underground relics on anything, but was aboveground. However, a strange barrier shielded the entire relics preventing drones from getting a good view. The region with the Aura-breaking stele refurbished by the city government.

A small fence was built around the area with a gate in front. By the gate, a few soldiers stood guard armed with gun-type vestiges. Two of them attended to the crowd lined up with a special type of machine in their hands. The devices not only helped with payment but also recorded the data of every tourist who came to the site for security reasons.

Due to the length of the queue, it took around an hour before Lucas' turn came to pay for the entrance ticket. Once in front of one of the two soldiers, he scanned his palm over the device and was allowed to go in. Although he had expected it, the entrance fee was quite pricey; thirty federal coins. But since he was already here, Lucas didn't dwell on it.

'I need to raise prices of services.' Lucas thought as he walked past the security checkpoint.

On the other side, a large stele that reached at least twenty metres (65.6 feet) in height appeared before Lucas. That was the same height as a four storey- building. The width roughly measured around seven metres (23 feet), giving such an overwhelming sight. It was unimaginable to think that the entire surface of such a large structure was hand-filled with inscriptions roughly the same size as a fingernail.

There were hundreds of thousands of such tiny inscriptions which was why the Aura-breaking stele was a very important artefact for one to comprehend the ancient inscription of the Sunil civilisation. Even though he had yet to reach it, Lucas was confident that if he went through the entire stele, he would fulfill the requirements for the mission given to him by the system.

The problem however, was doing just that.

Even with the advantage of being able to partially understand magi runes, it would take Lucas at least 2-3 days to cover the entire steele. This was because both the front and back were filled with these inscriptions. The staggering height of twenty metres also presented a challenge since it would be difficult to clearly see the tiny inscriptions at the top.

Lucas could depend on his sharp senses to do so, but it would consume a lot of his mental energy, making this a very tiring endeavour. Consuming mental energy while both trying to read the inscriptions and decipher them would result in Lucas not being able to spend much time on the job as he would tire out faster. Adding this in mind, it would extend the duration he would need to complete the stele by at least one day.

'I just need to learn enough to complete the mission, not the stele.' Lucas comforted himself before looking around.

At the entrance, there was a long queue but the inside was more packed. A rough estimate would put the number of people present to be somewhere between four to five hundred people. Such a crowd shouldn't really be termed as a lot, but the space was small and limited. As such, they were almost packed together here.

Some of them were tourists who posed close to the stele and took pictures, while others were historians, researchers or vestige-smiths who marveled at the stone and tried to decipher what they could. Differentiating between the two was quite easy since their gazes and treatment towards the stele differed largely.

To the tourists, they were only somewhat impressed by it, particularly because of its size and uniqueness; especially the mysterious aura all around it.

However, to the erudite scholars and researchers, their gaze towards the stele was one of adulation, deep interest, curiosity, and even idolization. To this group of people, even though the Aura-breaking stele was from a civilisation far behind theirs, there were some remarkable features and technology from the Sunil civilisation that even surpassed those on Erete.

It was undeniable that the Aura-breaking stele held more value to the second group than the first. Even the city government knew this and were aware of the value that the comprehension of the unknown runes would bring to them. Hence, they slashed the entrance fee by fifty percent for these individuals.

If Lucas had an official identification document for being a vestige-smith, he would have gone in while paying only fifteen federal coins. However, he didn't have a membership or licence from the Eretean Vestige-smith League, especially since he was blacklisted back in the Baylands City branch, so Lucas could only pay the regular fee.

Ignoring the crowd, Lucas turned his attention to the purpose of his visit; the towering stele.

The grey Aura-breaking stele stood tall that even with the crowd ahead, Lucas could still get a good glance at it. However, the distance between him and the stele was at least thirty metres, making it somewhat difficult for Lucas to be able to study the runes. But this was only just a little bit of difficulty.

Without wasting any time, Lucas found a spot by the side as he couldn't waste another hour on a queue. Unbeknownst to him though, Laura and Vergil were also present within the crowd. However, because of their identities, as well as that of those in the group, they were given better treatment and managed to skip the long queue to appear within the viewing area of the stele—a space at least five metres away from the stele.