

The Crafts 259

Chapter 259: Lucas Versus The Drudnid

Facing off against a third level Apertures Opening stage drudnid that was roughly the same as a fourth level stellar practitioner, it looked like Lucas was at a disadvantage. However, the reality wasn't so. He only suffered a loss because he didn't react in time.

Even without stellar energy, Lucas was able to operate the Stellar Circuit Battle-Armour to be able to simulate a fourth level stellar practitioner's strength. This was quite poor considering that the SCB was a Grade 4 vestige and should be capable of simulating at least a sixth level stellar practitioner, but nothing could be done about it.

At the moment, the complete Stellar Circuit Battle-Armour had been summoned and Lucas was in battle mode. But due to the earlier attacks by the drudnid, he was currently injured and had to be cautious.

Right now, both parties were at the same level of power, so the deciding factor would be their experience and skill. It was Lucas—who had at least five hundred years of experience in a survival-of-the-fittest world—versus the drudnid which was an inhuman creation made for the sole existence of war.

Fight.

Whoosh

The drudnid abruptly charged at Lucas after seeing the latter withstand its attack. Its green eyes flashed brilliantly for a second as it appeared before Lucas in the time it took to complete one breathing cycle [1].

Upon closing in, the drudnid swung its weapon at Lucas, bringing with it a dreadful air of death.

Lucas reacted quickly, not wanting to take another blow again. With the boost from the battle armour, he tilted his body to the side, effectively dodging the attack. But he was met by the drudnid's free hand that had formed a fist and struck towards him.

'Shield.'

Lucas placed his left arm in front of him.

Bang

The fist crashed into a blue stellar shield that had been projected at the last second, standing in between it and Lucas arm.

Not one to sit around and get beaten all day, Lucas immediately faced his right arm at the drudnid.

An ocean-blue ray shot straight from a circle in the centre of his right palm, hitting the drudnid that was at point blank range.

Boom

The drudnid was sent flying twelve metres away before it crashed heavily to the floor, cracking the tiles that were highly resistant to shock. That was to show how much power was inside that beam of light.

Even after the attack, Lucas didn't let his guard down. From what Sunil civilisation researchers and pioneers had found out, the metals used to create drudnids were incredibly tough and hard. The degree of hardness depended on the quality of the drudnid. Even Grade 3 vestiges would have a hard time slashing through a drudnid with third level Apertures Opening stage strength.

Although the Stellar Circuit Battle-Armour was a Grade 4 vestige, it only achieved this through a unique method of combining various Grade 3 vestiges to create a qualitative change. In essence, it wasn't truly a Grade 4 vestige and was lacking in some areas compared to the real deal.

As expected, the drudnid stood up from the attack, as a purple glow flashed across its body. The glow came from the fixed mysterious patterns on its body.

Looking closely at them, Lucas realised that those weren't magi runes, but an entirely different system of inscription. Due to the situation at hand, he didn't have the liberty to study these inscriptions and decided to keep it at the back of his mind.

The purple glow lasted for three seconds while the drudnid made no moves. During this period, Lucas was tempted to attack and interfere with whatever it was doing. However, he could see that the creature had no openings. It was very likely that the second he made an attack, he might be forced into defence. What's more, this moment of respite was equally helpful to him as he could use it to recover from the internal injuries he suggested earlier.

Within a short while, three seconds were up and the drudnid had charged at him once again. This time however, it was noticeably faster than before. Nonetheless, Lucas was prepared.

Whoosh

The sound of air being forced to the sides was caught by Lucas' ears and he didn't hesitate to retreat right away. Even then, the drudnid didn't let him rest and pushed on with its attack.

As it brandished its ridiculous weapon, Lucas dodged when possible and blocked with the stellar energy shield. Although he found some opportunities to launch an attack, it was pointless. Unlike before, he could not even find any chance to make an effective counterattack again.

The drudnid's weapon looked like an exaggeratedly large broadsword, but its structure was entirely different. At the two edges of the blade, another blade was attached perpendicular to the existing one. This made the weapon appear like the letter 'H' when viewed from the tip. A better description would be that the weapon looked just the same as the H steel beams used on Earth for construction.

This weapon was the source of Lucas' woes as not only could it be used as a blunt weapon, but it could also be used as a bladed weapon. Most of all, it functioned perfectly for defence or offence. There was also the fact that the drudnid's abilities had been raised, making it stronger, faster and more efficient with both its attacks and movements.

Clang

The H sword swung at Lucas but the latter intercepted it with his gauntlets, causing sparks to light up in the air. Because his strength was now boosted to that of a fourth level stellar practitioner, Lucas was only forced back by half a step and could still respond to any possible followup attack. However, Lucas was tired of playing the role of a punching bag.

Humm

The Vis receptacle —the key component of the Stellar Circuit Battle-Armour— left out a low hum as stellar energy was swiftly sent into the gauntlets, giving it a red glow.

Having blocked the swing from the drudnid, Lucas didn't retreat as he had done previously but held on tightly to the weapon with one hand. His other hand, which currently radiated a red glimmer, formed a fist and flew at the drudnid.

Bang

The fist connected, resounding with an intense sound while generating a small blast of air. The drudnid didn't expect this and was forced out of balance, leaning backwards as if it was about to fall to the ground.

Nonetheless, being a weapon of war, it quickly reacted and moved its right leg backwards while forcing its weight towards its leg.

Seeing this, Lucas snorted and closed the gap while pulling his right arm back again. He then smashed his fist into the drudnid's chest once more.

Bang

If the drudnid were a living creature of flesh and blood, it would definitely have its flesh mangled and spew blood after that attack. But as a creature of metal and energy, only a dent was formed on its chest while the light in its eyes flickered slightly.

This time around, it was unable to maintain its balance and began falling over. Yet Lucas still wasn't satisfied.

An eye for an eye. A tooth for a tooth.

"Ahhh!"

Roaring out loud, Lucas controlled the Vis receptacle to send a huge amount of energy into his right arm.

The gauntlet shined brightly as a ton of stellar energy was sent into it. The runes on its surface were working full time, making use of the energy to produce a maximum effect. Inside of the gauntlet, Lucas' arm could feel a hot sensation, but he ignored it as he punched at the falling drudnid.

Boom

The drudnid was struck squarely on its chest for the third time in a row. But this time around, it didn't just end with a simple loss of balance. The drudnid was flung nine metres away before it crashed into the ground with a heavy thud, leaving behind a crater in its wake while sending dust into the air.

The gleam in the creature's eyes went dark as it remained lying in the crater after that attack.

Even though it was a creature of steel, having taken three consecutive hits from Lucas, it was impossible for the drudnid to remain unharmed. Also, it was only a third level drudnid; its fourth level rating was based on the consideration of its battle skill and neuro-magic. In terms of which was closer to the fourth level, the Steller Circuit Battle-Armour won the race.

Lucas stared at the metallic creature that lay within the small pit and began to recall his experience in the battle.

Even though drudnids were capable of neuro-magic, the one he faced didn't use that often; only using the magic once. It seemed like the damage to its artificial consciousness wasn't small, which was why it couldn't use such complex techniques often. Otherwise, the battle wouldn't have ended so quickly.

In a sense, one could say that Lucas was lucky, but he was confident of winning regardless.

Now that the battle was over, Lucas' hobbyist mentality kicked in.

"Hehe."

Staring at the drudnid's 'corpse', Lucas couldn't help but covet it intensely.

The drudnid was a treasure trove even to a researcher; to a vestige-smith, its value was even more. This was essentially an artefact and it could sell for a lot. Even if he didn't sell it, the research value was high for Lucas. Even if he didn't use it as a research subject, just the materials used on it, when disassembled, can be used to make another top quality Grade 3 vestige, bordering Grade 4.

Just as he was about to make a move, Lucas' eyebrows suddenly widened in shock. He tried to move to the side, but it was too late as a pole appeared within the edge of his vision and struck him.

'I was too careless.'

Was the only thing Lucas managed to think of before he was flung away.