

## The Crafts 28

### Chapter 28 : The Wastelands

[[ Mission Overview: You have finally received your first custom order. It's time to let the world witness your light.

Mission Description: Craft a high quality weapon, using the Violent Sun ores from the Wastelands, in one month.

Reward: Bronze Grade Card.

Penalty: Loss of reputation.

"System, this says the Wastelands right?" Lucas couldn't help but ask.

"Yes."

"Same region swarming with desolate beasts, correct?"

"Indeed."

"How am I supposed to, you know, go and not die?"

"As a legacy inheritor of a god and the successor to the Crafts-God, the host should be familiar with the term 'miracle'. With that in mind, the mission has been with the host's strength put under consideration."

'Bullshit.' Lucas cursed internally.

The Wastelands was one of the most dangerous places in Erete. To the people of Baylands city, the Wastelands was a risk-filled location with many desolate beasts all over the place. It was home to a horde of desolate beast with varying degrees of strength. Here, there were desolate beasts of all levels.

It was even rumoured that a few of them could compare with city-lord class existences, in other words, ten Apertures Opening stage stellar practitioners. However, this rumour was either false or the number was far too small, otherwise, the desolate beast would have overrun Baylands City.

With his current strength, heading over to this region was no different from suicide.

Lucas ignored the system and began thinking of how to make it work. He could have placed an order for the Violet Sun ores and commissioned a freelancer to get it for him, but the system clearly stated that Lucas had to make the trip himself.

'Wait, it didn't.' Lucas suddenly thought of something.

"System, do I have to do it myself? Can't I just commission someone to get it?"

"No, as doing so would eliminate the purpose of the mission." The system replied.

Lucas sighed. He was partly expecting such a response, and the system lived up to his expectations. Even so, Lucas wasn't entirely disappointed or frustrated. He couldn't keep living like this—locked up in a store and only working on vestiges. He had to get stronger to secure his safety.

Although this mission was very risky and even deadly, since the system gave it to him, there was a significant chance of survival. With that being the case, there was no reason for Lucas to reject it.

This was an opportunity to see the world outside, beyond the walls of the city. He would encounter different desolate beast and people. As long as he was careful and planned properly, there shouldn't be much harm.

Freelancers frequented the Wastelands in search of wealth, with the lowest of them being at the peak of the Body Strengthening stage. Although Lucas wasn't truly there, relying on the craftsman gloves and some of his self-made vestiges, it was possible for him to take on someone at that level. His attack power might even compare with that of a one Apertures Opening stage stellar refiner.

This meant that even without the protection of the store, Lucas could ensure his safety to some extent.

'No use thinking too much about it.'

Lucas decided to leave the next day. After the customers were gone and the store was empty, he closed for the day and made his preparations.

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The next day, Lucas hung a 'Closed' sign and left the store. He had already done his research and knew that there was a public transport system to the Wastelands, courtesy of the city state government.

The history of Baylands City was quite interesting. Historically, the Wastelands predated the city and was home to much more desolate beasts than at the moment. Back then, it was said to be the central hub of desolate beasts on the Groeten continent.

When the Oklo Dynasty began its war for expansion, they launched multiple assaults and raids against the desolate beasts on the Groeten continent, but even then, they failed to annihilate them entirely. In the end, they forced most of the desolate beasts into the Wastelands and built a fortress city to blockade a possible desolate beast retaliation or invasion. This city was known as Baylands City.

With Baylands City as the central area, other towns and cities propped up around it. Under the control of the Oklo Dynasty, these cities and towns were known as districts, and by swearing fealty to Baylands city, they would be offered protection and other services. This was how the Baylands city-state was formed.

Being a fortress city, Baylands city was the wall between the rest Wastelands and the rest of the Groeten continent. To be specific, it was the West Wing district that was the real border.

To prevent a possible desolate beast upsurge, the Baylands city-state government, which was essentially the Baylands city lord office, allowed freelancers to venture into the Wastelands. In fact, they encouraged this act and put in place different incentives to attract freelancers to the city and send them to help explore the Wastelands while cutting down the number of desolate beasts.

One such incentive was free public transport to and from the city and the Wastelands. Although the Wastelands was said to border the West Wing district, this didn't mean that the distance between the two places were close. One should still recall that there was a small area of land known as the Slums, just outside of West Wing district.

One would still need to go further west, at least seven hundred kilometres (434.96 miles) away, before they reached the Wastelands. With the current technology, this distance was just alright for the Baylands city-state government to monitor the region and react in time to any changes.

After purchasing a ticket for a ride, Lucas headed into the light-rail train and took a seat. It was surprising that he got admitted despite not having a freelancer identity, but the agency in charge didn't care. Some people would always want to try their luck with their meagre while others desired suicide or an opportunity to run away from reality.

While this might sound sad, some saw it as a means of population control, and so, didn't stop anyone. As long as one was of age, they could get a ride. The only difference was that non-freelancers would have to pay a fee, albeit a small one of three federal coins.

Using a light-rail train, it would only take thirty to thirty five minutes to cover the distance even with disturbances. Despite being called a train, it was actually a flying shuttle merely shaped just like a train. In truth it could go faster, but due to the weight and weapons attached to it, as well as other safety reasons, it maintained a speed of between 1200km/hr-1350km/hr.

Nonetheless, this speed was already fast enough for most.

Very soon, the light-rail train had landed at its destination and everyone inside stepped out.

The base station in the Wastelands was a small camp made up of a couple buildings. Some of these buildings were lodges and the others were varied spots like bars, restaurants, shooting ranges and even training centres. At the edge of the camp was the landing zone for the light-rail trains.

The base station was made by the city-state government, but other forces helped with the further development, investing their resources into the place. For instance, some companies, especially those related to freelancers and basic needs, had their branches set up here. However there were few such companies.

This was because the base station was located in the Wastelands, and very few individuals would want to work there.

The living locations were only accessible to freelancers so if a regular individual wanted to work in the Wastelands, they would have to commute from the West Wing district. As a result, most stores were operated by robots.

The Wastelands base station was the gathering spot intended for the freelancers who worked here. It wasn't a strange thing for freelancers to spend months in the Wastelands. The city-state government hence built the base station just at the outer edge of the Wastelands. This was another incentive program to motivate freelancers to spend more time in the Wastelands.

Although it didn't have everything, the base station had everything one needed.

Lucas admired the sight and thought to himself that it would have been better if he had set up his store here instead.

While others could buy vestiges, the major customers of a vestige store were freelancers. Other parties, like students and the city patrol corps, didn't engage in much combat, and as such, their vestiges were usually in top form. However, freelancers fought day and night as it was their source of income. This led to their equipment being damaged regularly.

Just the expenses on maintenance alone was the bulk of a freelancer's expenses. If Lucas had set up shop here, the money he would have made from maintenance in two weeks alone might have cleared his debt.

'No use crying over spilt milk.' Lucas thought as he walked away from the port and towards the base station. His first task at the moment was to find a map to help him navigate to his destination.