

The Crafts 283

Chapter 283 : The Stakes

The process of installing a new engine wasn't exactly long. At most it would take three to four hours alone, but with a team working on it, the time would be shortened to two hours or even an hour.

Because the spectators were all busy people, Lucas couldn't spend the majority of the morning setting up the engine. He has already drafted a document showing the necessary steps for installing the Destroyer, so he handed it to Lerman.

"What's this for?" Lerman asked while staring at the projected images.

"It's the installation script for installing my new engine, the Destroyer." Lucas replied.

Lerman was speechless.

An installation script was the same as a manual or a guide.

One should know that Lerman is a peak Tier 1 Elite vestige-smith with a lot of experience on hover cars and racing shuttles. What's more, he was the department head of Vehicle manufacturing for the Versoa team. When it came to installing engines, Lerman was confident that he was even more proficient in that than Orvel, the team's only Tier 1 Master vestige-smith. As such, he was stupefied by the fact that Lucas had handed him a manual.

Usually, even though every engine might differ in appearance or functionality, they always maintained a few core components. Because of this, the process of inserting an engine onto a racing shuttle or hover car was roughly the same. As long as one could identify those key components, then it wasn't a hassle to attach them to the shuttle; and as an experienced vestige-smith in this area, Lerman was confident that he could identify them.

As if reading his thoughts, Lucas added,

"It's a bit special."

Although he refused to believe it, Lerman downloaded the installation script and went through it. Thirty seconds later, he got interested. One minute later, his eyebrows were wide open.

For the next five minutes, Lerman was glued to the script and it wasn't until one of his department members called out to him that Lerman recovered.

With an astonished look on his face, he glanced in front of him hoping to see Lucas and question him on the design, but the latter was already long gone.

"Is there a problem, sir?" The vestige-smith asked Lerman.

"No, nothing. Let's get to work. Everyone should download the script and go through it first. If you don't understand it, just follow the instructions written on it." Lerman said before uploading the installation script to the department's group chat.

The vestige-smith was confused just as Lerman was before. He couldn't help but wonder why his department head had ordered that they all go through the script. What's more, he even insinuated that they might not understand it.

How could that be? Even if they weren't as skilled as Orvel or Lerman, they were still experienced professionals.

But as orders were orders, the vestige-smith didn't argue with Lerman and did as he was told. It was only after he went through the script that he understood Lerman's instructions. The person who built this engine was a genius; a fucking genius.

With the assistance of the Vehicle manufacturing department, Lucas only spent forty-five minutes inserting the engine into the Viper doppelganger. It would have been shorter, but he spent a significant amount of time explaining some aspects to the crew lest they made any mistake.

After the installation, the Viper clone was tested for functionality and after fifteen minutes, it was ready to be on the road.

The bet was to be settled in a race.

While a simple engine test could be carried out, it wasn't as entertaining as driving the vehicle around.

The drivers were two robots called Racers. A Racer was a type of robot that was used as a training partner for drivers. They were programmed to be able to ride any kind of vehicle, but because of this, they weren't necessarily better than drivers. Human drivers were flexible and could take risks, whereas Racers were stuck to the protocols set by their programming. Because of this, they were referred to as rigid drivers.

Even though this was a disadvantage in drift racing, it made them suitable practice partners for beginners and also test subjects.

"The bet is simple. Five laps. The first racing shuttle to win the race takes majority points. Performance and efficiency would also be taken into account in calculating the final result. If you feel it's not fair, an engine calibration test would be carried out."

Helnord announced from the viewing platform after everyone took their seats. The VIPs, who consisted of the three attending stakeholders and their assistants, sat at the VIP section of the arena. The vestige-smiths, however, stayed at the viewing platform of the recreational building right at the centre of the track.

"Any disagreement?"

Helnord glanced at Lucas and Orvel.

"None." The two responded.

"Good. In that case, we can begin."

The two Vipers, Viper original and Viper clone, were pulled out of the garage and the repair station respectively. The two Racers walked towards the racing shuttles and got in. The thirty seconds countdown to the start of the race began and the Vipers were turned on, transitioning from their warm-up phase to active phase.

"If you kowtow now and apologize to me, I don't mind letting you off." Orvel said with a mocking grin on his face.

There were no bets without stakes.

For this bet, the two sides had staked their lots. Lucas had offered half of his stocks in the company, which was equivalent to twenty percent. It would bring him down to the second largest majority shareholder and he would be sharing the spot with Orvel. On the other hand, Orvel had agreed to do whatever Lucas wanted and not go against him.

From the onset, it looked like Lucas had more to lose, and that was true, but the latter didn't mind because there was no way he would lose. At the same time, Orvel was also confident in winning.

One should know that the L2.130 wasn't solely designed by him. While he was the head vestige-smith, it was still the combined effort of him and his teammates. The production was also achieved thanks to the teamwork of the other collective departments. In essence, Lucas wasn't just competing against Orvel, but the entire Versoa team.

Finally, Orvel didn't seem to be losing much even if Lucas won. At best, it would be his dignity and pride dragged to the ground. But he believed that as the best vestige-smith in the team, there was no way Lucas would humiliate him even if he lost; after all, the team needed him. At worst, Orvel would have to treat Lucas with more respect which wasn't exactly difficult. As such, Orvel wasn't worried about the race at all. Instead, he decided to play mind games on Lucas.

Hearing Orvel's words, Lucas simply glanced at him before turning back to the track without saying a single word.

Orvel fumed, feeling humiliated by Lucas' actions. Right then and there, he mentally swore to make life difficult for Lucas once he won, even if the latter was the majority stakeholder. The team couldn't risk firing him as finding a replacement —especially at this point in the tournament— was difficult, if not impossible. Hence, he would make life in the team unliveable for Lucas as long as he won.

'Just you wait, you little bastard.' Orvel grunted.

In the next second, the counter reached zero and the two Racers accelerated to top speed.