

The Crafts 29

Chapter 29 : Meeting The Guide

The Wastelands Base station was built from scratch by the Baylands city-state government, and further developed by the different forces residing in the city-state.

As a product of the city-state government to motivate more freelancers to raid the Wastelands, there were a couple of buildings built to help satisfy the needs of the freelancers living here. One such was the Guild Centre building.

The Guild Centre was actually a government agency made by the Baylands city-state government to help monitor and oversee the activities of freelancers. While the hyuman race now had the ability to refine stellar energy, not all members were interested in such and this led to a power divide.

The Guild Centre was made to ensure that all freelancers and other stellar practitioners didn't misuse their power. It didn't directly control freelancers, but it did monitor and restrict them in certain ways. It also aided them by providing incentives and help whenever needed.

The Guild Centre had a second head office in the Wastelands Base station which was a three storey building. The first floor was open to everyone and was a store of sorts. Here, freelancers could exchange some of their gains from the Wastelands in exchange for points that could be used to purchase items and resources in the same building.

They could also purchase information or trade with whatever they had.

There were similar stores owned by the top forces of the city, but the advantage of the Guild Centre was that it was run by the city-state government. The disadvantage however was that they didn't have much resources to offer so most times, freelancers traded with the other stores.

However, none of this concerned Lucas as he just wanted to get a map so he picked the most trusted.

"Hello. Can I get a map of the Wastelands?" Lucas said to the clerk once it was his turn.

The clerk stared at him suspiciously, thinking that Lucas was one of those ignorant people who wanted to hit it big by killing a desolate beast. Nevertheless, he could do nothing to stop him and the clerk wasn't interested in doing so either.

"Your identification and occupation please."

"Lucas Saunters, blacksmith." Lucas said as he displayed an ID in his communicator and showed it to the clerk.

"Are you registered with the association? Where's your badge?" The clerk asked.

"I don't have any cause I'm not registered."

The clerk frowned slightly at the response, then stared at Lucas once again. It was then that he noticed the latter wasn't hyuman but a human. His expression then took an abrupt change.

"Are you joking with me?" The clerk frowned.

"I've already provided my details to you. If you want to have another look, I'll gladly let you." Lucas said with a straight face, ignoring the clerk's attitude.

The clerk snorted before asking rudely, "What do you want?"

"A map." Lucas repeated his intentions, getting slightly irritated at the treatment he was receiving.

"There are two types of map, but seeing as you lack proper identification and are not a freelancer nor pioneer, I can only offer you the basic version."

There were a couple of occupations for stellar practitioners with the majority dealing in fights. The freelancer role was the most notable of them all. However, there was another occupation quite similar to it. The role of a Pioneer majorly dealt with exploration.

While Freelancers took missions and killed desolate beasts for resources, Pioneers explored dangerous regions and new locations, drawing maps and recording new species of alien races or desolate beasts. Very few worked as a pioneer as compared to freelancing where you're adventuring

in an explored region, pioneer was all about searching for the unknown and was as such, much more risky.

When faced with the choice of risky and very risky, it was obvious which one people would choose right away especially since the pay gap wasn't so large.

Since Eretre was 70% explored, there were few pioneers here and on the Groeten continent, most of them resided close to the Wastelands; one of the few unexplored regions.

Lucas paid five federal coins for the map, a price much more expensive than the trip from West Wing district to here. After that, he left the Guild Centre building.

However, Lucas didn't go straight into the depths of the Wasteland just yet. As this was his first time, he needed a guide, even with a map in hand. His destination was quite far and dangerous, so it was much safer to have someone lead the way. Luckily, freelancers could be hired for the task. This was something he learnt on his way here.

Freelancers would take almost all sorts of jobs provided one paid well enough for it. Being a guide in a perilous region such as the Wastelands was a way for some freelancers based here to earn extra income. They were already familiar with the place, so using their knowledge to make some quick cash was not a problem.

Lucas' destination was the Cicalien Mountains, but it was quite far away from the base station and unpredictable in a bad way. What's more, it was located in a region within the Wastelands known as the Astranian Forest.

The Astranian Forest was a hunting ground for high level freelancers, but even they didn't frequent the spot often as it was still quite dangerous. From this, one could guess that the level of desolate beasts in the area was quite high. For that reason, a guide was necessary lest he dies without knowing how.

Lucas hired a freelancer team that was well known in the area as his guide. Although they were quite expensive, they were reputable and had even worked with a few humans before. As such, Lucas had no worries hiring them.

Just a short while after Lucas left the Guild Centre building, two people came towards him; a man and a woman. The man had brown hair and black eyes with a calm poise even in his walking steps.

As for the woman, she was a stunner, even in this world. With black hair let down behind her, a pair of blue eyes and a pretty oval face, she would have easily stood out on Earth.

She was 169cm in height (5`6) and gave off a confident yet prideful aura with her eyes.

Lucas glanced at the new arrivals who smiled at him.

"Lucas Saunters, I assume, correct?" The man asked him.

"That's right." Lucas nodded. He recognised the duo, not because he was familiar with them but that they were his guides for the trip; part of his guides to be exact.

The team Lucas hired was the Autumn's Gate guild, which had seven official members. They were a well known freelancer guild and although quite expensive, the group had a good reputation and had even worked with humans in the past before, albeit not any pure-blooded ones like Lucas[1]. Even so, they were the best possible option for Lucas to travel with.

For this trip, due to the uniqueness of the destination, four of the official team members were sent for the trip and Lucas had all the relevant information about them including their strength and appearances.

"Alright then. Let's go. Chad and the others are waiting for us." The lady said.

The trio departed from the scene but unknown to them, there was someone monitoring them. A man stood beside a building with a communicator shaped like a tablet. Displayed on the communicator's screen was an image; Lucas' picture.

But those are almost impossible to get.