

The Crafts 303

Chapter 303: Enraged Rotter-Bear

In front of the Terino Grand Ghost was a huge bear-like monster with brown fur and large sharp claws. It opened its mouth wide and let out a ferocious roar while brandishing its sharp claws at the shuttle. It was Lucas' current enemy, a Rotter-bear. A Rotter-Bear was a species of desolate beast that looked just like a huge brown bear. However, comparing the two was like having a child and a grown adult stand side by side. Desolate beasts were considerably stronger, tougher, faster and more aggressive than regular creatures. As such, the difference between a brown bear and a rotter-bear didn't just stop at size as the latter were professional diggers, more so than the former. A rotter-bear's claw could easily cut through metal like a hot knife through butter. Their fur, bones, skin and muscles were also denser and tougher than a regular bear by far. This made them difficult opponents to deal with, especially if one didn't have a vestige. To put this into perspective, a .30/06 Springfield [1], or even a .338 Lapua Magnum [2], would fail to deal much damage to a rotter-bear even though it was enough to put down a brown bear. But as a desolate beast, speed and strength wasn't all they had. An average fully-grown rotter-bear would be a fifth level desolate beast. At that level, it could easily make a mess out of an armoured tank. If it had a bit more potential, it could even end up as a sixth level desolate beast. "What's the stellar energy rating?" Lucas immediately asked the artificial intelligence. If the rotter-bear was an adult, he would have to retreat right away. A fifth level desolate beast wasn't something he could easily take on with sacrificing one of his two bronze cards left, but it wasn't worth it. However, leaving would mean that he would have to find a new place to hide the sare shuttle, but that was easier said than done. Regardless, if the rotter-bear was over his abilities, Lucas would promptly retreat. "Adolescent rotter-bear, fourth level of the Apertures Opening stage." The AI replied. "Just the fourth level." Lucas sighed with relief before leaving the cockpit and heading for the exit. "Retrieve." The door of the shuttle opened as a figure jumped out of it in midair and landed a few metres away from the large shadow cast by the rotter-bear's figure. "Roar!" The monster had taken notice of this as it turned and glared at the 'little' figure while letting out an ear-shocking roar. Luckily for Lucas, this was the Millennia Mountains and it wasn't always quiet, so the sound wouldn't attract any unnecessary attention. The 'little' figure, who was actually Lucas, glanced up and took sight of the rotter-bear that dwarfed his figure considerably. Lucas wasn't short and stood at a height of about 1.83 metres (6 feet), but when compared to the rotter-bear that was about six metres tall (16 feet), the difference was staggering. But such a height difference was pretty common for freelancers and they were all used to it. Even Lucas was used to facing creatures far much bigger than he was, so he wasn't pressured by the difference in size. "Even if these mountains can be quite noisy sometimes, I'd prefer a little bit of peace and quiet here." Lucas' black eyes stared at the beast as he began to radiate a dangerous aura. This was the killing intent that harboured deep inside of him; the killing intent of a soul who had lived over five hundred years in a world where the strongest fist had the loudest say. The rotter-bear suddenly went mute as its instincts warned of the little figure before it. Without realising it, the rotter-bear took half a step backwards. But just one second later, it flared up before an intense rage took over its mind. "Roar!" The monster was incensed by the fact that it had shrivelled up against such a 'weak' creature and it immediately charged at Lucas, desperate to avenge itself and wash away the humiliation. "Beasts will always be beasts." Lucas, who had only a pair of

gauntlets and boots, stood up to the rotter-bear. That's right; he wasn't going to use the complete Stellar Circuit Battle-Armour. This was because Lucas felt it was overkill and unnecessary; at the same time, he also wanted to test the capabilities of the upgraded vestiges. With every day, week and month that went by, Lucas' vestige-smithing knowledge grew by a noticeable percentage. He improved atrociously at a rate that one might term as demonic. This was because Lucas was absorbing the knowledge from the tomes he got after a few missions, together with the books on the intranet. He then combined these pieces of knowledge with what he learned from his past lives. As such, it was basically normal for Lucas to be able to improve on his skills on a weekly basis. The fusion of all the diverse knowledge and theories went into improving the various vestiges that made up the SCB. Originally, the first version of the Stellar Circuit Battle-Armour could only prop Lucas' strength to the third level while relying only on his base strength. Later improvements increased this reach to the fourth level, earning Lucas the ability to defend himself in the wild. However, he wasn't satisfied with just that and kept working on it. The latest tome, 'Basic Inscription Knowledge', broadened and deepened Lucas' understanding about inscriptions, especially the stellar matrices, stellar circuits, and the recently acquired magi runes. Thanks to that, Lucas was able to make a third major upgrade to the Stellar Circuit Battle-Armour. Currently, even he didn't know the true power the vestige armour could display with his base strength. But Lucas felt that relying solely on the gauntlets and boots alone, he should be able to take on the rotter-bear. However, this was on the condition that he could react in time, as without the Vis receptacle of the SCB, it would be difficult for Lucas' reaction speed to be upped to the same level as the rotter-bear. 'It's coming.' Lucas' eyes flashed as a large brown entity charged at him, leaving behind only an afterimage in its wake. For a creature that big, running so quickly should logically have been impossible, but desolate beasts couldn't be judged with common sense [3]. Lucas reacted using his hardened battle experience and managed to respond in time. The boots activated a pair of side thrusters and Lucas' figure immediately slid to the side, dodging the rotter-bear's ram. *Boom* The cave shook as the rotter-bear crashed into the walls of the cave. For a second, Lucas was scared that there would be a landslide and the entrance of the cave would be blocked, but those worries turned out to be for naught. The ground and walls of the cave were stronger than the average ground and rocks. Although the rotter-bear's ram did cause a dent, it wasn't enough to create a landslide. "Roar!" The rotter-bear let out a terrifying roar as its eyes turned red. It was greatly infuriated that the little 'pebble' who had humiliated it, happened to have also dodged its assault. Without saying another word, or another roar, the rotter-bear abruptly turned around and swiped its claws at Lucas.