

## The Crafts 36

### Chapter 36: Encountering A Desolate Beast

The Cicalien Mountains was a vast chain of mountains connected to form a mountain range. Towering peaks of different heights spread all over the area, forming 'waves' in the region. Home to many desolate beasts, the mountain range was a dangerous place even for a high-ranking freelancer. However, despite being dangerous, it was also home to many mineral deposits and lodes.

A couple decades back, the Baylands city-state government had launched an exploration campaign, aimed at understanding the Wastelands more in preparation for a future beast wave that could potentially pose a significant threat to the city-state.

This campaign wasn't meant to eliminate the monsters in the outer region, but to understand and record the various species of desolate beasts in the Wastelands as well as to map down the entire region. If there was also any important resource stock in the Wastelands, they would think of a way to retrieve and control it. Although this campaign ended in failure, a lot of progress was made.

At that time, the city-state government had discovered the Astranian Forest and located the Cicalien Mountains deep inside. As the campaign was an exploratory study, they had special equipment for discovering valuable minerals. Under the investigation of their scientists, the team found out that the Cicalien Mountains had a special ore, Keton, deposit on one of the mountains.

Keton was a metallic material which wasn't expensive and could be said to be common. However, it was very vital to various industries. It was an important component for manufacturing certain hover vehicles and furniture.

Logically, the city-state government should have built a mine on the deposit and began operations.

But after considering the expenses for the project: which not only included construction of the mine, but transportation of both construction materials, ores and workers, protection of the cargo and workers, the setting up of a base, as well the payment of workers which would have to be high as they would be working in a perilous area, which they then compared to the value of the metal ore, the city-state government came to the conclusion that the excavation was not worth it and abandoned the idea.

Some powerful industries and companies came to find out about the mine, but for the same reason, they also gave up on it.

As for individuals, any one of them who could make it to the Cicalien Mountains was definitely a strong character, and someone like that wouldn't stress themselves with a tiring task such as mining. Also, they would be able to make more off killing desolate beasts than mining for the ore and having to travel into the city to sell it, an endeavour which was clearly time-consuming and expensive.

This led to the special situation where everyone knew that the Cicalien Mountains had ore deposits, but no one could retrieve it. It was like a pie in the sky.

The metal Lucas was looking for wasn't some cheap metal like Keton or something similar. In fact, it wasn't even among the discovered ore deposits. On the contrary, it was a mineral deposit hidden inside the mountain. Unlike the discovered mine, this one was filled to the brim with a valuable metal called Violent Sun ores.

Due to the presence of a special element around the Violent Sun ore deposit, a natural electromagnetic field was formed, invisible to the eyes. This EM field had jammed the equipment used by the exploration team and other groups, and this led to the deposit remaining untouched for decades. Luckily for Lucas, this wasn't a problem as he had the system to aid him.

The system had verified its existence, but the task of finding it was left to him.

...

Once he was in front of the Cicalien Mountains, Lucas was greeted by the impressive sight of a marvelous mountain range. After admiring it for a bit, Lucas made his way into the Cicalien Mountains, making sure that he proceeded towards the northwest direction.

According to the instructions from the system, there was an average-looking mountain amongst the rest but located deep in. Hidden within this mountain was the target for his mission.

Just five minutes after Lucas had appeared within the Cicalien Mountains, he noticed a strange silhouette less than one hundred metres ahead.

Without any hesitation, Lucas immediately concealed his aura and breathing, and came to a stop as he studied the silhouette in front of him.

It was a creature that looked like a mole yet was much larger than that. It was four metres tall when standing on its hind legs and had a pair of special hands equipped with claws on them which aided it in digging through the mountain floor. It had a long snout and its huge body was covered in intense brown-green fur that was as thin and sharp as needles.

Its long snout was coloured green, but of a darker hue.

At the moment, the monster was nibbling on some gnawed out rocks, seemingly having a look of bliss on its face.

'The Green-Snout Metal mole ' Lucas thought as he stared at the monster. He then began to revisit the knowledge regarding the monster in his head.

The Green-Snout Metal mole was a special kind of desolate beast limited to the Cicalien Mountains and any other zones with metal ore deposits. It had fur as tough as metal, which was threatening to attackers and predators. Its terrifying arms also packed a punch so powerful that it could crush a boulder with one hit.

Above of all, the claws of the Green-Snout Metal mole was its most dangerous weapon, capable of cutting through refined steel with ease. It was thanks to this that it could dig deep into the ground and excavate metals.

The Green-Snout Metal mole was a monster with a capable defense, offense and stamina. Its only known weakness was its speed and vision, which were nothing impressive. However, it seemed to compensate in that department by possessing a long range attack option; it could fire some of its sharp needle fur at the target.

Generally, a Green-Snout Metal mole was at the very least a third level beast, but most times, the majority would be on the fourth level. If one were unlucky, they would stumble upon a fifth level Green-Snout Metal mole.

Luckily, Lucas didn't encounter such a special situation. Even more so, this Green-Snout Metal mole was at the third level, the weakest of its kind.