

The Crafts 41

Chapter 41: To Raid Or Not To

When Lucas began searching the mine using the wave-style spiritual searching technique, it didn't take him long to find the Violent Sun ores. In fact, Lucas was quite lucky. The spiritual searching technique couldn't cover the entire mine and he had to be discreet about it.

Lucas' original plan was to search every area one at a time, but as fate would have it, he found the Violent Sun ores' location just as he was checking the first area.

Nonetheless, the ancients had a saying; that bad news comes hand-in-hand with good news and they weren't lying about that.

Just after he found it, Lucas realised that the ores were deep inside the walls nearby. They were at least three metres deep into the walls. This was understandable as if they were closer to the surface, the Green-Snout Metal moles would have discovered it and began mining for the metal. Even so, that would have been a better occurrence than the current situation.

There was no way Lucas could dig five metres into the rock walls without making a sound. Once that happened, the moles would eventually spot and kill him.

Lucas was now stuck in a conundrum. The current situation was such that it was equivalent to seeing the pie but not being able to eat it; a pie in the sky as one would say.

"Chirp!!"

Right when Lucas was preparing to risk it, an ear piercing squeal rang out in the entire mine from the cavern outside, almost deafening Lucas for half a second. Confused, he immediately froze on the spot and held his breath right away. The first thought that crossed his mind was that he was caught, but Lucas didn't want to believe that as he was confident in his stealth.

Before he could understand what had happened, the moles in the mine, numbering in the dozens, abandoned the metals they were mining and began to dash towards the exit. Lucas remained still and took all this in, wondering what had happened.

The commotion outside got louder and despite being inside the mine, Lucas could overhear stomping sounds from the cavern. It seemed like all the moles in every funnel had been assembled to the cavern. Just from the sounds of their steps, Lucas estimated there to be almost a hundred moles, and the number was still increasing.

Two thoughts crossed Lucas' head as he began trying to understand the current situation. The first was that the moles were having a meeting of sorts, but the rate of gathering as well as the speed at which they moved was insane and violent.

As for the second possibility, it was that a formidable invader had arrived in the burrows of the moles.

Lucas was more inclined to believe the latter option as that would explain the sense of urgency amongst the moles. However, he didn't act just yet, but waited for a couple of minutes to ensure that the moles had gone far enough.

Once he felt that the coast was clear, Lucas went exactly at the wall he sensed the Violent Sun ores to be and extended his senses into it. This was to ascertain the exact location, depth and point the ores were.

After a few seconds, Lucas frowned but was slightly relieved. The distance was about five metres deep. It was still within his reach.

Pulling out a spear, Lucas gripped it with both hands before taking a stance.

The spear was a Grade 3 vestige made with an alloy of various precious metals Lucas found in his workshop. It was also mixed with a bit of Red Iris stone, the second metal he received as a reward from the system alongside the Purple Iridium metal.

Red Iris stone was a metal that had a stone-like appearance. It wasn't suitable for making weapons on its own as it didn't have a suitable malleability; it would crack upon exposure to intense hammering. However, the metal had a special quality; it was a superb conductor of mystical energy.

By mixing Red Iris stone into the alloy of metals, Lucas was able to create a Grade 3 spear with impressive strength and mystical energy conductance. If a first level Apertures Opening stage stellar practitioner was using this spear, they could take down a second level practitioner.

After taking in a deep breath, Lucas thrust the spear into the rocky wall with the entirety of his strength.

Bang!

The spear pierced the wall while shoving out a few rocks, however, it only managed to go less than a metre in.

Lucas wasn't disappointed by this strike as he had expected a similar result. The rocks were solid enough that even fourth level Green-Snout Metal moles had to take their time digging through them; otherwise these beasts might have found the Violent Sun ores long ago. If it weren't for the Grade 3 spear in his hands, Lucas might not even be able to make a mark on it.

However, the result of the strike spelt out a clear problem; his weakness.

If it were a second level or even first level Apertures Opening stage stellar practitioner, they would have been able to dig deeper with a Grade 3 vestige in their hands. Relying solely on his physical strength, which was even weaker than a true stellar practitioner, he would have to take more time digging through the rocks.

Lucas resumed bombarding the walls with attacks from the spear. He didn't bother to be careful with his actions as most of the moles were gone already, so Lucas didn't hold back in his strikes. It eventually took him quite sometime, but Lucas managed to successfully dig out a five metres deep hole, about the width of an adult's head.

From the hole, Lucas could see a special ore that glowed just like the Igrum steel ores, but instead of a red glow, the rocks were orange. Their temperature was also higher than that of the Igrum steel ores.

Although he already had a high resistance to heat, Lucas immediately wore his craftsman gloves before grabbing one of the ores. All of a sudden, a notification popped up in front of him

[[Violent Sun ores collection rate: 2%]]

A progress bar was displayed just below the line of text and Lucas understood right away. He used the spear to make the hole a bit wider before extracting as much ores as he could until the progress bar was filled. Even then, Lucas still emptied the hole before he stopped.

'Time to get out of here.'

There were occasional vibrations and muffled sounds Lucas heard while mining, and he surmised them to be from the battle outside. It was getting furious and while there was no risk posed to him at the moment, Lucas felt uncomfortable remaining behind for long.

Just as he was leaving, Lucas glanced at the Igrum steel ores left behind by the beasts. The sizes of the ores were very large after all, a beast at least two metres in height could mine and carry more than a palm-sized piece of rock. Every single ore weighed at least 100kg and was as big as a twelve year old or even more.

Seeing these mined ores just laying on the floor, Lucas couldn't help but feel pity that the ores would get cold and turn homeless. As such, he immediately stored them into his inventory. The system inventory was a mystical place that could store anything regardless of size, so even the hefty pieces of ore were no problem.

Lucas gathered all of them up in his inventory and didn't stop until he cleared the entire floor. Satisfied, he then ran towards the exit of the mine.

There was less than an hour left on his talismans, so Lucas had to get away quickly. Although the battle would serve as a suitable distraction, it was better to be safe.

When he arrived at the cavern from earlier, Lucas was surprised. The previous populated area was now sparse of Green-Snout Metal moles. The very few Lucas spotted, not numbering more than a couple dozen, were all dashing with gusto and fearsome appearances towards a certain tunnel, which was most likely the direction of the battle.

'The invader has to either be really strong or a group.' Lucas couldn't help but feel chilled.

It was like playing witness to a war of species. His past life was filled with chaos and he was quite familiar with such events, but being in the presence of one with his current weak state was very worrisome to Lucas. He decided to get away quickly lest he gets caught in the crossfire.

As Lucas took the first step out of the tunnel that led to the Igrum steel mine, he suddenly froze.

A crazy thought appeared in his mind and firmly took root, refusing to disperse.

Lucas glanced in the opposite direction of the tunnel, towards the part of the cavern that had the tunnels leading to the 'warehouses' of the moles.

A glint flashed through his eyes as the thought finally settled down and took shape. Lucas was ready to take a crazy gamble.