

## The Crafts 42

### Chapter 42 : Windfall

In a few seconds, the cavern would be completely empty and devoid of Green-Snout Metal moles, leaving the entire place to Lucas. On the other side was a makeshift warehouse carved out by the moles to stash their mining gains.

Without any security measures, it was all open to Lucas. It would be a lie to say that he wasn't tempted to raid the tunnels. Actually, Lucas had already decided to do so.

In less than a minute, the cavern was completely empty, but Lucas still didn't make a move, waiting an extra minute just to be sure, before dashing over to the first tunnel. Based on his inspections, this tunnel had the shortest length, but the metal stored inside was important to him.

Even with the equipment and his skills from his past lives, Lucas still couldn't work with every metal, as the higher they were, the greater the requirement for refining them. Beyond the rank of Special grades, Lucas would need stellar energy to make a complete vestige. This was why he hadn't created a complete vestige using the Red Iris stone or Purple Iridium metal.

All the vestiges he made using them were produced with an alloy with a small quantity of these metals—just the right proportion he could bring under control.

With a variety of metals before him but limited time, Lucas had to make his picks based on the metals he could work with for now.

It took him less than two minutes to make it to the warehouse at the end of the tunnel. Inside, Lucas was greeted with a mix of stones and dull yellow metal, quite similar to gold but with a darker sheen.

Without any hesitation, Lucas moved everything to his inventory and left the tunnel.

As he was doing so, Lucas felt that his speed was quite slow, and since the situation at the battlefield was still unclear, it would be better if he could wrap everything up fast. He took out a talisman and applied it to his body.

Lucas called this talisman a speed boost talisman, since it increased his speed by almost a factor of two. Similar to the Invisibility talisman, it was difficult to make and he only had two of them. Lucas' intention was to use these two talismans to escape danger and depart the Cicalien Mountains once he was done with his mission.

But with the allure of metals before him—the love of his life—Lucas couldn't resist using it to increase his progress.

Within fifteen minutes, thanks to the speed boost talisman, Lucas managed to loot five more warehouses, leading to a total of six raided warehouses. If the Green-Snout Metal moles were to find out about this, they would surely rampage around in anger, as there were only fifteen such warehouses, and Lucas had wiped forty percent (40%) of them clean.

It should be known that each warehouse was very big, as the individual sizes of these beasts and the size of their horde were large. The metals in these caves were supposed to serve as food supplies when things turned difficult for them. So, the size of each cave was large—very large—at least enough to contain a two story building with a 100m<sup>2</sup> area.

You could imagine how many ores were inside one of them, much more, six caves.

Right when Lucas was about to exit the sixth cave, he abruptly halted and froze on the spot. Even though his actions so far seemed to have been careless, Lucas was on alert all the time. There was also slightly more than twenty minutes left on the clock for the other talismans he had one. The speed boost only had five minutes left on it as each talisman lasted only fifteen minutes.

The reason why Lucas stopped was simple; he could sense that in the cavern ahead, there were living presences. In this situation, it could only mean one of two things: a victor had been determined between the two fighting sides, or the battlefield had shifted towards the cavern.

Lucas paid attention ahead and focused his senses, deciphering a few sounds of collision right away.

'They're still fighting.' Lucas sighed with relief.

As long as the chaos remained, escaping wouldn't be too difficult.

Once he arrived at the edge of the exit, Lucas glanced down and finally caught sight of the invader as well as the defenders.

At the bottom of the cavern, there was a horde of desolate beasts gathered into two parties. The strangest thing, however, was that one of the two parties was only a single beast, facing off against the others.

The desolate beast had the appearance of a scorpion but was a chimera version. It had two chelae [1] just like a normal scorpion, but its body was different. Unlike the wide and sturdy abdomen of a typical scorpion, it had a slender body, almost like that of a snake, but still retained the stinger of a scorpion.

At its mouth, just after the chelicerae [2], there was a pair of jaws like a mammalian creature, with gory looking teeth.

The chimera desolate beast was in a confrontation against the Green-Snout Metal moles. Amongst the moles was one larger than the others and more intimidating. It reached a height of at least three metres when on all fours, and seven metres when it stood on its hind legs. Its claws were terrifying and longer than the average Green-Snout Metal mole's.

On its head were two small poles jutting out from its head. A closer look revealed these 'poles' to actually be bones; the mole was growing two born horns on its head.

It was now clear who the invader was.

Even with the distance between them, Lucas could feel the menacing aura from the two sides, albeit slightly off. The chimera's was stronger than the leading Green-Snout Metal mole by almost one factor, however, it was outnumbered.

Staring at the grievous injuries afflicted on both sides, Lucas finally realised what the off sensation he got from their aura was. Based on the degree of the injuries, it was evident that the two creatures were not in their best form.

Lucas estimated the chimera to be at the sixth level or the peak of the fifth level at the very least, whilst the leading Green-Snout Metal mole was at the fifth level.

Logically, it should have lost long ago, but Lucas guessed that the moles used tactics similar to humans, aka the human wave tactics, drowning the chimera with their numbers. Even though each

individual Green-Snout Metal mole was incomparably weaker than the chimera, by relying on each other, they were able to pose a significant threat to it.

Despite the grievous state of their injuries, the two sides were still capable of putting up an intense fight. The chimera dropped from the peak of the fifth level to the peak of the fourth level, bordering so close to the fifth level. As for the 'king' Green-Snout Metal mole, it had dropped to the early point of the fourth level, on par with most of the other moles here.

However, this was just in terms of stellar energy capacity, not pure strength. It still wasn't a match for the chimera alone, but relying on its species, it was difficult to say who would eventually come out on top.

At the moment, the normal moles were harassing the chimera on the side while the 'king' recuperated. However, the chimera was more dangerous than predicted. It tore apart every mole that could get within its attacking range, relying on its claws and mouth. But the king was unbothered by this.

Their battle had already lasted over thirty minutes and it was aware of the prowess of the chimera better than the other moles thought, so it knew the end result. But even then, the king didn't give the command to stop. If it were to beat the chimera, it would have to rely on this cheap trick to do so.

Meanwhile, as he stared at the ongoing rampaging battle, another insane thought crossed Lucas' mind; this time even more terrifying than the last one.