

The Crafts 47

Chapter 47 : The Young Boy Worries

Three days went by quickly and apart from the short confrontation with the man sent by Ramirez, Lucas didn't encounter any trouble. In fact, the days had been too peaceful for his store. He barely had any customers.

This wasn't because they were threatened or anything, but simply because Lucas was bad at running a store. The previous set of customers had already received modifications to their vestiges, and those who could afford it, bought some to use. Right after, they all went to the Wastelands at separate intervals. Typically, freelancers spend most of their time in the Wastelands or the base station.

Those who come back to the city either do so for important events or to take a break from work.

The current period was early May, which was part of the most active window of the year for beasts. So most freelancers would have their schedule booked by this time. A good example was the Autumn's Gate guild which had received a high pay mission to the Astranian Forest.

Without new blood coming to the store, it was natural for it to turn empty, but Lucas wasn't bothered by this one bit. The less work he had to do, the more time he had to research and create new vestiges. Lucas had planned on fixing his weakness by creating a special set of vestiges to cover for them and boost his strength, and this time period happened to just be the best opportunity for that.

However, the store being empty was contrary to the system's goals.

"Host is reminded to up the transaction numbers of the store to level up the system and receive bonuses. Remember, once the system approaches the required level, the host can access options to enable you to refine stellar energy."

"Not interested." Lucas replied.

While the system's words were tempting, Lucas knew that the level the system had to reach in order for him to be able to find a solution to his 'disability' was definitely high and not something he could achieve soon. So for the meantime, his decision to find a short-term solution was better than nothing.

"Host has left the system with no choice."

Suddenly, Lucas had a bad premonition.

[[Mission Overview: The system has once again been forced to take matters into its metaphorical hands. It's time to become a proper craftsman.

Mission Description: Receive 100 customers before the month is over

Rewards: Bronze Grade card.

Punishment: Crippling of one arm.]]

"Well, fantastic." Lucas sarcastically remarked.

He could still remember the previous time something like this happened. It was during then that Lucas found out that the system could assign missions based on its learning machine capability. These missions were different from those within the built-in algorithm of the system, and merely devices by it based on the situation it perceived.

Luckily, the system had a limit on its ability to create such impromptu missions per month, and the counts couldn't be stacked.

"Hold up..."

Lucas glanced at the reward section.

"Another one..." He muttered as his serious face collapsed with a grin.

The Bronze Grade card was Lucas' reward from the previous mission. He had already checked it out and knew what it was all about. It was a special item with a very special ability; it could raise Lucas' power level (both physically, mentally and energetically) up to the level of the card.

In other words, if it were a fourth level Bronze Grade card, once used, Lucas would become as strong as a fourth level Apertures Opening stage stellar practitioner.

This sounded impressive, making the Bronze Grade card a very much desired item, but there were still flaws to this godly item. First, the card was a one-time use item, so once Lucas used it, it would be gone. Second and most importantly, the buff effect is temporary.

All this made Lucas have a desire to accumulate as many of these cards as possible, since they could ensure his safety in a way more proactive and better way.

'All I just need to do is get one hundred customer this month, huh?'

DING

The bell at the entrance door jingled, separating Lucas from his thoughts. He cleaned himself up a bit and left the workshop to find out who it was.

"Oh, it's you." Lucas was slightly surprised by the appearance of the individual but not so much.

"Hello, mister." A young boy looking about 15-16 years of age greeted.

Lucas remembered him to be the first winner of his roulette spin, and the reason why the system gave him the mission to go to the Wastelands. What caused Lucas' surprise though, was that he had informed the boy the trip might take up to a month, but he was here after a bit above a week.

"So soon?" Lucas voiced his surprise.

The boy nervously replied, "I initially wanted to wait a bit longer, but something came up. My school's mid-term practicals are coming up."

"What's that about?" Lucas asked.

When he looked up the details of this world, Lucas only focused on the important things like geography, politics, finance, and material science. Things like the school system and holidays of the year were not in his interest.

The boy was slightly surprised by this question but didn't think much of it.

"Schools are typically divided into three; civil, technical and practical. The civil path caters to growing civil characters like a business genius, a political authority and so on. Technical focuses on the technical aspect of life like engineering, vestige-smithing and the likes. As for Practical schools, they raise freelancers.

This differentiation isn't so clear in high schools but it becomes so in universities.

"I'm currently studying at the Greendale Highschool which is a subsidiary of the Greendale School of Refiners. Although the high school is a subsidiary of a technical school, they are still required to teach all the fundamentals of the other two paths. So twice every year, we carry out practical exercises. I'm currently in my senior year, so our practicals aren't the usual hand-to-hand combat again.

Instead, we're sent into dangerous regions to face desolate beasts. There are invigilators to protect us, so the death rate is almost zero. However, the purpose of the exercise is to score high. I was hoping I could get something to help increase my chances at getting a good score."

Listening to the boy's explanation, Lucas suddenly had a question.

"Vestiges are allowed?"

"Why not?" The young boy was confused.

"A vestige is classified as part of one's power regardless of its grade. It's a common fact that to draw out the power of a vestige, one should equally be strong as well. A Body Strengthening stage practitioner with a Grade 3 vestige would at most draw out a Grade 1 power from it, and that's if they're talented enough."

Hearing this, Lucas' mind began to spin. It was as if he had just received a burst of inspiration which could help him complete the mission.

Lucas was truly surprised. While he knew that students in their final and penultimate years could purchase vestiges, this was applied to university students and not highschoolers.

'Hold up, vestiges are illegal for use to anyone who isn't a freelancer, a military or registered paramilitary member, doesn't have a permit or official recommendation from a freelancer. Is it alright to actually give this kid one? I won't get in trouble right?'

"Debatable." The system replied. It then explained to Lucas,

"As the customer won the vestige in a lottery spin, it can't necessarily be classified as a transaction. However, vestiges are valued items so the host might potentially get into trouble. The simple solution would be to apply for a permit on the customer's behalf, but he doesn't fulfill the criteria for one. Hence, the only solution is an approved recommendation from a registered freelancer."

Lucas frowned as he realised what a messy decision he had made. It was unlike him to make such a flaw, but making a mistake didn't mean he would quit.

"By the way, mister," the young boy hesitated, "the, the vestige..."

"Hey kid, come back tomorrow. I'm a bit busy now." Lucas waved him off as he turned around.

"But, but, the practicals are in a week's time. I need to make preparations and get used to the vestige as soon as possible."

"Are you doubting me?" Lucas glanced at him.

The young boy's statement might seem to have no problems but Lucas could sense a bit of anxiety in them. The young boy probably thought that he was scammed and wanted to make sure about it. If it turned out to be true, he would have to look for a backup solution as soon as possible, as he was running out of time. But why would Lucas even want to scam a kid? And of three federal coins at that.

Lucas felt insulted.

"Don't worry. Come back tomorrow and I'll make a vestige that you'll fall in love with right away. I'm busy now, so see yourself off."

Lucas walked away.