

The Crafts 63

Chapter 63: Lucas' Retaliation

"I finally have enough time to work on this now."

Lucas smiled as he stared at the skeletal framework that was arranged in front of him.

During the last couple of days, Lucas had spent at least four hours a day training Wally. This was to ensure that the latter would perform well, especially with the vestige he had made for him. However, this has led to a drop in Lucas' working time.

Lucas' time was usually spent researching the vestige-smith art, calculating and simulating the two major projects he had in mind, and improving his skill. Anyone of the activities would consume a lot of time, and with him spending not less than four hours a day on Wally, it made Lucas tight for him.

With the training cycle over, Lucas finally felt relieved.

'It would have been nice if this test were a couple of months, or at least weeks away. I would have had a prototype ready by then.'

Lucas sighed. But when he recalled that there was still a final term practical test, he wasn't as bothered.

There were currently two projects Lucas was working on: the first has to deal with his security. Lucas has been worried about how to go about exploring other places and surviving dangerous encounters against other humans who were at the Apertures Opening stage.

Although he had the Bronze Grade card, it was a one-time usage item with a time limit, and Lucas didn't want to have the fate of his life lie in such an item.

The second project he was working on, was something that would possibly redefine the vestige-smithing society. It was the new equipment Lucas planned to create to make a name for himself and seize a part of the market. He could still remember the system's mission to have received one hundred customers before the month was over.

After working for five straight hours, Lucas decided to take a break. But even during his break, he was still working, at least mentally.

'To complete both projects, I would need a powerful control unit or CPU. The more advanced it is, the better. But unfortunately, I can't make those.' Lucas thought.

What he was trying to build wasn't something that could simply be described as a weapon any longer, so the requirements for it were... special. Sadly, Lucas couldn't create the entire parts himself and would need to outsource some of them, particularly the most important component, the CPU. However, it was not just an ordinary CPU but a stellar processor.

When the usage of stellar energy became more popular, technology was similarly influenced. The profession of vestige-smithing also came to be.

A misconception by some was that vestiges were all weapons, but this was wrong. Even the two factions -the Multiplex and the Forger factions- were just branches in the weapons department of vestige-smithing. Vestige-smithing went beyond just making weapons, to reshaping technology.

It was to the point that the lines of differentiation between it and engineering were so blurred, that one could mistake them to be the same.

When a technology was made without the utilisation of stellar energy, it was simply an engineering technology. However, when stellar energy was used, either as a power source or an important integral of its operation, it became a vestige. In layman's terms, a vestige was a technology made with stellar energy in mind.

Apart from the common weapon vestige-smiths, there were also all other types of vestige-smiths. For instance, there were the vestige-smiths who built the light rail trains and sare shuttles. There were those who made consumer tech and even security tech.

However, the most popular branch of vestige-smithing, apart from the weapons branch, was the school of vestige-smithing known as the School of Analytical Reasoning, with the leading faction being the Methodical faction.

The School of Analytical Reasoning was the most popular branch of vestige-smiths, together with the weapons branch, because they made a very important component that almost all engineers and vestige-smiths couldn't do without -stellar processors.

Stellar processors were Central Processing Units (CPUs) or microprocessors made using stellar energy as a very important component.

Compared to typical processors, they were more powerful, could handle more intensive tasks, and were very fast. Most interstellar spaceships and even hover cars were powered with a stellar processor at the control unit, which was exactly why the Methodical faction was the most popular vestige-smith faction.

"System, I'm supposed to be a Crafts-God, but there's no training manual to be a stellar processor vestige-smith. What's with that?"

"Host is clearly a bit slow." The system responded.

"The difficulty of making stellar processors is on par with a Grade 4 vestige. As host currently lacks the ability to make such, you shouldn't even be considering this."

Lucas' lips twitched, at the response as he had a sudden urge to curse the system. It could have passed the message in a much nicer way than that, but clearly, it refused to do so. Sometimes, Lucas was convinced that the system had emotions, despite its dispassionate tone of speaking.

"Hey owner, get the fuck out right now!"

A loud voice sounded from the lobby.

Lucas was surprised that someone was causing trouble, after all, he had lived a somewhat quiet life here. As he left the work-station, Lucas tried to think of anyone who would do such, and only one party came to mind, but that was even more unbelievable.

At the entrance of the store, three men stood and stared at Lucas as he walked into the lobby from the work-station. They all had menacing looks on their faces, and two of them held batons in their hands. Seated in front of them was another individual with a hat, one whom Lucas found to be familiar.

"We meet again." The man with a hat spoke up.

"To my disliking, yes." Lucas replied.

The man was the second level Apertures Opening stage who had confronted Lucas the day he came back to the store from the Wastelands. From what Lucas knew, the man was a lackey of Ramirez, the underground boss who had his eyes on the land the Seven Sparks Forge was set on.

"You thought having the Red Fangs know about our little matter could save you?" The man smirked.

"You're too ignorant. Not to talk of the fact that the Red Fangs base is in the Central Prefecture, the West Wing district is Ramirez's home; it's our backyard. Even if those Fang fellows leave a few guards to monitor your surroundings or investigate that suspicious attack, there are many ways for us to go around them or to draw them away."

"To what do I owe this visit?" Lucas calmly asked as he took a seat opposite the man.

One of the men behind, the one without a baton, walked forward with a bottle of wine and a glass. He carefully handed the glass to the man with a hat and then poured a bit of wine into it.

"Ah. Refreshing." The man said after taking a sip of the wine.

"Regarding my visit, I think you can easily guess it. My boss is interested in meeting you."

"I'm quite busy, so I'll have to decline." Lucas waved his hand.

"Busy?" The man smiled as he glanced around, implying that the store was anything but that.

"You wouldn't know anything." Lucas ignored his scornful attitude.

The man with the hat couldn't help but chuckle. He wasn't just dumbfounded by Lucas' response, but most importantly, his behaviour. Despite being a human, Lucas showed no signs of fear even when confronted by a second level Apertures Opening stage stellar practitioner.

As he thought about this, the man couldn't help but keep laughing.

"Haha. Haha. Haha."

Bang

The wine glass in his hand abruptly exploded as his laughter came to an end.

The man in the hat narrowed his eyes at Lucas as he said, "I wasn't asking for your permission."

The two men behind, who held a baton in their hands, walked up and came to Lucas' side. They glared at him and radiated a bloodthirsty air as the grip on their weapons tightened. With such an overbearing nature, their peak Body Strengthening stage aura was on full display.

Even without saying a word, it was obvious that they were signalling for Lucas to leave with them; otherwise, they would let loose and attack him right away.

"So, kidnapping?" Lucas raised an eyebrow.

"It's not your first experience, but it won't end as before." The man calmly replied.

Lucas' eyes glistened. The man's response seemed to hint that the trio he met when he first came into this world were related to them, and the man was aware that Lucas had dealt with them.

"I'm honestly tired of so much killing. It's barely been a month, and I already have this much blood on my hands. Why must you force my hand?" Lucas sighed.

The two by his side didn't hesitate to strike with their batons right away. They had been informed that Lucas was at least on par with a fourth level Body Strengthening stage practitioner, which is the Organ Refining level. He was more likely to be at the peak level of the Body Strengthening stage, which was the Blood Cleansing level, the same as themselves.

With that being the case, it would take them going all out and cooperating well enough to be able to take down Lucas without being injured. Any hesitation on their side would result in a disastrous result, even with the second level Apertures Opening stage practitioner on their side.

Their batons swung at Lucas, smashing through the air with great force as they headed for Lucas.

Even with the incoming threat, Lucas remained calm and maintained his sight on the man in the hat. He ignored the duo attacking him to the point that one would have to ask whether Lucas failed to sense the incoming threat or he was just dumb.

'Idiot.'

Both fighters sneered at him. Even if Lucas was at the first level of the Apertures Opening stage, trying to tank two full-powered hits from peak Body Strengthening stage practitioners aimed at his head, was almost nothing short of suicide. Even if he didn't end up with his brain mushed, Lucas would suffer a severe concussion and be unable to retaliate.

Bang

The two batons connected with their target without fail, but the result astonished all sides, except Lucas.

There was no sign of damage nor any reaction from their target. Even his head remained in the same position, not moving a slight inch.

"How..." One of the attackers couldn't help but exclaim.

In the very next second, all four intruders went speechless as Lucas' voice sounded

"That tickles."

Both men were simultaneously embarrassed and infuriated as they took back their weapons and swung at Lucas again. However, even if the attacks would cause no damage to him, Lucas had no intention of acting as a punching bag for the duo.

He moved forward and dodged the two swings, then stretched out his hand towards the two.

"Retrieve."

A pair of daggers mysteriously appeared in Lucas' two hands, and unlike the weapons of the two attackers, they were vestiges.

The timing of the daggers' appearance was such that as Lucas stretched out his hands, they appeared and stabbed into the two attackers.

The two men had not expected Lucas to retaliate. Considering the previous shock from their first attempt, they were too enraged to evaluate the possibility of their prey attacking them. This led to a flaw in their attacks, a flaw that Lucas had targeted and successfully clinched.

"You..."

"Ahhh."

The two men now had vestiges stuck on their chests, just a few centimetres away from their heart. Regardless, the damage was dealt and they were in severe pain and desperate straits.

But Lucas wasn't satisfied with just a stab alone. He gritted his teeth and tightly gripped the daggers, dragging them horizontally and widening the wound.

The two attackers only had the chance to let out a mournful scream before they fell to the floor with blood flowing from their wounds almost like a stream.

"Interesting. I underestimated you a bit, but this is all you can amount to."