

The Crafts 65

Chapter 65: Lucas Versus The Scarred Man

When Lucas swung the vestige for the first time, the scarred man dodged it without a hassle before brandishing his pole at Lucas. The stellar energy revolving around the pole was even more vibrant than before and Lucas could sense a terrifying feel from the man.

Previously, the opponent had been battling Lucas to find out his limit. However, the scarred man now intended to take him down right away.

Even though he had managed to deceive the Red Fangs and snuck into the Seven Sparks Forge building, the man knew that it wouldn't be long before the Red Fangs came back. At best, it would be within the next twenty minutes.

Seeing the pole encroach towards him, Lucas ignored it and slashed his sword again.

'Stupid.' The scarred man thought.

Lucas had already coughed a bit of blood from the last strike, implying that he was already approaching his limit. With the strength of his attack raised a notch, it would be difficult for Lucas to tank the hit safely. So, ignoring the sword and pushing onward with his attack seemed to be the most logical course of action.

However, the scarred man was quite cautious. He didn't ignore Lucas' strike just yet but grabbed at it with his other hand while channelling stellar energy through it.

The sword gave off the energy of a Grade 2 vestige, and in the hands of a peak Body Strengthening stage practitioner, it would demonstrate a first level Apertures Opening stage strength at best. Even if it were a bit stronger, it was still something that the scarred man could catch with his hand.

But he was wrong.

Whoosh

"Ahhh!"

The sword cut through the man's hand, slicing off half his palm, including his five fingers. The latter was stunned, and his eyes opened wide as he let out a horrifying scream.

Because both attacks were at the same time, the man's attack was still unaffected by this. On the contrary, it had reached Lucas at the same time. However, Lucas had already reactivated the Host Protection Mechanism's active state and he only felt a slight itch from the pole strike.

The pain from having his palm sliced in half prevented the man from responding in time, and Lucas made good use of that time. He quickly closed the small gap between them with a step forward and brandished his sword once again at the man.

When the scarred man realised this, there was only one second left for him to respond. But that was on the condition Lucas let it be. After being suppressed for so long and finally finding an opportunity, there was no way Lucas would give him half a second to breathe, much less a full second.

'Die.'

With eyes wide open, the scarred man could only express thoughts of regret and frustration as the vestige pierced through his chest. To make sure that he got his opponent in one hit, Lucas had aimed for the heart.

"Ugh."

The abrupt explosion of force, which destroyed his heart, affected the man's blood flow, forcing him to spit out blood.

As the life in his body rapidly drained out, the scarred man could only raise his eyes and stare venomously at Lucas. Never did he think that he would go down like this; so easily, so quickly, without even a chance at saying his last words.

Lucas pulled out the sword, letting blood splatter on the store's flooring as the man's corpse fell to the ground.

Peak Body Strengthening stage practitioners had strong vitality, and it was even more so for Aperture Opening stage stellar practitioners. Usually, if they are stabbed by a blade, they could still walk away from it, albeit with the degree of injury depending on the stab.

Weapon-type vestiges were made with this in mind, which was why they were so lethal and made stellar practitioners seem like average humans after getting stabbed by one.

After recalling this fact, Lucas raised his head and glanced at the last man standing; the fellow who stood behind the scarred man and served him.

"Y, you. What do you want to do to me?" The man nervously asked as he took a step back.

Lucas was tempted to kill him right away, but he held back. As it stood, Lucas didn't know much about his opponent. All he knew was what Harry had told him, which was pretty much open information in the freelancer community. If he wanted to know more about Ramirez and his organisation, it would be best to interrogate one of them.

Staring at the man who acted weak but had secretly slid his right hand behind to extract some type of weapon, Lucas abruptly made his move and knocked the fellow out before he could react.

For Lucas, who had survived his very first life in a world filled with unscrupulous humans, entities and living beings, he was quite cautious and could tell between a coward and a sly individual.

After knocking the last man out, Lucas tied him up and hid him in the work-station. This was the only place in the store that no one could enter without his or the system's permission. Following that, he gathered the three corpses and threw them into the furnace.

The Red Fangs were already on to him and suspicious of his ability. This might not seem like a problem, but Lucas' identity as a human was the issue.

Lucas had recently learnt of something after his stay at the Red Fangs station. The various city-states, despite being ruled by the Oklo Dynasty, were somewhat independent and not exactly close friends or allies. It was even more so with Digress city-state.

It had an isolated identity, and most of the other eleven city-states (Oklo excluded), were on unfriendly terms with it and the others were basically neutral. Baylands city-state just happened to

be neutral, but it was leaning more on the opposite side, which was clearly obvious from how humans were treated in the city-state.

If the Red Fangs found out that Lucas was stronger than a peak Body Strengthening stage practitioner, he would be suspected of being a spy from Digress city-state, as that was the only place on the planet where humans who exceeded the Body Strengthening stage were found.

If he was arrested on the grounds of being a spy, Lucas could kiss his freedom goodbye. And since he wasn't even an actual spy, neither did he have any relations with them, the Digress city-state would not be bothered to intervene for his sake.

As such, Lucas wanted to erase as much suspicion as possible, and clearing the 'evidence' was the best way possible. Although the city's security footage might have caught the four gang members arriving inside his store, Lucas could just blatantly bluff that he had no idea where they went.

Within the store, the system was god, and as the host of the system, Lucas was the proxy of god. Lucas didn't just possess immortality in the store; he could easily 'reset' the store's appearance. This would bring the Seven Sparks Forge to its initial state (the state after it got renovated).

In other words, it would clear away every single footprint, thumbprint or traces, that might lead to suspicion.

Right after doing all that, Lucas returned to the lobby and sat down. A tablet appeared in his hands, which was a store-maintained appliance. Just like the desktop on the checkout counter, it was a piece of equipment that came with the renovation.

It wasn't like a communicator and didn't have many functions except aiding Lucas to monitor the store and control its various equipment no matter where he was.

A few minutes later, Lucas saw a Sare shuttle appear close to the Seven Sparks Forge. The shuttle looked fancy and didn't have the usual space-shuttle design. Instead, it looked just like a sports car, but a bit bigger and without any tires.

From the vehicle, a familiar duo stepped out and walked towards the store. They were the 'cops', Nafir and Barry. This time around, the lieutenant, Lily, didn't show up with them.

Cling

The sound of the bell hung by the door frame rang, signalling movement from the door.

Lucas glanced at the door's direction after having put away the tablet into his inventory.

"Oh, what a surprise. To what do I owe this visit?" Lucas calmly looked at the two men.

"No visitors?" Barry asked as he glanced around, not even bothering to greet.

"Not exactly. Although business has been slow recently, I do have a few." Lucas answered.

"What about the men that came in a while ago? Did they leave?" Nafir asked as he stared at Lucas.

Lucas suddenly had a feeling that Nafir was using the same technique from his time at the Red Fangs base. However unlike then, Lucas was now in the Seven Sparks Forge. Any mental spell or technique applied to the host would always be deemed as a threat, so the Host Protection Mechanism disabled the technique.

However, the HPM didn't give any rebound or feedback to the attacker; it simply acted like a hidden cushion and absorbed an attack. So, Nafir wouldn't notice that his technique failed. Nonetheless, Lucas had to respond properly, otherwise, Nafir would notice something out of the ordinary and be on alert.