

Mech Touch 6179

Chapter 6179 Tricky Plays

"It's your turn, Marvaine."

The young boy furrowed his brows in a cute manner. He looked as if he was struggling to make a big decision.

His choice of player group had a lot to do with his problems.

Frontier Warlords had only been out for a few years, but it had released so many expansions that players could practically pursue any development strategy!

Unlike Pirate Empires, the newer game tried to keep every game session short and fresh by imposing unique winning conditions for every group or faction.

Total annihilation of all other players could definitely lead to victory, but the digital game board was so large and intricate that it was unrealistic to eliminate everyone.

This was why players needed to race against time to complete their unique victory conditions as fast as possible.

For example, Ves needed to make his puelmer force plunder resources and acquire advanced human tech to complete the development of the first alien mech.

Andraste's goal was to evolve her sole leader unit from a lesser to a greater phase whale.

Lucky needed to tip the scales so that red humanity entered into an unstoppable decline.

Everyone knew what the other players needed to accomplish, so they could choose to take calculated risks to hinder each other's progress.

This time, Marvaine did not have the desire or the assets to intervene in the struggle between his father and his sisters.

The youngest member of the family only had one goal in mind.

"I bet half of my resources and all of my actions into developing the Ultimatum." Marvaine declared.

Yes, the Larkinson Clan was one of the more recent additions to Frontier Warlords!

Frontier Warlords already included a lot of states such as the Terran Alliance and the Colonial Federation of Davute.

However, the game also added in expansions based on the more notable and successful organizations in the Red Ocean.

The game developer joined the Larkinson Clan right after Ves managed to attain civilization-wide recognition during the infamous public inquiry on living mechs.

Naturally, the company first approached the Larkinson Clan in order to negotiate a licensing agreement.

Ves never received any reports related to this minor transaction, so one of his underlings must have taken care of this matter at the time.

It didn't matter. Ves felt flattered that he and his clan not only became a part of this popular digital board game, but also became a popular player choice, especially among other mech designers!

Unfortunately, Frontier Warlords focused so much on publishing new and pricey expansions that the game developers neglected to work on balancing the damn game.

This led to the unfortunate fact that the playable groups were highly unbalanced!

Many players developed a loathing for the Larkinson Clan in Frontier Warlords due to a unique and exaggerated gameplay gimmick.

The Ves in the game had some of the highest potential for innovation among any of the other named mech designers.

He also happened to be the most unstable one!

The exaggerated reliance on luck led to highly variable game sessions.

In some of them, the Larkinsons managed to climb their way up to first-class standards much sooner, allowing them to demolish every player by relying on superior capital and tech!

In other game sessions, the Larkinson Clan remained stuck in second-class society and lacked too much funds and troops to do anything meaningful.

In short, playing the Larkinson Clan was bound to be exciting, as people would either obtain extreme satisfaction or deep despair as Ves either succeeded or failed to develop a groundbreaking product!

The randomness of the Larkinson Clan reflected in the fact that three projected dice appeared in front of Marvaine. One of his small hands reached out and tossed them out again.

[1, 3, 5]

"Haha!" Andraste laughed. "You failed again!"

Marvaine made a frustrated noise!

"Why are you so bad in this game, papa?!"

Ves chuckled and leaned over to kiss his frustrated son in the head. "This is just a game. It is never meant to be an accurate reflection of reality. Frontier Warlords has done a good job at representing how much of the success of our clan Larkinson Clan is dependent on making a lot of calculated gambles. In reality, I have a lot of different ways to stack the odds in my favor. It is regrettable that this game doesn't include those options in order to maintain a semblance of fairness."

"So the game has to nerf you in order to keep it balanced?"

"Pretty much." Ves smirked.

Marvaine's failure to make the Larkinson Clan release a guaranteed bestseller in the form of the Ultimatum was a major setback. The loss of time and funding meant that the boy had to scale back his ambitions and focus on recovery.

"Mama, it's your turn now."

"I am aware. I choose to dispatch my Hexer mech force to the E3 System. I want to intervene in the battle over there even if I know that I may be coming too late to defend Aurelia's troops."

The daughter in question perked up. "I will do my best to hold out!"

"You don't want to save her." Ves accused his wife. "You just want to pick up the scraps for cheap and sell them for a lot of money."

That caused Aurelia to deflate again.

"Ves! Stop telling nonsense! I am doing my best to keep Aurelia in the game!"

The game session continued as every player encountered both successes and failures.

Due to the accelerated time progression of Frontier Warlords, a lot of years quickly went by. The Red War progressed way into the future, causing massive changes throughout the galaxy.

One of the ways that made Frontier Warlords so interesting was that all sorts of random factors determined the course of the Red War.

In some cases, red humanity successfully defended the border regions and disrupted the native alien offenses by conducting relentless deep strike operations.

In other cases, the native aliens managed to gain superiority and smash through one zone after another, thereby driving red humanity to an increasingly smaller corner!

Other weird scenarios could also take place.

For example, there was one where the Terrans and the Rubarthans successfully overthrew the hegemony of the Red Association and the Red Fleet.

Of course, many specific scenarios could be triggered through player intervention. A cosmopolitan player was able to negotiate a permanent peace deal between red humanity and the Red Cabal if he managed to make all of the right choices!

This outcome was virtually impossible to attain because other players had too many ways to sabotage such an extreme outcome.

The only player standing in her way was Clixie, whose colony in the rear of human space had been left alone for so long that it had finally grown into a formidable high-tech research and industrial hub!

All in all, Ves and his family experienced a mix of satisfaction, disappointment and anger as the game session rapidly reached the end stage.

Only two players remained in contention by this time. Andraste's leader unit had managed to weather a lot of different crises and was close to evolving into a greater phase whale!

The only player standing in her way was Clixie, whose colony in the rear of human space had been left alone for so long that it had finally grown into a formidable high-tech research and industrial hub!

The cat cleverly compensated for the lack of resource endowments by investing heavily in education and research to raise a lot of high-quality scientists and engineers.

With so many brilliant people growing up in the colony, most of them went on to emigrate to other star systems in order to work for big enterprises.

However, a small group of locals agreed to stay on their home planet and contribute to its prosperity. There were enough entrepreneurs among them that they managed to found numerous successful research institutions and production companies, many of which had become regional giants!

Now, Clixie desperately sought to buy time for her colony to grow large enough to satisfy her winning condition by delaying Andraste's progress!

"You scaredy cat! You did nothing but hide away from everyone. How dare you mess with Jenny?"

"Miaow miaow miaow!"

"Hah, your mercenaries are worthless! A phase whale can't be defeated by these mechs. There's not even a single ace mech in their lineups!"

"Miaow..."

"Only two more turns to go before Jenny becomes a powerful greater phase whale."

"Miaow!"

"What?! How come you managed to find my hidden phase whale enclave?! Wait, is that an RF strike fleet?! It takes a huge amount of money and favors to mobilize the fleeters! You... you despicable cat. You deceived me. You gave up on trying to win the game by making your colony reach its growth target. You diverted the funds that were supposed to develop your colony further in order to get the Red Fleet to move!"

"Miaow." Clixie responded with a toothed grin. Her tail was swishing confidently behind her back.

"No! Jenny! Get away! How did you manage to track my pocket space?! I was sure I took enough precautions to keep it hidden!"

"Miaow miaow miaow." The cat arrogantly explained.

Andraste looked at her father in pain. "How could you, papa?! How could you sell me out to the humans?!"

"I needed funds in order to make a comeback after my fleet almost got smashed by your mother's crazy Hexer forces." Ves admitted his guilt. "I managed to eliminate her from the game, but it was a pyrrhic victory in the end. I managed to scrape a couple of extra puelmer warships with the secret deal that I have made. Not that it helped since Marvaine of all players managed to ambush my fleet and crush it utterly. Saint Tusa is such a ridiculously overpowered ace pilot when fighting against puelmer warships. His Ultimate Ability is too effective against the small alien hulls."

Marvaine had already gotten drowsy as he rested on Gloriana's lap. His only response was a slight curl of his lips.

In the end, Jenny failed to escape the hunt of the Red Fleet. The phase whale got speared to the point where the fleeters managed to capture her alive!

"Nooooo!"

"Miaaaaaaooow!"

The ultimate winner of this session was Clixie! The cat preened with pride as she had proved her mettle as the strongest warlord among the gathered players!

"Okay, let's get ready for bed time. It's time to sleep so that you can get ready for another day in school."

"Awww..."

"I wanna stay up and watch the new Tolsten Confidential drama."

"Where did you hear about that? Tolsten Confidential is not a show that you should be watching, young lady!"

As Ves and Gloriana were about to lead their children to their bedrooms, they abruptly paused as they received a silent alert.

Soon enough, flashing red lights briefly engulfed the entirety of Diandi Base as not just the Larkinsons, but all of human civilization received a dreadful piece of news.

"It's happening..." Ves whispered in shock.

He already expected something like this to happen, but now that the time had finally come, he still couldn't maintain his composure!

[CONTACT WITH BRIDGEHEAD ONE IS TEMPORARY LOST. ASSUMED UNDER ATTACK BY A RED CABAL DEEP STRIKE FLEET AND MULTIPLE COSMOPOLITAN CELLS. ATTEMPTING TO RESTORE CONTACT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, BUT LIKELIHOOD IS LOW AS SPECIAL SENSORS HAVE DETECTED THAT THE STAR SYSTEM IS ENTIRELY WALLED OFF BY A NEW AND UNPRECEDENTED SPATIAL ANOMALY.]

[261 STAR SYSTEMS ACROSS ALL BORDER SYSTEMS HAVE COME UNDER ASSAULT AT THE SAME TIME. OVERWHELMING NATIVE ALIEN ASSAULT FLEETS AND RAIDING FLEETS ARE PUTTING IMMENSE PRESSURE ON THE STRATEGIC AND PERIPHERAL STAR SYSTEMS OF THE 1ST, 2ND AND 3RD DEFENSIVE BANDS AT THE SAME TIME.]

[MANY ASSAULT FLEETS COMPRISE OF MODERN ALIEN WARSHIPS AND LIGHTLY ARMORED CARRIERS THAT CAN TRANSPORT LARGE CONTINGENTS OF PHASEFIGHTERS. THERE ARE SPORADIC SIGHTINGS OF PHASE WHALES. IF LARGE-SCALE REINFORCEMENTS ARE NOT FORTHCOMING, THE 1ST DEFENSIVE BAND WILL FALL IN LESS THAN A WEEK.]

[THE ALIEN OFFENSIVE HAS BEGUN. THIS IS THE HOUR WHERE RED HUMANITY MUST PROVE ITS COURAGE. EVERY HUMAN HAS A DUTY TO FIGHT OR CONTRIBUTE TO OUR COLLECTIVE CAUSE. MARTIAL LAW WILL SOON BE EFFECT IN THE BORDER REGIONS. OTHER WARTIME LAWS AND POLICIES SHALL COME INTO EFFECT IN EVERY STATE. PREPARE YOURSELF. FOR HUMANITY!]