

THE HIVEMIND IS CONQUERING FOR ME?

Chapter 7: Apollo

I woke up some time later to sounds of clicking and scuttling all around me. Opening my eyes, I discover the sun setting on the horizon a purple hue in the sky as dusk was setting in.

Trying to move I look down realising I was in a papoose made of a gossamer like substance I suddenly recalled. "Right I died." I sighed then looked up. Orchid was looking round making low screeches. I turned my head back to see what she was screeching at and what I saw made my jaw drop.

Bugs, bugs everywhere.

Thousands of them, some reaching the same height as Orchid, some looking like smaller copies of her. A variety of drones and warrior caste that Orchid mentioned to me earlier and others variants I had no clue all whirling round with such purpose, a hive at work all one, no mistake in any movement.

I went to activate my psionic power to establish a link with Orchid to ask her what is happening here. I wailed. "Waaaaaaaaaagh!" The connection instantly severing. The pain coursing through my head was the result of extreme sensory overload. The only reason I was conscious is the simple fact that I have a psionic shield, albeit very weak, all psionic users have.

Plus the fact that I'm not seen as a hostile mind to the hive itself or I would have received more than just sensory pain, I'd be dead from a defensive countermeasure.

As I did scream, the once organised flood of bodies paused and snapped their necks towards now direction. Orchid instantly severed the connection to the rest of the hive and into mine.

"MATE-SPAWN!" She screeched letting off a bitter pheromone into the air indicating fear. Before she could continue her screeching, a tentacle pulled me out of my papoose and into the air.

Two other smaller tentacles latched onto my temples and a coolness rushed into my head, warding off the intense pain I felt a moment ago. Looking through my teary eyes, I saw a very peculiar member of the hive. It was 6 meters tall. It had no legs and hovered in place, just slightly off the ground. The trunk of its torso was thin with 2 clawed arms.

Its head was similar to Orchids however, it had no discernible mouth and the back of its head was bulbous and pulsing with psionic might. Flowing from its head like hair were a plethora of tentacles squirming independently from one another.

"Worry not now little-mate-spawn." A calm, soothing voice entered my mind. "This one has mended the damage to your mind shield that our amplified link caused." The creature started rubbing my cheek tenderly with its tentacles. "This pain we caused you hurts us greatly and we promise it shall never happen again."

Though healed and mildly enjoyed the caressing, my mind was still recovering a smidge so I just conveyed "t-thank you. Hungry."

"I understand. Our mate, this one shall return you to the Orchid. We shall converse more on the void swimmer." With one final caress, the being put me back into Orchids makeshift papoose before hovering back to its task the rest of the localised swarm doing the same.

Once back into the papoose, Orchid instantly span me around and had me feed again. After I had my fill at the melted ice cream machine, I was spun back around and carefully reconnected my psionic link with her. Before I had

the chance to greet her I heard. "Are you ok Mate-spawn? Did the Psion agitator help you?"

Orchid closed of her connection to the hive again after you wailed so you could reconnect to Orchid when you wanted to." I could tell by the emotions coming through the link that Orchid was truly worried about me. she felt almost grief stricken at the thought of causing me pain.

" I promise I'm fine whatever that...Hive body did it, washed away the pain from my head I just feel tired again despite waking up." After saying this, Orchid let out a low growl sound which I inferred as a sigh of relief.

"Now, what's going on here? Are we waiting for that void swimmer?" "Yes mate-spawn. You left your short torpor at a good time, the void swimmer has finally been able to find a breach in the preys air defence after we finished our attack on a few more of their concrete nests. The void swimmer shall be here shortly."

After a short wait, in which Orchid started to rub my cheek with the back of her scythes in an imitation of the Psion agitator, I felt a change in the air. I looked up to see a ship of behemoth of a ship. roughly a kilometre long and half that height wise. The ship was a brown fleshy colour with thick darker brown supports adorned all over the exterior at the front?

Of the ship 2 tendrils poked out like antenna. I looked over towards the being that helped me earlier their tentacles almost identical in shape to the ships only on a whole different scale. The ship came in contact with the ground with a controlled thud, no hydraulics or loud whooshing present from what you would expect from a ship of such size only the sound akin to breathing.

"What a spectacular sight, its majestic." I exclaimed. As someone who loved sci-fi things in my past life, to see a ship of such calibre left me elated and giddy.

"While smaller than the main hive ships by a large amount, the void swimmers were some of the first designed by the queen when we first left our nest world and since our goal is to take you back to nest world, a swimmer will be comfortable to you on our journey as it can store oxygen in its whole body instead of just in the torpor nests." Orchid gave a small speech and the information was shocking.

This whole ship is one living being!

It took about 10 minutes for all the drones and such to get onto the ship with the extra biomass they have accumulated though the main force still attacking the planet would have gathered this eventually. It was more efficient to take at

least some back now and not waste all the extra space the ship would have if it was just me and Orchid on the ship.

As Orchid stomped into the ship, I could tell right away this ship definitely wasn't made with humans in mind. For a start the walls were constricting and relaxing in a rhythm. 'Yep clearly alive.' I shuddered. Second, holes going this way and that way all over the walls for drones to scuttle around easier while bigger pathways were left for bigger entities such as Orchid to travel through.

As Orchid was about to go deeper into the belly of the beast, literally, I asked "Is there a place we can watch us leaving orbit? I want to see the world as we leave."

Orchid changed her direction of movement "Of course mate-spawn there is some translucent tissue towards the ships tendrils you should be able to see out from there." After 5 minutes of walking Orchid arrived at the location said. What was there was a wall of pink translucent tissue enough to see out off but not as clear as a window. This would work.

"Thank you Orchid, no not just you, the whole hive." I said, Tears forming in my eyes. "What for mate-spawn?" Orchid tilted head in confusion at my emotional state. "Although its not the way I ever would have imagined it you have made one of my life long dreams come true. To step into the stars and

see what is out there." Even more confused orchid tilted her head in the other direction.

"But mate-spawn I don't understand? You are only a day old, how would you have had these dreams?" I paused. crap! *sniff* "Don't mind me Orchid, just something weird your mate does time to time." I played off trying to distract her by mentioning 'your mate.' Which worked.

After saying that, this the ship finally started to rise from the planet. It took roughly a minute of flight before being able to see the whole planet from a fair distance away. It was a dwarf planet roughly 2000 km in total. Most of the planet was rocky and mountainous in terrain. The places where greenery was abundant, human cities, were created in those futuristic circular style.

Very little water was visible from space as most of it was underground or transported in from neighbouring worlds. It was almost peaceful. Almost. From a certain angle, you could see what looked like more Colossal hive ships surrounding the planet and smaller metallic ships evacuating under intense defensive fire.

Explosions on the planets surface were visible even from this distance indicating the defence is truly fighting to the end.

I let out a sigh, beautiful and horrific all at once. To distract myself I asked Orchid.

"So Orchid, have you had any luck with figuring out my name yet as I said I'm not the biggest enjoyer of mate spawn."

"Ah, yes! Orchid has chosen a name along with the rest of the hive when you were in torpor that we think would be perfect."

"Is that so? please let me hear it" I asked. "Yes as we take this world for you, we can never forget what it has given to us. Our greatest treasure, our future mate, you. As such we shall take the name your prey-species gave this world and immortalise it in you. Therefore, even when its resources become one with the hive.

The name of your home world shall always be with you.

"Apollo."