

Last System 469

Chapter 469 First Skirmish At The Caraven's Perimeter

"Control unit reports on duty!" a relatively young man rushed past the doors to the deck of Daniel's mobile headquarters. After him, a group of seven more men and women alike of all ages entered, all instantly heading to their designated spots.

"Spotter unit reports in!"

"Communication unit reports in!"

"CQ Unit reports in!"

Bit by bit, the relatively tiny space that Daniel had for himself and Alice alone filled up with people of all sorts of ranks and jobs.

The entirety of the deck was only around eighty square meters, with eight meters of width and ten meters of length. On its own, the deck made up the entire central part of the massive hover, protected from any potential impact by all the floors around it.

"Communication, give me a status report!" Daniel ordered as he stepped into his own designated space as well before smashing one of the control buttons located at the control panel to the side of his stand.

Just like was the case in the ground headquarters when everything started, Daniel ended up standing. Only by being up on his legs could he gain a perfect look at all of his surroundings, free of any obstacles if he wanted to take a closer look at the inner workings of any of the departments within the deck.

It was the best spot to command both the hover itself but also all the units within the caravan. Yet, it was the place that Daniel really hated.

After all, standing up was far less comfortable than relaxing in a hammock that he would often hang between the third and fourth communication seat!

"Our rear guard made contact with the advance units of the army following our path," the officer in charge of the communication unit reported after glancing through the data provided by his underlings. "They are in the middle of the skirmish right now but our troops can force them back at any time," the man reported before gently nodding his head, "just give me the order, sir."

"That won't be necessary," Daniel replied before heaving a long, annoyed sigh. Then, he smashed the same button as before, quite angry that it failed to work on the first try.

A mere moment later, Daniel once again saw the proof that the third time was really the charm, as the huge panel of windows embedded into the entire front of the deck turned opaque before revealing their true form.

Only an idiot would put the main center of operations and command in a place where only a thin layer of protective glass would keep all the important people inside from attacks.

And the people who were capable of replicating the technology from blueprints Daniel provided were as far from being idiots as a human being could be.

The aesthetically pleasing look of the situation outside that the windows provided turned out to be nothing more but a clever lie, constructed on the basis of the extremely detailed cameras and other sensors mounted all over the massive hover. And what anyone else would formerly take for windows turned into simple flat screens hung along the perimeter of the room.

"Sir?" the communication officer stood at attention. His face betrayed the man was taken aback by Daniel's decision.

"We can drive them away at any time," Daniel decided to elaborate on the situation a bit as soon as he noticed the confused look on the officer's face. "It's still too early to reveal our hand, not over something as minor as a skirmish of the proxy units."

The absolute military core of the caravan was positioned at the back of its center, all within direct proximity of Daniel's headquarters. The further one went away from the core of the caravan, the lighter the units became all the way to the proxy units that secured both the path ahead and the road for potential retreat.

Those proxy units consisted mostly of the usual tech, just with some added perks as per courtesy of the conglomerate's engineers and Daniel's requests.

The vehicle of the proxy units was actually technologically behind the early prototype of hovers that turned out to be the main type of equipment their enemy was using.

Yet, it wasn't the vehicle that would decide the outcome of a skirmish, but how well the commander could fit proper firepower to abuse the vehicle's strengths while punishing the downsides of the enemy formation.

As such, by following this simple rule, Daniel made sure to equip all the proxy units with technology from roughly two hundred years worth of scientific development in the future. As such, it wasn't the drivers and the soldiers on the back of the trucks that Daniel used for his proxy troops.

Every last vehicle that currently operated on the first line of defense of the caravan was just the earliest version of a battle drone in the entire world.

The guns of the proxy unit were comparable to what the other side brought to the play. And yet, when it came to actually shooting, only about one round every four hundred shots by the enemy would actually reach its target.

On the other hand, though, the run-down desert trucks with the AI-controlled sentry turrets would hardly lose even a single shot by allowing it to miss.

'Soon, even foot soldiers will turn obsolete,' Daniel thought as he turned his eyes toward the screen that outlined the details of the ongoing battle.

Looking at the screen, Daniel couldn't help but squint his eyes a little.

'They should hold on for at least two, maybe three hours,' he thought, taking his time to properly analyze the situation.

"Boss, what are your orders, sir!" this time it was the representative of the spotter's unit.

And judging by how he was grasping the trigger for a whole array of the tools his department took for the journey, he was more than happy to initiate the annihilation of their enemy.

"Just keep on going," Daniel replied before turning around and half-sitting at the edge of the small railing that secured his spot. "I will be damned if that unit loses," he added before turning his head back and taking a second look at the scenes displayed on the screen.

"You know what..." Daniel muttered after a second while his eyes glued to the screen. "We are so damn close..."

Daniel couldn't help but hesitate.

And then, for but a second, he saw a potential future before his eyes.

A large, nuclear crater. The ruins of the ancient warehouse with its walls devastated by the strike. Daniel's own corpse with his hand reaching out for the device's controls only to fall short just a few inches...

Daniel closed his eyes and cleared his mind. He then took a proper, deep breath.

"Yeah, let's do just that," he then muttered under his nose before putting a perfectly blank look on his face and then turning his eyes towards a very specific unit.

"LDC unit!" Daniel called out.

"Yes, sir!" A man stood up from the corner of the deck.

"Feel free to rain some hell on those fuckers," Daniel said with a strangely satisfied look on his face. "And don't worry," he then added while averting his eyes a bit, "and you don't need to mind the drones."