

The Mech Touch

Chapter 7535 The Two Mothers

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Weeks passed by. The four Larkinsons worked almost nonstop every day they remained inside the System Space.

Though they regularly spent a couple of hours on rest and relaxation, they always felt guilty for wasting their time on less productive activities. They only reserved the bare minimum on leisure time as every wasted day diminished their AP earnings a little further.

Ves alone could have never challenged all of those Missions by himself.

Mech designer or not, there were limits to how much he took pleasure in exercising his craft.

Most of his works in completing his Missions did not possess any commercial viability. Though Ves gained bits and pieces of inspiration that could guide him into designing his future mechs, none of the mechs he designed during the ongoing marathon could be used outside of their very narrow purpose.

That sapped a lot of his passion and motivation for his current work. Ves was the sort of mech designer who delighted in serving real clients and customers. He measured his success by measuring the impact on society attributed to his works.

From realizing the hidden potential of mech pilots to contributing to the decisive defeats of serious adversaries, Ves had long enjoyed the feeling that he was changing the course of human history for the better since he had begun his career.

Even his most humble virtual mech designs managed to improve many people's lives.

Venerable Joshua never could have made it so far without getting affected by the huge influence of living mechs.

Perhaps Ves' rise and proliferation of his living mechs may have displaced the careers of many highly intelligent and capable individuals, but so what?

The mech industry rarely took pity on the losers!

If other rivals failed to match the expectations set by their customers, then they deserved to get pushed down by his superior products!

Yet all of that excitement only took place in real space.

Here inside the completely isolated System Space, his works only had one recipient from the beginning to the end. Its requirements were simultaneously harsh and strange at the same time. Insane demands such as insisting that a mech design must have a completely functional secondary cockpit completely threw the mech designers off their usual game.

Ves did not entirely dislike these oddball requirements. They added a bit of fun and interest to the work sessions.

He and the other three mech designers couldn't help but fall into discussion about these oddities from time to time.

Though they tried to keep their talking to a minimum in order to prevent Gloriana and the two Journeyman from taking too much credit, it was impossible for them to refrain from talking entirely.

They were still human. They were still mech designers. Nothing delighted them more than to sit down and have a good discussion on the future direction of mechs and whether an eccentric feature might become dominant one day.

The four Larkinsons held these kinds of talks frequently enough that they developed a new sense of respect and understanding of each other's background and expertise.

After all, spending so many weeks and months in a common living and working space had a way of melting barriers.

Though the four already knew each other pretty well and worked together many times in the past, it was different this time.

They no longer had any contact with other people. Their ongoing commitment prevented them from dropping out in order to have a chat with their children or respected colleagues.

The two mothers among them took this especially hard.

Gloriana and Ketis both missed their children dearly. To spend a day without pampering or consoling their eager and growing boys and girls went against their instincts.

Strangely enough, they partially managed to compensate for the gaping holes in their hearts by deepening their friendships.

The two women never really got along very well in the past. They possessed completely different backgrounds, values and outlooks in life. Even the fact that they both became Larkinsons could not bridge the enormous divide between their personalities.

Yet out of all of the possible subjects, the shared burden of motherhood finally managed to set aside all of their disagreements and allow the two to sit together without breaking into an argument.

"I miss Aurelia the most." Gloriana sighed as she sat next to the dining table that the mech designers had built inside the Workshop of Creation. "You cannot imagine how many times I have cast doubt on the decision to enroll her into an RF academy. I am not as familiar with the Red Fleet as Ves. While he says it will be okay, I am not as certain whether the fleeters will truly treat her well enough."

Over the course of their marathon, they had spent a bit of time on expanding and improving their makeshift living conditions.

The mech designers had built a small and modest bungalow that only contained the most essential rooms and facilities.

Every couple of days, one of them might spend a few hours on adding decorations or installing another gadget, yet none of them dared to be too extravagant for fear of wasting too much time.

Gloriana on her part gazed over at a wall. She had spent some of her free time carving metal sculptures of all of her children. Aurelia's sculpture appeared the most dazzling due to its shiny golden exterior and its greater length.

While the Senior Mech Designer admired the image of her oldest child, the swordmaster sitting next to her shook her head.

"To be honest, I cannot see how you would send one of your kids so far away. I would never want to be too far away from any of my adorable brats for more than a few days at most. Being able to keep in touch with them over the galactic net simply isn't the same. Besides that, I don't trust the mechers and fleeters at all. These guys used to be the tyrants that reigned over us from above. Sure, they're not as powerful as before, but that arguably makes them even more dangerous. These guys still maintain the same sense of arrogance and entitlement that they have built up over four centuries. The thought of letting my precious Kirian or Mayra receive their indoctrination twists my heart."

As a swordmaster, she always spoke from her heart. She could never lie to herself, nor to others.

This made it practically impossible to do the same as Gloriana and let one of her children study at one of the former hegemonies of human civilization.

Gloriana understood this and respected the other woman's stance. "It is certainly never a bad idea to keep your children close, Ketis. Cherish your time with them. Each day you spend with your son and daughter is a blessing that you can never make up for in the future. As for my husband and I, our calculations can never be so simple. Our status and ambitions in high society imposes many expectations on us. Ves had risen so quickly that we must proactively show our ability and willingness to assimilate into the highest power base of red humanity. All of our ongoing collaborations with the major powers share the common purpose of sending out a signal that we are willing to work together as opposed to trying to challenge their dominance."

"Politics." Ketis sneered. "You guys always have to make this more complicated than is necessary."

"Just because you do not like it does not mean you cannot avoid it. As a prominent leader and the only 'source' of superdimensional matter to red humanity, everyone is taking note of your actions and opinions. I am actually envious of how much influence you wield as the bearer of the

Heavensword. Holding this exquisite relic of an indeterminate age has effectively made you half as impactful as a Star Designer."

The swordmaster scoffed at this. She briefly turned her head and threw an annoyed look at the large sheathed blade that was so persistent in sticking to her body that it had even managed to follow her inside the System Space!

"All of that is fake, as you should very well know. I won't lie and tell you that I have never appreciated its immense power and abilities. However, it definitely has a mind of its own, and it isn't afraid to impose its opinions on me. This thing does not respect my privacy in the slightest and only barely allows me to retain my free will. I have already grown so tired of being tested on my decisions to stick to my own personal swordsmanship and holding on to my Bloodsinger. I have nightmares about becoming the next Heavensword Saint. If you ever see me become a different woman one day, then you will know that this relic has succeeded in taking me over. I will already be dead in a sense."

That caused the Senior Mech Designer to frown. "I... never imagined that the threat posed by the Heavensword would be so severe. I thought the two of you would have spent enough time with each other to form a mutual bond of friendship. Is that not the case?"

"You are not completely wrong, Gloriana, but you are not completely right either. It's complicated. The Heavensword is old. It had grown up in a completely different age than our own. Due to its power, it is already difficult for this relic to respect our modern rules and sensibilities. It is actually a sign of deep respect and admiration that it is already refraining itself from assimilating me into its system."