

## 6849 Need for Patience

"Master Devos, if our work has managed to earn recognition from above, why did we fail to notice any signs?" Gloriana asked.

"Anchor mechs are not supposed to be obvious to laymen and mech designers below the rank of Master." Master Laila Rebecca Devos responded. "This is a competition that is primarily aimed at my peers and I. The two of you have made good use of the opportunity to participate early, but the rules do not fully account for your low ranks. It is not a surprise that there are... glitches."

Even the Red Kingdom still had flaws.

"I understand." Ves said. "We are mech designers. We do not need any flashy ceremonies or rituals. It is already enough

for us to know the truth. How quickly will the Minerva Mark II grow as a response earning more favor from above?"

"It should be relatively slow enough to avoid attracting too much attention. It is difficult to provide a convincing explanation if your Minerva Mark II abruptly grows strangers from one second to the next. By spreading out the improvement over months, it is unlikely that those who are not keeping a close watch on the ace mech will notice anything unusual, or if they did, attribute it to the kingdom."

That sounded about right.

"Will the two of us notice any differences outside of the Minerva Mark II?"

"You will, but the changes will be subtle." Master Laila Devos replied. "If I have to

make concrete guesses, then it should be marginally easier for third-party mech designers to acquire the ability to design living mechs. Mech designers will also find it easier to comprehend the alien technological principles that are necessary to understand archetech beyond its surface. Aside from that, you will also enjoy slightly greater favor from the kingdom, but you should hardly notice the difference. It can still make a difference when it counts."

Both Ves and Gloriana nodded in understanding. They guessed that they would probably have an easier time breaking through, but they were still years away before they were worthy to become Masters.

They talked a bit more, taking care not to mention anything too sensitive.

Unfortunately, Master Laila Devos was not able to share much more information related to anchor mechs.

The Miracle Couple would not be able to brag about their accomplishments to others. The Red Association would not send them official certificates. Most people wouldn't even notice that the Minerva Mark II had become a little more special.

However, it made sense when Ves thought about it a little further. If the Minerva Mark II deserved to become renowned across human civilization, then she would do so based on her excellent design, her ingenious tech and her stellar performance on the battlefield.

Compared to her superior combat power, a plaque that commemorated the Minerva Mark II as the first anchor mech built by

Ves and Gloriana did not seem important in comparison!

"Forget about it." Ves said. "Master Laila, we would like to have the cooperation of your clan for the purposes of testing the Minerva Mark II. We intend to conduct a limited test in space and involve hundreds if not thousands of mechs. We would also like the cooperation of an expert mech and possibly an ace mech. Is it possible for your ancient clan to put your forces at our disposal?"

This was quite a serious request. Master Laila could not decide on this matter alone. The other leaders of the Devos Ancient Clan needed to agree with this request.

"We are willing to lend you a hand, but we cannot dispatch our forces too far from their designated positions. Give us 3 days

to complete the preparations. Until that time, you are free to find a safe location and test the Minerva Mark II's solo performance. I highly recommend you measure the living mech's baseline performance before moving on to stress testing."

Her suggestion was sensible, but Ves lacked a lot of patience.

Gloriana answered in his stead. "We can wait for 3 days to conduct more thorough tests. In the meantime, we will begin to test the basic functionality of the Minerva Mark II and her Victrix starting from tomorrow. We are all too exhausted to conduct any tests."

Saint Commander Casella Ingvar did not exactly look pleased with this small delay, but even she had grown a little fatigued from staying awake for so many hours.

She looked as if she was a stimulant addict who just got told that she would be getting her fix tomorrow instead of today!

Ves found it rather funny that the cool and self-controlled ace commander would react this way in the face of a brand new ace mech that was still out of reach for a day.

However, they truly could not help it. The mech designers needed to rest and internalize everything that happened. It was not a good idea to conduct potentially risky tests without properly resting their minds. They needed to be attentive in order to respond to potential accidents.

Before Ves retired for the day, he approached the Saint Commander, who had since walked up to the feet of the Minerva Mark II and placed her palm onto the archemetal exterior.

The ace commander looked as if she was reuniting with a lover after a long separation.

A part of her still felt lost. She had yet to pilot the upgraded Minerva and did not have a good grasp on how much their combat effectiveness had improved.

Both of them understood on an intellectual level that they could definitely do a lot more than before, but the changes were not tangible enough.

"The feeling is different." Casella said with a frown. "The Minerva has grown stronger... but also changed in other ways. I can feel a split mind of sorts. The Victrix is a lot more vicious, bloodthirsty and aggressive. It is not the most comforting presence."

"Understandable." Ves remarked. "When



you interface with the Minerva Mark II for the first time, do not hesitate to show the Victrix who is in charge. That should be enough to keep it compliant."

The Saint Commander grunted in acknowledgement.

There was no need to give any detailed instructions to an ace commander. She should be more than competent to handle this situation.

"Do you think you are equipped to fight the battles of tomorrow, Casella?"

"This improvement has come early enough. We cannot afford to show weakness against the rampaging aliens. With the vast improvements of my new ace mech, I have become much more confident in my ability to repel the alien invaders. If there is no phase lord support,

I cannot see how a conventional enemy raiding fleet can defeat us despite outnumbering us by several times."

"That sounds like an analytical answer. Can you give me an answer that is purely based on your heart?"

"I... am not entirely clear what to share with you, sir. I feel delighted, but in an abstract fashion. I will not be able to feel fully satisfied unless I am able to pilot the Minerva Mark II in reality."

"Tomorrow." He told her. "Be patient. We will let you take the Minerva out for a spin tomorrow morning. We might even test the performance of your Command Field in isolated cases so that we can take detailed scans. We can conduct more elaborate tests the day after that. As for three days later, the Bluejay Fleet and the Devos Ancient Clan will lend us enough

forces to simulate a small to medium engagement."

The Saint Commander lit up a bit. She looked forward to testing her greater capabilities in a real test environment.

"I am looking forward to testing the many new features." Casella began to display a genuine smile. "Mindstorm Alloy and the Victrix increases the versatility of my ace mech."

The combination sounded powerful enough, but both of them were relatively untested products, which significantly reduced its actual market price.

THat would hopefully change once more advanced tech trickled down into society.

Ves merely rolled his eyes when he witnessed that sort of behavior, but continued to spread their innovation

across the stars.

"War will continue to engulf the Red Ocean." Casella spoke about another subject. "The Agamemnon Upper Zone has already witnessed their scouts. It is only a matter of time before the fighting escalates.

The aliens had grown confident and greedy enough to divert to working for under employees.

That way, even if one of their pincers encountered obstacles, they still had more to overthrow the god of this thing!

The next day came later than people wished.

The first activation should not be a big deal, so they moved out into the clearing around Dlandi Base and set the Minerva Mark II in the middle of a field.

Casella had already changed into her piloting suit and made her way to the cockpit.

The children all nagged their parents until they were allowed to observe the first activation of the Minerva Mark II.

"Hihihihhi!"

"Hihihihhi..."

Aurelia and Andraste ran around and laughed as they played a game among themselves.

Half a minute later, their cats joined in as well.

"Meow."

"Miaow!"

The two running daughters made for a stark contrast with the grim environment.

Ves meanwhile sat down and held Marvaine in his lap.

The boy eagerly wanted to learn what made the Minerva Mark II so powerful.

"There are many reasons why the Minerva Mark II has become so impressive, but I cannot fully explain it to you all. What is important for you to know is that you should stick to your own ideas and have the courage to pursue them. Reality will try to push back, but if you are strong enough, you will be able to resist all of the pressure."

"Ohhh..."

"That said, you should only make risky design choices if you are strong enough to absorb the consequences of failure." Ves gently taught his son.

"How do I become stronger as a mech

designer?" Marvaine asked.

"Do not fight by yourself. Humans are capable of extensive cooperation, and it makes a lot of sense to join forces. Our clan invests a lot of resources into building up the camaraderie between fighting troops. These are the soldiers who will be protecting you in the following years."

Ves felt a little concerned about Marvaine. His two daughters gave him the sense that they could rely on their good sense to avoid a lot of potential trouble.

Whether it was reliable or not was quite substantial.

Marvaine was not satisfied with the answer, though.

"Is there a way for me to fight directly?"  
The boy asked.

"Absolutely not."

"What about becoming a phase lord? Can I become a phase lord like you, father?"

Marvaine looked so cute when he wanted to plead with Ves to obtain the necessary knowledge and materials.

Ves coughed. "I do not recommend you to follow this path. We do not fully understand the nature of phase lords. Not many humans can turn into phase lords. If you really want to gain a giant True God and start to smack stuff around, then there are many alternatives that are better."

Mech designers were never supposed to take action in the first place. Ves' insistence on avoiding anything too serious meant that he gained a unique qualifier that he could be dangerous when startled.



"The Minerva moved!" Marvaine exclaimed.

"So soon?! We haven't fully synced everything correctly. What is it doing?"

The Minevera... has taken a few steps forward." Marvaine described. "I don't see anything wrong with its movement. The ace mech hadn't toppled over or anything."

"For now."

Ves quickly put down his work and raced towards a nearby terminal.

He could observe many different sensor readings. Much of them produced results that vastly exceeded what they originally expected.

"I... am... free!"

The Saint Commander felt much more at ease when piloting the ace mech.

Her growth was no longer constrained by other factors anymore!

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**Exlor**

Creator's Thought

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