

Chapter 196: Dawn

While our car made its way through Elevate City's everlasting traffic, I sent a message to my sales department.

It had begun to bug me that it wasn't possible to internally vocalize my thoughts over calls. From what I've seen, it was a limitation of commercial SAID models. Now that I've discovered a way to address that with the neural component used in the bio-processor chips, I noted it down on the project files for our under-development SAID.

One of our ongoing projects was the set of cybernetics. The number of pieces in a set could vary. There were numerous tiny cybernetics that could synergize and improve performance, but at the end of the day, there were only a few mandatory pieces in a set.

The point was to facilitate high-speed movements by replacing weak human parts with cybernetic parts that could handle the stress. That meant a set often included the human limbs, the spine, relevant muscles, joints, and even some bones.

The most complicated part was the spine. It included numerous sensitive parts that replaced the nervous system. However, for the set I was aiming to create, my main focus was on the SAID. That was because it was the control tower for all the other cybernetics a user had. It was basically the heart of it.

With all these delicate parts to design, it delayed the project again and again. It was to the point where I expedited the commercial variant of the Talos, our in-house cyberarm. With more funds, we could expand our team and expand our research budget. We didn't want to rush our in-house cybernetics, only to need an upgrade soon after.

With all these things on the line, I couldn't help but have a screen pulled up in the corner of my eye to keep an eye on our product launch. We simultaneously launched our MMORPG game and our translation software today.

As it was a new market that we were entering, I had no idea what to expect. I didn't think it'd fail, but the level of success it could achieve varied too greatly for me to set what was a reasonable expectation.

"And, we're here. I almost can't believe it," Polina muttered.

I looked outside to inspect the towering megabuilding we were approaching. I've seen many like it and even lived in one when I first got into this world. Still, it was hard not to be impressed by the architectural marvel that it was.

Our small convoy of half a dozen cars pulled up in one of the parking lots and dispersed. Many of my security personnel would be clearing the way and guarding us from the distance. That left me and Polina to slowly make our way in.

Immediately upon opening the door toward the greater atrium of the megabuilding, I was met with obnoxious music and the bustling of the crowd. Like the other buildings, the atrium was surrounded by numerous residences across hundreds of levels. The central part of the first floor was like a busy shopping mall with various businesses.

We pressed the button for the elevator and I couldn't resist taking a peek down at the market below. We were only on the third floor, so I couldn't oversee the entire place, but it allowed me to clearly see what businesses they were.

Unlike the megabuilding I had lived in, this building appeared to be better on the security side. I didn't spot any gang members, and the eateries were jammed packed.

I didn't get to examine them further as the elevator swiftly arrived.

I simply followed Polina. She soon nervously came to a stop outside one of the many units.

"Go on. She is already expecting you, right?"

She turned to me and, after a moment of hesitation, swallowed down all her worries and rang the doorbell.

Immediately, the door popped open, and an eye peeked out.

"Mom?" the teenage girl on the other side widened her eyes as it got teary. "Mom!"

The door slammed wide open and a younger version of Polina rushed to her mother's embrace.

"Sally, I'm back," Polina weakly muttered with a gentle smile. "I trust that you were able to take care of yourself properly while I was gone?"

"Of course. Didn't Auntie Suzy tell you about it?"

"Yes, yes. I still have to thank her for taking care of you."

As they continued to chat, I slowly took a step back from the dramatic reunion between mother and daughter and gave them some space. However, my good intentions were foiled as a hand reached out to grab me.

"Anyway, let's head inside first. I have someone to introduce you to."

It was only then that her daughter noticed me.

"Umm, who? He's too young for you, Mom."

Polina fiercely smacked her daughter on the back of the head as we made our way inside.

"I wouldn't be here without this person's help. Be polite."

“Haha, it’s fine. You can treat me casually. I’m Rollo, by the way.”

“Sally. Thanks for helping my mom.”

While the girl regarded me with a guarded look, she still welcomed me to a seat.

There, I tried to keep my words short, so the two could spend more time with each other. The conversation lasted a few minutes before Polina rebuked her daughter.

“Where are our manners? Sally quickly go grab something to drink for our guest here.”

The moment she left earshot, I whispered a question that happened to be one of my purposes for today’s visit.

“Polina, do you still have that...biochip installed? The one from Nova Tech.”

“Yes, I was busy scrounging up every credit I could to get back here. There’s no way I would pay a cyber doc to remove it when it wasn’t an urgent matter. In fact, it helped me with my work quite a bit. There were a few times I got close to getting hurt from some hurling debris if it wasn’t for the chip.”

“Still, it’s dangerous to use that experimental product. It hasn’t been thoroughly tested and wasn’t even designed for longevity. It was something they smashed together for a one-time test. It’s practically a ticking time bomb.”

“...I’ll see what I can do once I get settled in again.”

We fell into a moment of silence as we heard Sally coming back with a tray in hand. She placed them down in the most polite way she could before going over to turn on the TV. It seemed she thought we were talking about something sensitive and kept her distance.

“Now that you’re back, how about it? Will you think about my offer to work for me?” I continued.

“Oh please. I’ve troubled you enough. I don’t have any valuable skills that would be worth your time.”

“You’re someone who has valuable experiences working in space now. I plan to expand up there soon, so you’d be plenty helpful.”

“Hmm, let me think about it first.”

“Of course. You deserve a break with your family.”

At my words, we both turned to Sally. Her eyes were currently glued to the screen that was playing a commercial. The commercial just so happened to be from my company.

“Are you interested in games?” I asked.

She snapped toward me and was about to answer when she suddenly settled down upon seeing her mom.

“Not really. I just recognize it because I heard my friends will be playing.”

I grinned at her obvious attempt at hiding her desires. I checked the latest GPS update from my employee and found them just a few minutes away.

“I see. Well, I have a gift for you guys, but it’s a little too bulky for me to carry, so I had someone else bring it over. It should be arriving soon.”

I could almost see the question marks popping up from both their heads and chose not to elaborate. I excused myself to the washroom so I would return at the perfect time.

Like that, several minutes went by.

I returned to their living room just as their doorbell rang.

“Go ahead, that should be my gift.”

The two ladies exchanged glances before answering the door. They gasped upon seeing all the people outside.

I had ordered a VR capsule unit for them so I could gift them my company’s new game. While we didn’t manufacture any capsule units ourselves, we still reserved a number of them for our testing and demo sessions.

While covering her mouth, Polina came over toward me as four men carried the bed-sized capsule into their home.

In hindsight, I should’ve realized they wouldn’t have much room in their apartment. Thankfully they have just enough room to put it, but I feel kind of bad for crowding up their space now.

“What is this, Rollo? You didn’t have to get us anything.”

“Don’t worry about it. My company happens to be launching a game today, so I was giving these out as a promotional activity. I thought your daughter was at the age she would enjoy things like this. Sorry, it’s so bulky, though. If you don’t want it, I can get something else instead.”

“No!” Sally interjected. “We’ll take it!”

She turned her pleading eyes to her mother, who only sternly glared at her. However, the young girl didn’t falter.

“Please, mom. I want to join my friends.”

“If you want something, then save up for it with your own abilities.”

“You don’t understand, mom. Then I’d be so behind. I’d have to level by myself if I don’t join them within the first few days.

Faced with the puppy eyes of her beloved daughter, Polina did what any other mother do in this situation. She relented.

By the time I was on my way back to lab zero, it was dawn. Our sales data for our opening day was just about ready. It was time to see how it did. Just the first day wouldn’t be indicative of how it would do in the long run, but it was still a strong indicator.

If we organized larger beta sessions, and various pre-launch activities, we may have gotten more data to plot our estimates with. However, all those things also alerted our competitors.

While the gaming industry wasn’t one where sabotage was common, it was hard to say what they would do to deter new competitors from joining their market. It was deemed safer to quickly enter the market first than to min-max our marketing campaign.

I opened the file named ‘Legend of the Mythic War Sales Report’ and read over the numbers with bated breath.

I skipped over the fluff and arrived at the sales number. I counted the digits behind the two. I counted three digits, then four, and then five. Including the two, that was six digits.

That meant we had sold over two hundred thousand copies!

It was common for famous companies to sell tens of millions on the first day, but our results were still amazing.

We priced our game as low as we could get away with it without appearing to be a cheap knockoff. That meant it was sold for fifty credits. However, that didn’t include the micro-transactions available in the game or subscription time in the future. Just from the initial sales alone, we made ten million credits in revenue.

The development team was considered small, as Lanus did much of the heavy lifting, and the only significant expenses were for the servers and marketing.

I couldn’t wipe the grin from my face as I placed a call to my chief operations officer.

“So you read the results, too? Are you going to come back for today, or should we go over to you?”

“Let’s...get used to coming over to lab zero. It’s more secure.”

“Hmm, fine. I’ll grab the others. See you in a bit.”

Claire swiftly ended the call before we managed to get into the meat of the conversation.

I sighed and looked back down at the report.

While hundreds of thousands of sales weren't record-breaking or anything, it was still a significant step forward. My bottom line was ten million in revenue within two weeks. It was what we needed in order to jumpstart our expansion plan and we had met that in a day.

It was a mind-boggling number to think about only a year ago. It was the same amount of credits we paid annually to maintain our new status as an E-Class Corporation.

I knew the top players in the market sold tens of millions, but I only felt satisfaction at our accomplishments.

Just Elevate City alone had hundreds of millions of people. The life of the average person in this world was miserable enough to strengthen their urge to play games to get away from it all. Nevertheless, they decided to spend their hard-earned money on my product. I couldn't be prouder of my company.

The success had opened up numerous possibilities for us.

Tomorrow, I'll have a lot of work to do. But as Claire said, these moments are for celebrations.

Our golden age is coming.