

# Chapter 197: Legend of the Mythic War

The doors to the elevators opened, and several figures exited. Seeing this, I exited my lab to go greet them. I came just as they disabled their holographic disguises.

“Congratulations to you, *head designer!* Your baby is a success,” Claire cheered.

While I was used to her antics, I wasn’t ready for what came next from Leo.

“Come on, Rollo. Were you seriously surprised at the success? Did you not believe in me when Lana and I sent you our reports after that closed beta we hosted?”

“Um—”

Before I could respond, Thorne cut me off.

“He one hundred percent skimmed through your report. I’ve been watching him do that to everything marked as non-urgent these past few months. He shoved them all in a pile for him to view *later*, or so he says.”

“Well, I’ve been busy.”

I couldn’t verify Thorne’s claims, but he was more likely to be right than not. In that case, it really was my fault for not reading it.

“Either way,” I cleared my throat. “It gave me a pleasant surprise, so all’s well that ends well.”

“Well, the one you should be paying close attention to is the translation software,” Leo continued. “For things like that, the sales usually ramp up rather than explode all at once on launch day.”

He was right. Our target market for the translation software was part of an entirely different segment. The gaming market was broad and leaned toward the younger age groups. Meanwhile, the translation software was aimed at people of working age and above. More specifically, small businesses, mercenaries who traveled, or simply people going on vacations.

These working adults were a lot more cautious in their spending habits compared to their younger counterparts, letting others review the product first. Then they would analyze it further to ensure it didn’t have any detrimental effects. All this made the sales of the translation software industry be slowly ramping. It was a lot harder to judge its success based on data from launch day alone.

“We’ll deal with that as things happen. That was a side project anyway. For the next week, we need to gather more accurate projections to calculate our expected income. Then we can really start the expansion.”

“You boys!” Claire clapped, drawing our attention. “Enough talk about work, I said. Come on, let’s go lay out the food. It’s going to get cold.”

She briskly walked toward the meeting room with Lana close on her tail. The three of us shrugged and followed along.

The conversation went on to more mundane subjects as I swiftly found our meeting table filled with various delicacies. True to my taste, everything was made from authentic ingredients and none of that synthetic crap. I soon found out it was courtesy of my longtime acquaintance, Joey. He may be all business when it came down to it, but he at least knew how to enjoy when he could.

I had barely met him or my other friend, Luford, after my return. Only occasional business calls, so maybe I should change that soon. If I wanted to expand rapidly, I couldn’t neglect my business relationships.

As Claire got loaded up on booze, we quickly found ourselves running out of topics to talk about. We didn’t exactly have much in common outside of work. It naturally led the discussion to drift toward our new game. Apparently, it was okay to talk about it. I had no idea what kind of standards Claire used, but I wasn’t complaining.

“You two,” I addressed Leo and Lana. “Tell me more about this closed beta I missed. I’d rather hear it from you than read a report at this point.”

Leo shrugged.

“What do you want me to talk about? It’s just us reaching out to the acquaintances we made over our short career as mercenaries. Tons of cy-sec experts are nerds who dabble in games as well, so it wasn’t that hard.”

“And what’d they say that made you confident it would do okay?”

“Everyone thought it was refreshing,” Lana answered. “Don’t think there are many games that incorporate magic and made-up races. Usually, people find it too unfamiliar, but the world in the Legend of the Mythic War was captivating.”

“It just feels... polished,” Leo added.

I nodded.

I knew it was because the entire concept, from the classes, game mode, leveling experience, and everything else, was based on my memories from one of the most popular games released. It was cheating in that I *borrowed* a developed idea. Things aligned, and the people of this world were new to the fantasy genre. I didn’t regret being the one to introduce it to them.

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## Sherry - Mercenary

"I told you, I'm busy for this weekend. You'll either have to find a replacement for your gig or wait!"

Sherry mercilessly cut off the call. It was from one of the few teams she occasionally helped out, but she didn't regret it. It was hard for someone like her who had a corpo upbringing to get along with others who were so different. She believed she was already doing her best by being able to work with them at all.

However, everyone knew she didn't have a choice. Practically exiled from corporate society, the mercenary jobs she had to take often required more than just brains. She needed boots on the ground and muscle to get past the security. It was unavoidable for people in her situation to work with these mercenaries from the *common stock*.

Once she ended the call, she dove back into her VR capsule and rejoined another call.

"Sorry about that. I'm back."

"No need to be sorry. We didn't wait for you. Hurry up and catch up before we start the instance!"

"What? You guys couldn't wait a few minutes? Oh, come on. Come back and help me. There's no way I can quest faster than you guys in a group."

"...Fine. Give us a min—Wait! We're being ganked! Dumb ugly orc rogues! Who in their right mind would create a character like that? Hurry up and come help us."

"Where?"

"Look on the map, genius! It's just north of you."

Sherry swiftly got on her mount and speeded off to her companions. The urgency of her actions caused one of the patrolling guards to signal her to a halt. It was a bot. A computer-controlled character. Thankfully, it was one from the faction she hailed from, so it wasn't likely it would turn hostile.

If Sherry could, she would rather blow past the bot if she had a choice. However, she knew that would just get her placed on the wanted list and taken to a cell once she returned to town.

"Halt. Explain the commotion at once! We can't have you galloping at full speed in the town in this manner."

Sherry took in a deep breath to calm herself, despite knowing her real body did not mimic the same action. She needed to compose herself before talking to the bot. It felt strange speaking to someone from a different time. Compared to her previous experience when playing games in a

modern setting, it was a new experience. It pulled her into the atmosphere, which caused her to speak dramatically.

“Please make way! My companions are being assaulted and they need my help!”

Her messages were instantly read by the game’s AI and a response was composed within a second. Different from Lanus, this AI wasn’t sentient. It was similar to Rollo’s old SAID AI, Kiri. It was simply a database of inputs and outputs that had preset responses.

“What? Under my watch? Outrageous! Guide me, I shall join you.”

Like that, Sherry was joined by the bot in reinforcing her friends. It would inevitably lead to chaos.

The chaotic battles on opening day were widespread. Numerous players were experimenting with the mechanics of the game and the parameters of the bots. Everyone was rushing to be the first one to solve the game.

It was something even Rollo didn’t know how it would develop. AI brought a whole new dynamic to games. Having intelligent NPCs completely overhauled the experience. The economy was more sophisticated, as well as enabling a plethora of options.

What the players soon found out after the first day was that the AIs were strangely well-coded. They didn’t find any game-breaking bugs or exploits. Praise of the game was being sung throughout the grapevines. The game development team of the Halls Corporation was establishing a favorable reputation.

Unbeknownst to these players, the party who was really responsible for the smooth gameplay wasn’t any human. It was, in fact, Lanus, the sentient AI. It wasn’t a surprise for Rollo that Lanus was an expert in managing how a primitive AI worked. It took one to know how one worked.

Even with Rollo’s advanced knowledge, he was still only human. He would still make mistakes. It was only an AI that could produce perfect work. It was to the point where Rollo purposely introduced small bugs to not raise suspicion. But that truth wouldn’t see the light of day.

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The next morning, I woke up and went through my routine to get cleaned up. I then made my way to the server where Lanus was.

“Greetings. Good morning, Rollo.”

“Lanus, can I get an update on how the Legend of the Mythic War has been doing since last night?”

“Report. It has been steadily growing. From the two hundred thousand, six hundred and forty-two players recorded at eighteen hundred o’clock, it has gone up by approximately one

hundred thousand. Micro-transactions have been rapidly rising as well. Sending you a detailed report with the numbers now.”

Satisfied with the numbers, I went to inspect our servers. With Lanus overseeing it, there haven't been any crashes or anything yet, but I needed to double-check everything on the hardware side. The pseudo AI we created for the game's NPC, or bots, as they called it in this world, was vital to the game.

We gave them a lot of freedom, so any potential issues they had could easily ruin everything. It was something I wouldn't have dared to implement if I didn't have Lanus monitoring it. If anything was found, Lanus would then flag it to our development team for fixes.

Otherwise, it may raise some suspicion if any parties paid attention and discovered an inhuman response time.

Overall, I was happy with the results. This entire project had another boon to it. It allowed us to openly procure a large amount of hardware parts for the servers. With that large order, we easily added extra parts to expand Lanus' capabilities as well.

It could now handle all the day-to-day monitoring of my employees, game, and facility. At the same time, it was able to assist all four research groups.

With the matter of the video game being on the right track, it was time for me to review our expansion plan.

For the commercial aspect, our roadmap included upgrading to D-Class, so we could have the rights to operate in Aegis. We had a few other projects lined up as well, with the set of cybernetics at the forefront. However, the focus of that would be on internal use instead.

As we built up our business, we needed the strength to defend it. We needed to have a strong front to deter any parties from getting ideas. Our equipment also needed to be ready to operate in the zero-g environment.

There were many upgrades in mind, but the most important ones were going to be directly related to what I was going to spend my upgrade points on. It was time to pull the trigger. I confirmed our company finances would be able to support more ambitious endeavors.

As my guardian, NPC, had said, the time to lie low was over. I could afford to reveal some high technology of my own now.

I opened my status once more time to confirm my points.

Status	
Level:	39

EXP:	290/3800
Musculoskeletal:	211
Neural Reflex:	65
Visuomotor Coordination:	87
Endurance:	59
Sensory Perception:	127
Upgrade Points:	22
Upgrades:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Stealth +7</li> <li>● Hacking +5</li> <li>● Cybernetic Engineering +10</li> <li>● Stealth Technology +12</li> <li>● Software Engineering +12</li> <li>● Electrical Engineering +10</li> </ul>
Enhancements:	SAID: Zenitech Sebastien v2 Bio-Coprocessor: SocialCorp Lightning II Optics: Mirage Tech Clear-Sights mk.12 Cyberarm (Left): Nova Tech Heracle Mk. 3 Cyberarm (Right): Nova Tech Heracle Mk. 3 Auditory: SocialCorp Echo IV Vocal: SocialCorp Orator III Cardiovascular: BioGen Lifepump 5 Sensory: Halls Corp Argus Elite Custom Additional Processing: Halls Corp Custom ST Miscellaneous: Halls Corp HSU Custom Shade

*Twenty-two points. It's time to bring out the big guns. Literally.*