

## Chapter CXXV: Hurry Up and Wait

The vacation turned out to have been something of a stroke of genius — accidental or otherwise — because the general good mood that followed it lasted through the next week, at least for the Servants and us Masters, and it even seemed to have lifted the spirits of the technicians and crew as well. Like watching us relax had vicariously eased their own burdens and lifted a weight off of their shoulders.

It wasn't quite the first time since the sabotage, but there was a lightness in the air that infected everyone.

But as things moved back into the normal day-to-day operations at Chaldea and we all went back to our routines, things slowly became business as usual. Ritsuka and Rika were back to morning sessions with Aífe in the gym and afternoon sessions with El-Melloi II. Mash's swimming lessons continued, and although she adapted to them and picked things up quickly — likely helped in no small part by the fact that she had mine and Marie's individual attention instead of having to share it with a whole class of students — she was not suddenly an Olympic swimmer after just a couple weeks of instruction.

I was confident, however, that she could at least manage to make it safely back to land if she got dropped into a body of water. Like, say, that bay near where we'd landed in Septem. Whether she'd do quite so well if she was dropped into the middle of the ocean with nothing but a heading, well, that I was less sure of, but she would at least be better off than us Masters would be, courtesy of the strength and endurance granted to her as a Demi-Servant.

As the days wore on, however, and November came closer and closer to ending without any news about what to expect from the next Singularity, my patience started to wear thinner. We still had a little over a year to resolve the remaining four Singularities — a year to do the same task we'd completed in less than half that time already — but I didn't like the idea of getting anywhere near close to our supposed deadline.

As it turned out, when I brought the issue up to Marie a few days before Thanksgiving, she didn't like it either.

“Of course it's frustrating,” she said a little impatiently. “I don't like it either, but we had to put investigating the next Singularity on hold for a while so we could look back into the Age of Gods to determine if there really was a connection with King Solomon.”

“Did you find anything out?” I asked her.

She pinched the bridge of her nose and let out a gusty sigh, leaning on her desk. One of the piles of paper wobbled a little, but stayed upright. “Da Vinci is the one handling the bulk of the data,” she admitted, which explained what Da Vinci had been up to the past few weeks, too, “but from my understanding, no. So far, based upon observations by the SHEBA Lens, there's no evidence of any historical deviation in the era of King Solomon.”

And that was confirmation of a kind, wasn't it? Whoever or whatever was behind all of this, the best case scenario, they were either using King Solomon's name or had summoned him as a Servant.

Although how they would have forced the compliance of a Heroic Spirit who came in damn near the top of the list for Casters, that part I still wasn't clear on. Command Spells could only go so far in binding a Heroic Spirit that could probably unravel them with a glance and a raised eyebrow.

Whatever the case, they'd cast a curse on Ritsuka from across time and space using one of their Demon Gods — as a familiar, I had to assume, and the fact that they were using one of *those things* as a familiar said quite a bit, too. We had to assume that our ultimate enemy, however they related to King Solomon, was probably close to his level of power and ability. At the very least, they had some method of controlling him, but what that was, we might not find out for quite some time.

“What does that mean, going forward?”

“Dantès could have been lying,” she said first, but she didn't sound like she really believed that, “but the other possibility is that whoever concocted this entire plot somehow summoned and bound King Solomon as a Servant. We'll have to look into how they might have accomplished that, because the idea that someone could summon a Servant without a system like ours or a Holy Grail System like Fuyuki's is already a matter of concern.”

As I'd thought, then.

“And the British Singularity?”

Marie grimaced. “Da Vinci is still collecting the data on the issue of King Solomon, just to be as thorough as possible, so we likely won't have any more information about the next Singularity for at least another week. We still haven't managed to narrow it down beyond the general location and a loose timeframe, but we've at least managed to rule out anything before the eighteenth century.”

That was still a lot of history to cover, though. A lot had happened in the past three-hundred years, and stuff like preventing the Industrial Revolution or destroying Britain before America could enter the Second World War were just the first two things I could think of that might be the focus of a Singularity there. There was still at least a hundred years of history that fit in-between those, too, with several important events happening that could easily have changed the shape of the world as we knew it now.

I'd skim over things to try and pick out more likely candidates on my end, but in terms of in-depth study, I still didn't have enough to work with. Combing through the major events of a single decade in England was something that could be done in a month, but three centuries was too much for that little time.

In the meantime...

“If we're expecting to take another few weeks before we're ready to tackle the next Singularity, it might be a good idea to arrange some more...community events to break up the monotony.”

Marie's brow furrowed. “Community events?”

“Since Da Vinci still hasn't found the time to fix the simulator for Servants,” I reasoned, “another movie night or two might give everyone something to do besides wait or kill time.”

Marie's lips pursed. "For the moment, we still don't have much use for the briefing room," she said slowly, "so there isn't any real reason why something like that can't be done..."

I was sensing a "but" in there somewhere.

"Is there a reason why we shouldn't?"

She sighed.

"No, it's nothing," she said. "If you think it would help everyone to have another movie night, then I'll trust your judgment. You have my permission to set it up whenever you like."

It wasn't nothing, I could tell that plainly and I think anyone else would have been able to as well, but I wasn't quite sure what it *could* be. It wasn't like we'd left a mess behind last time and no one had needed to use the room while we were in there. It wasn't even like there was something else we were meant to be doing that we'd had to clear our schedules for in order to sit down and watch that movie a few weeks ago.

Unless she was thinking about — ah.

"Ritsuka is fine, Marie," I told her patiently.

"I know that!" she snapped back at me. "I know that th...the incident afterwards had nothing at all to do with the movie you all watched the night before! I know that...any trigger that might have caused that curse to activate would already have been tripped long before now! I'm perfectly aware that there's no reason at all to...to w-worry that something else might happen! Even so, I...!"

Her eyes squeezed shut and her bottom lip wobbled a little. Her grip on her pen tightened until her knuckles turned bone white.

I'd thought she was doing better when she didn't have any trouble with us Rayshifting into Okeanos for that vacation day, and maybe on the day to day, she was. None of that meant that she would never have a bout of irrational fear or another panic attack ever again, or that it would be safe for her to take down the dreamcatcher that was, to my knowledge, still hanging above her bed.

That whole incident must have been like finding out about the sabotage all over again. A punch to the gut just when she might have started to feel safe again.

"Even so..." she whispered.

I sighed. "I know."

She took a shuddering breath and visibly gathered herself. Like she was climbing a ladder, her back straightened and her shoulders squared, and even if some part of her was still fragile on the inside, what was projected outwards was an image of strength.

"I don't have any problems with you and the others watching movies together in the briefing room whenever you have down time," she said, and her voice barely quivered. "The only conditions I

have are that I be informed of times when you plan to do that and everyone keeps their communicators on.”

“Of course, Director.” The only place I went without my communicator these days was the shower, although I guess Okeanos had proved that they were actually waterproof, hadn’t it?

“Was there anything else?” she asked, all business.

“Have you eaten breakfast yet?”

Her stomach gurgled, and her cheeks flushed a pale pink.

“I-I was just about to, actually, before you came in!” she answered.

*Liar*, I thought, but I didn’t call her on it. She’d probably been so caught up in her paperwork that she’d forgotten about it entirely. The only reason she’d eaten regularly for most of those two years before the sabotage was because she’d been so dedicated to making sure I had enough myself.

“I’ll get out of your hair, then,” I said, “so that you can go and get some food. I need to ask Da Vinci about a few things anyway.”

With that said, I left Marie’s office behind and made my way down to Da Vinci’s workshop. I hadn’t yet picked out a room for a terrarium or even really talked to Marie about it, but that was partly because I didn’t really have anything to fill it with yet. For the most part, there wasn’t even a point in having a huge swarm hanging around Chaldea, because even if I managed to cram all of it into that coffin with me, it was largely pointless when I would just be building up a new one once I arrived most of the time anyway.

So having a small, carefully selected swarm would be best. Something that had real utility, something I could leave here and use for supplementary tasks, like weaving lines of silk rope for me to use in the field. Unfortunately, while I’d found a few Black Widows while we were in Septem, we hadn’t had a place to put them at the time, so I’d had to leave them behind.

What would be most convenient would probably be having a few spider puppets that could do the job just as well. Easier to care for, less need to feed them or worry about them dying off on me if they were left alone for too long. The question was whether or not we had the supplies and Da Vinci had the time to really make them, and if the former was a problem, then I could grab another bunch of bugs for her to use as raw materials.

The latter, unfortunately, I couldn’t really do anything about. Da Vinci was an important, irreplaceable asset in Chaldea, probably the one largely responsible for the fact it was still running at all, let alone so effectively, and if she just didn’t have the time to dedicate to building me more puppets, then the only options I really had were to leave it be or try and make them myself.

I wasn’t particularly confident I could manage to make something like that on my own. Something workable? Maybe. Something as elegant, sturdy, or functional as Huginn and Muninn? Not a chance.

Da Vinci was, predictably, hard at work when I arrived at her workshop, with her back to me as she poured over whatever was on her workbench, although the door was, as usual for her, left wide

open. I lifted my hand, but before I could rap my knuckles against the wood to let her know I was there, she tilted her head to the side and said, “Yes? Was there something you needed, Taylor?”

I didn’t think I would ever get used to being on the receiving end of that.

“A couple of different things,” I said. “The Director said something about you handling the data for the scan of King Solomon’s era.”

She nodded. “That’s right. I’m running it through a few programs to look for subtler anomalies, but so far, there hasn’t been anything. If King Solomon truly is involved the way Edmond Dantès claims he is, then it doesn’t seem like it has anything to do with his own native time, which means that it really could be occurring from any point — even, theoretically, a time before his own life, although that’s actually harder than it might sound.”

Right. Because the only way to summon a Heroic Spirit whose legend hadn’t occurred yet using a catalyst that would one day have a connection to them was either accidentally or using some form of Clairvoyance to peer into the future. Not impossible, in other words, but incredibly difficult. That part wasn’t that hard to grasp.

“So the only answer we have is that it would have to be King Solomon as a Servant.”

Da Vinci held up a finger and looked at me over her shoulder with a smile. “Or someone who is doing a very convincing job of pretending to be him! It’s too soon to say with certainty, especially as we have yet to actually encounter the man himself, but yes. Barring truly extraordinary circumstances that would surprise even a genius like me, those seem to be our only possibilities.”

Nothing I hadn’t already known or talked about with Marie.

“And the next Singularity?” I asked.

“As I’m sure you’ve already discussed with the Director, that’s still an ongoing investigation as well,” said Da Vinci. “Another week, and we might be able to glean more information about what to expect, perhaps even narrow down a more exact era and location. I wouldn’t place any bets that we’ll be deploying you before December, but almost certainly before Christmas.”

Longer than a week, shorter than a month. I was hoping she might have had more for me than that, but I guess that was just wishful thinking.

“One other thing,” I said. “That spider puppet you said you were working on. Have you finished with it yet?”

She paused briefly, hands stilling for a short moment, and I knew the general shape of the answer before the words even left her mouth.

“Ah,” she said awkwardly. “Yes, well, I’m afraid...that’s taking a bit longer than I’d hoped it would.” She sighed, stopped, and turned around, offering me an apologetic smile. “Things have been a bit busier than normal the last few weeks, and examining King Solomon’s era for discrepancies became something of a priority, you understand.”

“I understand.”

That didn't mean I had to like it. Investigating our ultimate enemy was important, and I would never have suggested that what was ultimately a personal project was more important than that, but I'd been waiting on that spider puppet for about a month now, and she was usually so fast completing projects that it felt all the more unusual that it would take her this much time and effort to get it done.

Although I suppose a lot of different factors had been combining and piling up on her metaphorical plate, including Ritsuka's three-day coma and the preparations to send us all on that vacation, and before all of that, summoning Emiya back to Chaldea. A lot had been happening since we got back from Okeanos. Things had been busier than they were between, say, Septem and Okeanos or Orléans and Septem.

“On the subject, however,” she said, “I'd like to do some maintenance work on your beautiful ravens — check the wear and tear after two Singularities, if you will, even if you didn't have much cause to use them in Okeanos — so if you could see to it that they're brought down here sometime in the next few days, that would be great.”

My lips pursed, and my first instinct was frankly to be a little insulted, because I took care of my ravens as much as I could. But gut reaction aside, I'd just admitted that Da Vinci was far better at the job of creating and tuning puppets of that kind of quality, and they were her work to begin with. I hadn't noticed any dip in their functioning, but if she caught something before it became a problem, then that was all the better.

“Of course,” I said. “I'll bring them down later, after lunch, as long as that works for you.”

Da Vinci smiled broadly. “That will be just fine, thank you. Was there anything else you wanted to address?”

“No, that was it.”

Even if she hadn't really done much more than confirm what Marie had already told me.

Da Vinci dipped her head and went back to her workbench. “Then I'd best get back to work. Ciao ciao, Taylor!”

“Yeah. And maybe take a lunch break sometime.”

She might not need to eat, but if she was going to harp on Romani about it, then she could at least take her own advice and relax every once in a while.

She chortled. “I suppose it's about time someone gave me a dose of my own medicine, isn't it?”

“Servant meal days aren't just for everyone else.”

“Perhaps not!” Da Vinci shook her head. “Well, I can't complain if I'm getting on Romani's case about exactly the same thing, can I? Alright, Taylor, since it's you who said so, I suppose there's no reason for me to starve myself, even if it is metaphorically.”

“Then I won’t have to order Aífe to drag you in by the ear.”

“Heaven forbid!” she said with a laugh. “No need for me to become another one of her strays, yes?”

She waved me off with a smile, and I turned around and left as she returned to whatever it was she had been working on when I entered. I went back to my room to kill some time with a novel until lunch, and when the alarm I set for myself went off, set it down to go and eat.

Emiya dished me up something I didn’t recognize, but by the smell, it was probably something Mediterranean. I was sure it would be just as good as anything else he’d made.

“Everything good between you and Rika?” I asked him casually.

He paused midway through fixing my plate, but his smile didn’t droop even a little.

“I’m sure you noticed,” he told me, “but I took her aside on that vacation and cleared the air with her. I’m not sure we’ll be able to tell whether everything is back to normal until our next deployment, but it certainly seemed to go well, at least to me.”

To me, too, because she seemed back to her usual self now, but it was good to hear it straight from him.

“I see. That’s good, then.”

“For now,” he reasoned, “the only thing I can do is have trust in my Master. Even if she is overly reliant on my food and calls me her house-husband every now and again.”

“Be thankful it’s not as catchy as most of her other nicknames,” I told him dryly.

He chuckled. “There is that, isn’t there? Tii-chan isn’t bad, but at least she doesn’t call me Hot Pops.”

Or Queen Booty. Or Captain Pillows. By that metric, I guess “Senpai” was something I could live with just fine, too.

When my tray was completely loaded up, I bade him goodbye and went to find myself a seat in the almost empty cafeteria, and it wasn’t too much longer before the twins and Mash meandered in and up to Emiya’s counter. The words mostly just washed over me like white noise, but I paid particular attention to Rika’s interaction with him, her body language, her expression, examining everything to look for the slightest sign of unease.

But there was none. A couple weeks after she and Emiya had that talk, and she seemed completely back to normal, as though nothing had ever happened. You might have thought that nothing was ever wrong.

I looked away and did my best to smother a smile. I was glad I hadn’t had to intervene more directly. A little nudge to move things along, but they’d otherwise eventually handled things themselves. No invasive meddling necessary.

Once they had all gotten their food, they made their way over to my table and sat down with me.

“Lunch!” Rika declared gustily. She clapped her hands together, bowed her head, and said, “Itadakimasu!”

Her brother echoed her quietly, and then they started to eat. A strange little ritual, one they didn’t always seem to observe. I assumed it was the equivalent of saying “Grace!” right before you ate, a quick way of saying, “Thanks for the meal!” without involving a long prayer when everyone was just hungry.

I was already halfway done, so I finished before them and sat for a moment, watching them enjoy their food. Poor Marcus, I thought. Always upstaged by Emiya, no matter how hard he tried.

Maybe he preferred it that way, though. Cooking for a staff of twenty people, all of them running themselves ragged to keep this place going, all of them eating meals in staggered waves, only a Servant could possibly have the stamina to keep up with that. No wonder he’d looked so haggard and tired for that brief stint where he’d had to handle the load by himself.

“How do you guys feel about another movie night?” I eventually asked.

The twins both paused, Rika halfway through chewing and Ritsuka with his fork raised and his mouth open, and they shared a look.

“It sounds good to me,” said Ritsuka as his sister quickly chewed what she had and swallowed — and then choked a little from trying to go *too* quickly.

After she’d gulped down a sip of her drink, she rasped, “Can we invite everyone along again?”

“Oh,” said Mash. “You meant another group movie night, Miss Taylor?”

“I’ve talked to the Director, and she okayed it,” I told them. “As long as we ask permission beforehand and don’t interrupt anything important, we can have as many movie nights as we want.”

“Really?” Rika asked. Her eyes almost sparkled.

I nodded. “Really.”

“Oh, wow!” she gushed. “Okay, okay, what should we watch first? We already did *Titanic*, and that’s a hard act to follow. Maybe another Cameron movie?”

“Not *Avatar*,” her brother was quick to say.

*Avatar*? I think I vaguely remembered hearing something about that from Aleph, but I’d never seen it myself.

Rika grinned. “Yeah, not sure a bunch of heroes who fought monsters and stuff would want to watch a bunch of giant blue people fight corporate greed. Row, row, fight the powah!”

“If we’re going to watch something like that, I’d say *Dances with Wolves*,” Ritsuka suggested.



His sister stuck her tongue out at him. “You would.”

“*Dances with Wolves?*” asked Mash.

“A movie about a guy who gets a frontier post after heroism in battle and falls in love with the culture of the native tribe in the area,” Rika rattled off. Her lips pursed for a moment. “There’s an American Singularity later, right? Maybe we should save that one for then. Before or after?”

“I guess...it would depend on when the Singularity is taking place?” Ritsuka hedged. “I mean, it’s not like that movie is all that historically relevant, but it had to get at least some of the details right, right? So it might be useful to watch that before we go in if the Singularity is set in the same time period.”

“Point,” Rika allowed. She suddenly perked up. “Oh! Oh! I know! Man, why didn’t I think of that before? It was sitting right in front of me the whole time?”

“What?” said Ritsuka.

She turned to him. “*Terminator.*”

He grimaced as though he’d just smelled something particularly foul. “Really?”

“Come on!” she said. “How could we skip out on that? It’s, like, one of the most relevant movies we could possibly watch at this job!”

Maybe it was, but that didn’t mean I wanted to watch it again myself.

“Are you sure you don’t want to save that one for after we summon Emperor Nero?” I asked her slyly.

Her eyes went wide, and as though I’d just cast some kind of spell, she reversed course so fast I was surprised she didn’t give herself whiplash.

“No, we’re not watching *Terminator* yet!” she insisted. “In fact, I don’t even want to hear about it again until Best Buddy is here!”

Ritsuka sent me a thankful look, like I’d just spared him some terrible fate. To be fair, I suspected Bradamante would come out of *Terminator* throwing the lines around the same way Rika did, and I think I spared everyone by convincing her to put it off for later.

One pop culture machine was enough, thank you.

“How about *The Princess Bride*?” I suggested. *As long as you don’t butcher the lines again*, I didn’t add.

Rika lit up. “Oh! Yeah, sure! That’s a great one! Hey, hey, do you think Siegfried will like that one? He’s a knight in shining armor, isn’t he?”

*Not in the way you think he is.* “Maybe.”

“*The Princess Bride?*” Mash echoed curiously. “What’s that about?”

“Oh!” Rika gushed. “Oh, you’ll like it too, Mash, I just know it! See, it’s got all the things a good movie needs — action, romance, a revenge plot, sword fighting, a duel to the death —”

And she went on to explain the movie in broad terms, somehow managing to avoid giving out all but the most basic of spoilers for anything more than the first five minutes of it. Mash listened, enraptured, and even the little gremlin on her shoulder seemed interested in hearing about it.

I took my chance to slip away and return my dirty plate and tray to Emiya, then left the cafeteria to start the rest of my afternoon. As I went, I reached out along the thread to Arash and gave him a mental prod, *Arash?*

*Yeab?* he replied. *Something you needed?*

*We’re having another movie night tonight, I told him. Same time, same place. Let the others know?*

*Sure, he said. I’ll make the rounds and let the others know we’re having another movie night. Was there a specific one decided upon, or are we leaving it a surprise?*

*The Princess Bride, I said, but if anyone wants to be surprised, that’s up to them.*

*Will do.* And when he ended things there, I eased out of our connection and continued on my way. Huginn and Muninn were delivered to Da Vinci without any fuss.

About an hour or so later, it was time for another swimming lesson with Mash, and I had to admit, there was an added level of convenience to being able to change into a swimsuit with a press of a few buttons. The bikini Da Vinci had made for me might not have been the most appropriate for a teaching environment, but as a matter of professionalism, I would have cared more if I had a whole class instead of just a single student.

It wasn’t like Mash and Marie weren’t wearing their own personalized swimsuits, after all. Mash seemed to have taken quite the liking to the one Da Vinci had made for her, and since Marie had worn the same one since the first lesson, no one had any room to criticize.

Naturally, Fou was there again as well. I ignored his presence as best as I was able.

An extra layer had been added ever since Marie had first told me about what was going to happen to Mash. Something bittersweet, like knowing your days with a person were numbered and being unable to do anything to change it, and I guess in a very real sense, that was exactly how things were, because a year and a half from now, Mash was going to be gone, and it felt like tomorrow. Even if your time with any given person was always going to be limited, the uncertainty of *when* and *how* made the inevitable feel far off and distant. Having a deadline, on the other hand, shoved it all in your face.

If I’d known that my time with Lisa, Brian, and the others was going to be so short... Well, given how things were back then, maybe I wouldn’t have done much of anything different at all. But I would have cherished that time I did have all the more.

After Mash’s swimming lesson was over — as she had every time since we started, she thanked us at the end as though we were doing her some great favor — Marie and I went our separate ways to get

washed up for dinner. I made sure to leave last, after that ball of fur in its ridiculous jersey had already trotted off after Mash, just so I didn't have to feel its eyes on the back of my neck.

Dinner itself, of course, was as excellent as always. Emiya had made something a bit lighter than usual, perhaps as a nod to the fact that we were all going to be snacking on popcorn not too long afterwards, but Rika inhaled it with her usual gusto and delight, as excited about the food as she was to have another movie night with everyone. She was practically vibrating in her seat.

Maybe we should come up with a list, I thought as I watched her. A checklist of all the most important cultural icons in film, from both Eastern and Western culture, although that meant I would probably have to sit through at least one or two of the famous Kurosawa films that I had heard so much about and maybe one of Rika's anime.

The former might not be so bad. The latter, well... I guess I didn't have a frame of reference beyond her jokes, now that I actually thought about it. Japan had been devastated by Leviathan, so some of the things that gained popularity here and in Aleph had just never happened, and that left me without any real idea about the quality of Japanese animation — how much of Rika's obsession was nationalistic pride or her age, in other words, and how much of it was these things being genuinely good.

Mash, at least, seemed eager to watch another movie, too, although she wasn't as... *animated* about it as Rika was, and while Ritsuka similarly was much more subdued, he seemed to be looking forward to it as well.

So about an hour after dinner, it wasn't a surprise to see the three of them there first, already waiting in the briefing room. They turned towards Arash and I as the door whooshed open, a giant grin stretching across Rika's face.

"Arash!" she called. "Senpai!"

"Someone's excited," Arash said, amused.

"Are you kidding me?" She giggled. "I get to share some of my favorite movies with everyone! Sprinkle some fairy dust on me and I'll fly!"

Ritsuka rolled his eyes, smiling, but Mash only blinked. "Fairy dust?"

"Peter Pan," I told her.

Recognition lit up in her eyes. "Oh! Yes, there was something like that, wasn't there? With Tinkerbell."

"First star on the right, and straight on 'til morning."

I was a 90s kid. Disney was part of my DNA. And then, of course, Mom had made sure to introduce me to the original play written by J.M. Barrie, because there was no way she was going to let that pass without it. You only got half the experience if you just watched a watered down, streamlined movie version.

I had to wonder if Romani had managed to sneak in any of those movies to show her under Marisbury's nose. He was braver and cleverer than I'd given him credit for if he actually had.

The rest of the group slowly filtered in over the course of the next ten or so minutes, and just like he had last time, Emiya wheeled in a cart containing cartons of popcorn for us all to eat. Arash was taking care of setting things up for the movie this time, so I joined the crowd jockeying for one of those cartons and made sure to grab one for Arash to have, too.

It took a few minutes for everyone to settle down and find a seat. I wound up a couple rows back from the front, with Bellamy to one side and a spot reserved for Arash on the other, and once we were all snuggled in and ready to go, Emiya turned off the lights and Arash hit play. The screen turned briefly black, and then it began to glow as a nameless tune filled up the sudden silence.

The briefing for the next Singularity couldn't come soon enough, I thought as the movie started and the studio logos played across the screen, but at least for now, watching movies with all of us here together wasn't a bad way to spend the time until then.