



Jinto finds himself in more trouble than he ever anticipated as the rebellion on Lobnas II develops, while Lafiel finds herself unable to do anything to protect him - and forced to ask for help from Admiral Spoor to protect the rest of her crews. Not exactly what you'd call a good day at the office, then...

### **5 - Rebellion**

Full-scale rebellion has broken out on Lobnas II - the prospect of seeing the prisoners of the Western unit leave, condemning those left behind - all males or infertile - to life in a colony that was slowly dying out, has persuaded Angusson that if they're to have a future, the women must be either persuaded or forced to stay. The remaining prison staff are stretched too thinly to contain the rebellion - they're doing what they can, but between lack of manpower and a number of betrayals, it's just a matter of time before the rebellion spreads, meaning Jinto and Lafiel need to speed up their evacuation plan. While Jinto is on his way to the spaceport, though, Angusson's men manage to capture him...



### **6 - Abh Hell**

The situation down on the planet has just gotten worse, with the defection of a number of the prison guards to the side of the rebels - addicted to a locally-produced drug, they've decided to protect their supply of the drug rather than defend themselves, and it's one of the defecting guards who takes Jinto and the administrative director to Angusson and Dokufu. To the rebels, Jinto is a valuable hostage - but to Lafiel, taking him captive (not just an Abh, not just a noble, but someone who means a lot to her) is like holding a red rag to a bull - especially when the threat to kill him is made...



### **7 - The Flag of Gasarus**

Having looked at the odds of a rescue mission succeeding, Lafiel decides she's got no choice other than to keep the emigration flowing and leave Jinto to his fate - a rescue would cost her too many men, have too small a chance of succeeding, and mean less of the evacuees could get away before the United Mankind fleet arrive. It was also Jinto's own decision to stay on the planet until the end of the evacuation, and now he has to live with the consequences of that. Down on the planet, Dokufu finally realises that angering the Abh won't help their cause and tries to persuade Angusson to let Jinto go - but Angusson isn't the sort to back down on his threats. Meanwhile, Admiral Spoor and her fleet arrive at Lobnas, and soon regrets asking Lafiel why she hasn't withdrawn yet...



The big problem with this volume is that this story takes place mostly on the surface of Lobnas II, which is pretty much Jinto's domain. Lafiel does get some airtime, but it's fairly limited - especially by the standards of *Crest* and *Banner I*. It's a sad state of affairs for Lafiel fanboys, but none of that goes to say that this disc isn't as good as it could be - it's definitely worth watching.

For a start, there's some decent ground-based action - not something this series has ever been known for. It's not on the same level of detail as the space combat scenes seen previously, but it's decently enough done and for once means that there are blood & guts on display as a number of key characters meet premature ends. Jinto's been trying his best to be of use to the people on the ground, which gets him a telling-off from the Administrative Director for trying to be a hero - and you can't help but think he should've listened when he ends up in the hands of Agnusson. There's a feeling in places of Jinto being in over his head, yet wanting to make sure that as far as he can, he'll make sure events turn out alright. Sadly the room he has for maneuvering gets more and more limited as time goes on.

There are 2 scenes on this disc which I have to flag as classics. First, there's the explanation of Abh Hell. I won't spoil it, but yet again we see that you really don't want to mess with the Abh. Secondly, there's the conversation between Lafiel & Spoor, where Spoor eventually agrees to commit her forces to what can only be a losing battle. Both scenes are great examples of what *BotS*

does so well - moving a story & fleshing out characters and background through the dialogue rather than the action of the story. Personally, I love it - especially as it's something that this particular season hasn't been doing quite so well as those that came before it.

*Banner II* is different in tone than its predecessors - mainly as it's mostly a land-based story & focusses more on Jinto than the earlier stories. Whether that's a good thing or a bad thing I haven't decided yet, but even if this were the poorest of the *Crest / Banner* stories, it's still head & shoulders above most other SF anime shows out there, and this disc just continues the trend. Well worth getting.

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