

## Crossing 411

### Chapter 411: Inscrutable!

Qiao Ting immediately refuted his own speculation. As he had been tracking the data produced by his mecha's A.I. all this way, he was sure the distance between his mecha and Zhao Jun's had not ever fallen below the 4-kilometre limit keeping him out of the range of detection of Zhao Jun's mecha. In real life, perhaps due to various reasons, the data collected by mecha fluctuated erratically, so there was the possibility of an error leading to exposure. But in Mecha World, the data was set to be dead-accurate. As long as one did not go against the data given, there should be absolutely no chance of being discovered.

Qiao Ting made a decision instantly. He quickly sped up to follow them, wanting to see what exactly had made Zhao Jun change directions so abruptly. At the same time, he had already made up his mind to eliminate Zhao Jun — he did not plan to wait any longer.

Even though Zhao Jun's group of three had pushed their mecha's engines to their respective limits, the two advanced mecha had still dragged down Zhao Jun's speed. Qiao Ting quickly caught up to them in his ace mecha. If not for the fact that Qiao Ting wanted to find out what Zhao Jun was doing and so was still keeping 4 kilometres away for now, at this time, Zhao Jun's group might have already been facing Qiao Ting's mecha.

Not too long after, Qiao Ting discovered the reason why Zhao Jun had suddenly changed directions. Ahead of Zhao Jun, that is, within the 5-kilometre range of detection of Qiao Ting's mecha, the A.I. once again sounded an alert, notifying him that there was an unidentified flying object there.

Qiao Ting immediately zoomed in and saw that this mecha which had just appeared was actually from Leiting's battle team. It looked like Zhao Jun had discovered the other's presence and so had changed course in preparation to attack this mecha.

Qiao Ting was just thinking to speed up and rescue his team member when an idea flashed through his mind. He gave up on accelerating, choosing to maintain his speed instead as he moved forwards. He continued to maintain 4 kilometres between himself and the three mecha of Zhao Jun's group, trailing them as they sprinted towards that team member of his. Because he knew who the other was, Qiao Ting did not hesitate to send a heads up to that team member.

That member of Leiting had actually noticed Zhao Jun and the others coming for him as well by this time. When he saw that the one in the lead was a special-class operator, he knew that he was no match for the group and had quickly turned tail to run. This was also why Zhao Jun's group was pushing their engines so far in pursuit. Since they had found prey, they naturally could not let their prey escape from right under their noses.

As he was running, the Leiting member suddenly received an alert from his mecha's A.I., conveying a message from a teammate. His heart leapt in joy, and even as he continued running at top speed, he rapidly skimmed the message. When he saw its contents, his heart settled and he abruptly stopped running to turn around, calmly waiting for the three mecha of Zhao Jun's group to catch up to him.

As Leiting's member had stopped running, Zhao Jun's group managed to catch up to the other a few seconds later.

"D\*mn, you run fast!" Zhao Jun's group surrounded the Leiting member immediately. At the same time, Zhao Jun's loud voice rang out from his mecha's loudspeakers, his tone mocking as he said, "Why don't you continue running? You really think I can't overtake you?" If not out of consideration for the two fellows behind him, he would have long caught up to the other.

"I'm too unlucky today, actually bumping into you. However, Zhao Jun, aren't you stooping too low? Actually joining a tiny, insignificant freshmen mecha clan. Isn't this a waste of your talent? If you just don't have a good place to go, as long as you quit this battle, I can recommend for our regiment commander to take you in as a member of Leiting. How's that?" The Leiting member was not flustered, actually speaking up to negotiate with Zhao Jun.

"Don't. This lord 1 is very happy throwing my weight around in this freshmen clan. I'm provided with good food and drink and treated well. Since I can be a lord, why should I make myself suffer by submitting myself to become Qiao Ting's underling?" Even though Zhao Jun's expression was not visible, the smugness in his tone caused the other two Lingtian members with him to sweatdrop endlessly.

"Luo Lang, has this person always been this arrogant?" *Throwing his weight around? Hells, what did he take the Lingtian Mecha Clan for?* Li Yingjie was very dissatisfied with the other's words 2 .

Luo Lang pursed his lips in thought, silent for a moment before replying, "Leave it. This person is especially stupid. He speaks without the words going through his mind. If you take him seriously, you're just torturing yourself." The connotation being that Li Yingjie should just let the words pass and not take it to heart.

Zhao Jun was a member of the Lingtian Battle Clan, a comrade of Luo Lang's, so Luo Lang could not sell him out and tell Li Yingjie the truth. In fact, in the team, before Boss Lan, Zhao Jun was as obedient as a harmless cat ... how could he be arrogant?

Leiting's member still seemed to have more to say, but Zhao Jun had no interest in blathering on with him any further. With a cold huff, he said, "Stop your chattering. Young Brother Li, Young Brother Luo, why aren't you all attacking? Do you still want such a master as myself to take action for this kind of minor character?"

Zhao Jun's apparent tone of ordering underlings around made Li Yingjie's chest feel stuffed up with annoyance. Luo Lang too was extremely speechless. Could it be that, out of Boss Lan's sphere of influence, this Zhao Jun was finally exposing his true nature?

"You ..." Li Yingjie only submitted to Ling Lan. Even though he knew Zhao Jun was a special-class operator, this fact could not make him lower his head to the other. He could not suppress a sound of indignation, but he was stopped by Luo Lang before he could say anything more. "Li Yingjie, leave it. Let's go!" After saying that, Luo Lang drew the beam saber from his back and operated his mecha to leap at the opponent.

Li Yingjie saw that Luo Lang had already begun to move — in order to work together with Luo Lang, he suppressed the rage in his heart, merely throwing a fierce glare at Zhao Jun before pulling the beam saber from behind him and charging out as well.

This advanced mecha warrior of Leiting seemed to be very strong; Li Yingjie and Luo Lang actually were not able to gain the upper hand with their joint attack. Instead, there were even times when the two of them fell out of sync and disrupted the other's attack, leading to several occasions where they ended up attacking each other, giving the opponent a chance to turn around and beat them back. For a while, both sides were actually evenly matched in a tough battle.

"F\*ck, how stupid, Little Li, what are you hacking at? Are you trying to cut the enemy or your ally? Little Luo, can't you see where your teammate is? Actually blocking your own teammate's attack, are you a spy sent by the enemy?" Watching the terrible rapport between his two comrades, Zhao Jun's anger was stoked and he began muttering out loud, pointing out their mistakes.

The cadets who witnessed this scene could not help but break out into an uproar. The Lingtian battle team had undoubtedly performed extremely well in the past ten minutes — whether it was the members who had died or those who had won, their skills in mecha control had been vividly displayed, almost indistinguishable from that of old veterans. Those members' excellent performances had increased the anticipation of the spectating cadets towards the other members of the Lingtian battle team. But now, the terrible performance of these two members greatly disappointed the audience.

"So not all of the Lingtian Mecha Clan members are good. Some are just here to make up the numbers." The disappointed cadets began to criticize the Lingtian Mecha Clan harshly. It could not be helped — when expectations soared too high and were crushed, the sudden drop from that height would always seek an outlet to regain psychological equilibrium.

"That's strange. Why are Lingtian No.4 and Lingtian No.5 performing so badly?" Likewise, the school administrators and instructors were also shaking their heads, finding both these participants' performance lacklustre. In contrast, Instructor Tang Yu frowned, puzzled. After some thought, he searched for information on the two, and when he saw their details, he was even more bewildered.

Lingtian No.4; Name: Li Yingjie. Status: Elite family descendant. Age: 17. Physical skills: intermediate level Qi-Jin stage. Mecha Piloting Level: Advanced; Intermediate to Advanced advancement results, excellent!"

Lingtian No.5; Name: Luo Lang. Status: Military family descendant. Age: 17. Physical skills: intermediate level Qi-Jin stage. Mecha Piloting Level: Advanced; Intermediate to Advanced advancement results, excellent!"

These two boys had not performed like this last year! Tang Yu had a very deep impression of these two, especially Luo Lang. That ruthlessness that he had turned on himself had sent chills into Tang Yu's heart — how could this kind of person allow himself to perform so badly ...?

Tang Yu's gaze turned to several hundred metres behind Zhao Jun. An idea flashed across his mind, and his expression could not help but shift slightly.

The change in Tang Yu's complexion was noticed by the principal beside him, who then asked curiously, "Tang Yu, what have you discovered?"

"I'm wondering whether those boys are plotting something!" Tang Yu pointed with a wry smile at the mecha only they could see, which was hiding about 100 metres behind Zhao Jun. It was Qiao Ting who was quickly slinking forward.

“These boys look like trash at a glance. What could they possibly be plotting? Qiao Ting’s performance this time can pretty much be called perfect — while the attention of the Lingtian members is all on this other Leiting member, he fired some radar interference missiles and has silently snuck up to lurk behind Lingtian. I think that these three members of Lingtian will soon become battle points for Qiao Ting. It can be predicted that the upper hand Lingtian has established since the beginning will all be gone after this encounter.” One of the administrators to one side had overheard the conversation between Tang Yu and the principal, and was extremely dismissive of the idea. Qiao Ting’s current performance pleased them greatly — the candidate they had chosen for their God-building project was truly exceptional.

After saying all this, the administrator smiled ingratiatingly and said, “A renowned teacher produces accomplished students! The student Qiao Ting whom Instructor Tang Yu has raised is indeed impressive!” At the end of his speech, he did not forget to give a big thumbs up, and then turned to flatter the principal, saying, “Principal, this is all the result of your sagacious guidance.”

While the principal only nodded and smiled, making it hard to tell his true thoughts, Tang Yu was obviously less experienced in dealing with this type of situation. At the administrator’s words, his brows knitted together and he rebutted immediately, “Qiao Ting is still very young and inexperienced. Faculty Head Lin, you think too highly of him.”

As intelligent as Tang Yu was, he already had a vague sense of what the administrators were aiming to do. With regards to that, he did not approve. Knowing Qiao Ting well, he truly believed he had to take responsibility for Qiao Ting’s future; he needed to let the confident and somewhat domineering Qiao Ting experience more setbacks for his sake.

Trying to show favour but receiving a cold reception in return, this Faculty Head Lin was rather upset. His smile faded and he harrumphed softly before turning away to speak with the other administrators instead. Even half a phrase is too much when two people don’t see eye to eye 3 — this Faculty Head Lin no longer had any interest in talking with Tang Yu.

“You don’t think Qiao Ting will do well in this encounter?” asked the principal with a kindly smile.

“I have full confidence in Qiao Ting’s capabilities, and also think that Zhao Jun, Lingtian No.4, and Lingtian No.5 cannot handle him on their own. However, I do not believe that Lingtian No.4 and Lingtian No.5’s strength is as terrible as they are portraying right now ... If Qiao Ting truly underestimates these two because of this, I think that Qiao Ting may not get what he wants. It’s hard for me to foresee clearly.” Tang Yu frowned. Just as he said, he really could not figure out what the three members of Lingtian were trying to do.

“Since you can’t foresee it, then just continue watching ...” Unlike Tang Yu, whose attention was all on Qiao Ting, the principal’s gaze drifted towards the opposite direction of Qiao Ting’s position, his lips slightly turned up in a knowing smile.

Chapter 412: Tricked!

Qiao Ting stared at Zhao Jun’s group of three surrounding his team member with cold eyes. Lingtian No.4 and Lingtian No.5’s control skills could only be described as passable — Qiao Ting reckoned they were not from the same team before this and so had nothing much in terms of rapport. This was also

why his team member had not been put at a disadvantage even though he was up against two opponents. Meanwhile, Zhao Jun was also trying to instruct them. Even though his tone was terrible, he was not taking any action, and everything he said was targeting his two teammates' mistakes.

Seeing that Zhao Jun's attention was fully engaged on the three fighting mecha, Qiao Ting knew that his opportunity had come!

Qiao Ting was confident that he could defeat Zhao Jun easily even in a frontal attack and obtain victory. However, he would need to spend more time to do so. Qiao Ting did not want to waste any time, so he chose a method which could kill the enemy in one move — while Zhao Jun was distracted and unprepared, he would launch a sneak attack and kill him instantly.

Caught off-guard, a special-class mecha would be completely unable to withstand even one attack from an ace mecha, and this was precisely the ultra-effective attack Qiao Ting was aiming for.

On the battlefield, Zhao Jun's group of three were currently completely oblivious to the incoming danger, but the spectating cadets could see very clearly that Qiao Ting had already silently drawn his beam saber and was coiled like a hunting cheetah preparing to strike.

That special-class mecha of Lingtian's was in danger! This conclusion surfaced in everyone's minds. Against an ace operator's sneak attack, they just could not see how a completely unprepared special-class mecha could survive.

It could be said that the key moment determining the ultimate outcome of this fight was about to come ...

Right at this moment, Qiao Ting's eyes lit up. Having long been prepared to attack, he suddenly burst forth from his hiding place like a hunting cheetah, the beam saber in his hands slashing right at Zhao Jun's back, aiming for the most defensively weak cockpit area.

"Ah!" Even though the spectating cadets had known this was coming, Qiao Ting's sudden action still made them cry out involuntarily. Zhao Jun had his back to Qiao Ting, and Qiao Ting's speed was already at the limits of what an ace mecha could achieve. He could truly be described to be moving as fast as thunder, as quick as lightning. It could be seen that Qiao Ting had no intentions of giving Zhao Jun any little chance of surviving. Was Zhao Jun really about to be finished off by Qiao Ting in one move?

The supporters of Lingtian could not bear to watch; they could not help but close their eyes. If Zhao Jun was kicked out of the match like this, there would be absolutely no chance for Lingtian to obtain victory after this. Everyone knew very well that Zhao Jun was the strongest one in Lingtian.

"Zng!" This was not the sound of a mecha being pierced but the sound of two energies of equal strength clashing. Those who had closed their eyes opened their eyes again in surprise, only to see incandescent sparks blooming between the two mecha, so blinding that white spots appeared in the vision of the spectating cadets. The whole scene was a bright sheet of white.

Luckily, the adaptive ability of the cadets' eyes was very strong. One to two seconds later, they had all regained their vision. Only then could they see the scene clearly.

As expected, Zhao Jun had not been killed by Qiao Ting in one blow. He still had his back to Qiao Ting, but his mecha was lowered in a half-kneel, shrinking his body height down by half. Furthermore, this

action also allowed the half-drawn beam saber on Zhao Jun's back to perfectly intercept the attack Qiao Ting had launched at his cockpit.

The feedback from his mecha made Qiao Ting pause for only a moment. He knew that his attack had not succeeded as he had hoped — though he had no idea why Zhao Jun could block his strike so coincidentally, he also knew that he still had the upper hand. The opportunity could not be missed — without any hesitation, he raised his beam saber and swung it forwards viciously once more.

This attack came hard and fast — Zhao Jun, who still had not fully drawn his beam saber and had his back to Qiao Ting, had no time at all to try blocking Qiao Ting's attack with his beam saber again. Everyone thought that even if Zhao Jun did not die this time, he would certainly be heavily injured. The beam shield of a special-class mecha could not completely offset the power behind an ace mecha's beam saber. At that time, not only would Zhao Jun's mecha be damaged, but, at the same time, the intense shockwaves brought by the beam saber would also injure the operator's body.

Just as Qiao Ting's attack was about to succeed, he suddenly sensed danger. Without conscious thought, the beam saber in his hands suddenly changed directions, giving up on his attack on Zhao Jun to sweep out at his right flank ...

"Zng!" His beam saber clashed with another beam saber, once again sending out countless electrical sparks into the air. Meanwhile, Zhao Jun took this opportunity to operate his mecha to flip backwards, and after bracing his mecha with one arm on the ground, he successfully rolled out to land securely. With that, Zhao Jun was now facing Qiao Ting directly. Qiao Ting's plan to kill him in one move had failed completely.

Qiao Ting's face was stormy — he had not expected his sure-kill sneak attack to fail. This made him very unhappy. If he had known this was how things would turn out, he might as well have attacked the other directly from the front from the very start. Even if that would have required more time, he still would not be as annoyed as he was now.

Qiao Ting's frustration passed quickly. His gaze then turned swiftly to his right — it was this person's perfectly-timed attack which had allowed Zhao Jun to get away. However, after glancing over, he was taken aback. The one who had attacked him turned out to be that unimpressive Lingtian No.5. Qiao Ting had not thought much of the other two mecha with Zhao Jun, but it was precisely this inconspicuous mecha operator who had successfully taken him by surprise. The other's timing had been impeccable, giving him no choice but to give up on attacking Zhao Jun to save himself.

It should be known that even for ace mecha, the beam shield protecting the cockpit was still the weakest. As long as it was hit directly, the energy shockwaves would still leave him injured. Lingtian No.5 had been aiming straight for his cockpit in his sneak attack, which was why Qiao Ting had had no choice but to save himself.

This outstanding attack from Lingtian No.5 gave Qiao Ting the inkling that something was not right. He immediately looked towards his team member and found that the other was in a terrible situation. Against Lingtian No.4's attacks alone, his team member was reduced to pure defence with no room for counterattacking.

Right now, Lingtian No.4 was showing none of the previous clumsiness he was showing earlier. With just one glance, Qiao Ting could tell that this Lingtian No.4's strength was greater than his team member's. Qiao Ting's thoughts stirred and he instantly realised that he had been tricked.

Qiao Ting was furious that he had been set up. Tone icy, he asked Zhao Jun, "I would like to know. How did you know I was here?" They could only have set this up if they had discovered his presence.

Zhao Jun waved the beam saber in his hands, smiled, and said, "Actually, from the very moment you began following us, we already knew."

Qiao Ting's eyes turned cold. Zhao Jun's answer was clearly just humouring him; it looked like the other would not be telling him the truth. "Since you don't want to tell, then leave it. Just with the three of you, even if you've set a trap to lure me out, so what? The outcome will not change. You will all die here." Qiao Ting coolly announced his verdict for the three members of Lingtian. He had barely finished speaking when he had moved to come right up to Zhao Jun. Even though Qiao Ting was proficient in long-range offence, as Instructor Tang Yu's student, his close-combat abilities were not that weak either.

"Bring it!" Facing Qiao Ting's frontal attack, Zhao Jun hollered, raising the beam saber in his hands and moving forwards to meet the other. Zhao Jun was a close-combat mecha operator to begin with, so he had the utmost faith in his own close-combat ability. Even up against an ace operator one level higher than him, as long as his own mecha had enough power, he was not afraid.

"Zng, zng, zng ..." The two beam sabers met several times in succession, sending sparks flying everywhere. The intense bursts of light when they clashed left the eyes of many of the students watching the fight aching. Still, even so, they could not bear to turn their eyes away, because they could not know whether the fight would end in the very next second. Because anyone with eyes could see that after exchanging several blows, Qiao Ting had gained the upper hand. The power differential in mecha levels and control ability had still pushed Zhao Jun into a disadvantaged position. As the power levels of Zhao Jun's mecha drained rapidly, this disadvantage grew bigger and bigger. It was entirely possible that he would be defeated by Qiao Ting and eliminated in the very next second ...

"Beep!" The thus far silent mainframe suddenly emitted an alert once more. Qiao Ting glanced at his system notifications reflexively, and found that the section marking his battle team's numbers had gone down by one again. At present, the number of active members left on his team had become 6.

Qiao Ting's heart clenched. He quickly turned to look at where his team member had been fighting earlier. This one glance made Qiao Ting's expression change drastically.

His team member was already down on the ground, a beam saber slowly being pulled out from the team member's cockpit. The one holding the beam saber was not Lingtian No.4 but Lingtian No.5, the one who had attacked him earlier. It looked like while he had been trading blows with Zhao Jun, Lingtian No.5 had chosen to go back and combine forces with Lingtian No.4 ...

The rage in Qiao Ting's heart surged — the Lingtian battle team's persistent face-smacking fuelled abnormal hate in Qiao Ting. The powerful killing intent he felt pushed his finger-speed to rise once more, truly reaching the speed an ace operator should have. Perhaps Qiao Ting had felt that victory was at hand and had still somewhat underestimated his opponents, for he had not truly shown the

standards an ace operator should have up till now. This was another reason why Zhao Jun had been able to hold out for so long.

With the increase in his control finger-speed, the beam saber in Qiao Ting's mecha's hands also began to move a level faster. It swung at Zhao Jun like a thunderstorm — this kind of wild and frenzied attacks placed several times more pressure on Zhao Jun. He could only parry desperately, hoping that he would be able to endure and survive these intense attacks.

The spectating students could only see a sea of sword-light at this point. Zhao Jun's black mecha was completely obscured by the light of the beam sabers. The students did not know what would happen; they could only open their eyes wide and wait for the light to fade to witness the final outcome.

Only several keen-eyed instructors and several powerful administrators were able to see what was happening through the light. Right then, the light representing the power behind Zhao Jun's beam saber was already extremely dim, and the beam shield on his mecha was only glowing very faintly. This meant that the power supply of Zhao Jun's mecha was about to be completely exhausted by Qiao Ting's frenzied attacks. In perhaps another two or three attacks, Zhao Jun's mecha's power would be finished — at that time, the inevitable outcome awaiting Zhao Jun was a merciless killing, defeat, and elimination.

“As expected, a special-class operator has no way of resisting against an ace operator.” Some of the administrators relaxed at this point, unable to stop themselves from laughing. When they had first realised that Qiao Ting had been tricked, they had been afraid that Qiao Ting would drop the ball at this critical moment. But now, from the looks of it, their worries were unfounded. How could an ace operator be defeated by these measly small fry?

Chapter 413: Self-Destruct!

Just as Zhao Jun's life was hanging in the balance, Lingtian No.4 and Lingtian No.5, who had already successfully killed off the other Leiting member, suddenly attacked at the same time. Coming in from the top and bottom at very tricky angles, their beam sabers stabbed viciously at Qiao Ting.

In the face of their sudden attack, a sneer appeared on Qiao Ting's lips. Compared to the start, he was already extremely vigilant against these two Lingtian members. As such, how could he be unprepared for their sudden attack?

Qiao Ting's mecha suddenly twisted in a bizarre fashion, and the two attacking beam sabers grazed by the sides of his mecha without damaging him at all. At the same time, his beam saber turned away from attacking Zhao Jun to pierce towards one of the other two mecha at an unimaginable angle extremely quickly ...

Qiao Ting's attack was too abrupt — his beam saber broke through the protective beam shield of the mecha to sink directly into the opponent's cockpit ...

The severe pain of his body being stabbed almost made Luo Lang unconscious. Luo Lang gritted his teeth and with a full-body jolt, his initially watery and bright eyes had turned cold and ruthless. Right then, he almost seemed to not feel the agonizing pain his body was in.



“Hmph, actually pushing me out to suffer on your behalf at this critical moment. Primary identity, you are just too irresponsible.” As Luo Lang muttered to himself, he decisively pressed the self-destruct button on his mecha. Then, he reached out with both hands to grip the beam saber piercing him firmly. The energy radiated by the beam saber instantly seared Luo Lang’s hands, but Luo Lang did not seem to feel it, just as if this body was not his.

Meanwhile, at this time, Qiao Ting was trying to pull out his beam saber from Lingtian No.5’s cockpit. However, when he tugged, he actually did not succeed. Could it be that the beam saber was stuck?

“Luo Lang ...” Seeing Luo Lang pierced by the beam saber, Li Yingjie screamed in horror.

“Run!” Luo Lang’s icy voice came through his mecha’s commlink. Suddenly realising something, Li Yingjie’s face paled and he began retreating swiftly.

“Damm\*t, you little punk Luo, wait for me!” Zhao Jun had also heard Luo Lang’s voice. What else was there to figure out? It looked like Luo Lang was prepared to carry out Ling Lan’s second battle tactic now — who asked them to be the first to encounter Qiao Ting?

Even a little junior four years younger than him was unafraid; how could he shrink back? Zhao Jun clenched his teeth — taking advantage of the time Qiao Ting was struggling to pull out his beam saber and was unable to attack, he decisively threw aside his beam saber that was almost completely drained of energy and dove forwards fiercely to wrap his mecha around Qiao Ting’s mecha.

Qiao Ting saw the two of them unwilling to back off no matter what, and in his shock and consternation, a notion suddenly crossed his mind. His expression changed drastically — decisively casting aside the beam saber in his hands, he pushed his mecha to maximum power, trying to escape Zhao Jun’s entanglement. At the same time, he dialled his ace mecha’s beam shield to its maximum setting ...

Quicker than words could say, before Qiao Ting could wrest free of Zhao Jun’s grip, two loud explosions rang out in quick succession. Luo Lang’s mecha and Zhao Jun’s mecha had exploded, and the massive energy produced threw the white sand below them into the air. Within the range of 100 metres, the entire area was shrouded by white sand, so the spectators could not see what was happening inside.

“Bang, bang, bang!” In this kind of uncertainty, the sounds of violent collisions rang out once more from inside the sphere of swirling sand. Then, a mecha suddenly flew out from the sands. Its body was emitting trails of dense smoke, and the initially gleaming mecha was not rather dull. There were also many scars now on the initially smooth outer shell. It was Qiao Ting’s ace mecha. Having lost the original weapon he had been attacking with, the beam saber, Qiao Ting substituted it with a beam gun. He pointed it at the swirling sands and pulled the trigger, sending a beam of energy bursting out from the muzzle.

Immediately after, another mecha also flew out from the sandy sphere. Up against the shot coming at his face, the other mecha did not choose to dodge but faced it head-on. This mecha was the third Lingtian mecha, the only surviving Lingtian No.4.

“This fellow is asking for trouble!” Seeing this idiotic behaviour of Lingtian No.4, the spectating students could not help but grumble angrily. They were not looking down on Lingtian No.4 — it was just that the fierce performance of the other Lingtian members had drawn the spectating students involuntarily over to Lingtian’s side, so they did not want to see Lingtian No.4 be sacrificed for nothing.

The beam shot struck Lingtian No.4 as expected, and his mecha's beam shield became dim instantly. Everyone knew that if he was hit one more time, Lingtian No.4's mecha would not be able to take it; at that time, the operator would perish along with the mecha.

"Dodge quickly, you bastard!" The spectating cadets yelled as they clenched their fists, hoping that Lingtian No.4 would not be impulsive and protect himself well before thinking of some other way to attack Qiao Ting ...

Unfortunately, the spectating students' wish did not come true. Lingtian No.4 seemed to have lost his reason after his two teammates had self-destructed; berserk, he was like a moth to a flame, charging fearlessly at Qiao Ting ...

Qiao Ting's face revealed his contempt for this kind of brainless behaviour. He operated his mecha to retreat even as he calmly pulled the trigger in his hands. Just one more shot, and this Lingtian No.4 would end up exactly like the other two, killed by him and ejected from the field.

The beam gun once again released a bright beam of white light which hurtled towards Lingtian No.4. Just as everyone thought that Lingtian No.4 was sure to die, suddenly, from the skies above the two fighters, a beam of light came down and intercepted the beam about to strike Lingtian No.4. The two beams offset each other and finally dissipated into the air.

Of course, as the two beams were dissipating, there was still some leakage of energy. If Lingtian No.4 had waited a bit for the energy to fade completely, he would be fine, but Lingtian No.4 did not consider this at all. Instead, he sped up to leap at Qiao Ting — as his mecha passed through the area where the beams met, the ambient energy once again brought harm to the mecha. The initially already very dim beam shield became completely dark due to Lingtian No.4's actions, leaving his entire mecha a sheet of grey ...

"Even if I, Li Yingjie, am defeated and have to leave the field, I will still rip a piece of flesh from my opponent first!" Li Yingjie saw that a teammate had arrived and began laughing arrogantly. He decisively activated all the engines of his mecha, pushing them to their limits.

The mecha was thrown into overdrive, drawing a trail of shadow through the air as it leapt onto Qiao Ting's mecha. Due to overdrive, the already extremely battered body of Li Yingjie's mecha could not take any more and began to disintegrate. Some of the outer armour actually fell off the mecha's body, dropping down from the sky. Even without receiving any external attack, Li Yingjie's mecha would not hold out for more than a few seconds before completely disintegrating ...

As soon as Qiao Ting saw what Li Yingjie was doing, how could he not know what the other was thinking? He was just about to push his mecha to maximum speed in preparation to dodge Li Yingjie's suicidal attack when, at this moment, from the skies above him, a string of beam shots rained down on his head. Facing these overwhelming wave of beam attacks, Qiao Ting had almost no chance of avoiding them. He could only choose to return fire to try and counteract these attacks, but this decision made it completely impossible for him to also escape Li Yingjie.

In the next second, Li Yingjie had wrapped himself securely around his mecha's right leg. Qiao Ting's face changed and he quickly turned his gun to aim at Li Yingjie who was hugging his thigh. Even if his mecha

would be hit by a shot coming from above, he still needed to first get rid of this Lingtian No.4 which was threatening his mecha.

“No.11, the rest is up to you!” Even as he shouted, Li Yingjie pressed the self-destruct button on his mecha. And though that Lingtian mecha that had just appeared did not respond verbally to his cry, the beams pouring forth in a torrent from his gun was a clear response to Li Yingjie’s words.

As Qiao Ting’s beam shot struck Li Yingjie, a tremendous ‘boom’ rang out at the same time. Li Yingjie’s dilapidated mecha was instantly reduced to a fireball; the incredible force of its explosion distorted the air.

At this time, all the spectating students were silent. They did not know whether the explosion was a result of Li Yingjie’s successful self-destruct or a result of Qiao Ting’s attack. Still, whichever it was, they were now filled with admiration for Lingtian, this newly established mecha clan. Who could have guessed that the Lingtian battle team which no one thought had any chance of winning could fight back to this extent? One special-class mecha and two advanced mecha actually managed to push Qiao Ting into such an awkward and dishevelled state. This was something that had never occurred ever since Qiao Ting had become an ace operator.

“Ah, look, Thunder King’s mecha!” Qiao Ting’s mecha finally flew out from the cloud of smoke and fire. His mecha’s appearance at this time shocked the spectating students to their core. The lower half of Qiao Ting’s mecha’s right leg had been completely blown off and was no longer there.

“Lingtian No.4, he managed to self-destruct in time!” The supporters of Lingtian cheered. Lingtian No.4 had really managed to do as he had said before he left the field. He had indeed ripped off a chunk of Qiao Ting, bringing the lower half of the other’s right leg with him in a glorious withdrawal.

“Warning, warning! Mecha has already been destroyed up to 15%. Defensive power decreased by 15%. Flight speed decreased by 12%. Please adjust mecha’s balance parameters immediately ...” The A.I. of Qiao Ting’s mecha blared several urgent warnings. Face dark, Qiao Ting swiftly operated his mecha to perform balancing and repair procedures. At the same time, he also needed to dodge that Lingtian No.11 who was still attacking him. The other was another old rival of his, the original head strategist of the Wuji Mecha Clan, the fifth-year Li Lanfeng.

“Unexpectedly, the Lingtian battle team members also know about that battle case!” At this moment, in the audience, Tang Yu’s expression was complicated. He looked at the dishevelled Qiao Ting on the screen and sighed softly. Compared to Leiting, the Lingtian battle team had prepared much better for this battle. All their members knew very clearly what they had to do ...

“It looks like Lingtian is planning to use this tactic to handle Qiao Ting.” A satisfied smile appeared on the principal’s face. It should be said that this tactic of Lingtian’s was pretty good — it was the only tactic that could let them defeat Qiao Ting at present.

“Heaven knows how they learned of this tactic,” commented Tang Yu with a bitter smile. Mind you, this battle case had always been kept sealed away by the Federation; only ace operators and above had the clearance the view it ...

#### **Chapter 414: Missions Exchanged!**

“Cough, cough, cough!” Tang Yu’s comment made the principal erupt into a sudden burst of coughing. The principal could not help but think silently whether Ling Xiao had secretly given his son a private lesson? Thinking about it, it was very likely. The principal decided that he must help cover up for his close friend, and so he said vaguely, “Don’t underestimate the Lingtian Mecha Clan. Many of the members come from military families or elite families. They probably knew about these things long ago.”

The principal’s words made a lot of sense to Tang Yu. He had seen Wu Jiong’s and some of the others’ data before, and they were indeed from military families or elite families. As such, it was not impossible for Lingtian to have learned of this battle case from them. And so, Tang Yu set aside the doubts in his heart and continued to watch the fight closely.

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Meanwhile, Ling Lan was hurrying towards a target. This time, not only had the mainframe cast Qiao Ting far, far away from the others, it had also cast Ling Lan far, far away from the others as well. Although Ling Lan’s mecha had been able to deceive everyone’s eyes, it had not been able to fool the mainframe which had control over all the data. In order to ensure fairness, the mainframe had treated Ling Lan like it had Qiao Ting, throwing the both of them to the outermost reaches of the map, far away from the centre of battle.

This action of the mainframe’s had thrown all of Ling Lan’s original plans out the window. This time, in order to handle Qiao Ting, Ling Lan had designed two tactics. The first tactic was for her to keep Qiao Ting busy while her team members boldly spread out to wipe out the rest of the Leiting battle team. After that, they would regroup with her and they would lay siege to Qiao Ting to finish him off together.

Of course, Ling Lan also knew that things might not go as smoothly as she imagined. So, she had created another supplementary tactic. This was their second tactic — if she was unable to meet Qiao Ting within the shortest amount of time, then, those members closest to Qiao Ting should move up to gang up against Qiao Ting if none of the other Leiting members were around. As the power difference between the other Lingtian members and Qiao Ting was very large, Ling Lan instructed her members to self-destruct if they had no other option, using this method to cause some damage to the other.

The reason for this arrangement was out of sheer helplessness on Ling Lan’s part. Frankly, the moment they encountered Qiao Ting, due to the power gap caused by their mecha levels and strength difference, her members would not be able to escape even if they tried to run. As such, they might as well take a gamble and fight — perhaps then they might stand a chance. Of course, there was another advantage to this decision. That was, her team members would have an opportunity to fight with an ace operator. The experience of trading even just one move with a powerful opponent was much more effective than arduous training — Ling Lan did not want her team members to miss this chance.

You say that Ling Lan is also an ace, so wouldn’t fighting with her also give the team members the same benefits? Well, that would make sense, but the fact was that this was not the case. Perhaps in the team members’ hearts, Boss Lan was just too strong. Her oppressive force of presence crushed any bit of competitive spirit they might have when they were up against her. Therefore, fighting with Ling Lan not

only brought no benefits to the members, it may even be detrimental to the members' morale, which made the potential gains not worth the loss.

This was also why they had come up with these two tactics. Regardless of which they chose, the team members would have the chance to trade blows with Qiao Ting. The only difference was that one would let them go up against him earlier, while the other would let them go up against him later. It had to be said that in order to let her companions develop faster, Ling Lan had put a lot of thought into creating these tactics. She had even asked Little Four to dig out that battle case sealed away by the military academy so that she could watch and analyse it together with her team members for one full day.

When one learned that the power gap between themselves and an ace operator was not insurmountable, and then come to understand that no matter how strong an opponent was, they were not unbeatable ... these insights would allow her companions to truly become strong. And this was the true intention of the two tactics Ling Lan had crafted.

Ling Lan knew that the distance between her and Qiao Ting was too far, so the first tactic was completely impossible. Thus, she decisively highlighted Qiao Ting's coordinates to all her members. When the team members saw Qiao Ting's coordinates, they knew immediately that they were going with the second tactic. This was also why Zhao Jun, Luo Lang, and Li Yingjie had appeared at Qiao Ting's location, and it was also why Li Lanfeng had managed to rush over in time.

Ling Lan allowed her team members to grapple with Qiao Ting as they liked; in the meantime, she was also rushing swiftly towards the centre of the map. Of course, her mission and that of her members had now been exchanged. The task of her members to eliminate the members of Leiting in the first tactic now fell to her. In order to let her team members concentrate on Qiao Ting, Ling Lan would be seeking out all the scattered members of Leiting on the map and eliminating them one by one.

If at the end, Qiao Ting still managed to survive despite the Lingtian members' suicide campaign, then she, Ling Lan, would wrap things up and put an end to the so-called indomitable legend of Qiao Ting.

Of course, Ling Lan was hopeful that her team members would be able to hold out till the end and wait for her to join them after she had wiped out all the small fry of Leiting.

At this moment, Ling Lan's cold gaze was already locked onto a random Leiting member 3 kilometres away, who was still completely oblivious that he had been targeted.

"Good control skills. An experienced veteran. Unfortunately a little careless." Zooming in on his image, Ling Lan judged the other's abilities. At the same time, Little Four rapidly mapped out the route the other was taking.

Ling Lan did not choose to attack from the front. This would startle the other and may cause him to run, lengthening her hunt time. Thus, Ling Lan chose to ambush the opponent by rushing before the other to lie in wait along the path he would take.

Watching as the opponent sprinted over cluelessly, Ling Lan calmly operated her mecha. A vortex force appeared under her mecha's feet, creating a deep hole in the desert sand below. Her mecha then sunk into the hole silently, descending into the white sands until it was completely hidden from view. When the desert once again resumed its original appearance, even the energy reaction of the mecha vanished completely, not a trace of it to be found ...

Although a majority of the spectating students' attention had been drawn to the fighting on Qiao Ting's end, there were still quite a number of people watching the team leader of Lingtian closely. Witnessing this scene, they were somewhat puzzled, unsure why the Lingtian team leader would choose to hide himself there.

And according to the mainframe's elaboration, they knew that Ling Lan had already turned off the mecha's engines. It would be impossible for another mecha to discover the mecha hidden below the desert sands by relying on radar searching.

Just as everyone was boggled by this inexplicable development, on the screen, a Leiting mecha suddenly appeared in the area where Ling Lan was hiding. The audience exclaimed in shock — at this moment, they finally understood why the Lingtian team leader had chosen to hide here. Without question, his target was this Leiting mecha.

As the Leiting mecha drew closer and closer to the ambush point, the audience could not help but feel their hearts creeping up their throats. Some of the students even cried out uncontrollably, "Don't go there!"

Unfortunately, their warnings would never be transmitted into the battlefield. That Leiting mecha continued to run obliviously towards the ambush point ...

"Swoosh!" A blinding ray of light suddenly shot out from the desert floor!

The Leiting mecha's feet had barely stepped onto the ambush point when this ray of light had shot out to pierce straight through the Leiting mecha's cockpit.

This attack had come too suddenly — the Leiting mecha had no chance at all to react. That ray of light pierced into the cockpit without meeting any resistance, and in the next second, the white sands below had suddenly surged up like a wave to crash towards the Leiting mecha.

A loud 'boom' rang out — the Leiting mecha was thrown to the ground by the overwhelming wave of white sand. Everyone was shocked awake — only now did they realize that the mecha of the Lingtian team leader which had been hiding beneath the desert had long vanished.

They quickly started to search but soon found that the Lingtian team leader's mecha was already 1 kilometre away. After succeeding in one strike, he had not dithered, moving right away to leave the scene.

"Clean and efficient, not draggy at all." The encounter on Ling Lan's end had also been displayed by the mainframe onto the large screen used by the VIPs. Right then, the screen was split into two sections — one was displaying the fight on Qiao Ting's end, while the other was focused on Ling Lan.

"It looks like this team leader of Lingtian is very careful, afraid that the opponent might choose to self-destruct before death. So he chose to leave immediately after his attack succeeded," the principal could not help but nod and smile at the sight.

"Yes. This also means that he has the utmost confidence in his own attacks, knowing that the opponent would have no chance of surviving." Tang Yu was very admiring of Ling Lan's calmness, decisiveness, and efficiency. This was how an excellent mecha operator should behave, never leaving an opponent any shred of a chance. In this regard, Ling Lan did much better than Qiao Ting.

“It looks like the task distribution in the Lingtian battle team is very clear. The strongest team leader handles the Leiting members while the other Lingtian members use self-destruct methods to drag Qiao Ting down. The outcome of this challenge is probably hard to predict now.” The principal’s words caused the expressions of the administrators beside him to turn ugly. They were intelligent people — of course they could tell that this tactic had wiped away all of Leiting’s advantage, even drawing the ace operator Qiao Ting into danger.

“Principal, you speak truly. However, Leiting’s situation is not that bad. As long as Qiao Ting calms down, even though his mecha is now missing half a leg, special-class mecha would still be no match for him due to the disparity in mecha levels.” Tang Yu stated matter-of-factly. Qiao Ting appeared to be in an awkward situation, mecha damaged and all, but he had not actually sustained any major injury. As long as he could avoid being caught in further self-destructs by the Lingtian members, it was not impossible for him to win.

“Let’s continue to observe. This fight is very interesting. It’s really true that, on the battlefield, anything is possible.” The principal’s words left everyone silent. Some began reflecting on themselves — had they really taken things too much for granted?

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Qiao Ting swiftly examined his mecha and found that there were not any huge problems with it. Only then did he relax and begin properly engaging in long-range attacks with Li Lanfeng. Because the damage on his mecha had affected his mobility and balance, at first, Qiao Ting was being overpowered by Li Lanfeng in their fight. However, Qiao Ting was still an ace operator after all — his adaptability was very strong. It did not take too long for him to recalibrate himself. Having grasped the new parameters of his mecha, Qiao Ting once again took the initiative on the field. The two combatants weaved and dodged, dashing and fluttering swiftly through the air.

Very soon, Li Lanfeng was being suppressed by Qiao Ting and was falling into a disadvantaged position. With the passage of time, he was finding it harder and harder to fight back. In the end, Li Lanfeng had no choice but to defend as he evaded the other’s attacks, only able to counterattack once or twice with great difficulty.

Qiao Ting once again claimed an overwhelming advantage in the fight; the administrators of the academy could finally breathe easier. However, they did not dare to fully relax — a special-class operator was not like an advanced mecha warrior who could only wait to be killed when facing an ace operator. The defence of a special-class operator’s beam shield, as well as its power reserves, were formidable. Even an ace mecha in perfect condition would still need to expend quite a bit of effort to wipe out a special-class mecha.

## **Chapter 415: The Slowest Member!**

“Ah!” The spectating students suddenly cried out in surprise, because behind Qiao Ting, three more mecha had appeared — Lingtian No.3, Lingtian No.6, and Lingtian No.7. It was Wu Jiong, Xie Yi, and Lin Zhong-qing! After receiving Ling Lan’s orders, they had gathered together and then raced desperately towards Qiao Ting’s coordinates to carry out the tactic they had agreed upon from the start. They would

use tactic number two, that is, the one they had named the 'Swarm Tactic' to pull Qiao Ting off his high horse.

As they were rather far away from Qiao Ting's location, even though they had engaged all the engines on their mecha to fly at high speed, they were still the third batch to arrive.

At this time, following the departure of Zhao Jun, Luo Lang, and Li Yingjie, the Lingtian battle team only had six people left on the field.

Meanwhile, in another direction, a mecha was running speedily over the ground. When he saw on his screen that all his remaining teammates on the field had already arrived at the spot Boss Lan had pointed out, he was very frustrated. "F\*ck, they've all arrived! I'm actually the last one!"

He was Lingtian No.2, Qi Long. Originally, his position was actually even closer than Lin Zhong-qing's group to Qiao Ting's coordinates. However, as a lover of close-combat, in order to increase the close-combat abilities of his mecha, Qi Long had asked Chang Xinyuan to modify some local aspects of his mecha, sacrificing a portion of the mecha's speed. For this reason, he had ended up lagging behind to be the one and only member yet to arrive.

"There's still 3 kilometres from here to my destination. Based on my mecha's speed, I should arrive there three minutes later." Once again checking against the new coordinates Boss had sent, Qi Long found that he would soon arrive. His tense expression eased and he wiped the sweat from his forehead, continuing to pilot his mecha forwards.

However, he had not gone far when the A.I. of his mecha sounded a warning, alerting him of the presence of an unidentified flying object 3 kilometres away on his radar. Looking towards that unidentified flying object, Qi Long could not stop himself from cursing his luck. Apparently, that mecha had been diagonally to the rear of his position. If he had just been a tad bit faster, he might have crossed paths with the other without either of them being the wiser.

Qi Long's gut feeling was that this was certain to be a Leiting mecha. When he zoomed in to check, it was just as he expected. That mecha had also noticed Qi Long, and just as if he had been pumped up with stimulants, the opponent accelerated to charge in Qi Long's direction. As things were, Qi Long could no longer avoid the other even if he had wanted to. Qi Long could not help but swear silently, "F\*ck, I'm just so bloody unlucky!"

Qi Long was not afraid that he could not match the Leiting member; he just really wanted to rush over to Qiao Ting's area as soon as possible so his team could lay siege on Qiao Ting with as much firepower as possible, thus carrying out his boss's second plan to the best of their abilities. As such, he did not want to waste time fighting with other Leiting members. However, since he could not avoid it now, although Qi Long was rather disgruntled, he still drew his weapon and made proper preparations for battle.

Frankly, there was a reason why that opponent mecha had become so excited at the sight of Qi Long. He had actually met Wu Jiong, Lin Zhong-qing, and Xie Yi's three-man mecha column first, but as clever as he was, he knew that he was absolutely no match for three opponents, so he had turned without hesitation to flee. Honestly, when he had made that decision, he had not really believed that he would be able to escape the opponents' group attack. However, unexpectedly, the opponents acted like they



had not noticed him, showing no signs of pursuing him to kill him. Instead, they merely continued flying rapidly in the direction they had initially been headed towards.

Even as the Leiting mecha rejoiced at his luck, he could not help but be a little curious, wondering what exactly those three Lingtian mecha were up to. Just as he was debating whether or not to follow them in secret, he actually discovered another mecha coming from another direction. This mecha was also a Lingtian mecha, and the direction it was heading in was the same as the three mecha before it.

He may not dare to confront three mecha, but one mecha alone, and just an advanced mecha like his as well? The Leiting member believed that he was sure to win. He thought to himself that he may perhaps be able to find the answer he sought from this lonesome Lingtian mecha.

Very soon, the two mecha were facing each other. Unlike the other, Qi Long did not have a beam gun in one hand and a beam saber in the other. Instead, he only carried a giant sword made of steel. Due to the weapon's great size and weight, Qi Long's mecha seemed incredibly clumsy and slow, and its speed naturally would be no match for the Leiting mecha's.

Qi Long did not mind the decreased speed of his mecha. A worshipper of Boss Lan, he had also learned to love fighting with steel-made giant cold weapons. Thus, in the Lingtian Battle Clan, he was the only one who, like Ling Lan, chose to use cold weapons in battle. And just like Ling Lan, he also wielded these cold weapons with great proficiency.

Seeing that the Lingtian participant was using a giant cold weapon which slowed his entire mecha down significantly, the Leiting member could not help but view the other with contempt.

Although giant cold weapons had greater destructive power than heat-based weapons, their heavy weight and massive size prevented mecha from attacking at high speeds. If both combatants were slow-moving close-combat mecha, perhaps these weapons might have some astounding effect, but against speed-type mecha, they were pretty much useless because they would be easily dodged by the opponent.

And this Leiting member just so happened to be piloting a speed-type mecha. Speed being one of his primary strengths, a slow and clumsy close-combat mecha would never be able to hit him. This was why he looked down on Qi Long, but at the same time, he was delighted at bumping into a mecha weak against his own. The victory of this encounter was sure to be his.

Now more confident, the Leiting member charged forwards with his beam saber and beam gun. As soon as Qi Long entered the attack range of his beam gun, he pulled the trigger without any hesitation, sending a cascade of beam energy at the opponent. Since the opponent lacked speed, these barrage of beam shots should be able to hit the other. Once the other's beam shield ran out of power, he would be able to clinch the victory of this fight even before the other could get close.

After a round of frenzied shooting, it was unclear whether the opponent was just too lucky or if his shooting had been off the mark, but the Leiting member found to his great surprise that none of his long-range attacks had caused any damage to the opponent ...

"F\*ck, why are my hands so stiff today?" The Leiting member was rather annoyed. Still, he did not think much of it, merely figuring that his hands had not warmed up yet and so had lost their normal accuracy. He saw that his beam gun was not doing any good, plus the two of them were about to enter close-

combat range anyway, so he put the beam gun back to its original place. Then, he focused on driving his mecha forwards at Qi Long with his beam saber in hand.

“Heh, perfect.” Qi Long was just growing frustrated at his mecha’s lack of speed, worried that the opponent would keep up the long-range attacks and choose to keep his distance. If that had happened, he would have been stuck in a stalemate with the other, and this match would become a battle of endurance to see whose power would run out first. And this was something that Qi Long absolutely did not want to see happen.

Qi Long was tangled up in worry inside, but when he found that the opponent was not doing as he had expected but rather taking the initiative to attack instead, he was overjoyed. As soon as the opponent was within close-combat range, Qi Long believed that he would definitely be able to finish off the other within a matter of seconds.

The speed of the Leiting member’s incoming beam saber was very fast — the light and quick sword allowed the opponent to stab out several times in just one second. The spectators could only see Lingtian’s mecha being surrounded by the light of the beam saber in an instant ...

No one believed that this clumsy Lingtian mecha could completely evade so many beam saber attacks — everyone felt that he would at least be hit several times. Even the attacking Leiting member believed so in his heart. Whenever his beam saber struck the opponent, the power of the opponent’s beam shield would be drained, and as soon as the power of the opponent’s beam shield ran out, the very next second would be the opponent’s last.

However, the subsequent scenario went beyond everyone’s expectations. The weighty giant steel sword which everyone originally believed would slow the Lingtian mecha down actually produced a streak of layered images within the span of a second. And then, the violent sounds of collisions rang out ...

These sounds made alarms ring in the Leiting member’s mind. They were not the sounds of a beam shield’s power being drained, but was the sound of something solid hitting another solid object. He was just about to pull back to see what was going on when ... the giant blade which had been shrouded by afterimages suddenly disappeared from his sight completely!

An unprecedented sense of danger sparked in the Leiting member’s mind. Frightened, he piloted his mecha to move back swiftly, but it was too late. He only saw a cold light flash across his eyes, and immediately after, he felt his mecha being struck by a tremendous force. The tremendous force threw his mecha out of his control, and it began to fall backwards. Besides that, the tremendous blow had also created large vibrations which were so strong that his shock-dampening devices inside his cockpit were all ineffective. He felt a sharp pain in his chest and a mouthful of blood shot out of his mouth ...

Before he could recover from the pain, another forceful blow struck his mecha again. This time, the blow struck his cockpit directly. The horrifying blow dealt great damage to the already weakened cockpit whose defence was at its lowest point. The operator inside felt as if a mountain had crashed on top of him; his vision turned black. By the time he was conscious again, he found that he was already back at the login point of the virtual world. He quickly browsed through the notifications he had received from the mainframe and found that the mainframe had declared him dead and kicked him out of Mecha World around 10 seconds ago. Now, he could only wait for the death penalty period to pass before he could apply for a new trainee mecha and start anew.

“The opponent’s physique is absolutely at the level of a monster,” commented the Leiting member with a rueful smile. Although it looked like they were each operating their respective mecha to fight, in truth, the actions executed by the mecha would be fed back to the operators themselves. For the opponent to be able to pull off such terrifying attacks with that giant cold weapon and bear the feedback force generated by it, his physical constitution must definitely be extremely aberrant ...

Having finished off his opponent, Qi Long happily slung the giant steel sword back on his mecha’s back. Then, without delay, he continued to use his damnable speed to rush as fast as he could to his destination. From start to end, this fight had still wasted three minutes of his time 1 . If only he had not bumped into the other, he would have already arrived at his destination ...

Even though Qiao Ting had obtained victory here, he was not very happy. He was very afraid that by the time he got there, the fighting would already be over. Regardless of whether Qiao Ting had been finished off by his teammates or if his teammates had been wiped out by Qiao Ting instead, either outcome would make him very unhappy.

#### **Chapter 416: A True Ace!**

On his end, Qiao Ting had just managed to suppress Li Lanfeng, but before he could think of a way to finish off the other once and for all, he suddenly felt his heart clench, a strong sense of danger rushing over him. He decisively stopped attacking Li Lanfeng and operated his mecha to rise rapidly into the air ...

Qiao Ting’s intuition was undoubtedly accurate. He had just left his original position when three beams of light struck right there.

Qiao Ting quickly zoomed out his mecha’s screen and only then did he notice that several hundred metres behind him, heaven knows when, another three Lingtian mecha had appeared.

Seeing this, Qiao Ting felt the faint stirrings of regret in his heart. If you recall, back when he had tried to ambush Zhao Jun, he had fired a radar disruption missile. Indeed, this radar disruption missile had caused the radars of Zhao Jun’s group to lose their functionality, but within the same area, the radar in his own mecha was equally affected by the missile. This was why he had not noticed Li Lanfeng, nor had he discovered the unexpected arrival of these three mecha.

Now, in retrospect, this decision of his back then was just digging a pit for himself. Keep in mind that the mecha he was operating was an ace mecha which had a radar search range of 5 kilometres. If he had not fired that missile at the start, with his search range of 1 to 2 kilometres larger than the Lingtian mecha’s, how could he have been taken by surprise again and again by these Lingtian mecha?

The ones who had failed in their sneak attack were Wu Jiong, Lin Zhong-qing, and Xie Yi. Seeing Li Lanfeng fighting alone and catching sight of the thick smoke down below as well as the remains of mecha scattered on the ground, and then looking over at Qiao Ting to see that his mecha was missing half a leg, they had a good idea of what had happened. Their teammates who had arrived before them had most probably used the tactic Boss Lan had designed, and bringing that piece of Qiao Ting with them as their spoils of war, they must have been defeated and ejected from the field.

The three of them did not dare to hesitate. As the primary mecha, he was the first to pounce with his mecha, while his secondaries Xie Yi and Lin Zhong-qing followed close behind. Meanwhile, at that moment, due to the assistance of Wu Jiong's trio, Li Lanfeng had finally managed to catch his breath. He likewise operated his mecha forwards, the initially snuffed out beam gun in his hands lighting up once more to attack Qiao Ting.

"Godd\*mmmit!" Seeing Lingtian about to attack as a group once more, Qiao Ting carefully evaded Li Lanfeng's beam attacks while flying swiftly in a particular direction at the same time. He did not want to be surrounded again and be forced to endure the opponents' self-destructs and add even more wounds on his mecha.

Seeing Qiao Ting choose to flee, Wu Jiong and the others were surprised, but they immediately revved their engines to fly after him. Even though Qiao Ting's speed was very fast, perhaps the damage on his mecha had still affected his speed — combined with the fact that Wu Jiong and the rest did not hesitate to overload their engines, Qiao Ting was actually unable to lose them for a while.

In this manner, chasing and running, this stalemate continued for two to three minutes. The extended pursuit made many of the spectating students think that this might be a match of endurance now. Perhaps they could only wait for one side's mecha to completely run out of power before this boring chase war would end.

The cadets were dissatisfied by this — they wanted to see a fierce battle, and not this kind of boring chase which carried some element of luck. Qiao Ting's active retreat also tarnished the glow of his previous glorious image as an unbeatable legend; he was swiftly losing his shine. In contrast, the Lingtian Mecha Clan which had always presented a brave front had earned the goodwill and favour of many of the cadets.

Even the spectating administrators in the VIP room were extremely unhappy at this moment, thinking that Qiao Ting's performance was indeed too lame, upsetting their plans. However, they still did not give up hope. They were waiting for Qiao Ting to turn the tables around and carry off an exciting reversal from his dire situation right now ...

Just as everyone was starting to feel bored, thinking that Qiao Ting would continue to run, Qiao Ting did something that shocked everyone. He suddenly stopped his rapid flight and almost without pause, he flew in the opposite direction, charging ferociously at the chasing four Lingtian mecha.

This action may seem extremely simple but was actually very hard to do. To suddenly stop while one was moving forwards at a rapid pace required one to withstand the inertia of the movement — only then would one be able to stop instantly. On top of that, after coming to a stop, to shift and fly in the opposite direction was several times harder than just pulling off an emergency stop. The average ace operator whose skills were still far from perfect would never dare to attempt this, because it was all too easy to lose control of one's mecha this way, and might end up pushing one into a desperate situation instead.

This movement was considered a super hard double-S rank ace mecha control technique which only elite aces had the guts and qualifications to use. Even among the ace mecha instructors within the military academy, only the elite ace mecha master Tang Yu could do it. The other instructors would

never dare attempt it normally, because they had no way to guarantee that they would pull it off successfully.

This action made instructor Tang Yu's eyes glint, a faint satisfied smile appearing on his lips. This was the first time he had expressed any satisfaction at Qiao Ting's performance — only a Qiao Ting like this deserved to be called his proud student.

"You've taught him well. Qiao Ting is finally about to display his skills." The principal's eyes were sharp. Qiao Ting's previous performance had at most been at pseudo-ace level. But the appearance of this technique was enough to prove that Qiao Ting was now truly entering the mindset of an ace operator.

"Qiao Ting's weakness is that he's too slow to warm up. The fact that he's able to enter the mindset of an ace operator so quickly this time should be all thanks to the repeated oppression of the Lingtian Mecha Clan ... the victory of this challenge fight now looks like it may really belong to Leiting." Tang Yu had not been certain of the outcome of the fight at first because he was well aware of Qiao Ting's weakness. Although Qiao Ting was already an ace operator, he could not immediately enter the mindset of an ace operator. At most, he could only enter a pseudo-ace state, which was just a little higher than special-class, but he would not be able to completely overpower a special-class operator ... this was why Zhao Jun and Li Lanfeng could wrangle with Qiao Ting for so long.

Mind you, a true ace operator could easily kill a special-class operator in a matter of seconds.

Qiao Ting's sudden change of direction this time turned him from a fugitive to an attacker; he charged towards the four mecha who had been pursuing him. Wu Jiong was at the fore of the group. Originally, among the four mecha, Li Lanfeng was piloting a special-class mecha, which was also a speed-type mecha, so he should have been the one in the forefront. However, because he was a long-range attacker, he had not forgotten to attack Qiao Ting during the pursuit. This was also why Qiao Ting had not been able to blast away and escape at full speed; he needed to watch out for Li Lanfeng's beam attacks.

This had also led to Wu Jiong taking the lead among the four mecha, followed closely by Li Lanfeng, Xie Yi, and Lin Zhong-qing. Therefore, when Qiao Ting abruptly changed directions to attack them, Wu Jiong naturally became his first target.

Perhaps this action of Qiao Ting's was too sudden, or perhaps the distance between the two was too close — whatever the case, when faced with Qiao Ting's sudden attack with his beam saber, Wu Jiong had no time at all to take any defensive action. The only thing he could do was to turn the power on his mecha's beam shield to the max, hoping that it would be able to withstand the other's sudden attack.

There was a soft "Swoosh!", and the glowing beam shield on Wu Jiong's mecha turned dark. Those with keen eyes could clearly see that Qiao Ting's beam saber had sliced cleanly through Wu Jiong's cockpit, achieving a one-hit kill!

Qiao Ting's sudden outburst-like reversal left the spectating cadets gobsmacked. Some seniors who understood just how difficult the moves Qiao Ting had just executed had been could not help but become serious — this was how the Thunder King should perform.

"Regiment Commander Wu!" Xie Yi cried out in shock. He had never expected that the third strongest from the Central Scout Academy, Wu Jiong, would be killed instantly, unable to withstand even one

attack from an ace operator. He finally understood the meaning of Boss Lan's words right before the challenge fight. When they were up against a true ace operator, do not even think about exchanging blows with the other. Instead, they should think about how they could successfully self-destruct as soon as they made contact, so they could just deal even the slightest bit of damage to the other ...

The gap between them and an ace operator was just too large — though it looked like just a gap of two levels, this gap was the difference between heaven and earth.

Wu Jiong was killed on the spot; without any chance at all to self-destruct, he had been defeated and kicked out of the field. In intense pain, Wu Jiong was sent out of Mecha World by the mainframe. At the login point, Wu Jiong could not help but crouch on the ground. He was extremely frustrated — at that instant, why had he chosen to adjust his beam shield to the maximum instead of cleanly pressing his self-destruct button?

“Truly, if you don't listen to Boss Lan, you will make mistakes ...” said Wu Jiong with a bitter smile. He knew that he had chosen as he had back then because he still had that bit of ambition and competitive spirit in his heart. He had hoped to prove to Boss Lan that he was not as weak as Boss Lan thought he was. However, reality proved that he really was as weak as Boss Lan thought ...

Wu Jiong was expelled from the fight without achieving anything, and his elimination had left Qiao Ting an opening in Lingtian's encirclement. Qiao Ting did not push his advantage to chase victory, instead choosing to continue flying forwards to flee.

This time, however, Qiao Ting managed to shake off Xie Yi and Lin Zhong-qing. Although Li Lanfeng continued to stick close behind him, he had still fallen quite a distance behind Qiao Ting. After all, flying backwards after an emergency stop was something only an ace operator could do; it was not that easy for the three from Lingtian to change directions.

Li Lanfeng moved the swiftest — he used a horizontal-8 turnabout manoeuvre to turn his mecha around. Meanwhile, Xie Yi and Lin Zhong-qing had to make a large loop to turn their mecha around, and this was another reason why they had fallen so behind.

The chase began again, but this time, none of the spectators had any more objections about Qiao Ting's actions. They knew very well that Qiao Ting could switch from running away to massacring his opponents at any time; it was all a matter of whether he wanted to or not.

“Actually coming back here. How lucky for me!” Rushing here with all his might, Qi Long had been very irritated to see his target originally going further away, as this would delay his reunion with his teammates even further. But unexpectedly, the target had turned back not too long later. This made Qi Long ecstatic — judging by the speed of the opponent, he should be able to join his teammates about a minute later.

#### **Chapter 417: Prioritizing Personal Interests!**

Very soon, Qiao Ting had returned to where Zhao Jun and the others had set him up at the beginning. He noticed that Li Lanfeng had pulled quite a distance away from the other two Lingtian members, and a cold smirk tugged at the corners of his lips.

The reason he had not pressed his advantage but chose to run instead was that he did not want to fall into the opponents' encirclement again. He hoped to destroy the formation of these Lingtian mecha with his speed. It should be said that, based on the current situation, Qiao Ting had achieved his objective.

Qiao Ting's attitude had changed from his restless ambition of before to caution. The Lingtian Mecha Clan still had five members — if he was tricked by the opponents again and fell into effective self-destruct range, even he would not be able to confirm whether he would be able to hold off the frenzied actions of five mecha with this battered ace mecha of his. Qiao Ting had instigated this challenge fight to obtain unmatched glory; he did not want to become a stepping stone to fame for the Lingtian Mecha Clan. He absolutely would not allow such an outcome to occur.

His previous mistakes had already caused him incredible grief, thus Qiao Ting absolutely would not permit himself to commit the same mistakes. Therefore, Qiao Ting had deliberately plotted to turn the situation around to his advantage.

When Qiao Ting saw that he had already destroyed Lingtian's encirclement formation, he consciously slowed his mecha, creating the impression that his mecha was running low on power, and waited for Li Lanfeng to approach.

With regards to the three Lingtian mecha chasing him, the special-class operator Li Lanfeng was undoubtedly the biggest threat. He wanted to eliminate Li Lanfeng, then the remaining two Lingtian advanced mecha would be not much threat at all.

Qiao Ting waited for Li Lanfeng to catch up to him, but reality made him frown. It turned out that, even as he decreased his speed, the other was also decreasing his speed. Only then did Qiao Ting notice that Li Lanfeng was constantly maintaining the distance he needed to attack him from long range.

"He really is a wily and difficult character to deal with." Qiao Ting was very annoyed. Li Lanfeng had always appeared in their circles as a cunning and scheming persona, which led many to overlook his mecha piloting skills. Qiao Ting was no exception, but after today's fight, Qiao Ting could clearly feel that the other was even harder to handle than Zhao Jun. This was because the other knew very well how to protect himself — it was very hard to trick or bewilder him with tactics since he was so proficient in them himself. Like right now, Qiao Ting had intended to draw the other in, but Li Lanfeng had prudently noticed his plan at soonest notice ...

Knowing that his plan had failed, Qiao Ting could only give up on his original objective. He compared the distance between Li Lanfeng and the two other opponents behind him, and an idea emerged in his mind.

Qiao Ting did not hesitate to once again display that super technique of stopping suddenly and then flying inversely. His mecha abruptly switched directions to leap at Li Lanfeng, the beam saber in his hands stabbing right for the other's cockpit. The whole attack screamed 'if you won't come to me, then I'll come to you'.

Although Qiao Ting's actions were rather sudden, the always vigilant Li Lanfeng was long prepared for this. Seeing the opponent pounce at him, Li Lanfeng decisively revved all his mecha's engines, forcibly sending his mecha shooting several metres up into the air, narrowly dodging Qiao Ting's savage attack.

At the same time, the beam gun in his hand once again unleashed countless beams at Qiao Ting passing by below him.

Li Lanfeng thought that Qiao Ting would definitely turn back to attack him after this attack of his missed, but the following scene surprised Li Lanfeng greatly. Qiao Ting's mecha suddenly twisted so that all the beams Li Lanfeng had shot struck air, and then, the very next second, Qiao Ting was already 100 metres or so behind him.

"Irregular Flicker!" Li Lanfeng, who had fought with his rabbit before, naturally knew that this was a hallmark evasion technique of ace operators. Li Lanfeng had initially been prepared for his beam attacks to miss. What surprised Li Lanfeng was that Qiao Ting actually chose to bypass him completely to expressly target Xie Yi and Lin Zhong-qing ...

"Not good! I fell for it!" Li Lanfeng immediately figured it out. The objective of Qiao Ting's attack this time was actually not him but Xie Yi and Lin Zhong-qing behind him. If Qiao Ting killed Xie Yi and Lin Zhong-qing without any trouble right before him, Li Lanfeng would definitely feel unworthy of all the trust the rabbit had in him.

In fact, whether or not the team members' self-destructs could deal heavy damage to Qiao Ting depended, to a large extent, on Li Lanfeng running interference by bombarding Qiao Ting with long-range attacks. When designing the tactic, Ling Lan knew very well how large the gap between the team members and Qiao Ting was — if there was no expert coordinating with them to run interference, there was almost no chance for the team members to get close to Qiao Ting and self-destruct by themselves.

As such, the heavy responsibility of running interference on Qiao Ting fell to the one most proficient at long-range attacks who had also already advanced to special-class operator, Li Lanfeng. This was also why Li Lanfeng had been so careful to maintain his distance from Qiao Ting all this while.

Li Lanfeng naturally did not want to disappoint Ling Lan. Without having to think about it, he instantly followed Qiao Ting, the beam gun in his hand shooting countless beams at the other, hoping to cause enough trouble to Qiao Ting that he would give up on his attack.

"Clack, clack, clack!" Right then, Li Lanfeng suddenly felt the beams die out from his gun's muzzle. He realised that the energy block of the beam gun was almost empty.

One misfortune comes in the wake of another 1 — unbelievably frustrated, Li Lanfeng knew that every second counted in the fight right now. He decisively pressed down a button on his control panel, and then a block-shaped object suddenly sprang out from a random slot on the waist of Li Lanfeng's mecha to fly into the air.

Quicker than words could say, his mecha's hands, which should have been unwieldy, performed nimbly at this moment to tug forcefully at the back of his beam gun. A block-shaped object fell out from the area, and at the same time, the other block-shaped object just happened to fly up to the level of the mecha's chest. With a smooth grab, the mecha's left hand caught the block-shaped object, and then with a flutter of the mecha's fingers, the block-shaped object was instantly plugged into the back section of the beam gun, replacing the previous block-shaped object.



This seemingly extremely complicated series of actions was actually completed within the blink of an eye. Equipped with a new energy storage unit, the beam gun once again lit up and sent countless beams flying wildly at Qiao Ting.

Perhaps he was in too much of a hurry, or perhaps Li Lanfeng was not at all concerned whether or not he would hit his teammates with friendly fire right now, for the overwhelming cascade of beams rained towards Qiao Ting's, Xie Yi's, and Lin Zhong-qing's mecha without distinction at this moment. At the sight, the audience's hearts were in their throats. They were shocked and bewildered — could it be that this special-class mecha was willing to sacrifice his teammates for the sake of the ultimate victory?

“As expected, Li Lanfeng is a selfish person who prioritizes personal interest over all else. In order to obtain victory, he doesn't care at all whether his teammates would die for no reason ...” The Regiment Commander of the Wuji Mecha Clan, Han Yu, was also watching this match. When he saw Li Lanfeng's current ruthless attack method, a mocking smile appeared on his face as he spoke to Wei Ji sitting beside him.

“He is an excellent strategist. In his opinion, everyone participating in this fight is working towards the goal of the ultimate victory. As long as victory can be assured, he does not care how many are sacrificed in the process. I thought you had already known this a long time ago, which was why you have been so wary of him all this time.” Wei Ji raised an eyebrow at Han Yu's words. From the very first year they had met Li Lanfeng, he had already gotten a vague sense of Li Lanfeng's style of doing things. Even though it was a rather heartless style, this character trait was undoubtedly perfect for a schemer. That was why Wei Ji did not hate Li Lanfeng like Han Yu did, and even respected him a little for it.

“Yes. It's precisely because I know what kind of person he is that I could not trust him with Wuji's future. I'm truly afraid that he will sell out Wuji completely one day for his own ends.” Having said all this, Han Yu's eyes turned cold and forbidding. He was extraordinarily vigilant when it came to Li Lanfeng; he just could not shake the feeling that this person was filled with a bellyful of calculations featuring Wuji.

“Let's not talk about his character. It seems we have underestimated his mecha control skills. Who knew he was this strong? That series of actions is not something any ordinary special-class operator can do,” commented Wei Ji with a sigh.

That rapid action of switching out the energy block of his beam gun had seemed so simple, but it was actually not easy. Mecha were mecha, after all. Even if one could control mecha like one's own limbs, when it came to this sort of detailed control, many mecha operators would not be able to do as Li Lanfeng had done. Fine control was an extreme test of an operator's abilities. From his control over these fine details, it could be seen that Li Lanfeng's control had truly reached a level where man and machine were united as one. Only that way could he have carried off those actions so naturally.

“He was delayed for close to two years on advanced mecha warrior level. Looks like it was because of this.” Han Yu now finally understood why Li Lanfeng had persisted on not advancing to special-class operator for so long.

“This kind of person who is very clear on his own goals ... would he really serve a newly established mecha clan loyally and obey the orders of a second-year?” After several seconds of silent contemplation, Wei Ji suddenly asked Han Yu.

It wasn't that they did not want Li Lanfeng in their clan, but after spending a full three years on him, they had still been unable to get Li Lanfeng to serve Wuji with undying loyalty. This was also why Han Yu had no choice but to use some methods to suppress Li Lanfeng's reputation within the clan while simultaneously fostering a new strategist to diminish Li Lanfeng's importance to Wuji.

"Of course it's impossible. He must have some motive for joining the Lingtian Mecha Clan. It's just that we can't tell what it is right now," replied Han Yu with conviction. "At present, the Lingtian Mecha Clan will be happy to have two extra special-class mecha operators in the clan, greatly increasing the strength of their mecha clan. But in future, there'll be a time yet when they'll be crying. Li Lanfeng, that fellow ... Hmph!" Han Yu had always thought badly of Li Lanfeng; he did not believe that Li Lanfeng would truly join the Lingtian Mecha Clan out of sheer kindness.

In battle, Li Lanfeng did not know that his previous clan's leader, Han Yu, was casting all sorts of malicious speculation on the reasons behind his joining the Lingtian Mecha Clan. However, even if Li Lanfeng knew of it, he would merely have laughed it off. The ties and emotions between him and the rabbit were absolutely not something someone like Han Yu could understand.

Li Lanfeng's unexpected ruthless actions stunned the spectating cadets and threw Qiao Ting into a dilemma at the same time. If he continued to attack Xie Yi and Lin Zhong-qing, he would undoubtedly receive the full force of Li Lanfeng's wild barrage of beam attacks alone. In that case, although he would be able to eliminate two of the opposing team's members, he might also end up with a certain degree of damage to his own mecha. Was this really worth it? Qiao Ting involuntarily hesitated at this time.

Chapter 418: All Alone!

This brief moment of hesitation by Qiao Ting, however, gave the initially helpless sitting ducks Xie Yi and Lin Zhong-qing a chance to counterattack.

The two of them were ecstatic — they did not hesitate to pilot their mecha to charge fiercely at Qiao Ting. Even though they too might face that wave of beam energy Li Lanfeng had shot in this direction if they moved forwards, this still could not stop them from doing so.

Lin Zhong-qing and Xie Yi were well aware that up against a powerful ace operator, they were incapable of taking any blows from the other, much less counterattacking. Wu Jiong, who was stronger than them, had already proved this point. Once they hesitated and wavered, they may likely die in vain, unable to even use self-destruction to ply some damage on the opponent.

Thus, when they saw a chance to approach Qiao Ting, the two of them naturally had nothing to fear. Even as they charged towards Qiao Ting, they each pressed the self-destruct buttons of their mecha.

Witnessing all this, inside the VIP room, Tang Yu could not help but sigh and say, "Qiao Ting, he is too indecisive." At the critical moment, Qiao Ting had still been too cautious. With his abilities, if he could have just been a bit more resolute, quickly drawing his beam saber to attack Lingtian No.6 and Lingtian No.7, he could definitely have killed those two instantly. Then, Lingtian No.6 and Lingtian No.7 would never have had the chance to get close to Qiao Ting, and so they would not have been able to use self-destructs to harm Qiao Ting.

The keen-eyed Tang Yu had seen through Lingtian No.6 and Lingtian No.7's plans with just one glance. Unfortunately, Qiao Ting had hesitated at that key moment. This hesitation that should not have appeared gave the initially hopeless Lingtian No.6 and Lingtian No.7 a chance to self-destruct.

"Qiao Ting is likely to suffer some trouble now." The principal too could see very clearly. Compared to Tang Yu, he was even more objective. From the very start, Qiao Ting had actually held the absolute upper hand, but after time and time again of mistakes in decision making during battle, his advantage had been whittled away bit by bit. If Qiao Ting continued to make mistakes after this, he might really lose all of his advantages as an ace operator. In terms of taking control of the larger picture, he was undoubtedly somewhat lacking.

"If Qiao Ting still cannot commit fully here, this match is likely to become treacherous for him," said Tang Yu, frowning. Even though he could not see as clearly as the principal had, he still knew that Qiao Ting's advantage was steadily decreasing. If he did not put his full effort into the fight now, the outcome would really become unpredictable.

"Qiao Ting probably didn't think that that Lingtian No.11 would be so ruthless." The principal found an excuse for Qiao Ting's mistake. At this point, the principal could not help but shake his head and say, "To tell the truth, this No.11's method's are a little over the top. In order to attack Qiao Ting, he doesn't even mind doing so at the expense of his teammates." Being retired, the principal especially treasured those old battle comrades of his, and so found this sort of behaviour rather unacceptable.

"If Lingtian No.11 had not done as he did, Lingtian No.6 and Lingtian No.7 would, without question, have been killed by Qiao Ting and directly eliminated." Tang Yu held an opposing view, however. "Since the outcome would be the same either way, he might as well push it to the limits. Perhaps then, his teammates' deaths would not be as worthless."

"Also, principal, this is the virtual world. Death isn't really death here." Tang Yu reminded the principal that the virtual world was still fundamentally different from the real world.

"I'm only afraid that these children will develop a habit here, that for the sake of victory, they would be willing to sacrifice anything that can be sacrificed ..." Even though the competition in the academy was fierce, it was still not a true battlefield after all. If someone could already be so cold and ruthless here, then would they be even more callous and unfeeling on a real battlefield? The principal could not avoid worrying about this.

"Sometimes, sacrifice is unavoidable even if it is undesired," said Tang Yu. The principal's words had caused Tang Yu's eyes to darken, revealing a glimpse of a deep well of pain, as if he were recalling something unpleasant.

Tang Yu's strange state jolted the principal to awareness. He quickly changed the topic by saying, "Matters of the future, no one can tell what will happen. Let us just continue watching. Who knows? Perhaps, these children will bring us some pleasant surprises." The principal somewhat blamed himself for speaking too thoughtlessly and accidentally prodding at the deeply hidden wound in Tang Yu's heart.

Tang Yu only nodded in silence. At this moment, he really had no more interest in talking.

During the conversation between the principal and Tang Yu, Xie Yi and Lin Zhong-qing had died by self-destructing as Tang Yu and the principal had foreseen.

It should be said that the boys had achieved their objective, though imperfectly. Although Xie Yi and Lin Zhong-qing had been charging at Qiao Ting at full speed, Qiao Ting was Qiao Ting after all — his reputation as the top person in the military academy was not just for show. His control skills were indeed outstanding — despite the short distance which did not allow him to completely evade the two opponents sudden charge, his improvised reactionary operation had still let him successfully avoid Xie Yi's charge, and Lin Zhong-qing's charge had only brushed his mecha a little.

If Xie Yi and Lin Zhong-qing had not chosen to self-destruct, their attacks could have been said to be perfectly counteracted by Qiao Ting. However, Xie Yi and Lin Zhong-qing had already been determined to self-destruct from the start, so the moment they brushed by Qiao Ting's mecha — just as they were about to face Li Lanfeng's beam attacks head on and bring about a scene of death by friendly fire — the two of them successfully self-destructed.

Two loud explosive booms rang out. Xie Yi's and Lin Zhong-qing's mecha exploded at the same time on both sides of Qiao Ting's mecha. The great force generated by the two explosions instantly shook Qiao Ting unconscious. Without anyone to pilot it, his mecha instantly lost control and began to plummet towards the ground head first.

In the air, Li Lanfeng saw this and his heart leapt in joy, for he knew that Xie Yi and Lin Zhong-qing had succeeded with their self-destructs. He quickly operated his own mecha to fly down as well, his beam gun shooting without hesitation at the out of control ace mecha.

Bang, bang, bang! There were several consecutive sounds of beams hitting mecha. If the beam shield of Qiao Ting's mecha had not maintained a certain degree of energy protection throughout all this, his mecha would have likely incurred a considerable amount of damage from these few shots. Still, these few shots had caused the beam shield of Qiao Ting's mecha to turn dim all of a sudden. As long as Li Lanfeng continued shooting, a few more shots would probably break the beam shield completely. At that time, an ace mecha with no defences would not be able to withstand a blow from any weapon.

Qiao Ting was after all the most outstanding talent in the military academy in recent years — he could be termed aberrant both in terms of spiritual power and physique. It took only the blink of an eye for him to regain consciousness. When he found that his mecha was in freefall and saw Li Lanfeng's tenacious pursuit from above, he did not panic even in the face of such a desperate situation. His first choice was not to try and rein in his out of control mecha. Instead, he raised the beam gun in his hand, aimed it at Li Lanfeng, and calmly returned fire.

"Bang, bang, bang!" Although both combatants were proficient at long-range attacks, Qiao Ting's skills in this respect were even more impressive than Li Lanfeng's. With just three shots, Li Lanfeng was forced to evade and the beam attacks from the gun in his hands were interrupted. This let Qiao Ting breathe a sigh of relief ...

"Warning, mecha entering into low altitudes of less than 100 metres. There is a risk of crashing. Now 90 metres, 80 metres ... 50 metres, 40 metres, 30 metres! Danger! Danger! Please raise mecha's altitude immediately ..." Qiao Ting had barely just finished dealing with Li Lanfeng's attacks when a new crisis involving his mecha came to his attention. The mecha's A.I. was screaming urgently, alerting Qiao Ting that, once the mecha passed the 30-metre limit without raising its altitude, it would be impossible to avoid a crash.

“Rise up for me!” Qiao Ting temporarily stopped attacking Li Lanfeng to turn his full focus on operating his mecha. Engaging all the engines on his mecha, Qiao Ting fingers flew, changing the fixed coefficients of his mecha.

The plummeting mecha finally came to a sudden stop at an altitude of 20 metres — the incredible power of the engines pushed the mecha which had been calibrated to suit low altitudes in a desperate attempt to defy gravity. The deep rumble of the engines reverberated throughout the entire venue — as the mecha was very close to the ground, the airflow bursting out of the engines actually sent sand and dirt spraying up into the air. Very soon, the dust had spread, turning the airspace of about 20 to 30 metres high into a world of swirling sand, so turbid that no one could see what was going on inside clearly.

Finally regaining control of his mecha, Qiao Ting divided his attention between operating his mecha in a slow ascent and pulling the trigger of his beam gun to keep Li Lanfeng, who was still attempting to attack him, at bay ...

The mecha finally managed to reach an altitude of 50 metres, escaping from the risk of crashing. All mobility functions of the mecha were back to normal. Qiao Ting felt pained as he looked at that 30% damage indicator — the self-destructs of those two punks earlier had still ended up dealing quite a bit of damage to his mecha.

Qiao Ting was filled with hate, which deepened to loathing with regards to Li Lanfeng in the air above him. If not for the other’s wide-scale attack heedless of friend or foe, Qiao Ting would not have hesitated and given those two mecha the chance to self-destruct. Qiao Ting blamed his error in judgment on Li Lanfeng’s insanity. He decided that before the last two members of Lingtian arrived, he would first finish off this sticky-candy of an opponent, Li Lanfeng.

Just as Qiao Ting was about to take action — “Beep!” “Beep!” “Beep!” — three sounds marking notifications from the Mecha World mainframe rang out in quick succession. Qiao Ting reflexively swept a glance over the notifications panel, and the contents of the notifications almost made him spew blood and die right then and there. It turned out that his only remaining three team members had been successfully taken out by Lingtian within the last few seconds. In other words, he, Qiao Ting, was the only representative left for Leiting. He was now truly all alone.

In contrast, the Lingtian Mecha Clan still had three members to its name. Qiao Ting felt rage crest in his heart — he had initially thought that this would be a one-sided fight, but now the outcome was reversed where it was them, Leiting, who were being beaten badly. Even he was somewhat messed up, and this made hate rise in Qiao Ting’s heart.

With a face full of killing intent, Qiao Ting looked towards Li Lanfeng who had been keeping his distance. This sudden burst of cloying killing intent chilled Li Lanfeng’s heart, though he had sensed even stronger killing intent coming from Ling Lan before. He knew for certain that the following fight would not be ordinary ... he clenched his hands hard over his beam gun, his entire being alert for what was to come.

Qiao Ting’s mecha suddenly warped in the air, and in the next second, he was already by Li Lanfeng’s side. At this key moment, Qiao Ting had abandoned the long-range attacks he was most proficient in and had chosen to use his relatively weaker close combat skills instead to engage the enemy. This

unexpected move caused everyone in the audience to exclaim, unable to understand Qiao Ting's decision right then.

#### Chapter 419: Empty-Handed Weapon Grab!

Only Tang Yu alone could not help but cry out in approval, "An accurate decision."

From Lingtian No.11's performance so far, his skills obviously marked him as a special-class mecha master with a proficiency in long-range attacks. Although Qiao Ting could rely on even better long-range attacks to defeat the other, that would no doubt make this a protracted battle, a great waste of time. Moreover, Qiao Ting's current condition, both in terms of the state of his mecha and the state of his mind, would not allow for a protracted battle. His only option was to defeat the current opponent as quick as possible so he could have as much time as possible to rest. Hopefully, he would be able to regain his optimum state to deal with the other two Lingtian members who had yet to show themselves.

Tang Yu believed that Qiao Ting himself was aware that one of the two remaining members was the main regiment commander of the Lingtian Mecha Clan, one of the three special-class operators of the Lingtian Mecha Clan. Since the other was able to become the regiment commander of the Lingtian Mecha Clan, his capabilities definitely could not be underestimated. If Qiao Ting could not face the other at his best, then it would not be so easy to defeat the other.

Of course, Tang Yu had cheered for Qiao Ting's decision to engage in close combat not just because of that. Tang Yu knew his student very well — although Qiao Ting had chosen an ace mecha geared for long-range attacks, in truth, his close-combat skills were exceedingly strong, even better than some of the average close-combat mecha masters. It could be said that Qiao Ting was an all-rounder who could fight at both long range and close range; so, for him to use close combat against Lingtian No.11, a long-range expert, was undoubtedly the best choice.

Truth be told, Tang Yu also did not believe that there would be another in the academy like Qiao Ting, a mecha master proficient in both long-range combat and close combat. Take this Lingtian No.11 for example.

Qiao Ting's sudden change in attack style indeed caught Li Lanfeng by surprise. This attack was undoubtedly very abrupt — the beam saber appeared in an instant right before Li Lanfeng's face. Li Lanfeng did not have time to dodge, much less draw the beam saber from his own back to block. In a flash of inspiration, he decisively flung the beam gun in his right hand out to meet that incoming beam saber.

"Pow! Swoosh!" The beam gun and the beam saber collided, emitting a soft sound. Immediately after, the beam saber's greater energy instantly cut right through the beam gun. Lacking any beam shield defence, the beam gun naturally could not withstand the beam saber's attack, splitting into two halves.

Although Li Lanfeng had lost a beam gun, he had also managed to resolve this sudden one-hit kill attack of Qiao Ting's. Li Lanfeng took advantage of Qiao Ting's ending momentum; before Qiao Ting could come at him with a new attack, he grabbed the opening to dash away at top speed in his mecha. Swiftly pulling a distance away from Qiao Ting, he drew the beam saber from his back at the same time so he was no longer unarmed.

“This Lingtian No.11 has extremely exceptional reflexes.” The principal’s eyes shone at the sight. These reflexes alone was enough to prove that this Lingtian No.11 was a good potential sprout for close combat ...

On the tail of the principal’s delight was disappointment. Such good candidates for close combat, and they just had to go and choose long-range combat. Lingtian No.11 was one, and Qiao Ting was another ... the students now all tended to choose speed-type mecha or long-range mecha in order to ensure their own safety. In contrast, close-combat mecha with the highest offensive power but also high risk were being chosen less and less.

“Who’d have guessed that there would not be just one genius ...” Tang Yu’s gaze was complicated at this moment. Honestly speaking, he did not want to see his student Qiao Ting, whom he had so painstakingly cultivated and was so proud of, to lose the challenge fight, but the performance of so many of the Lingtian members had made him sit up and take notice. Each of them had their unique points of brilliance, making him yearn to teach them, and one of them had even made him decide to take him in as a true disciple. As such, he also did not want to see them return in defeat.

“Cough!” Tang Yu could only sigh in the end. Troubled either way, he could only force himself to watch as a neutral bystander and wait patiently for the final outcome to emerge.

Qiao Ting saw his carefully planned blow strike air and was frustrated. Unwilling to lose his initiative, he quickly chased after Li Lanfeng and once again swung his sword out angrily.

Li Lanfeng did not hesitate to meet him with his own beam saber. Countless sounds of beam sabers clashing rang out, and the audience could only see a dancing light show. The forms of the beam sabers were almost indiscernible — it was clear to see that the attack speed of both combatants had reached a fever pitch, so quick that others could no longer see the exchange of blows clearly.

“Boom!” A dead beam saber suddenly flew out from the sphere of light. As the attack speed of both combatants had been too fast, none of the spectators knew whose beam saber exactly had been sent flying ...

Of course, many people were leaning towards the idea that it was Li Lanfeng. After all, Qiao Ting was an ace operator — no matter how damaged his mecha was, it should still be impossible for him to be disarmed of his beam saber.

The audience’s eyes were discerning. Indeed, the one who had his beam saber sent flying was truly Li Lanfeng. Facing a now unarmed Li Lanfeng, Qiao Ting laughed coldly and once again swung the beam saber in his hands. This attack was even fiercer than those before — it was clear to see that Qiao Ting had no intention to let Li Lanfeng continue living.

With no other tools at his disposal to intercept this blow, Li Lanfeng looked like he was about to be pierced by Qiao Ting’s beam saber. Right at this critical moment, Li Lanfeng’s mecha suddenly sank down low, both his mecha’s arms rose up, and his palms clapped together.

The beam saber was caught between the mecha’s two palms. Where the two met, dazzling electrical sparks bloomed. With that, Qiao Ting and Li Lanfeng were stuck in a deadlock in the air.

“Empty-handed weapon grab!” The spectating students exclaimed collectively. Even the spectating instructors could not help but leap to their feet in shock. This move was considered an extreme skill of mecha control; not any ordinary mecha master could master this move.

“How can this be possible? Even Qiao Ting was unable to master this move.” Tang Yu was equally astounded. The ‘empty-handed weapon grab’ was one of his favoured special moves; unfortunately, even Qiao Ting, the student he was proudest of at present, had not been able to learn this move. This was because this move not only had high demands on mecha piloting talent, it also required perfect mastery of the mecha basic controls. However, most operators typically did not like wasting time on the basic controls. Even Qiao Ting had only trained up his basics till they were excellent enough before moving on. This was why Tang Yu had not been able to pass on this technique thus far, but unexpectedly, he had seen it executed by this Lingtian No.11 today.

“Lingtian No.11. Name: Li Lanfeng. Status: Elite family descendant, age 20. Physical skills: Early stage Qi-Jin; Mecha Piloting Level: Special-class, Advanced to Special-class advancement results: Excellent.” The excited Tang Yu immediately searched for Lingtian No.11’s information, and discovered that the other was actually from the same year as Qiao Ting.

“I actually missed such an outstanding student,” said Tang Yu with a regretful expression.

“It should be said that our academy is filled with crouching tigers and hidden dragons. There are just too many exceptional seedlings of this type,” consoled the principal.

The principal’s words improved Tang Yu’s mood. Tang Yu thought about the six new students he would be taking — although Lin Zhong-qing had not officially become his student yet, in Tang Yu’s heart, he was already his disciple — and he believed that they would not be worse than this No.11.

In mid-air, Qiao Ting and Li Lanfeng were stuck in a deadlock. And then, right at this moment, Qiao Ting suddenly felt his heart clench, an unprecedented sense of danger stealing over his heart.

Could it be that Li Lanfeng was about to self-destruct as well? Qiao Ting could not confirm where the danger was coming from, and just as he was hesitating over whether he should just let go of the beam saber in his hands and run ...

“Ah! Down below!” Spectators see a game better than its players — the spectating cadets who had chosen God-view could all see where the true source of danger to Qiao Ting was.

Apparently, right below the pair in the air, on the dust submerged ground, a mecha had snuck in. He suddenly rose into the air, his cold weapon glinting with cold light as he raised it high and stabbed it insidiously at Qiao Ting’s mecha suspended in a deadlock with Li Lanfeng in the air.

Fortunately, Qiao Ting was high up enough that, at the final moment, he finally saw where the true danger was. This unexpected attack chilled everyone’s hearts and also frightened Qiao Ting enough to make him break out in cold sweat.

Qiao Ting decisively let go of the beam saber in his hands and piloted his mecha to forcibly shift a metre away in parallel. This one-metre distance let him avoid the crisis of having a sword shoved up his chrysanthemum, but even so, that giant blade still scraped across his mecha, sending up countless sparks to blind everyone.



An approximately 2-inch deep gouge appeared starkly on the outer armour of Qiao Ting's mecha. If not for the substantial thickness of the steel of an ace mecha's body, this gouge might have directly ruined the mecha's body.

Qiao Ting narrowly survived this crisis, and one more of the final remaining three Lingtian members on the field had appeared. Except for the regiment commander of Lingtian, Ling Lan, who had not appeared yet, the others had all appeared before Qiao Ting.

"Good, I didn't come too late." Qi Long succeeded in one strike and then immediately retreated to one side. His mecha hovered in the air, that giant sword over one shoulder, as he spoke loudly to Li Lanfeng.

"A bit later and I would not have been able to hold on anymore." Li Lanfeng was glad that Qi Long had come in time. A little later and he would not have been able to hold Qiao Ting off anymore — at his level, an ace operator really was not someone he could contend with.

"Sorry about that! My mecha's speed is low. I was already moving as fast as I could." Qi Long was rather embarrassed. In order to make up for it, he raised the giant sword in his hands suddenly and said, "After this, watch me."

Qi Long had hardly finished speaking when he shook his giant sword and charged ferociously towards Qiao Ting.

Compared to Li Lanfeng's speed, Qi Long's speed was truly like that of a tortoise. Qiao Ting's face expressed his contempt, and with a slight shift, he had dodged Qi Long's charge. As Qiao Ting moved, he pulled out his backup weapons, two high-frequency blades, aimed them at Qi Long, who was about half a body length past him, and attacked.

With a loud "bang", the high-frequency blades struck Qi Long's giant sword ... no, it should be said that they were blocked by Qi Long's giant sword. Although high-frequency blades were extremely destructive, they could not display their power before Qi Long's massive cold weapon. The only thing they left on the giant sword in commemoration was a shallow scrape across the body of the giant sword. It was likely that when the weapons had collided, the high-frequency blades' energy had caused a little bit of damage to the surface of the sword's giant blade.

"This fellow's physical constitution must be at monster level." Qi Long had only swung his giant sword twice, but the principal could already tell Qi Long's base stats.

"Yes, this fellow is a close combat oddball genius. It's a shame that in order to raise its strength, the mecha's speed is a little lacking." Tang Yu had also identified the weakness of Qi Long's mecha.

Chapter 420: Chang Xinyuan's Revenge!

"Thinking to contend with Qiao Ting, looks like this brat won't be doing well." If his speed couldn't keep up with Qiao Ting's, even having all the strength in the world would be useless. The principal's face revealed some regret — it was so hard to finally find someone who chose close combat, but he turned out to be such an extreme person.

Tang Yu's gaze, however, was on Li Lanfeng, who was calmly observing all this from the side-lines. Compared to this Lingtian No.2 who had just appeared, Tang Yu felt Lingtian No.11 deserved more

attention — as long as this person was around, Tang Yu could not be certain that Lingtian No.2 would be unable to threaten Qiao Ting like the principal had said. The cool-headed ruthlessness Lingtian No.11 had displayed previously in battle made Tang Yu concerned despite himself.

The principal had also noticed the focus of Tang Yu's attention. He cuffed his own head in a slight reprimand and said with a wry smile, "Ok, fine, I actually forgot about this person. Looks like I spoke too early. As long as that monster brat has this teammate around, it's hard to say for sure that that brat won't be any threat to Qiao Ting."

Qiao Ting patiently exchanged two or three blows with Qi Long and felt that he had thoroughly figured Qi Long out. The other's close combat skills were very strong, but he was disadvantaged by the speed of his mecha. If this fellow before him had been operating a special-class mecha, perhaps the danger to him would be far greater, but for now ... Qiao Ting did not think that this Lingtian No.2 would have any chance to get close to him and successfully self-destruct like the other members of Lingtian had.

Having come to a decision, Qiao Ting did not hesitate any longer. Facing yet another of Qi Long's naively fearless attacks, a faint sneer emerged on Qiao Ting's lips. He abruptly raised his finger-speed — on his control panel, his fingers were no longer visible on his hands, replaced by layers of blurred shadows. That's right, Qiao Ting was planning to directly kill off this newly arrived Lingtian No.2. For this purpose, he had brought out his highest finger-speed, sending the high-frequency blades in his hands spinning into a wild dance ...

Right then, even the spectators could not see clearly where Qiao Ting's attacks would really land. Just when everyone believed Lingtian No.2 was done for, in a swathe of shadows, the clanging of collisions could be heard ...

Qi Long, who seemed to be moving in slow motion, actually managed to block all of Qiao Ting's attacks. All the spectators just could not comprehend what they had seen — how the hell had this Lingtian No.2 known for certain where Qiao Ting was going to attack?

No one knew that Qi Long's innate talent was Animal Instinct; his beast-like intuition could help him determine where the true danger was coming from even if his eyes could not. Already used to relying on this instinct of his, Qi Long did not hesitate to swing his sword towards the spots his intuition dictated.

"D\*mmmit!" Qiao Ting saw all his attacks being blocked miraculously by Lingtian No.2. Foiled once more, Qiao Ting could no longer suppress the rage in his heart. This rage made his hand speed jump once more, and the already stacked afterimages of his fingers actually turned into nothingness.

Qi Long suddenly felt a frisson of danger flash through his heart. Without conscious thought, he instantly piloted his mecha to dodge. At this time, the weakness of the speed of his mecha was officially exposed — although Qi Long's reaction time was swift, he was still unable to completely evade Qiao Ting's unexpected attack due to the drag of his mecha's speed.

There was a massive "boom", and the remaining right leg on Qiao Ting's mecha kicked out savagely at Qi Long's waist. The powerful force behind the kick sent Qi Long's mecha flying — Qiao Ting was just about to chase his advantage and follow up when a sense of danger crept over his heart once more. His leaping mecha jerked to a sudden stop. Not just that, Qiao Ting's entire mecha tilted backwards, the two high-frequency blades in his hands raised high in a cross.

“Thunk!” A muffled sound rang out in the air. The spectating cadets could even see the range of the energy shockwaves the mainframe had specially simulated for this collision. Four high-frequency blades clashed fiercely, causing the entire space around them to be distorted ...

It turned out that Li Lanfeng, who had merely been watching all this while, had finally made his move. While Qiao Ting had been concentrating on dealing with Qi Long, Li Lanfeng’s attack came silently out of nowhere. If Qiao Ting had not been an ace operator, without the unique danger senses ace operators had, perhaps Li Lanfeng’s sneak attack would have worked.

Li Lanfeng’s attack was seen through by Qiao Ting and failed. However, due to his interference, Qi Long escaped with his life. Anyone with eyes could see that if Li Lanfeng had not acted then, Qi Long, who had already lost his balance, would definitely have died under Qiao Ting’s purposeful pursuit.

“This Lingtian No.11 ... his judgment is impeccable,” Tang Yu could not help but praise. Even though he was still quite a distance away from Qiao Ting in terms of strength, perhaps even incomparable to those other senior cadets in the academy who had long advanced to special-class operator status, this precise judgment of his had made him the one and only member who had managed to wrangle with Qiao Ting for so long on the field. It could even be said that those Lingtian members from before were able to harm Qiao Ting with their self-destructs largely because he had successfully interfered with Qiao Ting’s judgment.

“An assassin-type mecha master, no, he should also be a strategist-type mecha master. With such a person in a battle clan, the clan’s survival rates on the battlefield will be significantly increased.” The principal’s expression was solemn, but his eyes could not hide his delight. He was very happy for the son of his old friend for obtaining such an outstanding member.

It should be known that, other than a powerful leader with great leadership, a perfect battle clan also needed various other roles to be filled. A strategist-type mecha master was in fact the second most important character for a battle clan to have — even more important than the typically most valued primary fighter mecha. Unfortunately, many battle clans these days tended to overlook this, blindly looking for powerful mecha masters to fill their ranks. They did not understand that a truly strong battle clan was not powerful just because of its combat power, but because each of the positions and roles within the battle clan were filled well and could work together seamlessly.

While Tang Yu and the principal were astonished at Li Lanfeng’s brilliant performance, the other spectators were not thinking so deeply. Although they too were amazed at how accurately Li Lanfeng had timed his attack, they only felt that Li Lanfeng must have noticed the danger Qi Long was in and had acted at this moment to save him. Perhaps even they would have been able to do that if they had been the one on the field.

It had to be said that the students’ vision was so much weaker compared to that of the principal and Instructor Tang Yu. The students could not see at all that it really was not as simple a thing as they believed to grasp the timing of an attack so accurately. Moreover, Li Lanfeng’s attack had contained a certain degree of stealth — it was clear to see that Li Lanfeng had prepared well for this attack; he had not acted hurriedly just because Qi Long was in danger.

However, Qiao Ting was after all Qiao Ting. An ace operator was indeed very formidable — he had still managed to break Li Lanfeng’s near perfect attack.

After Li Lanfeng had failed in his attack, everyone thought that he would retreat quickly to maintain his distance from Qiao Ting like he had before.

However, they were mistaken once again. This time, Li Lanfeng did not choose to withdraw — from both sides of his mecha's rib area, two chains suddenly shot out at Qiao Ting's two thighs.

"There it is!" Chang Xinyuan, who had been watching the fight from the audience seats all this while, saw this scene unfold, and his face flushed with joy. He could not help but clench his fists briefly. Even though he had not been able to go on the field to fight against Leiting personally due to his level being too low, Chang Xinyuan had not sat idly by while the others fought against this Thunder King Qiao Ting who had oppressed him for four years and had almost forced him to drop out against his will.

When Li Lanfeng had come to him the night before the challenge fight and had asked him to design something for him, Chang Xinyuan had been completely unable to refuse. The two of them had spent the whole night researching and had finally designed these two chains coming from the mecha's rib area. These two chains were not offensive weapons — they were only capture devices, like how a lasso had been created in order to capture wild horses. These two chains designed by Chang Xinyuan and Li Lanfeng were created precisely for the purpose of capturing Qiao Ting's mecha.

The second tactic that Ling Lan had created received Chang Xinyuan's full acknowledgement. He too felt that only this tactic would give them a chance to win this challenge if they were going to rely on their advanced mecha warriors. However, to deal the greatest amount of damage to Qiao Ting's mecha, they would need to stick as close to the other as possible when they self-destructed. But Qiao Ting just so happened to be an ace operator — he would never give the Lingtian members the chance to get close. Perhaps out of his disdain for them at the start, they might be able to take advantage of that and succeed, but after Qiao Ting suffered some losses at their hands, it would become absolutely impossible to once again get close to him.

In order to solve this problem, Chang Xinyuan and Li Lanfeng had come up with this idea. In order to catch Qiao Ting by surprise, this design had only been implemented on Li Lanfeng's mecha. After all, Li Lanfeng's mecha was a special-class mecha — if he managed to stick close to Qiao Ting and self-destruct, the damage dealt to Qiao Ting's mecha would also be the highest value possible.

And now, this modification which had taken the two of them a whole night to create had finally appeared on the battlefield. Chang Xinyuan's emotions were running high, but he also had mixed feelings at this moment. If Boss Lan had not invited him to join the Lingtian Battle Clan, he would never have had the chance to use his own designs, his own modifications, to successfully take revenge on Qiao Ting. Once, Chang Xinyuan had believed that it was almost impossible for him to seek revenge on Qiao Ting.

The two chains from Li Lanfeng's mecha had truly appeared rather suddenly and bizarrely — after all, standard mecha could never have something like this. Qiao Ting had neglected this possibility — by the time he noticed them, the chains had already wrapped themselves around both legs of his mecha. Besides that, both chains actually ended in curved hooks. After wrapping themselves around Qiao Ting's legs, they automatically hooked themselves on his thighs with a snapping sound, securely fastened.

Seeing this, what doubts could the spectators have? “Lingtian No.11 is about to self-destruct!” In near unison, the spectators cried out. The Lingtian Mecha Clan’s self-destruct tactic was displayed in all its glory now.

“D\*mn, you actually still had this trick hidden away.” Qi Long had finally regained control of his mecha at this time. When he saw this unexpected attack from Li Lanfeng’s mecha, he instantly understood what this was. Extremely pleased and surprised, he threw away the giant sword in his hands and lunged.

This was such a great opportunity! If he did not rush over to self-destruct now, then it would truly be a disgrace to the hellish training his boss had given him all these years. Qi Long was well aware that the opportune window to self-destruct was fleeting — there was no time at all for him to hesitate.

Trapped securely by Li Lanfeng, unable to break free immediately, Qiao Ting saw Qi Long charge right up to him to hug him close, and Qiao Ting was livid, shouting, “Let me go!”

This was the first time Qiao Ting had felt so humiliated. The rage and frustration of knowing that he actually had the strength and skills to finish off all the enemies before him, but could only wait for this tragedy to happen because he had been trapped by the opponent due to his own carelessness, was almost enough to make him faint.