

## Mech Touch 6361

### Chapter 6361 Biting Words

Saint Tusa Billingsley-Larkinson was having a hard time.

As soon as his Dark Zephyr returned with pursuers in tow, the ace mech picked up the tier 3 Destroyer spear that possessed the raw destructive power needed to give him an edge against his most pressing opponents.

The Arena Lord of Ya'gwasa had been gunning for him and his ace mech ever since he managed to stay close to their private little pocket space!

The greater phase lord appeared to take personal affront at the Dark Zephyr's seemingly effortless attempt at jumping out of the trap earlier.

The prideful greater phase lords had been hurling conceited taunts and insults at Tusa for quite a while!

"I DESPISE THE COWARDLY 'PILOTS' WHO PREFER TO CLAD THEMSELF IN THE SMALLEST AND FASTEST METAL SHELLS OF ALL. YOU GNATS ARE SO AFRAID OF TAKING A HIT THAT YOU PUT ALL OF YOUR POWER INTO YOUR SPEED. WITHOUT IT, YOU ARE NOTHING. YOU CAN NEITHER INFLICT A POWERFUL ATTACK OR RECEIVE ONE IN RETURN. THAT IS COWARDICE AMONG OUR RACE. IF YOUR PITIFUL PINK-SKINNED MINIONS CANNOT RECOGNIZE THAT, THEN THAT PROVES THAT COWARDICE IS INGRAINED IN YOUR SORRY LITTLE RACE."

Were all nunser phase lords supreme bastards? How come they all possessed the same level of arrogance and need to belittle the champions of the human race?

Having toured throughout human-occupied space after receiving his first proper ace mech, Saint Tusa was no stranger to chatty phase lords. He and the ace pilots he fought alongside usually made sure to make the arrogant alien leaders regret their words.

In fact, the resentment and impatience welling up inside his head had worked wonders in keeping the normally unruly tier 3 Destroyer spear under his control!

Instead of wasting his time on fueling his fear about suffering a backlash from the volatile weapon, Tusa instead channeled much of his fury and will towards trying to poke a hole into the huge and hard body of the Arena Lord of Ya'gwasa!

Despite the fact that the greater phase lord's body proportions had not only matched the size of a battleship, but was also clad in a decorative raiment that made him look like a bulky alien gladiator, Tusa still had a lot of confidence in his ability to inflict a killer blow onto his chief adversary!

"Shut up, you dim-witted cow, or I will make you shut up by slitting your gigantic throat!"

The Dark Zephyr utilized his blazing speed and maneuverability to dodge the Saint Piercer thrust in his direction.

As the powerful ace mech fluidly managed to circle around the much larger but more sluggish body of the Arena Lord, all sorts of spatial fluctuations and interference attempted to impede his motion.

The Dark Zephyr easily bulled through most of the spatial interference with the help of his Saint Kingdom. Although the hours-long chase had depleted it to an extent, Tusa still forced himself to summon up the strength to impose his domain onto reality.

With the cooperation of Blackwing and his battle partner, The Dark Zephyr easily managed to Leap past the Arena Lord's spatial barrier, thereby placing his ace light skirmisher in the perfect position to thrust the tip of the Destroyer spear into the back of the Arena Lord.

This was usually the most difficult place for a nunser phase lord to defend against. Their centaur-like bodies meant that they could not easily extend limbs to fend off attackers approaching from the rear.

Even so, the Arena Lord reacted surprisingly quickly to the threat. The greater phase lord exhibited no fear at all despite the fact that his close-ranged spatial abilities failed to fend off the ace mech.

Despite his massive bulk, the nunser phase lord was able to change the grip of his Saint Piercer and thrust the lower end of the polearm backwards at a tricky angle!

Tusa did not sense the threat posed by this prototype weapon, but he just knew that it would pierce straight through his Saint Kingdom and inflict a powerful concussive blow onto his ace mech!

The Saint Piercer was actually a little too thin and short in the hands of the Arena Lord. It must have cost a lot of resources to gather the high-value materials to fabricate this weapon.

However, its lack of mass and bulk also made it much easier for the Arena Lord to whip it around and strike at the relatively small and elusive mech with unerring precision!

The Arena Lord did not have eyes on the back of his head, but he was still able to leverage his sprong spatial senses to track the Dark Zephyr's movements and predict where he would go next!

Saint Tusa so badly wanted to go through with his charge and poke a hole through the Arena Lord's raiment and hide, but he knew better than to allow his machine to get struck by a weapon that was especially designed to counter ace mechs.

Even the flat end might pose a greater threat to the Dark Zephyr than usual!

The ace light skirmisher quickly aborted his attack run and turned around at an extreme angle in order to evade the rear polearm strike.

As soon as the Dark Zephyr distanced himself from the Arena Lord, the greater phase lord sseemed to blur in place before abruptly turning around!

The nunser phase lord had excellent control over his body. He even implanted himself with a phasewater organ that was solely designed to change his orientation by 180 degrees in an instant!

Tusa realized that he had almost fallen into a trap. If the Arena Lord already possessed such a capabilty, then he could have employed it sooner to impale the Dark Zephyr with the tip of the Saint Piercer!

Perhaps the only reasons why the Arena Lord declined to employ this measure was because it became a lot harder and costlier to pull off this reversal ability after being subjected to the Dark Zephyr's space suppression field at closer range.

Even so, Tusa instinctively guessed that the Arena Lord was powerful enough to overcome the resistance by force if he was wiilling to make the effort!

"YOU ACE PILOTS ARE ALL THE SAME. YOU ARE HARDLY THE FIRST FOOLS TO BELIEVE YOU CAN VANQUISH ME BY TARGETING MY REAR SIDE. I HAVE CRUSHED MANY CHALLENGERS WHO MISTAKENLY THINK THEIR ADVANTAGE IN SPEED ALLOWS THEM TO ATTACK MY WEAK POINTS WITH IMPUNITY. A REAL GOD ONLY RELIES ON STRENGTH AND BODY MASS. TO RELY ON A SMALLER BODY TO OUTMANEUVER ENEMIES IS A STRATEGY ONLY FIT FOR COWARDS AND PITIFUL BEINGS WHO ARE NOT WORTHY TO JOIN THE RANKS OF GODS!"

Although the Arena Lord of Ya'gwasa was running his gigantic alien mouth again, Saint Tusa's previous bout of confidence had faded away.

Just because he successfully managed to wield the tier 3 Destroyer spear did not mean he had won an automatic victory!

Greater phase lords were far more competent than their lesser compatriots. The Arena Lord had much more phasewater at his disposal and was able to resist the space suppression field with greater ease.

Not only that, but the Arena Lord excelled at applying his spatial abilities on himself, which was impossible for the Dark Zephyr to block.

As the Dark Zephyr continually circled around the greater phase lord and occasionally attempted to swoop in to bypass his enemy's spatial barrier and land a destructive blow, the Arena Lord would never fail to repel the assault in the most efficient way possible!

Occasionally, the nunser phase lord's armor-clad body blurred as a spatial effect abruptly changed its orientation.

At other times, the Arena Lord spared his phasewater organs the strain and simply utilized his limbs or his excellent weapon skills to force the Dark Zephyr to change his course and evade the incoming threats.

Saint Tusa quickly grew frustrated at how difficult it was for him to make good use of his tier 3 Destroyer spear!

He had already commenced numerous attack runs, but never managed to complete any of them due to the Arena Lord's deliberate responses.

This was not a coincidence. Despite the Arena Lord's apparent love for comparisons of raw strength, the greater phase lord cunningly made sure that the Dark Zephyr was never able to land a solid hit with his potent Destroyer spear!

"DO NOT THINK THAT YOUR TINY BUT INTERESTING LITTLE TOOTHSCRAPER CANNOT REVERSE YOUR INCOMPETENCE. IF YOU POSSESSED THE STRENGTH OF A REAL GOD, THEN YOU WOULD HAVE NEVER BECOME COWARDLY ENOUGH TO FLINCH AWAY FROM MY COUNTERATTACKS. YOU FALSE GODS ARE ALL THE SAME. EVEN YOUR OH-SO-PROUD TERRAN CHAMPIONS HAVE REPEATEDLY FLINCHED FROM MY RESPONSES DESPITE ARMING THEMSELVES WITH SIMILAR WEAPONS. THEY HAVE PROVEN THEMSELVES UNFIT TO WIELD THOSE ARMS, AND YOU ARE NO DIFFERENT! SPEED WITHOUT STRENGTH ONLY EQUATES TO ANOTHER FORM OF COWARDICE."

As much as Saint Tusa understood that the Arena Lord of Ya'gwasa was just engaging in an acerbic brand of smack talk, the ace pilot couldn't stop himself from entertaining doubts.

What if... what if the Arena Lord's criticism was not entirely off the mark?

Though the ace pilot's willpower forcibly stopped Tusa from fueling this train of thought any further, it was difficult to shove this nonsense away when the Arena Lord constantly brought it back to the forefront of his mind!

Tusa threw away all of the contempt he still harbored against the Arena Lord. As primitive and vain as he appeared to be, the greater phase lord was able to draw upon many years of actual combat experience in duels and other complicated matches. He had fought against many varieties of opponents, and managed to learn a lot from fighting against human ace mechs during the Red War.

Destroyer weapons were incredibly powerful, but it was still possible for enemies to mitigate their threat.

From minimizing the opportunities for their wielders to land serious blows with these potent weapons to cladding themselves with destroyer-resistant armor, the signature tech of the Terran people was anything but unbeatable!

Tusa felt more and more frustrated. He was no longer in peak condition when he first started to fight properly against the Arena Lord, and the constant Leaps repeatedly sapped his willpower even further.

The Arena Lord probably exerted himself as well, but his consumption was probably a lot less!

This was clearly detrimental to the ace pilot as he would exhaust himself much sooner than his potent adversary. Tusa couldn't afford to let this confrontation turn into an endurance battle, chiefly because he was never built to last!

Phase lords all possessed massive bodies that stored huge amounts of energy. In fact, they were even more difficult to exhaust than other creatures of their size because they could even draw energies from other dimensions!

Although the Dark Zephyr also possessed special and transphasic qualities, the ace light skirmisher was designed to perform at his peak during short but critical intervals. His mech frame lacked the capacity to extend his endurance and staying power, and Tusa's willpower was also finite due to the lack of time to develop his resonance strength.

"Tch. We need to conserve our strength and keep him busy, partner." Tusa spoke to his ace mech.

The Dark Zephyr no longer tried to win the jackpot by attempting to land crippling blows.

Instead, the machine began to adopt a more patient and frugal approach. The Dark Zephyr evaded the Arena Lord's attacks as best as possible while using the enhanced lethality of his tier 3 Destroyer spear to damage and deplete the phase lord's spatial barrier.

This was not enough to contain the Arena Lord, so the Rosfield Cannons installed on Fort Rock regularly had to strike the greater phase lord with punishing kinetic impacts!

Other friendly warships occasionally struck with opportunistic attacks whenever they could, but they were far too preoccupied with other enemies to commit more to this effort.

No first-class multipurpose mechs dared to poke the Arena Lord. Their attacks were too small in caliber to make much of a difference, and they were much more suited to fight against other opponents.

Tusa was not resigned to this outcome. For now, he and his battle partner could do nothing more than to contain the Arena Lord and hinder the greater phase lord from directing his ire elsewhere, but this needed to change.

"What can I do to gain the upper hand?"

Chapter 6362 Pride and Unwillingness

Tusa was being a bit unfair to himself.

Recently ascended ace pilots generally had little chance of surviving an encounter with a greater phase lord by himself.

In fact, the Arena Lord of Ya'gwasa would have fought a lot more aggressively and put the Dark Zephyr in much greater peril if the latter had not retrieved the tier 3 Destroyer spear.

Although the nunser phase lord openly despised the weapon and how it was being used by the Dark Zephyr, the wiley old alien leader never took the Destroyer spear lightly in his actions.

His long experience had taught him better than to underestimate any weapon or opponent. Just because he did not agree with his opponent's combat approach did not mean he could defeat it with ease.

It was this habitual caution and respect that encouraged the Arena Lord to hold back his aggression and prevent himself from making any mistakes that his much more lethal opponent could exploit with devastating consequences.

The end result was a stalemate, which could already be considered a victory for Saint Tusa. To use a junior ace mech to stall a greater phase lord was a fantastic bargain that the Bluejay Fleet eagerly took advantage of to take care of other threatening enemies.

It took a lot of mechs, warships and weapons of mass destruction to hold back the Distance Shaper as well as the 5 arche phase lords!

Although the Arena Lord occasionally had to be pushed back by the mighty Rosfield Cannons, the Dark Zephyr was already doing a pretty good job at keeping the Arena Lord occupied to the point where he did not have the room to lend aid to his cosmopolitan and alien subordinates.

Alas, the inherent pride and confidence that all halfgods accrued over their extraordinary careers prevented Tusa from taking satisfaction at this 'victory'.

What made perfect sense in terms of strategy meant little to a champion who largely preferred to deal with absolutes!

To an ace pilot like Tusa, there was only winning or losing.

He lacked the age and young years of experience to temper his expectations and adopt a more realistic viewpoint like that of the Messenger of Silence.

Yet his relative youth and lack of tempering from reality also served as his sources of strength, as it became relatively easier for him to impose his willpower on reality when he did not know any better.

The more Tusa struggled against the greater phase lord, the more his resonance strength repeatedly moved beyond its previous peak.

His endurance lasted longer as his increasing unwillingness to let himself get stalled and denied by his opponent strengthened his desire to liberate himself from his lack of competence!

As the clash between the Dark Zephyr and the Arena Lord of Ya'gwasa continued to rage in the distance, Ves was getting ready to undertake his own challenge.

The 5 lesser phase lords hailing from the arche race were clearly not as weak and servile as the pet arche captive that Gloriana occasionally involved in her work.

Hekkel was a mere alien engineer who ranked at the lower end of the hierarchy of his race.

His archeshell happened to feature a beautiful aquamarine crystal look, but it was not that strong or special by the standards of his species.

The 5 arche lesser phase lords on this battlefield were completely opposite in this regard. They had climbed to the top of the hierarchy and enjoyed the worship of lots of arche. They had access to



bountiful phasewater and other precious materials, which they largely used to develop their archeshells and grow their true bodies until they turned into hardy organic bulwarks.

Ves had closely observed how much punishment they endured since they approached Fort Rock.

The lesser phase lords had resisted far more damage than a typical battleship or protected city could withstand. They endured dozens of antimatter missiles and numerous horrible torpedoes by relying on the power of phasewater and their unique biological gifts.

It made sense for aliens that resembled turtles in a vague way to excel in defense, but the sheer amount of damage they managed to mitigate was frankly ridiculous!

While all of the successive bombardment had stripped their spatial barriers and cracked their shells, the damage did not really go any deeper than that. It would take far more weapons of mass destruction to finish the job.

The first-class multipurpose mechs that had managed to beat the crap out of the enemy mechs and phasefighters tried their best.

Their firepower was quite potent. Armed with at least a dozen integrated weapons, they could easily threaten small craft and warships when they banded together, but their weapons fire failed to inflict any serious damage to the lesser phase lords.

It was only when they closed in and allowed their space suppressors to weaken the transphasic properties of the archeshells that they proved a little more effective, but there was a limit to how much they could accomplish.

Phase lords were intrinsically merged with the phasewater circulating in their true bodies. It was a lot harder to suppress their activity, especially by small mechs who could only produce relatively limited space suppression fields.

What was worse was that the arche phase lords were not completely defenseless.

So far, they clearly showed that they had put all of their development opportunities into enhancing their defenses. They had spent very little time and effort on honing their offensive and maneuvering capabilities.

That did not mean they had no defense against mechs. When a trio of first-class multipurpose mechs had activated their plasma swords and intended to swoop in so that they could carve new holes into the damaged archeshells, parts of the shell lit up before they emitted powerful laser beams that inflicted so much damage that the first-class multipurpose mechs quickly lost their azure energy shields and started to suffer serious damage to their exterior!

They only managed to get away with damaged but intact frames when other mechs with support functions quickly reinforced their defenses and helped them beat an emergency retreat!

Ves twitched his lips. He did not look forward to getting blasted by those lasers.

It was moments like these that separated true fighters from the amateurs.

As far as he was concerned, Ves was in no way a pure amateur, but he was not a proper fighter either. He fell awkwardly in between, making everything about his decision to take to the field uncertain.

It made sense for him to take action, though. The enemy phase lords might not have the weapons to break open Fort Rock, but their strong and hard archeshells already served as adequate tools to break open a space fortress!

The 5 arche phase lords continued to maintain their ball shapes while using parts of their shells to blast powerful laser beams at the circling first-class multipurpose mechs.

The killing power of this self-defense measure was not too great, but they were powerful enough to deter me from first-class multipurpose mechs and keep them at a distance.

This was not a good development. They needed more fire support, but everyone else already had their hands full with trying to contain or defeat the other enemy assets.

The addition of an extra combatant could make all the difference. Ves felt an obligation to step up. If he did not possess the strength of a phase lord, then he may be able to excuse himself.

That was not the case.

Since he possessed the raw strength to play a useful role on the battlefield, he could not shirk his duty and allow others to die on his behalf without lifting a finger.

Besides, the Bluejay Fleet may very well lose if he did not take action in person!

This was what he told himself as he launched from Fort Rock in his giant, armor-clad form.

He felt awfully vulnerable even though he attracted remarkably little attention. Even the confidence gained from receiving two decades worth of dedicated weapons training became awfully fragile when the reality of his actions truly sank into his mind.

This was anything but his first time participating in a battle, but there were factors that made this situation different from others.

Was it the lack of support from the expeditionary fleet and many other dependable Larkinsons?

Was it because he was about to fight against 5 lesser phase lords that had already proven themselves to be more hardy and resilient than himself?

Or was it because he wanted to prove his honor and valor, but feared he might not be able to uphold his own expectations?

Ves gripped his relic weapon harder. The Oceancaller proved to be far inferior to a third order living mech in terms of cooperating with him. The cold and callous weapon never developed a strong sense of friendship or camaraderie with its current wielder, and felt no obligation to provide him with any moral support.

His lips twitched again. He once again received a reminder that he did not deserve to wield the Oceancaller.

The replica of a once-legendary ancient relic desired to be used by a more compatible and worthy wielder.

Ancient cultivators would describe this as letting the precious relic be wielded by its destined user, but it all came down to the fact that the Oceancaller did not like Ves, or to be more precise, his domain.

The best possible wielder would be a woman who shared many of the same qualities as the Mistress of the Oceans.

The probability that a person like that would show up one day and give Ves a reason to gift her the powerful flute was miniscule.

"Perfection does not exist in reality." Ves reminded himself.

His wife may vehemently disagree on this premise, but this was what he believed.

"You are mine." He said with a possessive tone. "I will take care of you later, but now you need to work with me. I am about to channel a lot of darkness energy through your body. Do not resist. Let it flow through your structure and help me unleash it towards our enemies. Do not shame your pedigree by adding a loss to your record!"

If he wanted to perform at his best, he needed to be in charge of the Oceancaller. He could not afford the slightly willful and petulant weapon to dictate their relationship.

Fortunately, his brief pep talk seemed to hammer home in the high-level relic. Its intelligence may not be as sophisticated as his living mechs, but he knew his way around them just enough to master the Oceancaller for the time being.

His greater sense of control over his weapon infused him with a shot of courage.

Instead of letting it expire by procrastinating further, he decided to pull the trigger and go on the offensive!

He charged forward and began to perform one of his recently acquired extraordinary staff techniques by holding it like a lance and flying forward with the single-minded determination to impale his target!

As his giant armored form rapidly closed in on the ball of archshells, Ves silently executed the technique that would help him draw out more darkness energy from the environment as well as the Blinkyverse!

His efforts yielded results as the forward top of the Oceancaller already began to spawn a speartip composed of dangerous and corrosive darkness energy!

Though Ves was not entirely certain how much damage it could do, he could not afford to back off at this point.

Just as he was able to cross the remaining distance and drive his empowered weapon into one of the cracks of the archeshells facing his direction, his opponents finally responded to his actions.

The 5 arche phase lords simultaneously activated specific phasewater organs and produced a strong spatial push that diverted Ves' charge at the last second!

This not only caused him to miss his charge attack, but also collide against the archeshell surface in an unanticipated collision!

"OUCH!"

Chapter 6363 Discovering How To Fight

"That was embarrassing."

To be fair, how could he have known that the arche phase lords not only had the ability to push incoming enemies off-course, but also combine their abilities so seamlessly to produce the strength needed to succeed?

It became clear that the arche phase lords became a bit harder to deal with if they were able to work together to such an amazing extent.

After Ves made a fool of himself by smacking himself against the archeshells, he at least possessed the awareness to distance himself from his opponents and take stock of his situation.

No matter how many excuses he used, Ves largely wasted his time and failed to stall the forward progress of the arche phase lords.

He had lost most of his mind when he went on the attack. Just because he gained a bit of strength and skill did not mean he could beat up phase lords straight away!

Just as Ves tried to figure out what he should do instead, a first-class mech that was roughly a third of his size approached from afar and stopped by his side.

A communication signal directly connected to his cranial implant.

"Professor Larkinson, it is good to see you joining the fight!" Major Simon Jankowski greeted.

"That said, we cannot afford to have you fly around and act on your own. It will be better for all of us if you follow our lead and coordinate your actions with us. As the highest-ranking mech commander in the field, you should follow my orders with as little questions as possible. Do you comply?"

The way the expert candidate talked to Ves had shifted by the time he spoke the last two sentences. He switched from an inferior tone to a more bossy tone.

This was a deliberate shift that was meant to signal that Ves needed to set aside all of his authority if he wanted to fight alongside the mechs of the Bluejay Fleet.

"I will comply." Ves bowed his head. "My expertise does not extend to command. I will put my trust and my capabilities in your hands. Use me however you see fit."

This was no time for him to show off and let his lack of combat acumen ruin the effort to win the battle. Ves still held the highest status among the soldiers, but that did not automatically translate into martial competence. He had no problem with putting down his ego and letting Major Jankowski order him around as if he was a minion.

In fact, Ves welcomed the expert candidate's guidance!

It was quite confusing for Ves to join the fray without knowing his place and what he should do at specific times. It was much better if Major Jankowski and the officers back in the Bluejay Fleet did all of the analysis and strategizing. Ves just needed to act like a dumb grunt and do what he was told.

That was good. That was exactly what he needed. He already had his hands full with trying to piece together a combat system that would allow him to combine his diverse but scattered advantages into a cohesive strength.

Sections of archshell lit up and began to pelt the incoming human phase lord as well as his accompanying first-class multipurpose mechs with transphasic laser beams.

Major Jankowski was pleased that Ves agreed to play along. "Please hold on to your current attitude, professor. I am not entirely aware of what you are capable of, but I can make reasonable guesses. For now, we need you to work with our mech units as an anchor and a linchpin of our offensive approach. Those archshells are too good at forcing our mechs to maintain their distance. With your help, you should be able to buy us opportunities to get closer and weaken their spatial abilities."

His first-class multipurpose mech quickly blasted off and rejoined a loose wing of other powerful machines.

Ves followed suit as best he could, but did not really manage to fit into their formation. His mobility worked a lot differently from theirs, so he was not able to replicate their tighter turns and abrupt course changes.

However, he was keeping up more or less, and that was enough.

As the first-class multipurpose mechs circled around the archshell ball, they did not remain idle. They oriented their torsos towards their primary objective and opened fire with whatever integrated ranged weapons they had on hand.

"Professor Larkinson, do you have any effective means of attacking from range?"

"No. Not against enemies as tough as these arche phase lords."

"Then we will be swooping in to attack. Do not try to overcommit. Just get in, use your staff as a club to attract the attention of the enemy phase lords and get out when we withdraw, understood?"

"What if the enemy phase lords gather their strength and push me away again?"

"That is good. The more energy they expend on keeping you at bay, the less energy they can spare for our mechs. Begin!"

The battlefield was no place for lectures or deliberations. Only action and timing mattered. Major Jankowski evidently thought that this was the time to strike, because 60 or so first-class multipurpose mechs acted in unison and either closed in on the ball of archshells, or stayed behind and coordinated their firepower.

As Ves' true body along with a collection of mechs approached the ball from a single direction, the enemy phase lords already prepared to repel the obvious assault.

Sections of archshell lit up and began to pelt the incoming human phase lord as well as his accompanying first-class multipurpose mechs with transphasic laser beams.

The mechs were better prepared this time. They all hailed from the Red Association, so they were not only able to link their azure energy shields with each other, but also received more potent support from the pair of combat carriers that had flown close enough to share their own energy shields!

Even so, there was a limit to how much shield link technology could sustain the pressure.

Ves repressed the urge to flinch when the laser beams struck his spatial barrier. It was incurring significant damage, but it was still relatively fresh, so he was not too concerned about getting his flesh burned right away.

As Ves continued to keep up with the surrounding mechs, he noticed that they were not approaching at a faster pace. Instead, they controlled their velocities and made sure to evade the laser beams as best as possible.

Ves did not possess that sort of maneuverability, so he straightforwardly tanked most of the incoming shots with his spatial barrier until he remembered he had a better option at his disposal.

In the face of an incoming attack, the instinct of a phase lord was to summon a spatial barrier and let it resist the attack.

However, an initiate in Dark Apostle Self Defense had a better option at his disposal.

Ves began to call upon the power of darkness once again while he began to spin his Oceancaller like a propeller.



His arms and hands moved by instinct. The skills he acquired through long practice that never actually occurred guided him into making the most effective movements.

As the Oceancaller spun around at such a speed that it looked like a blur in the eyes of most people, Ves began to draw upon the power of darkness from the surrounding environment and Blinky and infused it all into his polearm.

Ominous black energies spilled from his staff and quickly consolidated into a new barrier that successfully blocked the incoming shots!

"Let darkness become my shield!"

It helped that Ves also flexed his spatial abilities and tried to add transphasic properties to the darkness barrier.

Although a lot of darkness energy burned away after resisting the incoming transphasic laser beams, the barrier of darkness refused to admit weakness and stubbornly blocked the energy attacks, though at the cost of dispersing a portion of the darkness.

Ves could feel the strain of trying to maintain the darkness barrier when actively being attacked.

Strangely enough, Ves did not worry too much about whether he could sustain the effort. He was not really supplying this technique with his own relatively paltry darkness energy.

He instead sourced the darkness energy from others, though it was arguable whether Blinky should be treated as a separate entity or a split personality that gained a lot more independence than usual.

Whatever the case, Ves and the other mechs were able to get closer without straining their limited resources as much with the help of his stunt!

The arche phase lords tried to repeat their old trick and push Ves away, but it didn't work as well this time because he was on guard and moving at a more controllable speed this time!

Ves concentrated his mind and used his darkness barrier to resist the push.

"It worked!"

Some of the first-class mechs got pushed off-course, but their mech pilots quickly readjusted.

"Attack!"

The first-class multipurpose mechs had never ceased attacking with their varied mix of ranged weapons, but now that they had reached the archeshells, they began to use their powerful transphasic hyper melee weapons to inflict additional damage on the scarred and cracked archeshells!

Ves could not miss out on the action. He suspended his darkness barrier and no longer spun his Oceancaller anymore.

He instead began to stab one of the ends of his relic into a shallow hole. A few pieces of archemetal got loose, but that was all. Ves tried to leverage more strength from his true body and flexed his spatial power onto his weapon. He also borrowed the power of darkness to add more strength to his next strike!

"Darkness shall consume you!"

If there was anything Ves learned after learning how to fight like a Dark Apostle, it was that words always had meaning. So long as he wanted them to come true, then reality might be able to find a way to fulfill his desire!

What happened next seemed to be an example of this. The staff strikes began to chip away greater portions of the archeshell.

The alien whose shell was beaten into pieces clearly experienced a lot more distress. The arche began to fire more transphasic laser beams, doing a better job at suppressing the closest first-class multipurpose mechs.

None of them were immediately under threat as they continued to rely on shield link technology to avoid early retirement from the battlefield.

Ves was not mindlessly hitting the archeshell with a darkness-infused relic. He could not stop his mind from spinning. He was constantly trying to figure out how he could strengthen his attacks and inflict greater harm on the arche phase lord.

As much as he was doing his part, this scale of damage was negligible compared to the large archeshell!

He recalled everything he knew about how high-ranking mech pilots fought and the rules he discovered about E energy.

Although Ves lacked the characteristic willpower and true resonance of an expert pilot, he was still a very potent cultivator, though he channeled most of his energies towards creation rather than destruction.

This time he needed more of the latter, so he tried to think on how he could use his expertise to augment his blows further.

He concluded that he needed to harmonize with the power of darkness in the environment. He was not drawing enough darkness from the ambient energies, so he tried to leverage the power of his mind and spirit.

It was at this point that he began to harmonize with lots of small and unexpected malevolent spirits.

He pretty much forgot about them, but that did not mean they had ceased to exist. The nanomachine plagues that the first-class multipurpose mechs carefully tried to avoid were still working to chew through the archeshells.

Driven by the rudimentary evil spirits that Ves had managed to impart on them, they all took on the pre-programmed form of cats as they made their best impression of Lucky!

Although these spirits were not pure beings of darkness, the fact that they were born with malice in their hearts and that he happened to be their creator allowed him to harmonize with them surprisingly well!

It was... as if he could Commandeer them like how the Saint Commander blessed friendly troops with her true resonance!

## Chapter 6364 The Master of Plagues

When Ves reached out his senses towards the hyper nanomachine plagues, he could feel them as if he was standing in front of an entire army of living mechs.

No, it was different. He bestowed his living mechs with a noble purpose, and that was to help their mech pilots win their battles. From the moment they gained life, they already accepted their mission and committed themselves to serving their future partners, possibly even putting their needs above the demands of their creator!

Ves did not have a problem with that. To reverse this order would be a violation of his professional oath as a mech designer, which was to serve mech pilots. Aside from a few rare exceptions, his machines should never harbor double loyalties. Surrendering control to an individual other than their own mech pilots was a fundamental violation of trust and professionalism!

For this reason, his living mechs generally held great respect towards their progenitor, but never thought to ignore the needs of their own pilots and obey his orders. Even if the more clever and sophisticated third order living mechs could largely fight by themselves as if they were battle bots, they never desired to do so because they valued their identity as mechs. Only by intimately cooperating with their human partners would they give meaning to their own existences!

The hyper nanomachine plagues produced by the Red Association were completely different.

Ves did not possess any knowledge on their background or technical details, but he could paint a picture based on his observations and the little details that Captain Zonrad Reze saw fit to share.

The earlier versions of nanomachine plagues were solely designed to destroy all life and construction on the surface of a moon or planet.

They were largely employed in situations where the use of regular nuclear or antimatter explosives did more harm than good.

They were used extremely sparingly because they were much more dangerous compared to immensely powerful bombs that just produced large explosions!

There had been many incidents in the past where the careless use of self-replicating nanomachines turned into catastrophic gray goo scenarios where the damn tiny machines destroyed entire cities and maybe planets in order to replicate unending copies of themselves!

Nowadays, such incidents did not happen anymore. Humans learned the hard way how to stop the 'plagues' from devouring everything to fulfill their demented programming. People also implemented a lot of safeguard in subsequent smart metal products to ensure such doom scenarios never took place in human space.

Even so, there were still people who came to appreciate the horrifying potential of nanomachine plagues.

Instead of treating them like disasters, they preferred to treat the nanomachine plagues as weapons waiting to be used on legitimate targets!

The Common Fleet Alliance came to embrace the use of nanomachine plagues in limited scenarios.

They were much more handy to use on fortified planets and globes with highly divergent environments.

The nanomachine plagues could also be programmed to ignore specific materials and targets.

This enabled the CFA to cleanse a planet of all aliens with specific genes while leaving harmless organisms intact.

In short, nanomachine plagues saved the fleeters a lot of time and resources!

This was why the fleeters did not deny the use of nanomachine plagues despite their potential to start a doomsday scenario in the wrong places.

It helped that the CFA had much less to fear from them due to their highly dispersed organization and distribution.

Out of control nanomachine plagues could only destroy a single ship or fleet at most. Even if they managed to spread onto ships that subsequently infected others, the mechers and the fleeters employed many countermeasures that would warn them of this threat and trigger a maximum priority response.

The threat that gray goo could spread fast enough to engulf all of human civilization could never be ruled out, but humans had developed so many controls and countermeasures that no one was really concerned about it anymore.

What did this have to do with the hyper nanomachine plagues originally stored inside the vault of the Babylon Excavator?

A lot.

The Red Fleet kept up with the times. The latest edition of nanomachines plagues gained an even higher degree of virulence due to the integration of hyper materials. The boost in performance was not too dramatic, as the application of hyper technology at the nanometer scale was still a rudimentary discipline for the time being. The most obvious effect so far was that the nanomachines had an easier time devouring specific materials. They seemed to draw additional power from E energy radiation and work a little more optimally than before.

Unfortunately, the fleeters had not quite managed to discover a stable and cost-effective way to integrate them with phasewater, which was one of the reasons why the plagues employed against the arche phase lords were having a hard time chewing through the archeshells.

Anyway, hyper nanomachine plagues were quite powerful and efficient at their jobs. The Red Fleet had yet to deploy them on a serious target during the Red War so far, as that may spook the native aliens into employing their own horrifying weapons of mass destruction.

It was quite telling that a reconnaissance cruiser such as the Babylon Excavator still carried a payload of hyper nanomachine plagues regardless. They could come in handy when they stumbled upon a strategic native alien planet that they needed to wipe off the board regardless of the consequences.

When the Red Fleet reassigned the Babylon Excavator to Ves' protection detail, the fleeters never bothered to empty the cruiser's vault of her stockpile of weapons of mass destruction.

This inadvertently gave Ves access to the incredibly fearsome hyper nanomachine plagues!

When he adapted them to his torpedoes, he never thought that he would be able to connect to them again. This was a completely unintended interaction that momentarily took him by surprise.

The reason why he was caught off-guard was because he possessed an uncommonly good connection to the nanomachines that attempted to wreak havoc across the surface of the archshell.

The comparison to the Saint Commander's modus operandi was a convenient explanation, but it was not quite accurate.

Ves was not able to connect with the nanomachines through the true resonance generated by his willpower.

Instead, he was somehow able to harmonize with the plagues due to two factors.

The first factor was because he bestowed them with life. He took advantage of their hyper material integration and transformed their blank sheets into rudimentary life forms. These living nanomachines may be weak and barely cognizant, but they were still intelligent enough to recognize and respect their progenitor!

This alone was not enough to gain their obedience, however. In order to make the nanomachines more effective, he deliberately infused them with malice and hunger. The living nanomachines were supposed to feed into their destructive instincts and act without any restraint!

Coming into contact with them was like coming into contact with a huge amount of descendants that just happened to believe in the same ideals as himself!

How could these naughty nanomachines hold any respect for their progenitor?

This was why the second reason became a factor.

Ves discovered that the hyper nanomachines unintentionally matched the properties of his domain very well!

Coming into contact with them was like coming into contact with a huge amount of descendants that just happened to believe in the same ideals as himself!

From the perspective of cultivation science, the hyper nanomachines were ruthless weapons created for the purpose of destroying and devouring entire populations. Their purpose cast their existence in darkness, for they could be used to inflict great harm and evil.

By breathing life into the hyper nanomachines, the tiny but sophisticated creations gained a quality that enabled them to surpass their physical and digital limitations. They became greater than the sum of their parts, and became even better at reproduction, which was another powerful aspect of life!

Finally, the root property of these nanomachines was the fact that they were all machines and by extension metal. Even when they were scaled down to an incredible degree, the plagues all consisted of a huge amount of tiny metallic machines, all working in concert with each other!

Ves' domain happened to be split between mechs, life and a little bit of darkness.

Although the definitions were not precisely the same and the proportions were also difficult, the point was that Ves had enough in common with the living nanomachines that he was able to command them as if he was their god!

"What an exhilarating feeling! Is this what Saint Commander Casella feels all of the time?"

Ves became increasingly more distracted, which was normally a taboo on the battlefield,, but he could just not help himself!

Seeing that the living nanomachines were not really doing all that great, Ves spontaneously decided to step in and take control.

He used his spiritual authority over the nanomachines to pass on an instruction.

If the hyper nanomachine plagues abided by their strict programming and their hardware-level restrictions, then they would never follow any suggestion made by Ves.

It would be the height of foolishness to allow enemies to hack the weaponized nanomachines and turn them against their original users!

The fleeters had therefore implanted a lot of restrictive programming in the hyper nanomachines, but how could they have anticipated that their efforts could all be defeated by giving their creations life?



Right now, the simple nanomachines all wanted to obey their progenitor and god, so much so that they chose to ignore the programming codes that prevented them from surrendering control to another individual!

This had drastic consequences, one of which was that the nanomachine plagues spontaneously leapt from the archeshell and condensed into increasingly larger and more ominous swarms!

The shapes of millions of cats blended into each other, causing them to lose shape before reforming again.

All of it was under the control of Ves' Spirituality. It became so easy for him to convey his instructions to the unnaturally obedient nanomachine swarm.

His connection to all of the primitive life inside the nanomachines gave him greater comprehension of what he could do with his authority over their existences.

He could make them do almost anything they were capable of in the first place!

The only major limitation was that he could not override their hard coding. Just as Sigrund was unable to overcome the forced imposition of loyalty to the Common Fleet Alliance, the hyper nanomachine plagues and all of their copies could not exist past their artificial 'expiration date'.

Ves understood why this safety measure existed, but he felt bummed that he wouldn't be able to harness these exceedingly high-quality nanomachines forever!

He shrugged. Oh well. He would just have to squeeze the greater amount of value out of their dangerous states while they were still alive!

Ves gained a spontaneous idea.

Instead of trying to form a giant smart metal cat out of smart metal, he wanted the plagues to synergize with him more effectively!

He spread out his giant arms as if to welcome the embrace of his family. "Come to me, my children!"

The nanomachine plagues instantly flew in his direction!

This behavior alarmed the mechers so much that a few of their first-class multipurpose mechs started to unleash their firepower against the lethal swarm, but Ves quickly urged them to stop.

"Don't! They are under my control! Don't ask me questions on this. Just let me do my thing!"

Major Jankowski and the other mech pilots reluctantly did so even though they sensed how these plagues could quickly break down their mechs if they gained the opportunity.

It was incredibly scary to see these planet-cleansing nanomachines engulf the true body of Ves in a cloud of darkness.

His body only became visible again after a few seconds. The nanomachines had descended on his raiment and broke down the alloys that comprised the improvised suit of armor.

The nanomachines subsequently produced more copies of themselves, thereby giving them enough volume to surround Ves in a brand new suit of smart metal armor!

The only difference was that these nanomachines would not hesitate to eat Ves alive if they ever fell out of his control!

Instead of feeling spooked about this, Ves completely became mad with joy!

This was because he could channel his domain through his new 'smart metal raiment' a lot more effectively than before!

It was as if he spontaneously forged a high-level artifact that was highly compatible with his Spirituality in the field!

"Hahahahaha! Now this is what I have been missing all of the time! Why didn't I think of this before?! This is true power!"

Chapter 6365 Extra Risky Smart Metal Raiment

Though Ves had fallen back into his bad habits and became completely fascinated by discovering his wonderful compatibility with the living nanomachine plagues, he did not lose the entirety of his mind.

The threat posed by the five arche phase lords were relatively low as they lacked a strong means of attack. The laser beams emitted by their archeshells were relatively potent, but not entirely unbeatable.

When Ves hijacked the living nanomachine plagues and used them to subsume his makeshift raiment, he effectively gained a suit of armor that looked as if it was darkness come to life!

He could completely pass off as a villain in a children's action drama at this time!

Not only did his true body exude a lot of darkness and malevolence, but he had clad himself in his own suit of morphing dark armor!

Ves was still experimenting with his newfound control over the nanomachine plagues. While their driving instinct was to consume and destroy everything they touched aside from each other, now that they had been given life, they willingly submitted themselves to their progenitor!

Despite how scary it was to remain in extended contact with these all-consuming nanomachines, Ves did not fear them at all. He was absolutely confident he could maintain control over these products.

He fully leveraged his abilities and his expertise as a mech designer and a spiritual engineer to maintain solid control over this weapon of mass destruction!

The original nanomachines sought to fulfill their programming without paying any attention to the context, but the living nanomachines were more sophisticated than that. They understood the principles of delayed gratification. Ves merely had to promise them that they could break down the enemy archeshells a lot more effectively so long as they accepted his leadership!

This meant that Ves remained confident that the nanomachines would do whatever he wanted as long as he continued to attack the arche phase lords!

The story might be different if he tried to retreat and avoid confrontation. The nanomachine plagues had their orders, and even if they possessed the power to resist the intentions of others, they were not willing to deviate from their purpose!

"Professor Larkinson!" Major Jankowski spoke with a bit of alarm in his voice. "You lost your awareness for a time. That is extremely dangerous and a good way to die in the field! You need to keep paying attention to what is going on around you. Also, you aren't supposed to take direct control over the nanomachine plagues. They are serious weapons meant to depopulate entire planets. If it wasn't clear that you seem to be able to keep their programmed attack routines at bay for the time being, the captain of the Babylon Excavator should have already activated their killswitch by now. His finger is still hovering above the button. Do you insist on carrying them around your person?"

"Yes." Ves replied as he and the surrounding mechs had already separated from the damaged archeshell ball and backed off to take stock of the situation. "Don't worry. I have taken control over them due to my previous work on them. I did not expect to be able to take control over the nanomachine plagues to this extent, but it is working fine for the time being. Just trust me. I think I can make good use of them to strengthen my attacks."

He was already working on it. By working together with the nanomachine plagues, he was able to attract a lot more darkness energy than before.

An astronomical amount of living nanomachines was cooperating with him in the effort to draw more darkness energy!

Even if the individual lives of all of those tiny machines were not that impressive, quantity became a quality of their own after surpassing a high threshold.

Not only that, but the nanomachines were accustomed to banding together and combining their forces. They were able to produce more dramatic effects as they united to achieve a common purpose!

The result of all of this was that the smart metal raiment began to produce an energy vortex that pulled in much more darkness energy from the surrounding environment than before!

The tiny hyper materials integrated in the original batch of nanomachines helped a lot. They happened to be neutral and compatible with every attribute in order to be able to adapt and reproduce in every situation.

Even though the efficiency of attracting darkness energy dropped when the nanomachines devoured other hyper materials, their excellent cooperation reduced the impact of this consequence.

Ves and the mechs around him briefly observed the state of the arche phase lords.

The first-class multipurpose mechs managed to inflict more serious damage to the archeshells after relying on him to get close for a time. The progress felt gratifying, but the problem was that it was not enough to halt their forward progress.

Most of the damage remained confined to the archeshells as opposed to the softer and more vulnerable flesh!

The mechs continued to bombard the archeshell ball in the distance. A number of warships that had already managed to defeat a few of their alien counterparts began to direct their firepower towards this impending threat as well.

The warship-grade gun batteries were able to inflict substantially more massive damage to the archeshells, but without enough space suppression fields acting on the arche phase lords, their results were ultimately limited.

"We have not done nearly enough to halt their progress." Major Jankowski urgently spoke. "We have managed to widen and deepen some of the cracks in the most heavily damaged archeshell. If we want to save Fort Rock, we must get close and dig all the way through. If we lose our mechs over this, it is worth it as we need to take down these arche phase lords sooner rather than later. Are you able to cooperate with us on this, professor?"

Ves nodded. "I am able. Be warned that I am still learning how to best harness these nanomachine plagues, but I already have a few good ideas that I want to try out. Just to be safe, don't get too close to my true body."

"Noted."

After circling around for a short time, Ves and the surrounding squads swooped in yet again. The arche phase lords resorted to their usual tricks, but they were no longer as scary as before now that they lost their surprise factor.

When the mechs utilized their combined ranged and melee weapons to tear into the gaps they previously made, Ves tried to join in the effort by leveraging his newfound control over the nanomachine plagues.

"Devour!"

Dozens of smart metal cats split off his form and began to chew at the cavity that Ves designated.

This was already more effective than letting them disperse all across the surface of the archeshell. The nanomachine plagues were designed to inflict widespread destruction, so they lacked the impulse to concentrate their strength when encountering a tough target.

Ves did not fear that this would happen as long as he maintained conscious direction over the living nanomachine plagues.

He was not only able to concentrate them onto the same targets, but also managed to squeeze them deeper inside the deepest cracks that had almost reached the flesh of the arche phase lord!

As the living nanomachine plagues eagerly sought to fulfill their new instructions, Ves lifted up his Oceancaller and watched as a layer of living nanomachines gradually started to cover its surface.

The flute felt anything but pleased by this. It was downright creepy to the weapon!

Ves was sure that he had diminished his relationship with the high-level relic even further, but he felt it was a worthwhile tradeoff as he gained a much more effective 'darkness staff' in return!

Compared to the previous impacts, Ves grew a lot more enthused when he saw that he was able to produce a much stronger effect this time!

With the Oceancaller acting as a virtually indestructible inner core, the outer layer of nanomachines enabled Ves to execute the extraordinary techniques of his recently acquired staff fighting style a lot more fluently than before!

Ves truly began to look the part of a Dark Apostle as his darkness-infused form smashed a staff made out of malevolent nanomachines against the archeshell!

The blunt force impact probably squished a lot of nanomachines, but they were quickly being cannibalized by the living ones in order to produce living replacements!

Compared to the previous impacts, Ves grew a lot more enthused when he saw that he was able to produce a much stronger effect this time!

The point of smacking the tip of his staff against a piece of archeshell was not to produce greater cracks. His real purpose was to infuse a concentrated jet of darkness energy into his target area.

As he did so, Ves directed his strong intent to weaken the structural integrity of his localized target.

The previous times he did so, the effect was minimal because the archeshell was just too damn tough!

This time, the resistance from the archeshell hadn't changed, but because the injection of darkness energy was so much greater this time, it truly began to weaken the piece of archeshell in real time!

In order to confirm the effect, Ves smacked his augmented staff at the same spot again.

It cracked!

Not only that, but the fresh injection of darkness energy seemed to combine with the previous injection that had not yet dispersed.

The weakening effect grew stronger!

Ves could feel the concentrated darkness energy express its corrosive and weakening aspect, causing the piece of archeshell to dull and lose its shine as if it became afflicted by a curse.

This was not too far from the truth, as Ves also applied his insights on the withering curse on this particular technique!

Although the withering curse was traditionally associated with the wood element, it also possessed a dark side that allowed Ves to transplant parts of it to his current techniques.

Ves was constantly thinking as he repeatedly bashed the archeshell underneath him. The rapid accumulation of darkness energy successfully weakened the entire section of archeshell and allowed him to dig deeper at a surprisingly fast pace!

His progress became so impressive that a pair of first-class multipurpose mechs joined him and used their own weapons to crumble the weakened portions of archeshell even faster.

"Whatever you are doing, keep it up, Professor Larkinson! We are making rapid progress!"

The mechers placed so much hope in Ves that they stuck around even as the laser beam emissions from the archeshell grew more desperate!

More and more first-class multipurpose mechs lost their azure energy shields and incurred severe damage. A few unlucky machines were even forced to eject their cockpits for fear of losing a precious human life!

The arche phase lords definitely took notice of Ves. They put more effort into trying to push him away from the expanding weak point, but the human phase lord refused to budge!

The ominous energies surrounding Ves grew more intense as he relied on both his spatial abilities and his cloak of darkness to keep him in place!

The effort exerted a lot of strain on his mind, body and Spirituality, but he felt more exhilarated than ever!

"Hahaha! With the protection of darkness, you can't do anything to me! You will have to resort to much stronger attacks if you want to push me away!"

That provoked the arche phase lord into shooting transphasic laser beams at his true body.

Ves no longer smacked his Oceancaller onto the weakening archeshell, but began to spin it around with his hands in a familiar fashion.

This time, he managed to produce a much larger and stronger darkness barrier!



Even if half-a-dozen laser beams struck Ves in quick succession, the barrier still held on, though it became a lot more exhausted.

Though Ves was no longer able to slam his staff at the archeshell surface, Ves simply raised one of his enlarged legs and slammed his nanomachine-covered heel right onto the same spot he had previously targeted!

Just as he expected, he was smoothly able to inject another dose of darkness energy within the compromised section. It crumbled apart even faster due to this move.

Ves grinned wider as he made a lot of interesting observations on what a difference the nanomachine plagues had made up to this point.

"This should only be the tip of the iceberg! I feel I can do more!"

Chapter 6366 Ves Larkinson's Combat System

"Hahahaha!"

Ves grew more and more enthused as he began to exert much greater power than before!

It turned out that Ves had vastly underestimated the difference that good equipment could make.

The hyper nanomachine plagues were never designed to serve in this capacity, but because of a series of happy coincidences, they inadvertently served as the perfect base for his raiment.

His successful experiments with the nanomachine plagues inadvertently caused him to figure out his own combat system.

Smart metal was the best way to go forward. It was malleable, adaptable and could take on many different forms.

In order to test this out, Ves raised one of his arms and replicated the enlarged fists that he had originally designed for the C-man.

With another thought, a tail of darkness extended from his backside, imitating the autonomous tail that added a bit of playfulness to the Devil Tiger!

These quick experiments proved that Ves could practically replicate most of the design elements of his smart metal mechs!

So long as the nanomachines were capable of replicating the smart metal configurations of his past mech designs, he could instantly use them to summon any piece of equipment that he wanted!

There was a huge potential in this, but he was currently limited by time and lack of nanomachines.

Engulfing his original raiment wasn't enough. He needed a lot more smart metal if he wanted to clad himself with a much larger and more versatile piece of equipment!

Ves gazed at the archeshell underneath him with greater hunger and desire. Though the nanomachine plague still found it difficult to eat through the shell itself, the flesh underneath should be a lot easier to devour and digest!

As if driven by his growing desires, more pieces of his smart metal raiment fell off in order to speed up the effort to pierce through the thick archeshell!

With the help of a pair of mechs and the growing injection of darkness energy, Ves made such great progress that he was finally able to create a solid breach into the flesh barrier!

Although the arche phase lord's massive true body tried to resist and close the gaps by injecting a lot of phasewater-infused blood and tissue, the hungry nanomachines forcibly overcame the resistance and continued to dig inside the alien's body with great enthusiasm!

Even when faced with the corrosion of spatial activity from all of the phasewater, the nanomachine plagues proved to be resilient enough to persist long enough for them to devour flesh and reproduce!

The quantity of nanomachines rapidly grew. These ones were different and weaker due to the integration of different materials, but they were undoubtedly part of the same strain as they hungrily devoured more pieces of flesh in order to obey their primary directive!

The arche phase lord that got infected by the living smart metal machines began to feel what was taking place inside his own body and began to panic!

The alien thrashed so much that he had lost his coordination with his fellow phase lords.

"Careful! The archeshell ball is breaking apart!"

The deteriorating unity between them ultimately caused their highly defensive formation to collapse, causing them to split into 5 separate phase lords again!

This not only made the arche phase lords a lot more vulnerable, but also showcased how much worse the most heavily injured phase lord was doing!

The nanomachine plagues proved their worth and more. Though their continued incompatibility with phasewater hindered their efforts a lot, it just so happened that the true body of a lesser phase lord was not too saturated with phasewater, which meant that there was plenty of organic tissue that the nanomachines could safely devour!

The more the phase lord was getting eaten from the inside, the more he began to thrash like an uncontrollable beast!

The arche phase lord was not entirely defenseless against internal infections. He mobilized his spatial abilities and his own inherent control over his body to squeeze out as many nanomachines as possible!

Yet for all of the ones he managed to remove from his body, more seemed to take their place as the nanomachines spread through the other parts of his body doing their own thing.

"What is happening, professor?"

"The nanomachine plagues have settled into his body. Even now, his own alien blood circulation is spreading the destructive plagues into his gigantic heart and phasewater organs. The damage is negligible for the moment, but it will become a lot more serious once the nanomachines have grown their numbers. The phase lord is doing his best to destroy or remove them in any way possible."

"We can't let that happen! We need to distract the injured phase lord and hasten his demise!"

The first-class multipurpose mechs began to assault the infected arche phase lord from every direction!

Although his cracked and damaged archeshell was still able to resist a lot of damage, the front of his body was much less able to resist repeated attacks.

The other 4 arche phase lords tried to help their colleague by surrounding him from multiple directions, but their efforts were not sufficient now that they had broken out of their earlier formation.

In order to distract the infected phase lord from dealing with the nanomachines tearing through the softest pieces of his flesh as if they were at a buffet, Ves chose to charge forward and distract the enemy as much as possible!

One of the healthier phase lords moved forward to block his attacks. Ves' smart metal-covered staff repeatedly smacked into the limbs of the lesser phase lord.

The alien adversity uttered soundless hisses as the repeated injections of darkness energy caused the alien limbs to grow numb and weak.

Although the arche phase lord did not launch any powerful attacks, Ves grew more frustrated his attempts to break the limbs of his opponents achieved very limited success.

The arche phase lord's limbs were definitely becoming more and more injured, but the rate of deterioration was so low that it was taking too long!

Fortunately, the surrounding first-class multipurpose mechs lent him a hand by bombarding the phase lord with their formidable arsenal of weapons.

The arche phase lord in question lurched as the concentrated attacks repeatedly targeted his weakest side. All of the distractions created by Ves and the first-class multipurpose mechs greeted gaps that enabled other mechs to launch attacks at the weakest and most injured of the enemy group.

"Professor Larkinson!"

"Yes?!"

"Can you grapple or restrain one of these arche phase lords?"

"No. My body isn't as large or massive as theirs."

"Then can you step up your offensive and keep the enemy in front of you occupied? The arche phase lords look as if they are about to resume their offensive against Fort Rock."

"I will try!"

Ves had been thinking about how he could flesh out his newly discovered combat system even further.

With the nanomachine plagues at his beck and call, he should have a lot more options at his disposal.

A thought came to mind.

He stripped himself of his nanomachine plagues, commanding them to disperse in tens of thousands of smaller cat shapes.

The nanomachine plagues no longer stuck by his side, but began to disperse across the battlefield in an attempt to devour any pieces of debris they came across!

Ves needed more of them in order to unlock their greater potential. His current true body was quite large, which also meant he needed a lot more smart metal in order to create anything good!

Exposing his true body and his face to his enemies was a great risk, but Ves no longer feared his enemies as much as much anymore.

At this stage of the battle, many of the enemy phasefighters and warships had been demolished. The greater phase lords were fighting for their lives.

Meanwhile, the 5 arche phase lords in front of him had proven to be weak at offensive.

He did not strictly need a raiment to keep himself alive, though sending his nanomachine plagues away weakened his connection to the power of darkness.

Even so, Ves made a deliberate choice when he exposed himself.

"Aliens!" He transmitted in the open while beating his chest with his fist! "Your target is here! If you want to kill me, then come and claim my head yourself! As long as you eliminate me, you can complete your mission and die with honor! So what are you waiting for? Attack!"

Despite all of the problems the arche phase lords had endured, they still looked committed to the fight.

When Ves presented himself to the native aliens in a manner that could not be ignored, the arche phase lords quickly recalled their original missions.

The weapons of mass destruction and the unceasing attacks launched by the human first-class multipurpose mechs had inflicted a lot of damage to their archeshells and psyche.

As old and wise as they may be, they had endured a huge amount of pressure. They hated this dangerous mission and wanted to retreat back to alien space as fast as possible.

From their perspective, destroying Fort Rock was secondary to claiming Ves' life!

Although it made strategic sense for them to destroy the space fortress with the big cannons and strong interference measures, the arche phase lords knew they could get rid of their troubles much faster if they completed their mission ahead of time!

Since the whole point of traveling so deep in human space was to assassinate the human mech designer in front of them, the arche phase lords completely threw any thoughts about ramming Fort Rock aside and advanced towards Ves instead!

"I've managed to catch their attention! What do I do next?!"

"Try and see if you can lure them away from Fort Rock. The more they leave it alone, the more it can help us control the battlefield."

Ves already began to orient himself so that the arche phase lords would have to move away from their previous target.

As they moved away from Fort Rock, the arche phase lords gained in strength as they came under less suppression and interference than before.

This made life harder for Ves as his spatial barrier had to resist stronger attacks than before.

The arche phase lords also became increasingly tougher and more resilient, making it even harder to defeat them than before!

This pattern persisted for a couple more minutes. Multiple first-class multipurpose mechs had to withdraw and retire from the battlefield after sustaining too much damage, but at least the native aliens were no longer threatening Fort Rock.

Just as the arche phase lords regained enough strength to be able to catch up to Ves, a wave of darkness and malevolence converged from many different directions!

The nanomachine plagues had returned!

Not only that, but they had all expanded the size of their swarms!

Even though they all had the option to stay away from Ves, they voluntarily answered his call and came back to him so that they could be used by him once more.

As the expanded nanomachine plagues gathered around Ves, they surrounded him in such a thick layer of nanomachines that it no longer became obvious that a human phase lord was hiding inside!

Under Ves' direction, the nanomachine plagues continually shifted in shape until they began to take on a different and unexpected form.

"Is that... a giant cat?"

"No. It's a tiger!"

Ves impulsively decided to follow his whims and ordered the nanomachine plagues to condense into the shape of his Devil Tiger!

As they obediently tried to imitate the form and also several of the smart metal mech's internal systems, Ves could feel the growing power at his disposal.

Choosing to replicate one of his smart metal mechs had been the right decision!

Compared to any other ad-hoc shape he could form, the smart metal mech that he had meticulously designed and optimized once upon a time clearly offered superior combat performance!

As Ves completely immersed himself in the shape of a feline mech-like construct, the harmony between him and the nanomachine plagues grew even stronger!

His grin grew wider even as the copy of his Devil Tiger exposed its sharp and deadly fangs.

"Let me show you the power of my Devil Tiger!"

Chapter 6367 High Stakes Struggle

The battle against the cosmopolitans and the native aliens entered into a heated stage.

While the defending side held the advantage on the surface, many mech pilots and other personnel clearly understood that taking down the relatively mundane enemy mechs, phasefighters and warships ultimately did not matter too much.

Failing to defeat them would only cause the Bluejay Fleet to cement its defeat.

Beating them did not translate into victory as they had never served as the true threat in the first place.

The real enemies that the Bluejay Fleet needed to defeat were the greater and lesser phase lords that possessed the power to bull through everything!



The Rosfield Cannons installed on Fort Rock and the primary gun batteries of the larger warships of the Bluejay Fleet continually pummeled the spatial barrier of the Arena Lord of Ya-gwasa, but it had proven to be disgustingly tough and powerful!

Although the Arena Lord clearly lacked the ability to manipulate the fabric of space across vast stretches of space, he had put a lot of resources and effort into developing his close-ranged combat capabilities.

Strengthening his defenses was one of the most basic but reliable means to outlast an opponent in a duel!

Many phase lords tended to believe their bodies were already large and powerful enough to withstand a huge amount of punishment. They instead spent their time and resources on developing flashier abilities that could further emphasize their status as gods, such as the power to warp and knead space.

The Distance Shaper was the archetypical example of such a phase lord. The erudite orven god had completely committed himself to this strategy and was able to help the relatively weaker strike craft and the warships of his side survive longer by manipulating the circumstances in their favor!

Yet when it came to dealing with overwhelming firepower and highly resistant ace mechs under heavy suppression, even a greater phase lord such as a Distance Shaper might feel uncomfortable!

This was where phase lords who strengthened their fundamentals began to stand out. The Arena Lord of Ya'gwasa strongly believed that all of those fancy tricks were far too unreliable. Depending on their strength would only lead to disappointment when the enemy had become strong enough to cope with such means.

Tricks could never overcome every adversity. The Arena Lord might not be able to fight as freely as he liked against an ace mech with a Destroyer weapon and a fleet that constantly bombarded his spatial barrier, but he was doing surprisingly well despite lacking enough assistance!

"I AM INEXHAUSTIBLE! IF YOU THINK YOU CAN TIRE ME OUT, THEN THINK AGAIN. THE PHASEWATER PRODUCTION SYSTEM THAT I HAVE EARNED THROUGH MY OWN EFFORT HAS STRENGTHENED MY PHYSIQUE BEYOND ITS PREVIOUS LIMITS. I AM A MUCH MORE POWERFUL GOD THAN YOU CAN COMPREHEND. IF YOU DID NOT

WIELD A SPEAR THAT YOU DO NOT DESERVE TO USE, I WOULD HAVE CRUSHED YOU LIKE THE INSECT YOU ARE MUCH SOONER."

Saint Tusa ignored most of what the enemy phase lord said as his Dark Zephyr rapidly swooped in and thrust a shadowy dark spear against the spatial barrier!

The energy barrier held up quite well, but Tusa could clearly sense that it had grown a lot brittler than before.

The continuous attacks from the warships and space fortress along with driving the tip of the tier 3 Destroyer spear against this defensive measure were slowly producing a result!

No greater phase lord was invincible! The Arena Lord of Ya'gwasa may possess much stronger spatial barriers than usual, but everything had a limit.

As the Dark Zephyr continued to circle around in order to launch another attack, the Arena Lord clearly prepared to launch another counterattack.

The Saint Piercer held in the alien's grasp had yet to pierce through the Dark Zephyr, but it was getting harder for Tusa to avoid a direct hit.

Just as Saint Tusa was learning how to cope with the Arena Lord's fast and accurate reactions, the greater phase lord had also taken his opponent's measure.

The Dark Zephyr had proven to be exceptionally difficult to hit. The Arena Lord might hold contempt for humans and their false gods, but he had never dueled against an opponent as elusive as Saint Tusa in the past!

That was enough to raise the Arena Lord's respect towards the ace mech and treat this opponent with a serious attitude.

Considering that the ace pilot did not reject the assistance of others during the fight, the Arena Lord felt no obligation to stick to his own means when fighting back.

As the Dark Zephyr's shadowy form began to explode into a cloud of shadows that made it much more difficult to track the ace light skirmisher's coordinates, the Arena Lord finally enacted the plan that he had been cooking up in his mind!

"NOW!"

The Distance Shaper immediately unleashed the spatial ability that he had been preparing after receiving the Arena Lord's silent signal.

Though the orven greater phase lord had been fighting under heavy suppression for a while, the powerful being still had ways to cope against this adversity!

After raising his palm, he voluntarily separated a portion of his own phasewater-infused flesh and blood and launched it toward the Arena Lord like an organic missile!

The strong spatial warping around the flesh missile allowed it to resist the spatial suppression by a noticeable extent and fly forward at a much faster pace than it should!

The flesh missile only had to cross a relatively short distance and reach the side of the Arena Lord before exploding in a bloody mess that spread phasewater-infused tissue in every direction!

Saint Tusa managed to detect the threat in advance, but the Distance Shaper's sacrificial play unfolded so quickly that his Dark Zephyr was unable to abort his attack run in time to get out of the danger zone!

The cloud of shadow became pierced by hundreds of smaller flesh projectiles!

The Dark Zephyr might not be able to change his course, but he was still able to use his Saint Kingdom to slow down and weaken the flesh particles just enough to avoid getting struck!

Yet that was not the true intention of the Distance Shaper.

Somehow, the greater phase lord was still able to exert control over his split and exploded organic tissue.

Normally, the particles of flesh should have continued to expand and fly away on their current trajectories, but after the Distance Shaper slightly exerted his power, the organic projectiles abruptly stopped and froze in place!

Saint Tusa's eyes widened as he sensed much greater threat from this unusual move!

Before he knew it, the flesh particles began to burn up and evaporate!

As they did so, they acted on the surrounding space, causing it to turn more solid and difficult to navigate through!

As Saint Tusa unflinchingly sought to bring his Dark Zephyr out of this trap, he found to his horror that his ace mech became a lot slower than before!

"No! We didn't slow down! The damn Distance Shaper has stretched out the surrounding space!"

Tusa still felt confident he could bring his ace light skirmisher out of this trap, but that took time that he did not have at the moment!

Due to his constant exertions, he was no longer able to employ his Free Flight and Leap of True Freedom abilities as quickly as before.

Tusa also had a hunch that his resonance strength was far from powerful enough to break the spatial expansion effect generated by the Distance Shaper, especially now that the greater phase lord decisively sacrificed a portion of his own flesh and blood to strengthen this move!

"If I can't get away..."

The Larkinson ace pilot had never taken his attention off the Arena Lord, so he could clearly observe the nuns greater phase lord turning around and moving closer with the Saint Piercer ready to impale his machine!

Unlike the Dark Zephyr, the Arena Lord appeared to be immune to the distance stretching effect.

This was normally not possible, but the Arena Lord and the Distance Shaper both figured out a way to prevent their abilities from interfering with each other!

From the perspective of the Dark Zephyr, the Arena Lord advanced much faster than usual, making it even more difficult to evade the spear thrust that Tusa knew was coming!

The two greater phase lords finally exposed the strength that entities of their exalted status should possess. They were too strong and clever to surrender to the handicaps that the Bluejay Fleet had imposed.

Seeing that there was no way for his Dark Zephyr to evade this trap, Saint Tusa decided to unveil his own true capabilities!

There were two distinct abilities that he had yet to employ against his opponents.

He had been saving the Dark Zephyr's Ultimate Ability as a killer move. Although saving it up for so long made his life harder, Tusa still insisted on keeping it in reserve until he finally obtained a golden opportunity to strike a heavy blow against his adversary.

That left the Dark Zephyr's latest resonating ability.

Saint Tusa had chosen the Banisher Edition out of all of the other potential upgrade trajectories for good reasons.

One of them was to give him a way to cope against situations where he was being overpowered by superior opponents!

Unfortunately, this situation was anything but ideal to him. His proficiency in the Banish resonating ability was still too low, and he had a strong suspicion that it would prove less than effective against the Saint Piercer wielded by the Arena Lord!

Fortunately, Saint Tusa had a much better target to employ his latest ability.

Instead of trying to Banish an overambitious target like the Saint Piercer or a small portion of the Arena Lord's limbs, the Dark Zephyr turned around and banished dozens of stationary flesh projectiles!

"Nngh! Banish!"

Tusa almost stumbled when he encountered the active resistance of the Distance Shaper. Fortunately, the flesh projectiles were small and already in the process of falling apart, so his ace mech ultimately managed to disappear them into another dimension, if only for a few seconds!

A few seconds was more than enough for the Dark Zephyr to take advantage of the collapse of the spatial expansion effect and dodge out of the way of an extraordinary spear that could have pierced through the ace skirmisher's torso without hindrance!

In fact, the Dark Zephyr was able to accomplish more than this. Tusa couldn't help but retaliate and took advantage of the Arena Lord's committed state to swoop in and press the tip of the tier 3 Destroyer spear against the phase lord's spatial barrier!

This time, the layer of defense visibly looked more and more stressed! It was not too far away from collapsing!

Once that happened, the Dark Zephyr would not only be able to inflict serious material damage to the Arena Lord, but the warship-grade guns of the Bluejay Fleet would also be able to shatter a lot of flesh from a distance!

Despite all of these dangers, the Arena Lord showed no sign of flagging!

He had grown so angry and frustrated at the near-hit that he unleashed a frustrated roar!

"COWARD! COME BACK AND FACE ME LIKE A WARRIOR! I SHALL SHATTER YOUR METAL SHELL AND DROWN YOUR PUNY PINK BODY IN A POOL OF MY OWN BLOOD!"

The Arena Lord did more than yell out his frustrations, though. He lifted his upper arm and changed his grip of his Saint Piercer so that he held it in a throwing stance!

After a brief wind-up, the Arena Lord threw the extraordinarily sharp spear forward with such a blazing speed that it would accurately impale the Dark Zephyr in no time, especially when the latter had not yet built up enough distance!

Saint Tusa tried to react in a hurry and force his Dark Zephyr to dodge out of the way, but the Distance Shaper exerted his own power and tried to warp the space around the ace mech!

The Dark Zephyr's domain field managed to negate most of this remote effect, but the greater phase lord had concentrated his power just enough that at least some of his efforts managed to produce a result!

The ace mech's trajectory unexpectedly changed in such a way that a complete evasion could no longer be accomplished!

"No!"

Tusa and his battle partner seemed to explode their potential at the last second, allowing them to jerk the mech frame to the side just enough for the Saint Piercer to graze the archemec'h's side!

Chapter 6368 Lucky Infiltration

The Dark Zephyr incurred damage!

His Saint Kingdom, his azure energy shield and his resonance-empowered archemetal exterior failed to resist the unnaturally effective penetration of the thrown Saint Piercer. Fortunately, the ace light skirmisher still managed to move aside just enough to incur a relatively small cut to the side of his torso, but the outcome could have been worse.

That did not change the fact that the Arena Lord managed to score 'first blood'!

Tusa and his battle partner did not take this setback well. They may have been fighting against worse odds, but they placed so much faith in their evasion ability that they took this incident as a major failing!

The damage to the Dark Zephyr was slight, but the minute drop in performance created a much stronger sense of urgency in Tusa.

If the Arena Lord was able to strike at his ace mech with the Saint Piercer once, then the powerful alien could do so again!

This stimulated Tusa's sense of danger and honed his willpower even further. His control over the tier 3 Destroyer spear increased by a small measure.

He even felt as if he was getting more in sync with the weapon. The two both felt aggrieved at the Arena Lord and wanted to do nothing more than to destroy the greater phase lord!

The power of Blackwing flowed casier through the tier 3 Destroyer spear. Its decreased volatility along with Tusa's greater focus made it seem as if the weapon was about to burst with shadowy power!

"THE ARENA LORD'S SPATIAL BARRIER IS ALMOST GONE." The Dark Zephyr spoke to his battle partner. "ONCE THAT HAPPENS, WE CAN BEGIN THE TRUE FIGHT. WE CANNOT STICK TO EVASION. IF WE WANT TO DEFEAT THIS GREATER PHASE LORD, WE WILL NEED TO GO ON THE OFFENSIVE. GET READY TO MAKE USE OF OUR ULTIMATE ABILITY"

won't

Saint Tusa's expression grew strained. "Are you sure it will work? I am afraid... be able to pass through all of the way. The Arena Lord's true body is so thick and solid that our Dark Wind Passage will deplete rapidly."

"THEN DO NOT TRY ANYTHING FANCY, WAIT FOR AN OPENING AND AIM FOR A LIMB. IF WE CAN SEVER ONE OF HIS LEGS, WE CAN STRIKE A BLOW AGAINST HIS CONFIDENT EGO AND MAKE HIM FIGHT MORE CAUTIOUSLY. HOPEFULLY, THAT WILL GIVE US MORE OPPORTUNITIES."

In the absence of any other alternatives, Tusa decided to adopt this plan.

"Let's try, then. Maybe my new spear can help us pierce further. This Destroyer spear is so powerful that should be able to cut through the alien's flesh even if we have shifted

to another dimension or phase."

Tusa had never tested it out in reality, but he had a hunch that he might be able to strengthen the Dark Wind Passage Ultimate Ability if he merged it with this deadly spear!



As the Dark Zephyr continued to circle around the Arena Lord of Ya'gwasa, hardly anyone noticed that the Doomspreader Torpedo Launcher had flung a very special payload into open space.

The playfully named Lucky Delivery System was finally being put to use!

As a large and obvious torpedo, the native aliens quickly detected its presence. They already attempted to fire their weapons at the torpedo if they could help it, but the azure energy shield surrounding its shape prevented the attacks from producing any immediate results.

"Meow!"

The gem cat stuffed inside the well-protected cage still felt worried, though!

Even though his successive meals had strengthened him to an amazing degree, he was still not capable of contending against ship-grade firepower!

The torpedo did not shake whenever it got struck by a potent attack, but its energy levels constantly fluctuated. Lucky was able to detect these fluctuations and grew more and more worried when the activity grew more volatile.

Lucky did not want to end up getting tossed into deep space, especially while incurring significant damage to his archemetal body!

If the Bluejay Fleet lost the battle to the point where the survivors had to flee in a hurry, then there was a good chance that Lucky would get left behind!

Worse yet, he may end up floating away in a random direction that made it difficult for the gem cat to alter his course and reverse his ballistic course!

The gem cat therefore had plenty of incentives to fight for the Bluejay Fleet and help it defeat the cosmopolitan and native alien fleet.

The cat continued to huddle in his protected cage as the torpedo traversed across the battlefield.

Ves had neglected to provide too many accommodations to Lucky, so the cat did not have a detailed picture of what was taking place outside.

He did not even know where the torpedo was taking him! There were huge differences

between trying to infiltrate a human warship and an alien warship.

At one point, the torpedo finally collided against the hull of its target!

This time, the azure energy shield was unable to dissipate the violent impact in its entirety, so Lucky's body smacked against the side of his cage!

"Meow meow meow!"

The gem cat hissed in frustration. He definitely intended to pay Ves back for all of this discomfort!

The cat did not forget his mission, though. He had already altered his mechanical body parameters to reduce all of its emissions before phasing through the side of the torpedo. Once Lucky managed to phase out of the crashed torpedo and enter the starship, he immediately concluded that he had been delivered aboard a cosmopolitan warship!

This puzzled the gem cat. He thought that Ves or whoever was in charge of controlling the Doomspreader Torpedo Launcher would send him to an archship instead. The torpedo began to transmit a subtle data signal that Lucky managed to pick up and decrypt.

The cat received his mission. His primary objective was not to sabotage and disable the enemy warship.

He instead had to invade the human vessel's data room and steal as much relevant intelligence of the cosmopolitans as he could!

The cat needed to retrieve any information regarding the identity of hidden cosmopolitans, their list of informers, how they managed to organize this ambush beneath the noses of human civilization and more.

More importantly than that, Lucky also needed to find information regarding the Saint Piercer weapons that vexed red humanity!

There were rumors that the native aliens only managed to develop the Saint Piercers in cooperation with the Cosmopolitan Movement.

The Saint Piercer spear that was currently in the hands of the Arena Lord of Ya'gwasa

may have originated from one of the cells that were currently in the fight!

This may have been the only way for the radical cosmopolitans to persuade such a formidable greater phase lord to take part in this dangerous gambit.

Whatever the case, any information about how the Saint Piercers were made was crucial

to red humanity and perhaps the Larkinson Clan as well.

Lucky grew more serious and made sure to remain phased through the bulkheads of the

human warship.

The gem cat was not familiar with the layout of this particular vessel, but most human vessels adopted the same naval architectural design principles.

For example, the ship that appeared to be the size of a heavy cruiser possessed a

horizontal layout as opposed to a vertical one liked by the major alien races.

The warship also appeared to be highly automated, which made sense as the cosmopolitans were too much of a fringe group to attract a large amount of hardcore

supporters.

This made life easier for Lucky. His combined ECM and other stealth capabilities had grown quite a lot since last time.

The cat also had the misfortune of being forced alloys infused with Solus Gas. Those alloys left a foul taste in his mouth, but it had triggered a substantial upgrade to his archemetal body that naturally reduced its emissions, similar to the Dark Zephyr! Therefore, all of the advanced detection methods and monitoring systems that constantly checked the interior of the human vessel for intruders had no idea that a cat was lurking towards the center of the hull!

Everything important about a ship was typically placed deep inside the citadel of the ship.

Lucky managed to cross from the outer sections of the human warship and smoothly infiltrate the citadel without tripping any of the alarms that were highly sensitive

towards intrusions.

This was quite an accomplishment as the stuff inside the citadel was so sensitive that its walls were constantly being watched.

It was here that Lucky started to detect the presence of more personnel. The cosmopolitan spacers all looked concerned. Their fleet was not doing well, and they had already lost plenty of ships during this fight.

However, the cosmopolitans also retained a sense of fanaticism. Each of them felt confident that the greater phase lords that they managed to invite to this star system at

great cost would deliver them victory in the end!

Even if their ship and everyone aboard her got blown to pieces, the sacrifice was worth

it as long as the Cosmopolitan Movement managed to preserve its footing among red

humanity!

Lucky wanted to jump out and claw their necks out, but he restrained this stupid impulse and continued to sneak towards the compartments that were better guarded.

The cat passed by azure energy shield generators, smaller power reactors, life support systems and even a command center where cosmopolitan officers frantically tried to direct the dwindling number of ships that were still persisting on the battlefield. None of the cosmopolitan officers noticed the undetectable passage of a black archemetal cat phasing through the deck where they stood.

Lucky guessed he was getting closer. An important chamber such as a command center was usually located close to a data room in order to minimize data leaks. With his sharp senses, he was able to detect where most of the data transmissions were passing

through.

The cat managed to find the data room.

Unfortunately, as soon as he took a peek inside, he noticed that the hardware was

completely different from what he was accustomed to. Instead of being greeted by rows

and rows of processor banks and memory banks, he was instead greeted by a forest of

white crystals!

The crystals all lit up in different patterns as they processed, retrieved or transmitted

data to other sections of the ship.

What surprised Lucky the most was the large oval crystal floating in the center.

Even though no cables or other parts connected it to the rest of the data room, the

crystal generated a strange and unusual energy field that instantly put Lucky on guard! The cat quickly tried to look up similar crystals in his extensive materials database. He soon managed to find a match that was so astonishing that he had to suppress his desire

to jump and meow in surprise!

A Mentalist Crystal!

The cosmopolitans were actually using a Mentalist Crystal to enhance the performance

of their data room!

Even Lucky knew that this was an extravagant use of such a strategic material! The gem cat began to feel mixed. He normally possessed a lot of appetite for rare and

precious materials, but why did it have to be a crystal?!

Even if he was technically able to ingest crystalline materials, to an existence like Lucky,

this was nothing different from eating his own body waste!

Lucky struggled to balance his desires.

Eventually, his greed to evolve his body eventually managed to vanquish his disgust

towards eating a large crystal.

In the face of a huge opportunity to improve his cognitive performance, Lucky was more

than willing to cat the most disgusting materials in the universe!

The gem cat had slowly snuck closer while still making sure he remained phased

through the deck.

Once he came close enough to pull off his heist, Lucky carefully examined the entire data room and confirmed that there was nothing that could hinder his attempt.

He moved into action!

Just as his body leapt out of the deck and soared towards the mysterious floating

Mentalist Crystal, the gem cat suddenly got struck by an electrical attack that shocked him and blasted him off-course!

"MEOW!"

A net appeared out of nowhere and tried to catch Lucky's body. However, the gem cat recovered quickly enough to blast away and avoid getting

entangled! Before he could phase back into the deck, a large amount of azure energy shields came online, preventing Lucky from departing the data room with ease!

"Well, well, well. What do we have here? An intruder has arrived."

An armored figure appeared in view. The suited human had deactivated the stealth system that was apparently sophisticated enough to fool Lucky's passive sensors!

The guard that had been watching over the data room looked quite different from other armored soldiers. He not only held another net, but also held a javelin!

The emblem on the chestplate of his armor made his allegiance clear.

He was a Hunter, a member of the Hunting Association!

Lucky had no idea why a Hunter was guarding this data room of all places, but he could not afford to get trapped in this place!

He needed to get out!

"Meow!"

Chapter 6369 The Deep Wanderer

As a cat, Lucky had no interest in human politics.

That said, he spent enough time around Ves to know that he did not have the best relationship with the Hunting Association.

Even a cat could tell that there was something extremely suspicious about finding a Hunter as well as a strategically valuable Mentalist Crystal in the middle of a cosmopolitan flagship!

Lucky had no idea what purpose the Mentalist Crystal served, but he could guess that it was doing far more than just improving the performance of the strange crystalline processors.

As the Hunter looked ready to turn Lucky into his latest trophy, the gem cat was already thinking about trying to slip away.

The cat had fallen for this kind of trap once before in the past, but he was much different from his past self!

After eating and digesting exceedingly precious materials such as ATC-A and EE-343F-00334R, Lucky had multiple ways to jump out of this trap.

He could either phase through the azure energy shields by force, or he could attempt to teleport his body a few hundred meters away!



Neither of these options were cheap, and Lucky would definitely expend a lot of energy in the process, but that was better than confronting this unusually strong and well-equipped Hunter!

Just as Lucky chose to phase through the multiple layers of azure energy shields by force, the Hunter standing on the other side of the data room made a surprising move. He deliberately relaxed his posture and put away his hunting equipment. A wrist port in his armored suit automatically folded and sucked in the trapping net. The Hunter also placed his javelin back in a storage port mounted on his back armor.

"You are Lucky, the mechanical pet that has accompanied Professor Ves Larkinson since he became a Novice Mech Designer."

Sensing that the Hunter did not seek to turn Lucky into a trophy, the cat minutely relaxed.

Though he was still vigilant for any tricks, the gem cat was willing to give the mysterious Hunter the benefit of the doubt.

That was especially when the Hunter retracted his helmet, revealing a grizzled but confident human head.

"Meow."

"I am Soto Nil. I am a Titled Hunter recognized by the Hunting Association. My fellow

Hunters has seen fit to call me the Deep Wanderer, for my passion for solo hunting is so strong that I regularly cross into alien space in order to hunt exobeasts while evading detection from the native aliens. You cannot understand the thrill of completing a successful hunt and returning to human space while evading alien detection and pursuit."

Lucky tilted his feline head. Even for an adventurous cat like himself, that sounded crazy!

"Meow meow!"

"I do not understand your speech, but I have hunted enough exobeasts to infer what you mean. If you are asking why I am here, then I cannot offer you a straightforward answer. You will have to bring what you have learned back to your master so that he can attempt to solve this puzzle. I am

willing to state that I am not your master's enemy. I may be riding on a cosmopolitan warship, but that does not mean I am a cosmopolitan myself. I am a guest, nothing more, nothing less."

"... Meow?" Lucky looked disbelieving.

After all, no matter whether this Hunter spoke the truth about his identity, it was highly suspicious for a Hunter to guard the Mentalist Crystal aboard a genuine cosmopolitan flagship!

If the so-called Deep Wanderer was part of a conspiracy, then there were probably far more people involved than himself!

Soto Nil adopted a mysterious smile as he faced the famous cat of the Devil Tongue.

"I am not your enemy. I do not pose a threat to you, and I will not hinder you from doing what you have been tasked to do on this warship. After I pass on a message that you should deliver to your master, I will take away this Mentalist Crystal and quietly evacuate from this ship. You will do nothing to hinder my actions."

Lucky did not want to let the Mentalist Crystal slip out of his grasp!

Who knew when he would have an opportunity to eat such a precious material? Ves would certainly not reserve one for himself!

"Meow meow meow!"

Even though Lucky was a bit intimidated by this Titled Hunter, he was not that weak either. The gem cat never engaged in a proper fight for years. It was about time he tested his upgraded combat capabilities against a truly formidable opponent. Though Lucky obviously looked as if he was getting closer and closer to starting hostilities, the Deep Wanderer remained confident.

"If you want to beat the answers from my mouth and claim this Mentalist Crystal for your master, then you will have to fight me for it. Defeat me and claim your prize. If you lose, then you will be at my mercy. Are you certain you wish to challenge me to a duel? It is not clear who shall be the hunter and who will bear the identity of hunted in this

matchup.

Lucky possessed a lot of confidence in the strength that he had attained over the years. How could a Hunter cope with his upgraded capabilities?

Yet... Hunters were not normal humans. They were cultivators who constantly gained more strength with each successful hunt.

A Titled Hunter who dared to invade alien ace just to hunt their exobeasts should not be weak in the slightest!

Hunters also posed a much greater threat than conventional soldiers because folk like the Deep Wanderer definitely had experience dealing with unusual and exotic creatures. When the Deep Wanderer stared into Lucky's glowing optic sensors, the gem cat keenly felt that he would likely end up as the prey in this confrontation! Lucky's tail nervously twitched as he decided to err on the side of caution.

"Meow meow..."

"I take it that is your agreement with my proposal. That is good. As I have said, I do not mean to harm or impede you. Our goals are not aligned or compatible with each other. Our masters pursue very different agendas. That may occasionally put them into conflict with each other, but they also have shared goals. Trust that they have enough in common for there to be no reason for us to fight against each other."

That confused Lucky. This completely flew above his archemetal head. He did not even know whether he should continue to fight or back off and let the Deep Wanderer take

away the Mentalist Crystal.

Even if Lucky could resist the temptation to nibble at it, he distinctly remembered that Gloriana badly wanted a whole Mentalist Crystal in order to implement a massive upgrade to the Minerva!

For the sake of a future ace command mech, Lucky could not give up so easily. Seeing that the gem cat slowly assumed a prowling posture, the strange Hunter let out a

sigh.

"Can you contact your Master?"

"Meow."

"I take it you can, but doing so will expose your intrusion. Fair enough. Then consider this, my mechanical feline friend. The Huntsman has been fighting diligently to preserve our defensive lines and stop the native aliens from overrunning human-occupied space. He has the blood of many alien soldiers on his hands, and he has turned the ancient phase whales he hunted last time into his personal trophies. There can be absolutely no reconciliation between him and the Red Cabal. Do you truly think that he and the organization that he has founded have turned traitor?"

That sounded far too crazy even for a cat!

"Meow." Lucky shook his head.

"As for our relations with the cosmopolitans, you have to know that they are not entirely

our enemies. As extreme and unusual their beliefs may be, they are still human, just as your Larkinsons. They may be our enemies, but unlike our alien foes, we still possess a shared identity with the cosmopolitans. That gives us the possibility to maintain contact with them and occasionally conduct exchanges in secret. I will not deny that these clandestine transactions are dishonorable, but the rest of human civilization is not clean either. My presence aboard this ship is not meant to be a slight against your master. This is why I am willing to forget about your intrusion and leave so that you can do what you

want." "Meow." Lucky stared at the Mentalist Crystal.

"This." The Deep Wanderer said as he casually plucked the Mentalist Crystal from its central position and carefully placed it in a container that he had prepared in advance. "Does not belong to you. It does not long belong to the cosmopolitans either. They have served their use, and should be consigned to oblivion. I shall take back this Crystal so that it can be put to a more worthy use, unless... you wish to issue a challenge?" There were metaphorical sparks in the air as the Hunter spoke those last words. Lucky tried to measure his chances against this prepared human fighter and did not feel completely confident about his chances.

"Meow meow meow..."

The Titled Hunter minutely relaxed. "If you want more answers, then I can oblige you, but only briefly. The battle taking place outside is not doing much good to the

cosmopolitan ships. What do you wish to know?"

"Meow meow meow... meow meow, meow?"

The furrowed his brows. "I am unclear what you are trying to ask. If you are trying to find

out the reason why I am here, then let me give you a permissible answer. The cosmopolitans are our enemies... but they can also be our tools. As long as your master establishes friendly relations with one or more of their cells, he shall discover that it is not that difficult to get them to act on your behalf... often without your enemies discovering your involvement. Does it not sound convenient to have a clandestine organization at your disposal that can handle the dirty business that would normally

sully your reputation if exposed?"

Lucky looked scandalized!

"Meow!"

"Hahaha! The Huntsman is not in total control over us. We do not inform him of every

action we make. Even if his involvement can be proved, he will definitely be able to justify any underhanded decisions. His Holiness lives and dies by the hunt. As the best hunter to ever exist among us, he knows better than anyone that in order to set up a good hunt, it is occasionally necessary to prepare the hunting ground in advance. The entire Red Ocean is his hunting ground."

"Meow." Lucky shook his head.

"As for our relations with the cosmopolitans, you have to know that they are not entirely

our enemies. As extreme and unusual their beliefs may be, they are still human, just as

your Larkinsons. They may be our enemies, but unlike our alien foes, we still possess a shared identity with the cosmopolitans. That gives us the possibility to maintain contact with them and occasionally conduct exchanges in secret. I will not deny that these clandestine transactions are dishonorable, but the rest of human civilization is not clean either. My presence aboard this ship is not meant to be a slight against your master. This is why I am willing to forget about your intrusion and leave so that you can do what you

want." "Meow." Lucky stared at the Mentalist Crystal.

"This." The Deep Wanderer said as he casually plucked the Mentalist Crystal from its central position and carefully placed it in a container that he had prepared in advance. "Does not belong to you. It does not long belong to the cosmopolitans either. They have served their use, and should be consigned to oblivion. I shall take back this Crystal so that it can be put to a more worthy use, unless... you wish to issue a challenge?" There were metaphorical sparks in the air as the Hunter spoke those last words. Lucky tried to measure his chances against this prepared human fighter and did not feel completely confident about his chances.

"Meow meow meow..."

The Titled Hunter minutely relaxed. "If you want more answers, then I can oblige you,

but only briefly. The battle taking place outside is not doing much good to the

cosmopolitan ships. What do you wish to know?" "Meow meow meow... meow meow, meow?"

The furrowed his brows. "I am unclear what you are trying to ask. If you are trying to find

out the reason why I am here, then let me give you a permissible answer. The cosmopolitans are our enemies... but they can also be our tools. As long as your master establishes friendly relations with one or more of their cells, he shall discover that it is not that difficult to get them to act on your behalf... often without your enemies discovering your involvement. Does it not sound convenient to have a clandestine organization at your disposal that can handle the dirty business that would normally

sully your reputation if exposed?"

Lucky looked scandalized!

"Meow!"

"Hahaha! The Huntsman is not in total control over us. We do not inform him of every

action we make. Even if his involvement can be proved, he will definitely be able to justify any underhanded decisions. His Holiness lives and dies by the hunt. As the best hunter to ever exist among us, he knows better than anyone that in order to set up a good hunt, it is occasionally necessary to prepare the hunting ground in advance. The entire Red Ocean is his hunting ground."

"Meow?" Lucky tilted his head in confusion.

"As far as hunting grounds go, the dwarf galaxy that we reside in is particularly rich in prey. However... the ecosystem is out of balance. We humans can be considered an invasive species, but our entry may end up doing a lot of good, as our collision with the

native aliens have caused both sides of the Red War to develop faster and adopt each other's technologies. The hunting ground needs more changes in order to produce a more sustainable and ideal environment. I am a small part of a greater plan to reshape this great hunting ground according to the will of the Huntsman. That... is all I am permitted to share with you and your infamous master. In time, he shall discover the meaning of my words."

"Meow! Meow meow! Meow!"

"If you are asking whether we have anything to do with the ambush of your master's fleet... so what if we did?" The Titled Hunter deliberately grinned at Lucky. "Let me reiterate that we are not your enemies. That does not mean we have no plans towards

your master. For example, we may feel it is necessary for a future leader of red humanity to undergo a serious challenge. We are curious to see whether we can draw out the inner hunter from his violent heart. We cannot accept the leadership of a human who

possesses the mentality of a prey as opposed to a predator. If he has managed to complete this hunt today, then his ascension in Yernstall will be a foregone conclusion."

With that, the Deep Wanderer turned around and activated his remarkably effective stealth system.

The data room fell silent. The surrounding crystal processors had dimmed as their

activity had degraded after the removal of the Mentalist Crystal. Lucky felt tempted to go after the Deep Wanderer, but his caution had prevailed this

time. The cat thought it was a bad idea to mess around with a powerful hunter who clearly possessed a mysterious purpose for being here of all places!

Chapter 6370 Nanomachines and the Elements - CORRECTED

While Lucky remained utterly confused in a chamber full of dull white crystals, the battle outside of the cosmopolitan flagship was intensifying!

The cosmopolitan and native aliens fleet had already begun this battle on the backfoot, but now that the largest cosmopolitan sub-capital warship lost her Mentalist Crystal, her performance dropped by a noticeable margin!

Her responses became slower, her predictions became less accurate and she was able to provide less good directions to the surviving mechs and escort ships.

Although the cosmopolitans were far too radical to give in to despair, they nonetheless fought more urgently than before when they noticed that they were suffering losses at a faster rate than before.

"Our lives may be forfeit, but we shall ultimately prevail!"

"There is no way a single junior ace mech can defeat the lesser and greater gods of the alien community!"

"For a pluralistic society!"

If the native alien phase gods heard any of the cries made by the cosmopolitans that died in droves, they exhibited no concern at all. They had more pressing matters to deal with. Not only were they being assailed by warship-grade gun batteries on all sides, they also struggled to deal with the human champions that stubbornly refused to acknowledge their inferiority!



The Dark Zephyr should never be able to hold out against a greater phase lord, let alone two, but the cutting-edge first-class ace mech was not only astonishingly fast and agile, but also stuffed with so much advanced technologies that it was frankly ridiculous!

Not only that, but Saint Tusa also became more adept with handling the tier 3 Destroyer spear. The Dark Zephyr held the weapon with greater confidence as he fearlessly threatened to disintegrate anything it touched.

From the moment the Arena Lord of Ya'gwasa lost his strong but ultimately fallible spatial barrier, the duel began to enter a critical new stage!

Tusa grinned at this development!

Finally he was able to inflict real damage on this overgrown bastard!

"Your protective shell is gone! Will you still have the courage to persist in your attack now that your own body is on the line?!"

To his credit, the Arena Lord of Ya'gwasa did not appear to back down in the slightest. The greater phase lord responded with his species version of a grin and smacked the side of his Saint Piercer against the side of his raiment.

"\$#&#&@#."

"YOU AND YOUR MORTAL MINIONS HAVE FOUGHT SO HARD ONLY TO OVERCOME A SINGLE LAYER OF MY DEFENSES. FOR THAT, YOU HAVE EARNED MY RECOGNITION, YOUNG PINK-SKINNED FALSE GOD. HOWEVER, IT IS A MISTAKE TO THINK YOU HAVE DRIVEN ME TO DEFEAT. IT ONLY TAKES ONE DIRECT HIT FOR ME TO END YOUR LIFE. YOU HAVE ALREADY FAILED TO EVADE MY ATTACKS ONCE. IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE YOU FAIL AGAIN. AS FOR YOU, YOUR INFERNAL WEAPON IS TOO SMALL TO DEFEAT ME WITH A SINGLE BLOW. MY TOLERANCE FOR PAIN IS FAR BEYOND WHAT YOU CAN IMAGINE."

"Keep boasting, you cow!"

As the Dark Zephyr began to use his tier 3 Destroyer spear to peel off the greater phase lord's gigantic raiment in cooperation with many elements of the Bluejay Fleet, another confrontation started to heat up as well.

The 5 arche phase lords had endured a huge amount of punishment, but still managed to rely on their abnormally tough constitutions to stay in the fight.

Yet now that their main adversary had somehow turned into a metallic tiger-like creature surrounded by a creak of darkness, the lesser phase lords began to feel much more oppressed than before.

This was not a coincidence.

When Ves recalled the much-expanded hyper nanomachine plagues, he initially planned to mold them into a larger and more massive version of his previous raiment. He had sacrificed 200 Ascension Points to exchange for this fighting method. Yet if he was being honest with himself, he had no particular love or passion for this fighting style. He only exchanged the enlightenment fruit because his freely scalable Oceancaller could moonlight as a staff. It was a choice made out of practical reasons. Though Ves ended up learning a lot of lessons on how he should harness the power of darkness like a martial qi cultivator, he never became fully satisfied with his performance.

He had only just discovered his combat system, but did not have the time or practice to realize its potential.

While Ves was grateful to the enlightenment fruit for instilling him with the fundamental skills and sensibilities of a warrior, did not feel all that confident in his ability to defeat all 5 phase lords by wielding the Oceancaller as a staff.

The high-level artifact was designed to act as a musical instrument, not as a blunt force instrument used to bash in skulls!

As a mech designer, he always found it incredibly painful whenever people misused his products. He felt it was disrespectful if he continued to make use of the replica of the Oceancaller as anything but a flute.

The problem was that he did not have a lot of good options available. He would have

preferred to wield a real staff instead of using this tool like one, but he did not have any large and solid rods on hand that possessed the same degree of physical durability as this seemingly indestructible artifact.

The mismatch in attributes made him feel even less good about wielding the Oceancaller. His control and affinity over the water element was too weak to employ it on a battle of this scale. Any water spouts he managed to launch towards his opponents could not leave even a single scratch on the archshells of the enemy phase lords! Ves never expected that salvation would come in the form of a weapon of mass destruction.

By hijacking and expanding the Red Fleet's infamous hyper nanomachine plagues, Ves had not only managed to define a combat system that fit inclinations exceptionally well, but also liberated him from the limitations that hindered him before!

Now that the nanomachine plagues had devoured a lot of fallen small craft and starship debris, they had reproduced many times over, causing them to expand to much more

usable quantities!

As Ves began to welcome the return of the expanded swarm and feel the intimacy of the dark and malevolent spiritualities that gave them a renewed life and purpose, he became so swept by his emotions that he chose to follow his whims.

His logic told him to form an oversized mech out of smart metal. With so much more nanomachines at his disposal, he could attract a lot more darkness-attributed E energy, thereby allowing him to execute the extraordinary staff techniques of Dark Apostle Self Defense Manual with greater potency.

Yet... his heart was not in it. There was so much more potential to the completely obedient hyper nanomachine plagues than that. The defining advantage of smart metal systems was that they could theoretically assume any shape.

There was no reason for them to stick to a generic humanoid shape. There was no reason for Ves to force himself to disrespect the Oceancaller any further just to harness the power of darkness.

A Dark Apostle was not a fighter. Not truly. They were heralds of darkness, and gained the knowledge as well as the 'right' to wield its terrible power in order to spread the

glory of their ominous dark god!

The point was that they did not have to insist on wielding a staff if they had to fight. It was just one of the many options available to them. If a Dark Apostle had no talent in the staff and preferred to approach his battles from a completely different angle, then that

was completely okay!

This was why Ves did not feel bad for abandoning the humanoid form.

From the moment he forced the nanomachine plagues to form a larger and hollow copy of his old Devil Tiger design, everything just clicked. Whether it was because the nanomachine plagues assumed a replica of his earliest. masterwork mech or because the feline form just fascinated him, Ves felt more at home

on the battlefield than ever before!

The sheer sense of comfort and satisfaction for donning a raiment that assumed the properties of a tiger mech clearly affected the living nanomachine plagues in turn.

They became stimulated by his emotions and began to imitate the design schematics transmitted by Ves more accurately at this scale.

They even managed to replicate the performance of more sophisticated parts of the

later versions of the Devil Tiger.

For example, energy claws began to extend from the paws!

Infused with darkness energy, the energy claws not only threatened to inflict a lot of material damage, but also gained a corrosive component that made the original Devil Tiger so difficult to fight against!

Ves felt as if he was inadvertently following his father's footsteps.

The difference was that while his father needed more time to become adept at piloting a tiger mech, Ves already felt at home with this feline form!

After all, his companion spirit Blinky assumed the form of a spiritual cat. Ves could rely

on that familiarity to instantly become proficient at 'piloting this nanomachine plague

cat construct!

Ves felt the need to bestow his spontaneous creation with a name.

"Let's call you the Devil T-, no, the Devil Cat!"

He instantly felt the need to design and produce a proper version of the Devil Cat!

Ves found it incredibly frustrating that he would not be allowed to keep all of these nanomachines if he managed to survive and win this battle.

The nanomachine plagues possessed a finite lifespan that could not be changed. Even if he managed to get rid of this hard limitation somehow, the mechers and the fleeters would never allow him to retain control over a weapon of mass destruction that could easily wipe out an entire populated planet if he lost control over their unruly existences! Perhaps this was for the better. If Ves wanted to design a proper nanomachine raiment for himself, he could work to gather the high-quality materials that matched his requirements even better and design the nanomachines with many more useful features. Ves even felt tempted to design the Devil Cat as the first smart metal Carmine mech and form a Bloodline Pact with this wonderful creation!

His eyes widened as he became inspired by this idea!

This setup could definitely form the basis of an elemental Carmine mech based on the

metal element!

In order to form a Blood Pact with a smart metal mech, Ves came up with the bold idea

of letting a portion of the nanomachines circulate throughout his true body! This was not an impossibility as there were numerous cybernetic enhancements that relied on fortifying the blood of the recipients with non-toxic nanomachines in order to

function properly.

It was a lot more challenging for human bodies to cope with the presence of

nanomachines made out of a lot of toxic metals, but this was not an insurmountable

problem.

What mattered was that the idea had a lot of potential!

He quickly tried to come up with a dignified name for this new variation of elemental

Carmine mechs.

A suggestion popped in his mind.

He tentatively decided to refer to it as a Polymetal mech.

If this approach of an elemental Carmine mech turned out to be viable, then Ves was definitely motivated to see it into fruition.

That was because Ves was determined to become his own first customer!

Smart metal systems fit so well in his personal combat system that he could not allow

anyone to enjoy the fruits of his labor before himself!

In order to design a Polymetal mech that was worthy of his expectations, Ves needed to

meet a lot of demanding requirements.

It was not that difficult for Ves to design and produce a good smart metal mech these days, but was a lot more challenging to turn it into the strongest and most dependable protective raiment in the Red Ocean.

He did not possess a specialization in smart metal, so he needed to gain the cooperation

of a specialist that could design the best possible nanomachines for himself. They not only needed to incorporate hyper technology, but also a more advanced form

of phasewater technology. The nanomachines had to be able to resist much stronger spatial effects in order to remain functional when working with a phase lord!