

Mech Touch 6401

Chapter 6401 The Carmine Revolution

Coining the phrase 'Carmine Revolution' was a stroke of marketing brilliance.

Ves recognized the allure of this revolution and intentionally mentioned it when everyone paid attention to his every word.

Just as expected, people eagerly embraced it because of their intense desire to trample the genetic aptitude tyranny and secure their chance to pilot a Carmine mech!

The Carmine Revolution had practically become red humanity's latest sacred cow. No one was allowed to tarnish it or challenge it in any way. Skeptics that dared to question the safety or the reliability of the Carmine System quickly became subjected to deluge of abuse, regardless of whether it was warranted!

This was not a violent revolution, nor a revolution that ended any government regimes.

This was a spiritual revolution.

The cloud of fear, doubt and uncertainty completely swept away once Ves lit the bonfires of the Carmine Revolution.

From this single spark, all of red humanity became inflamed with newfound passion and optimism!

The oppression of the Red War and the terror spread by the murderous native aliens no longer cast a dark shadow over everyone's hearts. This was because everyone drew sustenance from the brand-new fire spread by the revolution!

As Ves stood in front of the exhibition hall,, he listened to all of the cheers and felt how extensively he managed to arouse the collective will of an entire civilization.

It was at this moment that he felt he had served his ultimate purpose as a mech designer.

On the surface, his job was to design mechs.

Thinking a little deeper, his greater priority was to serve mech pilots.

Only now did he realize that mech designers existed to save the human race.

As long as mech designers did a good job, they would inevitably contribute to the strengthening of their fellow people, arming them with the weapons they could rely upon to beat back their foes!

Ves knew for certain that red humanity had changed significantly now that he had unleashed the Carmine Revolution.

Relying on just 3.5 percent of the population or less to bear the greatest burden of resisting the native aliens was never a sound idea. Now that the rest of the human population could contribute to the war effort by piloting mechs as opposed to helping in other ways, norms finally obtained a level of agency that was previously monopolized by potentates!

The dramatic battles raging in the 4th and 5th defensive bands no longer appeared as dire and hopeless as before.

At the very least, the most direct consequence to making Carmine mechs to red humanity was that the pool of eligible mech pilots had drastically exploded.

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The Carmine Revolution gave everyone a chance to pilot a mech!

Even if norms had not yet reached parity with potentates, at least the introduction of the Carmine System had successfully closed the gap by an enormous extent!

After the outbreak of the Carmine Revolution, Ves expected that his work would gradually lead to a new status quo where norms were merely 'a little behind' compared to potentates.

Both of them enjoyed many of the same opportunities, but actual potentates happened to enjoy less restrictions and greater advantages when piloting mechs.

It was difficult to completely close the remaining gap. Ves personally had no confidence he could accomplish this job. His Carmine System could only produce so many miracles, after all. Even his elemental Carmine System concept did not attempt to make any gains in this aspect.

Ves was happy to hand the torch to the rest of the mech industry. He may have started this revolution, but he did not necessarily have to lead it any further. A true revolution was supposed by a wide variety of people and interest groups. They should have plenty of motivation to develop their own solutions.

As Ves confirmed that the Carmine Revolution had given his fellow red humans a future they could look forward to seeing, he calmed himself down and resumed his product reveal.

"What you see behind me are 3 of the 6 mechs of the Swarm Project. They are the Carmine mechs that you have all been waiting to see and hear about. There are 3 more mechs attached to the Swarm Project that can play a useful if optional role in managing these Carmine mechs, but I shall introduce them later."

The spotlights highlighting the contours and sleekness of the Yellow Jackets brightened up a little.

"Let us detail these machines first." Ves continued. "My team has worked on all three mech designs on a concurrent basis with the support of the Red Association's helpful R&D departments. As such, they may belong to different classes, but they are similar in terms of design concept, general requirements, piloting approach, combat roles, piloting requirements and difficulty of operation. The underlying tech and materials may be differ, but there is a degree of commonality between them that makes it easier to treat them the same, more or less."

That was obvious to both mech designers and laymen. It was not difficult to distinguish the overall tech level of the Yellow Jackets, but they all shared so many traits that it looked as if their parts were interchangeable!

This was not a coincidence.

"The advantage of adopting this approach to all three mech models is to make it easier to upgrade the base models of these Carmine mechs." Ves smiled. "If you have started off with the Yellow Jacket Mark I Version C, you can upgrade it into a Yellow Jacket Mark I Version B by replacing weaker parts with stronger parts for the most part. There are steps to the conversion process that are more complicated to complete, but any decently equipped mech workshop should be able to pull it off by using the right tools and following the right instructions. Of course, you can also downgrade your Yellow Jacket to a variant of a lower tech level if you wish."

This was actually quite difficult to accomplish! The three mech designs had to meet so many requirements that the design team couldn't have done it without relying on heavy technical support from the mechers!

The design choices that Ves and his collaborators had to make were also many. They had to give up a lot of optimal design choices in order to increase the interchangeability of parts.

However, it was worth it as far as they were concerned!

The base models of the Yellow Jackets were never designed with optimal performance in mind.

Ease of use and versatility had always been the highest priorities. This was the best way to ensure that the widest possible audience would be able to make use of these Yellow Jackets.

"No matter the version or tech level, all base models of the Yellow Jacket are positioned as introductory mechs." Ves explained. "They are frontline mechs in essence as they are more affordable and easy to pilot than many other products on the market. Given the current state of the Red War, only these traits can ensure that our civilization can mobilize large quantities of irregular but combat capable mechs in the span of one or two years. Compared to the five or more years of training required to train and field a more comprehensive mech pilot, it should take much less time and money to train and field an equivalent Carmine mech pilot."

This sounded rather good to the ordinary folk who did not have too many high expectations and just wanted to have a chance of piloting one of these Yellow Jackets.

However, the wealthier people who occupied the upper half of the totem pole began to frown. There were many norms among them that were willing to do a lot to fulfill their almost-forgotten dreams of piloting a mech, but they did not want to do so by forming a Blood Pact with budget options that were clearly beneath their stations.

Perhaps their time had not yet come.

At this time, projections appeared above the individual Carmine mechs that denoted their exact model names as well as their basic properties.

"As you can see or read, all three Yellow Jackets are modern hyper mechs. They are all Carmine mechs. They are all what I call classical living mechs of the sixth generation. I shall explain later what that entails. Those familiar with my previous living mechs know that I also attach entities called 'design spirits' to my works. The Yellow Jackets are all connected to a design spirit that I refer to as Titania."

That last part confused a lot of people, especially the ones who had never studied or worked with a living mech before.

Ves smiled when he perceived the public's confusion. "Titania plays an important supporting role in the operation of the Yellow Jacket as an individual Carmine mech and in combination with other machines of the same kind. Titania is a swarm mother that is based on an astral beast that my clan has once encountered and defeated in combat. This has inspired me to create a design spirit that replicates the astral beast's penchant for deploying a large amount of disposable biological drones as her primary means of attack."

In order to illustrate what the astral beast used to be like, Ves chose to project a few edited clips of footage of the expeditionary fleet's encounter against the monstrously large astral beast.

"Just like how the Titania is able to coordinate the actions of her biological drones, I hope that the design spirit can help to encourage and improve the teamwork between many different Carmine mech pilots who lack training but share the same goals and enthusiasm. The base versions Yellow Jackets are not individually strong in combat, so only by joining forces and improving coordination can large amounts of Carmine mechs punch above their weight and defeat opponents that are supposed to be superior on paper."

That sounded rather promising, but Ves remained too vague to convince most of his audience.

That was fine. Actual results as well as other features might be able to make this claim more convincing.

"It is difficult to describe the full benefits of having Titania's guidance in these Yellow Jackets, so I will not speak much of it." Ves admitted. "It is better to put the Yellow Jackets in action and see for

yourself. Remember, the more Yellow Jackets to deploy at a time, the better. These are mechs that are best employed as coordinated swarms rather than individual machines. Only in large groups will they be able to exert combat power far in excess of their limited physical capabilities. This is one of the defining characteristics of the mechs of the Swarm Project."

He really wanted to emphasize this aspect. The Yellow Jackets were weak at every tech level, but that did not mean they should solely be used as cannon fodder.

Ves had high hopes that they could enable poorly trained Carmine mech pilots to produce amazing results on an actual battlefield!

The support of their living mechs as well as their design spirits should be enough to instill them with a greater sense of coordination.

Add the supervision and leadership from the Jacket Commander models that Ves had yet to introduce, and the swarms of Yellow Jackets may become powerful enough to fell entire phase whales one day!

Ves began to take a few steps back.

"Now, in order to introduce and explain the key systems of the Yellow Jacket designs to you all, I shall relinquish words to my fellow collaborators. Their expertise on the parts and systems that they have worked upon is much greater than my own. Please give them all your attention."

The spotlight on Ves darkened while the ones shining on Lady Romanda Devos and Professor Vector Loban brightened.

The two Senior Mech Designers stepped forward and faced the entire expectations of a massive audience for the first time!

To their credit, neither mech designers buckled under the massive pressure.

Chapter 6402 Career Savers

Ves had spoken for a long time.

The Yellow Jacket was his brainchild after all. He had come up with the concept and contributed the most crucial technologies that made it work. Without his input, the Yellow Jacket designs would not

be able to attract the attention of the Red Association, let alone capture the imagination of all of human society!

Still, when it came to introducing other specific features, Ves eagerly left this job to the respective specialists who worked on these parts and systems.

He was not egoistical enough to hog all of the attention for himself. In fact, he felt a little guilty for claiming a disproportionate amount of the limelight for himself.

The Yellow Jacket was a cooperative effort. The other 4 Senior Mech Designers not only provided valuable design solutions that made the mech designs comprehensively stronger, but also served as a sounding board that helped Ves refine his own implementations.

Ves was therefore glad to take a break and stand in the background while allowing his collaborators to enjoy their moment at the forefront of humanity's latest obsession. "Meow."

Lucky floated over and jumped into Ves' arms.

The gem cat relaxed as Ves gently stroked the oiled metal exterior.

[How is the reaction so far, Gavin?] Ves discretely inquired over a communication channel.

[You can't believe how many messages we have received! The LMC and our clan has received a deluge of purchase requests for the new Carmine mechs.]

[As expected. Have there been any groups that have exhibited significantly less demand?]

[As expected, the Red Fleet has shown very little interest, and the states that are heavily invested in the Auxiliary Fleet Program are also not as enthused.] Gavin replied. [Even so, it is impossible for them to remain completely unmoved. Mechs, not warships, are popular among the people. It is easy to fire people up by introducing a good mech, but it is much harder to build up passion for warships after centuries of cultural and legal suppression.]

As Ves continued to collect more information from Gavin, two of his collaborators had begun to introduce what could arguably be regarded as the most controversial aspect of the Yellow Jacket designs.

When Vector Loban and Romanda Devos attracted everyone's attention, the former spoke first.

"As the honorable Professor Larkinson has shared before, the Carmine System is biomechanical in nature. Every Carmine mech is a cybernetic mech by definition. This is an inescapable reality due to the limitations of the current generation of this tech. In more concrete terms, a Carmine mech must always contain at least a small proportion of organic matter. This can be quite minimal as the demand to create blood circulation throughout a mech frame is not difficult to meet. However, our design team has chosen a bolder approach and decided to apply a far greater proportion of organic systems relative to the mech frame for specific reasons. I shall display the actual proportions of metallic and organic components in the three versions of the Yellow Jacket."

A projected overlay appeared on the exteriors of the three Yellow Jackets.

These overlaid images seemed to erase the exterior plating and expose the guts inside the machines.

Every overlay displayed a realistic and complete representation of the components stuffed inside the Yellow Jackets.

It didn't matter if no one understood what the individual parts and components did. What mattered was that exposing the guts of the machines immediately revealed the proliferation of organic matter inside the Yellow Jackets!

Beneath their metallic exteriors, the slender upper torso section of the Carmine mechs. consisted almost entirely of organic matter!

A combination of flesh and bone occupied the positions traditionally taken up by the cockpit and many other important systems.

Although they already heard from Jacob Abbott that the Yellow Jacket at least partially contained organic components, this was much different from what most people expected!

The vast majority of organic components concentrated on the upper chest, so much so that it dominated this entire section.

This had many implications!

Many mech designers and industrialists frowned at this sight. The production chain for organic components was completely different from the production chain of metallic components. To grow a single, large organic mass like this required large and dedicated growing facilities.

It was not particularly difficult to set up these organic production facilities, but it took a large amount of upfront investment to construct them all. A lot of people needed to be trained and educated in biotechnology-related subjects in order to know how to handle the production and maintenance of these weird organic masses.

Not many people welcomed the additional burdens brought by this organic chest section. They would rather buy a Carmine mech that possessed only the bare minimum of organic components.

Both Vector and Romanda already expected to receive this response.

Neither of them felt worried because they firmly believed in their design solutions. "Many of you have begun to ask why we have made the unusual decision to implement a large organic mass inside the upper chest of the Yellow Jackets." Lady Romanda addresses the puzzled crowd. "This is because it represents the living core of a Carmine mech. I have combined my specialization in Ultra-Large Enhanced Cockpit Systems with Professor Vector Loban's specialization in Furnace Mitochondria Systems to develop an oversized organic 'cockpit' that has seamlessly merged with the Carmine System." This explanation already overwhelmed a lot of people. They still did not understand why this entire section had to be all-organic.

The Terran mech designer continued her lecture as she was far from finished.

"This design approach has many implications. When we started to design the Carmine mechs of the Swarm Project, we all became aware of the limitation that a Carmine mech pilot can only form a single Blood Pact for the rest of his or her life. In order to prevent many hopeful norms from returning to their old selves ahead of time, we sought to increase the survival rates of the pilots as well as their bonded Carmine mechs. After a large amount of trial and error, Vector Loban and I have finally developed a cockpit that carries enough metaphorical weight to form the bare minimum of a living machine." Professor Vector Loban explained why this mattered. "The most important implication of this special condition is that when you form a Blood Pact with a Carmine mech, you will not necessarily form a pact with these large yellow-and-black metallic-looking constructs, but the significantly more compact organic masses buried in their upper torsos. This means that the organic ultra-large enhanced cockpit is essentially the Carmine mech in truth. The rest of the machine that is predominantly made out of metal alloys can be treated as an elaborate, highly functional suit of armor." Many people grew silent when they processed this crucial information. A lot of people understood the implications right away, while others needed more help to understand

the benefits.

"Similar to an infantry soldier, if you destroy the suit, the person wearing it may still be able to survive." Lady Romanda explained with a smile. "Only when an attack kills the human is the soldier actually dead. The Carmine mech will always be able to remain alive even when it is reduced to just this organic ultra-large enhanced cockpit, and it does not even need to be whole. The less organic matter is left, the more heavily injured the Carmine mech becomes, but as long as it is relatively intact, it can still be restored in full. This will give any Carmine mech pilot who lost their 'mech' in battle a second chance to fight as before. As long as the pilot is able to evacuate from the battlefield with a functional cockpit, the Blood Pact will remain healthy and operational." Now that the two Seniors had made it clear enough, a lot of people suddenly changed their evaluations on these weird organic masses.

They previously regarded them as unwanted and undesirable complications. Now, they

literally embraced the organic cockpits as saviors!

They wished their cockpits were even larger and stronger than now, because that would give them an even greater chance of making a comeback after suffering a personal

defeat in battle!

No one was able to win a battle every time. No mech pilot could guarantee that he and his mech would remain in one shape after the end of every battle. Losing one's mech was a common occurrence in battle. The more informed individuals knew that the probability of losing a mech rose when the machine was cheap. Other factors that increased this rate was when the pilot was lacking in both skill and

experience.

All of this meant that many early Carmine mech pilots had a high chance of losing their bonded Carmine mechs in their first battles!

It would be extremely painful to many of them to enter the battlefield in high spirits, only to get thrashed by the ruthless aliens and eventually crawl back from the front without a Carmine mech to continue their short-lived piloting careers.

Lady Romanda Devos activated a new projection that displayed a cross-section of the three different varieties of cockpits.

To call them 'cockpits' was actually a misnomer. They gained so many additional systems and features that they had become vehicles in themselves!

"As you can see in these images, my organic ultra-large enhanced cockpits incorporate a large variety of elements that enhance their survival ability. If a Carmine mech falls in battle, the ultra-large cockpit will detach from the alloy shell and rocket back to the rear or nearest designated safe zone unless otherwise specified. The cockpit is large enough to mount fairly compact but powerful short-duration boosters. The damage resisting capabilities of these cockpits are fairly modest due to the need for cost savings, but their mobility is good. They contain a range of other damage control and damage mitigation systems to further enhance their survival,"

"The ultra-large cockpits possess an additional feature that can help with preserving the Carmine mechs as well as the pilots sheltering inside." Professor Vector Loban added. "I have applied a version of my Furnace Mitochondria into the organic cells. This will enable the ultra-large cockpit to overload its systems at the cost of rapidly extracting the high density of stored energies contained within the cells. This will cause the organic cells to rapidly burn out and die, but the released energies will be so great that

the ultra-large cockpit may briefly double or triple its acceleration as it flees the

battlefield."

This was quite a nifty feature!

The ultra-large cockpit was like a fast shuttle that could speed up even faster for a brief interval as long as it burned up parts of its organic mass!

This was a self-sacrificial feature that would rapidly degrade the size, the protection and

the functionality of the ultra-large cockpits.

However, the power boost gained from this sacrifice was more than worth it in the right.

moments!

The sooner the ultra-large cockpits escaped the range of enemy firepower, the greater

the probability that they would live to get rebuilt into complete Carmine mechs again. "The ultra-large cockpit functions quite similar to an escape shuttle for all intents and purposes." Lady Romanda said. "It is larger, more robust and just as maneuverable than a shuttle. When the aliens learn that the best way to handle Carmine mechs is to relentlessly eliminate the cockpits, then they will target them specifically. The burden of defeating your ultra-large cockpits will increase, and successful interception attempts will drastically drop."

It was not quite certain whether that would be the case, but many people had a lot of

confidence in these claims.

As the two Senior Mech Designers continued to explain the nuances of the organic

ultra-large cockpits, they gradually found their own rhythms and smoothly introduced the possible uses and constraints of the ultra-large cockpits.

"Do not forget. The organic core is the living mech. The alloy parts built around the

ultra-large cockpits are all optional and redundant. Losing them will not threaten the survival of the Carmine mech,"

Now that more and more people gradually understood how much this could save their lives and careers, they finally expressed overwhelming support for this wonderful

implementation!

Chapter 6403 Onager System

The Carmine Revolution had kicked into a lower gear ever since Ves backed off and allowed his colleagues to take the word.

It didn't matter because the flames of the revolution had already spread. People needed time to process what they learned and discuss the implications of piloting Carmine mechs with their buddies.

In the meantime, the other participants of the Swarm Project were not weak. Each of them represented the elites of their respective factions at their generation range. Their design philosophies may not be as exciting as his own, but they were helpful in other ways.

Many listeners had become thoroughly convinced of the value of having an organic super-large enhanced cockpit.

Just the fact that it could effectively preserve their Blood Pact and subsequently their right to pilot a Carmine mech turned it into a precious possession that had to be preserved at all cost!

Fortunately for many ordinary people who dreamed of becoming a Carmine mech pilot, Vector Loban and Romanda Devos both put a lot of thought and effort into fulfilling this overarching demand.

"The Biodomes as we have named the organic super-large enhanced cockpits of the Yellow Jacket designs serve as the cores of your Carmine mechs." Lady Romanda of the Devos Ancient Clan summarized. "They are designed with survivability in mind. Professor Loban and I have sought to maximize the role that the organic mass can play in increasing its odds of survival. Due to limited cost, the Biodomes designed for the base models of the Yellow Jackets do not excel in resisting damage. Its main philosophy is that the less time spent on the battlefield, the better. That is why it primarily relies on rapidly evacuating from the battlefield to ensure its survival and the survival of its bonded pilot."

That was a decision made out of helplessness. The design budgets for the Yellow Jackets were too low to afford any luxuries. The two Senior Mech Designers had to make the most out of a limited pool of resources, so they put mobility first and defense second. The Biodomes therefore turned into the equivalent of really small and weaponless light

mechs.

Their best form of 'defense' was not getting hit in the first place!

The Furnace Mitochondria implanted in all of the organic cells therefore played a very important role by providing temporary speed boosts that were otherwise not possible. It was risky to burn up

the mass of the Biodomes in order to amplify their acceleration, but it was better than lingering in a high-risk area for a few seconds too long! Vector Loban mentioned a solution that could help with that. "We understand that many Carmine mech pilots have a strong interest in doing their utmost to preserve their Biodomes if your Yellow Jackets have fallen. We have devised an elaborate virtual reality training simulation program where you can pilot a variety of Biodomes, both standard and custom ones, through a large selection of realistic battle conditions. Many of them are replicated from the recent battles of the Red Offensive, so they can teach you highly realistic lessons on how to survive on the modern battlefield. We advise every Carmine mech pilot to invest at least 200 hours in this virtual training before they set off to fight." All of these precautions shouldn't be necessary if breaking the Blood Pact did not have such serious consequences.

If Ves and Alexa Streon succeeded in developing Carmine mech dynasties, then all of this emphasis on the Biodomes should no longer be necessary.

Other mech designers may also be able to develop solutions that could make Biodomes unnecessary.

However, so long as the current iteration of the Carmine System remained stuck with these limitations, the Biodomes were still very necessary.

While the Biodomes mainly relied on speed and maneuverability to stay intact, there were many situations where accidents couldn't be avoided. The Biodomes needed a buffer in order to account for unavoidable accidents.

"In order to help the Biodomes resist attacks, whether targeted or not, we have also left open the option to install small-scale shield generators inside their organic structure, particularly non-rechargeable models that offer a small window of relatively strong defense for a single time." Lady Romanda informed everyone. "Due to cost constraints, the base models of the Yellow Jackets do not include them, but you may request the installation of any shield generators that fit the requirements from a vendor. Alternatively, customers can decide how to make use of this option after they have purchased the Yellow Jackets."

This was the best way to approach this matter. The Biodomes were extremely important, and every Carmine mech pilot would be interested in protecting them as much as

possible.

Not everyone could afford a good solution, though. The Biodomes were designed to work just fine without integrated shield generators, but it would still be nice to have them. Wealthier employers

and mech pilots could choose to purchase these shield generators themselves and install them into the Biodomes with ease.

If the budget was not enough, then the Carmine mech pilot better hope that he put in a lot of practice in piloting virtual Biodomes!

Vector Loban and Romanda Devos finally concluded their lecture on the Biodomes.

"An important piece of information that we need to disclose is that the production, modification and use of Biodomes is subject to stricter regulation from the Red Association." The female Terran mech designer warned. "The Carmine System may be less prone to malfunction due to physical changes than the neural interface, but the consequences are still severe. Caution must always be taken to ensure that the Biodomes can permit Carmine mech pilot to interface with their Carmine mechs without excessive risks."

People needed to learn to treat the Carmine System with the same degree of caution as the neural interface. The Red Association had already conducted plenty of secret tests that produced a variety of bad outcomes due to improper tech implementation.

Of course, there was no reason to disclose these outcomes to the public. It was enough to let their imagination run.

Once Vector and Romanda stepped back, Lord Richard Brownstone proceeded to step forward.

"I am Richard, scion of the Brownstone Principality of the Rubarthan Pact." The Senior Mech Designer briefly introduced himself. "I have been tasked with bestowing the Yellow Jackets with a range of versatile offensive options. In order to maximize the choices available to the mech market, every Yellow Jacket boasts 6 standardized modular sockets that are mounted to the sides of the mech frame. They can be mounted with limbs that allow for surface locomotion, weapon systems to turn them into frontline mechs, support systems to grant them additional utility or more. Each modular addition will increase the cost and piloting burden of the Yellow Jacket, so this arrangement is designed to accommodate the unique conditions of every individual Carmine mech pilot."

Modular solutions were not always the most optimal ones. The lack of specialization and the need to account for a broad variety of options often led to suboptimal design

choices.

However, a modular weapon loadout system fit well with the Yellow Jackets as they were Carmine mechs that would inevitably get used by a huge variety of individuals and

groups.

There was no way the design team could cater to the needs of every segment. A one-size-fits-all solution may be a decent solution, but would still leave a lot of people

dissatisfied.

Hence the reason why Ves and the others readily committed to this modular solution. This way, every customer could configure their Yellow Jackets however they liked in exchange for losing a bit of efficiency.

"The base models of the Yellow Jacket are designed to tolerate a large variety of different weapon and support modules, but work best with low-end products." Lord Richard Brownstone continued. "It is not impossible to mount high-end modules onto the Yellow Jackets, but they may induce excessive strain or demand more power than the Carmine mechs are able to provide. If you wish to pilot a more powerful Carmine mech, then it is best to wait for Professor Larkinson to publish a product targeted to the upper segments of the mech market."

The speakers had repeatedly emphasized that the Yellow Jackets were exclusively

targeted towards the bottom segments. This thoroughly frustrated the rich and powerful that could easily afford a mech that was tens or hundreds of times more expensive than the Yellow Jackets at the relevant tech levels.

How long did they need to wait until they could fulfill their lost dreams of piloting a

mech?!

While they could always go ahead and buy a cheap Yellow Jacket before letting the mech designers on retainer upgrade the machine as much as possible, this sounded like a

sketchy and unreliable solution!

What if stuff went wrong? What if Professor Larkinson published a genuine high-end Carmine mech that possessed advantages that could never be attained from a Yellow

Jacket?

These rich and powerful people understood the value of patience. They were willing to wait a few years until they gained access to more appropriate solutions. Of course, during this time, nothing must happen to Professor Larkinson!

As the inventor of the Carmine System and the only person who possessed the ability to design Carmine mechs from scratch, he needed to be protected and allowed to do his

thing as much as possible!

Alexa Streon also had to be guarded carefully. If the worst ever happened to the Larkinson Patriarch, then his direct disciple was probably the only successor who could pick up where Professor Larkinson left off with the Carmine System in the short term!

Perhaps later on, more and more people may eventually be able to learn or replicate Professor Larkinson's design philosophy.

It would be great if he realized his design philosophy and opened the path to all mech designers, but who knew how long it took for him to advance.

Would he be able to match or break the Polymath's record, or was he one of those sprinters who made a lot of progress early in their careers, only to burn out and slow to a

crawl?

A lot of people from the upper layer of society began to make plans in secret designed to support or sustain Professor Larkinson and his many interests.

In any case, after Richard provided enough explanations on the modularity of the Yellow

Jackets, he proceeded to introduce his own offensive contribution to the Carmine mech

designs. "While the Yellow Jackets can accommodate any third-party modular attachment that have been designed in compliance to the specifications that we have set, I have worked to design a standard weapon system that should work well in many situations." The outlines of the distinctively designed gauss gun modules slotted into the sockets of the Yellow Jackets lit up, attracting the attention of the public.

"The Onager A/B/C Enriched Gauss Gun System is capable of firing hyper gauss rounds

of notable caliber at relatively low firing rates. The modular weapons not only feature high damage and high impact power for a mech of this price category, but can also be loaded with my specially developed enriched gauss projectiles. Every round can contain different payloads that can produce different effects, from normal explosions to spreading exotic particles that inhibit transphasic energy shields. I have already designed a large variety of enriched gauss projectiles that can produce good results in many different combat situations, but third party developers are welcome to use my templates and develop their own custom enriched gauss projectiles."

The charm in the Onager System did not lie in the gauss weapons, but the projectiles

they fired!

Many mech insiders instantly understood how the Onagers extended the modularity and versatility of the Yellow Jackets. As long as a customer was willing to work with the limitations of kinetic weapon systems, they could get a lot of use out of Richard Brownstone's work!

Of course, there were plenty of other customers that preferred to arm their mechs with energy weapons. The Yellow Jackets did not prohibit this option.

Chapter 6404 Nebulous Luck Factor

Lord Richard Brownstone continued his attempt to sell his weapon system to an enormous audience.

He knew that his gauss weapons were the less essential parts of the Yellow Jackets, so he needed to do his best to emphasize their value.

"The Onager System is meticulously designed with the support of the Red Association to form a cost-effective solution when employed on a large scale. The weapon system can accommodate a wide variety of projectiles made from many different combinations of alloys. This allows every state or regional organization to produce large quantities of rounds with different effects with the lowest per unit cost."

This was highly relevant to third-rate states and organizations. They tended to have the greatest population of people. They also had selective access to a great amount of low-grade resources.

The Onager System was so flexible and adaptable in terms of ammunition compatibility that every state or group should be able to produce a huge amount of kinetic projectiles that offer good performance at a very low cost.

It was somewhat relevant to second-raters and first-raters, as they may opt to choose specialized rounds that were very effective but could only be produced by locally sourced exotics and hypers.

"Furthermore, the Onager System is also designed with the most common needs of the Red War in mind. The weapon system is designed to allow the Yellow Jackets to launch attacks against targets with superior defenses. Whether they are tasked with fighting against alien phasefighter or warships, the Onager modular gauss guns allow the Yellow Jackets to inflict damage that surpasses the average offensive level of a mech of this price range. This will make them more useful on the battlefield and allow them to make effective contributions at a lower cost."

In other words, the Yellow Jackets equipped with these gauss guns should ideally fulfill the fire support role.

The Yellow Jackets were not suitable for close-range brawling and dogfighting. They did not have the accuracy and precision to fight for longer either.

They were best employed at mid-range, where they could get close enough to wear down the transphasic energy shields that protected the hulls of enemy warships, but far enough to evade the approach of enemy phasefighters.

While the Yellow Jackets could fulfill other roles by equipping different support modules, their most direct and simplest combat roles required them to occupy a good position and fire their Onagers until they emptied their ammunition reserves.

More and more mech commanders and so on began to warm up to the Onager System. The designers had truly put a lot of thought in pairing it up with the Yellow Jacket

design.

Although the power of these guns were modest, they were better than the peashooters that most budget mechs carried, especially the more outdated ones!

"The Onager System is designed to serve as the standard weapon solution of all three editions of the Yellow Jackets." Richard Brownstone repeated. "It is the only weapon system that the Yellow Jackets are highly optimized to make use of. Their base models possess limited energy capacities, and cannot sustain the operation of one or multiple energy weapons for too long, especially if there is a desire to attain the same damage levels as the gauss guns of the Onager System. The latter are less demanding on the energy reserves, but are also limited by the quantity of ammunition that a Yellow Jacket can carry. The ammunition capacity of the Carmine mechs is relatively modest if there is a desire to retain their good mobility characteristics. If you feel it necessary, you can mount larger and more massive ammunition canisters onto the Yellow Jackets, but this will impose greater penalties to their mobility."

The Onager System consisted of rather hefty gauss guns. They were not designed to launch small and light projectiles, but rather larger ones that could pack a punch. That imposed a burden on the Yellow Jackets as the mech frames were supposed to remain relatively light.

There was no good solution to this problematic issue. The best way to resolve the contradiction was to employ dimensional technology to store a lot of hefty rounds in a different space.

However, only the more expensive first-class mechs tended to enjoy this luxury. It was impossible to supply this luxury to the Yellow Jackets on a large scale!

Soon enough, Lord Richard Brownstone gradually completed his presentation on the kinetic weapon system that he had designed for the Carmine mechs.

"As a final feature of the Onager System, the Yellow Jackets are designed to assist in the aiming of the gauss guns. We only recommend our clients to activate this function when the Carmine mech

pilots are still lacking in training. If they are fielded without possessing enough skill and experience in handling ranged weapons at the mech scale, then it is better to rely on the help of the living mechs to control the weapons to aim and fire at hostile targets."

This was a dangerous feature, but one that could also save lives one day.

The reality of the situation was that the Red Offensive was a life-and-death crisis to red humanity.

Most people may not act like it, but they could feel the tension growing in human-occupied space.

There may come a time where lots of norms had to be conscripted for war. Whatever training they received in bootcamp would not be enough to give them good aim. was better to let the living mech lend a hand even if it was a risky proposition.

Not everyone approved of this additional 'feature, but they were fine with it so long as it could be switched off. It was a fundamental principle that only humans should pull the trigger of a weapon.

Once Richard finally concluded his presentation, he made a short bow before the next-to-last speaker strode forward.

Jovy Armalon addressed the crowd with his characteristic smile. "My name is Jovy Armalon. As a Senior Mech Designer of the Red Association, I was responsible for designing the armor system among other aspects of the Yellow Jacket designs. As can be seen by the segmented armor plating of the Carmine mechs on display, we have developed the Scotara Hyper Semi-Modular Armor System to fit the physical defensive needs of this range of machines."

A new overlay highlighted the armor plating and listed out a few key properties. "Similar to the Onager System, the Scotara Armor is an umbrella term that encompasses a range of armor plating formulas that consists of commonly available exotics and hypers. We have especially composed the formulas to produce armor plating out of different materials that is roughly consistent at the same tech level, and are therefore interchangeable. The formulas take into account the most commonly available materials of notable effectiveness in the Red Ocean Union, the Terran Alliance and the Rubarthan Pact. All of this ensures that it is easy to mass produce large amounts of armor plating in vastly different regions but still attain a high degree of consistency and uniformity. This should depress the cost of production to a very low level, thereby making the Yellow Jackets more cost-effective."

The defensive properties of the Scotara Armor was actually not that impressive. It was only relatively good as far as budget mechs were concerned.

What was really great about this armor system was that it did not impose a heavy burden on the industrial capacity of many different states and organizations. This was quite important because the armor system was often the most expensive system of a mech. The Yellow Jacket was no exception in this regard, so even a modest cost saving in the armor system could benefit red humanity a lot in the long run! Much of Jovy's explanation sounded relatively standard and mundane. The Scotara Armor truly did not offer any other significant advantages aside from cost savings. This mostly sounded interesting to large states that intended to mass produce the Yellow Jackets on a large scale, but it was not as relevant to other parties.

Many people who decided to order a batch of Yellow Jackets already decided to task their mech designers to replace this inferior armor system with a more superior one

based on more premium alloys.

There were also other potential customers who decided to wait a few months for other brilliant mech designers to publish variants that addressed this particular shortcomings. Before Jovy could convince everyone that the Scotara Armor had no other advantages, he briefly surprised them by mentioning one nebulous advantage.

"I have applied my expertise in manipulating probabilities in the design of the Scotara Armor. With the help of hyper materials, the armor plating of the Yellow Jackets are imbued with a certain luck factor that helps them withstand attacks that should

otherwise cripple or destroy them entirely."

That caused more than a few people to look confused.

"It is difficult to define and describe this luck factor in precise terms as we have not been able to test its effects on the three Yellow Jacket models for an adequate amount of time." Jovy honestly admitted. "However, our brief testing so far has shown that there is roughly 2 percent that a serious outcome can be converted into a mild outcome. Let me explain what this means. Of the 100 attacks that are powerful enough to eliminate a Yellow Jacket, 98 of them will proceed to do so without any complications. Only 2 attacks will inexplicably deflect or lose power, as if a freak accident has occurred."

That was actually quite impressive! Jovy's design philosophy had already advanced to the point of interfering with reality to this extent!

Unfortunately, it was not strong enough to impress the crowd!

Who would want to bet their lives and their future careers on this measly 2 percent

chance of avoiding a fatal blow?

They would rather invest in a new armor system that may be a little more expensive or troublesome, but would also offer solid benefits such as 5 or 10 percent more damage

resistance!

Jovy continued to smile as he had yet to share the most important point.

"This luck factor is not a static property. I have not been able to test this hypothesis, but

I have a certain degree of confidence that the luck factor of a living mech can grow more powerful over time. My expectations are that it becomes more effective at deflecting weaker attacks, and may even protect against a larger variety of calamities." This luck factor was a nebulous concept even for a weirdo like Ves. He really couldn't understand how Jovy could bend and manipulate probabilities as if he could turn everything random into deliberate outcomes.

People had little choice but to take Jovy's word that this luck factor was a real feature

and not a figment of his imagination.

Still, if the Scotara Armor truly possessed a bit of luck, then that could play a significant role in mitigating casualties in the Red War.

Of the hundreds of millions of Carmine mechs that would be at the frontlines in the coming years, the Scotara Armor's inconsistent but highly effective performance may cause a couple of million of them to survive fatal blows and live to tell the tale!

Ves found it rather regrettable that Jovy was not able to work at his best in the Swarm

Project.

The Survivalist's design philosophy tended to work best on weapons and other elements that were inherently random to begin with. The Yellow Jackets did not harbor that much instability as a rule.

There was only one aspect about the Carmine mechs that could be described as unstable, but Ves intended to introduce that after Jovy had finished his speech. "The Scotara Armor's semi-modular design makes it easier to replace broken or worn plates with mass-produced replacement plating from other sources. This may lead to small but escalating inconsistencies over time, but is also good for restoring the immediate combat effectiveness of spent Carmine mechs."

Chapter 6405 Special Features of the Yellow Jackets

The Scotara Armor's so-called luck factor generated a lot of controversy.

Many mech designers and laymen found its value to be questionable.

Why couldn't the mech designers of the Swarm Project include a proper defensive specialist and design more robust armor systems?

Although Jovy Armalon definitely shouldn't be a weak mech designer due to his origins and his participation in the Swarm Project, that did not necessarily mean he was the best man for the job!

Jovy could have explained himself more, but he declined to do so for whatever reason. Instead, he calmly completed his obligatory presentation about the Scotara Armor before addressing a few other aspects of the Yellow Jacket designs.

He briefly explained the performance characteristics of the flight systems of all three versions of the Yellow Jackets. The persistent goal was to make all three Carmine mechs fairly fast and maneuverable, and the flight systems successfully met this standard for every tech level.

Of course, the limited design budgets also constrained how fast and agile they could become.

There were limits to how fast they could fly or how quickly they could change directions.

This was not necessarily a detriment, as excessively fast and mobile mechs tended to be much harder to pilot and control.

Beginner and less experienced Carmine mech pilots could never be as skilled and acute as Saint Tusa Billingsley-Larkinson, so pairing them with mechs that featured exceptionally high mobility was just asking for collisions!

Jovy also moved on to explain other relatively boring aspects of the Yellow Jackets such as the performance of their sensor systems, the properties of their power reactors and the efficiency of their heat management systems.

More and more people started to get distracted and pay less attention to this lecture, but there were still enough mech insiders who paid careful attention to this mundane information.

This was because those who intended to make actual use of the Yellow Jackets needed to master all of the information regarding the new products.

Oftentimes, Jovy not only recited data that could easily be retrieved from the documentation of the Carmine mechs, but also added his personal insights and recommendations.

This was all valuable information to the right parties. No one knew the Yellow Jacket models better than one of the contributing mech designers!

Once Jovy had finally supplied the public the necessary information about most of the remaining systems of the Yellow Jacket, he finally stepped back.

[Jovy.] Ves communicated with his friend over a private channel. [Why didn't you mention to the public that the luck factor of the Scotara Armor has a theoretically high upper limit? It can potentially save the Yellow Jackets from getting wiped out in an instant after suffering a direct hit from a warship-grade cannon strike!]

Yes, according to the theories and calculations made by Jovy, such an unlikely outcome could actually happen in reality!

Jovy's design philosophy was so unreasonable in this aspect. As long as the probability of surviving an overwhelming attack was non-zero, then he could magnify this tiny probability and make it a little more likely to occur!

Of course, the actual probability that this would happen would not be as high as 2 percent, but substantially less.

[Seeing is believing.] Jovy nonchalantly responded. [I am not as famous and familiar to the public as you, Ves. You have become an increasingly more known quantity to the mech community and wider population. I am an unfamiliar name to both groups. They do not understand my design philosophy or know any of the mechs that I have designed. The mechanics of my design philosophy are also difficult to test in this product reveal. I prefer to keep it simple and let the masses discover the value of my contribution through their own efforts. It is not as if my luck factor is a core feature of your mech design.]

That was true. Jovy was perhaps the poorest fit to the Swarm Project. He only took part because Ves trusted him and because he was able to represent the interests of the Survivalist Faction.

Still, Ves did not believe that many other mech designers could design such a sound and comprehensive armor system that took both cost savings and regional resource availability into account.

Even if Jovy outsourced a lot of the hard work onto the various R&D institutions of the Red Association, he had proven to be excellent at contacting and coordinating these efforts.

Collaborating with him was like collaborating with the entire R&D support structure of the Red Association!

Now that Jovy Armalon had concluded his presentation on the defenses and other properties of the Yellow Jacket, there were a few more key features that had yet to be introduced.

Ves slowly strode forward again. The noise in the massive exhibition hall quickly subsided again now that he attracted everyone's attention.

His ability to command the attention of the people had risen to a higher level. His pivotal work on the Carmine System had earned him this privilege!

"Ladies and gentlemen." Ves spoke with a naturally composed speaking voice. "I hope that you have gained a thorough impression of the capabilities of the three editions of the Yellow Jacket.

Before we conclude this presentation of 3 of the 6 designs of the Swarm Project, I still need to introduce a few more special features that you cannot find on other mechs."

That attracted a lot more interest. People had already become thoroughly convinced of the value of the Yellow Jackets. Even if it did not score full points in every category, the priceless utility of the Carmine System alone was enough for them to place as many orders as possible!

Now that the Yellow Jackets ostensibly possessed even more nifty features, people began to develop even higher expectations for the budget mechs!

"Earlier, I have mentioned that the Yellow Jackets are sixth generation living mechs. That means that they incorporate numerous design applications that I have added on top of the more basic and familiar framework of living mechs that you are familiar with. Let me show you a brief overview of what every generation has added to my living mech

paradigm."

[First generation living mechs: X-Factor

Second generation living mechs: Design Spirits

Third generation living mechs: Orders of Life

Fourth generation living mechs: Ascension Runes.

Fifth generation living mechs: Active and Passive Living Mech Cultivation

Sixth generation living mechs: Ultimate Modules, Strong Living Mech Cognition, Active Cultivation Techniques]

Few people possessed a systematic understanding of living mechs, so this brief summary held a lot of value to mech designers and other interested groups!

"In the first generation, my living mechs exhibited slight responsiveness and warmth towards their mech pilots through a phenomenon that used to be known as the

X-Factor"

The X-Factor was an obscure phenomenon that did not ring a lot of bells.

"In the second generation, I discovered design spirits and learned how to attach them to

my mech designs so that they can bestow glows and other useful properties to my

products."

Design spirits had become a known if poorly understood feature of Ves' products. Most people had given up on trying to understand how they worked.

"In the third generation, I discovered that living mechs can 'break through' and reach a new order of sapience, intelligence and responsiveness. Most of my products start off as second order living mechs and can naturally grow into third order living mechs over

time."

This had also become a known phenomenon. People understood it much better because a lot of third order living mechs had emerged by this time. They still alienated certain groups, but had become so common that most mech pilots had gotten used to piloting a mech that possessed so many human traits.

"In the fourth generation, I discovered the existence of Ascension Runes and managed to learn how they could structurally be organized in my products."

Only the mech pilots of third order living mechs came into contact with these mysterious Ascension Runes. They did not seem to do much aside from slightly improving the performance of a living mech.

"In the fifth generation, the Great Severing occurred. I discovered that living mechs

could not only grow by absorbing E energy radiation, but that I can also improve the direction and efficiency of the absorption process by imparting my living mechs with their own cultivation techniques."

This explanation generated a bit more controversy than the other descriptions! Many authorities had already labeled the process of cultivation to be dangerous. For Ves

to develop mechs that were smart enough to cultivate by themselves sounded rather

frightening!

Fortunately, so many third order living mechs had engaged in their own forms of

cultivation for a while now, yet none of them ever misbehaved. This successfully lowered

the vigilance of a lot of concerned parties.

There was a lot more depth into living mech cultivation that Ves could talk about, but

none of that was relevant to the product reveal.

"Now, the sixth and latest generation of living mechs came relatively shortly after the fifth generation. The advancements that I have made after discovering E energy radiation are myriad. The subjects related to strong living mech cognition and active cultivation techniques are too advanced for me to elaborate today, I shall only talk about the main benefit of sixth generation living mechs."

Ves waved his arm. The angular bottom sections of three display mechs began to glow, drawing many people's attention towards this section.

"The Yellow Jackets are deliberately designed to resemble wasps for multiple reasons. Real wasps come with stingers, and these Carmine mechs are no exceptions in this

regard. It is just that I have applied a more abstract meaning of a stinger to my works. Instead of turning this section into a 7th modular hardpoint or simply mounting a very sharp spike on it, I have incorporated what I have taken to calling an Ultimate Module inside this section."

Another series of overlays became active at the bottoms of the Yellow Jackets. They gave the audience images of the Ultimate Modules that were squished inside these sections. "There are many situations in the battles of the Red War where a mech is outmatched

and on course to suffer defeat. Under normal circumstances, the mech gets destroyed while the winner suffers relatively little consequences. The Sacrifice Ultimate Modules that I have integrated in all three editions of the Yellow Jacket is my attempt to mobilize all of the remaining power of the Carmine mech before unleashing the potent energies as a form of payback!"

Was this just a fancy and more harmful version of scuttling your own Carmine mech?!

"Before you ask, there is nothing to be concerned about." Ves reassured his listeners. "After activating the Superpurge Ultimate Ability, the Biodome of a Carmine mech will first eject ahead of any other actions. After that, the Ultimate Module will forcibly induce the remaining metallic components of the Yellow Jacket to overload every component that is capable of doing so and attempt to engulf as many nearby assets in an attempt to take them down. Even if the resulting detonation cannot take down the enemies of the Carmine mech pilots, the violent explosion should at least distract the enemies enough to give the ejected Biodome a better chance of returning to the rear intact." That sounded rather impressive, but not exceptional. So far, nobody had heard anything that deserved the description of 'ultimate'!

"I understand your doubts and skepticisms." Ves smiled at everyone. "You must be thinking why I am attempting to dress up what may simply be a self-destruct option. You are not entirely wrong, but you are vastly underestimating the damage that the Ultimate Module can do. Every Ultimate Module derives a large amount of power from E energy radiation. It also gains more advanced direction from an aspect of the living mech. There are also several other factors that I cannot mention that make my Ultimate Modules more potent. Perhaps a demonstration is in order."

The only way to convince his audience that the Yellow Jacket could achieve amazing results by sacrificing its metallic shell was to witness this phenomenon in reality!

Chapter 6406 Cost-Effective Sacrifices

As far as Ultimate Modules were concerned, the one that Ves designed for the Yellow Jacket possessed the least amount of sophistication.

This was partially because of the limited time that Ves could allocate on this priority. He did not have the time to design a more elaborate and sophisticated Ultimate Module that could produce a more sustainable effect.

Another reason why Ves settled with such a self-destructive Ultimate Module was because it was a desperate attempt to quickly raise the threat level of the Carmine mechs.

"Adding enhanced self-destruction capabilities to the Yellow Jacket is a calculated choice." Ves explained to his audience. "The Yellow Jacket is a budget mech at every tech level and possesses limited agency on an individual basis. While my Carmine mechs can be quite formidable when gathered in large numbers, alien warships are the least afraid of confronting swarms of small craft. In order to deter enemies from getting too close to the Yellow Jackets and take their threat more seriously, the Ultimate Module is not only designed to coordinate every active part of the Carmine mech aside from the Biodome to unleash their raw energies at once, but also amplify the explosions with E energy." "Before you ask, it is possible to order Yellow Jackets that do not include this Ultimate Module. You can still install the Ultimate Modules on the Carmine mechs at a later date. However, it is currently not possible to replace it with another Ultimate Module or a substitute developed by a third-party as far as I know."

Ultimate Modules were intrinsically tied to the living mechs.

Changing the hardware alone was not useful because the Ultimate Seed, which could be considered the 'companion spirit' of the living Carmine mech, was only designed to work with the Sacrifice Ultimate Module.

Perhaps Ves may be able to change that in the future and implement a more dynamic alteration setup for Ultimate Modules, but it was not a priority at the moment.

Projections began to appear above Ves' head that showed demonstrations of these explosions.

When a third-class Yellow Jacket controlled by a test pilot activated the Superpurge Ultimate Ability, the Biodome ejected while at the same time the remaining mech frame underwent a small transformation.

At the same time, the orientation of the Yellow Jacket changed so that it adopted a horizontal orientation.

The Yellow Jacket essentially turned into a missile!

Although the strange posture deviated from the template of an aggressive wasp, the horizontal orientation shrunk its silhouette when facing the enemy and made it a lot

harder to shoot down.

This 'missile' accelerated forward with the help of its overloaded flight system.

At the same time, a sharp spike extended from the angular bottom of the Yellow Jacket. This made it look as if the wasp mech had extended a stinger and was about to launch a suicidal charge attack!

As the third-class Yellow Jacket collided against a solid structure, the stinger punctured through the exterior wall, allowing the Yellow Jacket to push inside.

Once the shell of the Carmine mech had dug deep enough, its Ultimate Module instantly triggered the explosion based on preset instructions.

BOOOOM!

A noticeably powerful explosion ruptured the structure from within!

The power of this explosion was far more potent than a regular third-class missile, but it was still not a cost-effective way to make use of a Carmine mech.

Nobody would be stupid enough to purchase a large amount of Yellow Jackets, only to Superpurge them to exhaust the transphasic energy shields of enemy warships.

Still, it was a good way for Carmine mech pilots to spite the enemies that had defeated them in battle.

Not only would the explosion or threat of it divert the enemy's attention from shooting down the fleeing Biodome, but it could also ensure that the Yellow Jacket at least managed to do something useful on the battlefield!

The worst outcome for any mech was to deploy on the battlefield, only to get shot down while doing almost nothing aside from briefly diverting enemy firepower.

Mech commanders constantly sought to squeeze as much value out of their mech units as possible. It was much easier for them to do so when every Yellow Jacket could be converted into a stronger-than-normal missile!

The projections showing the Superpurgues of the second-class and first-class editions of the Yellow Jackets were much more dramatic.

Their energy levels were progressively higher, which usually translated into more powerful explosions.

They also possessed greater speed and could traverse longer distances before fulfilling their final purposes.

At the very least, Ves was not afraid that the Yellow Jacket B and Yellow Jacket A would be unable to affect the outcome of the battle at all. As long as their quantity was enough, the amount of explosions they could produce may actually be enough to wipe out an elite phasefighter unit or break open the defenses of enemy warships!

"The power of the explosions produced by the Yellow Jackets affected by the Superpurge Ultimate Ability are not constant." Ves warned his audience. "They are

mainly affected by the state of the power reactor and the charge levels of the energy cells. If the Yellow Jackets have already fought intensively and bottomed out their reserves, their explosions will be less potent. Other energetic and explosive elements can also affect the power of this final move. For example, a Yellow Jacket that is carrying a lot of enriched gauss rounds that contain volatile substances may be able to produce explosions with greater force or produce exotic effects."

It was a bit disappointing to hear that the Yellow Jackets wouldn't be able to produce explosions of the same potency when they had already fought for a while.

The most common instances where the self-exploding Yellow Jackets could serve their greatest use was when the battle was starting to enter the later phases.

As long as neither side held an overwhelming advantage, a sudden shock attack by launching a few hundred or even a few thousand Yellow Jackets could instantly turn the tide at one of the flanks!

Oh well. The explosion of an exhausted Yellow Jacket may be weaker, but it shouldn't be too pathetic.

"There are other factors that can affect the power of the explosion from this Ultimate Ability." Ves continued. "The Ultimate Module is actually a special living construct and can grow more powerful over time. The older the Carmine mech, the more powerful it becomes. It can also derive more energy from a stronger Carmine mech pilot. All of this means that the self-destruction of a 1 month old Yellow Jacket is nowhere comparable to a Yellow Jacket that has lived and fought for over 5 years. Best of all is this growth trajectory is largely based on E-technology. This means that when you install your Biodome onto a new Yellow Jacket shell, it will gain the ability to explode with much

greater power yet again!"

That sounded a lot more interesting to people than before!

Nobody had any idea how that could even work! Wasn't the Ultimate Module supposed to be a self-destruction unit that slowly charged up over time? How come a new Yellow Jacket shell 'inherited' this advantage without needing to spend months or years on accumulating energy?

A lot of people started to scratch their heads. They had no idea how E-technology worked, let alone the crazy variant that Ves had developed by himself!

Ves smirked. The Ultimate Module was not called this way for nothing. All of the power was invested in the Ultimate Seed of the living Carmine mech. This was an intangible existence that always remained attached to its principal and by extension the Biodome.

As long as the Biodome remained intact, the Carmine mech would continue to live. This not only preserved the Blood Pact, but also the Ultimate Seed responsible for managing and empowering the Ultimate Module!

All of this meant that as long as the Yellow Jackets grew old enough, their Sacrifice Ultimate Modules would be able to produce damage equal or greater than that of torpedoes, especially once they started to develop their own Ultimate Runes! Hardly any enemy would want to fight against such terrible wasp mechs up close!

It was a lot harder to evade the extremely potent explosions up close as the Yellow Jackets did not have to waste time to reach the right destinations.

Ves pretty much considered this coincidental interfaction to be a bug. He was more than glad to take advantage of it. He was happy to give his customers another reason to do their best to preserve their living Carmine mechs and learn to appreciate ones that had grown older, wiser and more powerful.

In any case, the addition of the Ultimate Module completed the Yellow Jacket in a brilliant fashion. It added functionality that multiplied the lethality of the Ultimate Module and also guaranteed that almost every Yellow Jacket would be able to make themselves useful regardless of the terrible piloting skills of their bonded partners. "Before I complete my explanation on the Ultimate Module, let me address the safety concerns." Ves spoke. "First, the Ultimate Module is largely solid and inert, so it is unlikely to explode when damaged or knocked. Second, the activation of the Ultimate Module is restricted by default. A mech technician can adjust the hardware settings to change the activation conditions. This can range from receiving an encrypted signal from a mech commander, a mothership, a space fort and so on. The Ultimate Module can also be set to only activate with the consent of the living mech. Of course, you can always remove all of these restrictions on the Ultimate Module and allow the Carmine mech pilot to be the sole decision maker."

These restrictions were very necessary because the Yellow Jackets could do a lot of damage to human lives and assets!

Nobody wanted a Carmine mech pilot to fool around, only to inadvertently activate the Superpurge Ultimate Ability and cause the Yellow Jacket to explode inside the hangar bay of a combat carrier!

While this may lead to instances where the Yellow Jackets were unable to initiate Superpurge in situations where doing so could produce good results, it was better to be safe than sorry.

By the time Ves finished his presentation on the Ultimate Module of the Yellow Jackets, he had thoroughly convinced most of the audience of its usefulness.

He had no doubt that there were still customers who planned to order a batch of Yellow Jackets without this potent feature, but they should hopefully be in the minority. The current state of the Red War had little room for caution and forbearance. If the

Yellow Jackets were able to reignite hope across the frontlines, then they should do so in their most effective configurations!

"That concludes our presentation on the Yellow Jackets." Ves finally said after another

minute of speaking. "This is not the end of our product reveal. We still have 3 more mech designs to introduce to you. They are not as shocking and innovative as the Yellow Jackets, but they are designed to complement the Carmine mechs and help you make more effective use out of them. Their usage is optional, but we highly recommend you to make use of them for reasons that we shall explain soon."

A short break ensued as the 3 Yellow Jackets on display sank below the floor in order to make room for another set of display mechs.

As Ves waited for the next phase of the product reveal to start, Ves noticed that Jovy did

not look all that happy.

[Why the look, Jovy?]

[I still cannot agree with your decision to hold back on the Yellow Jacket designs. It should not have been difficult for you to implement your proprietary Energy Weaver Mech Ecosystem onto both the Yellow Jackets designs and the Jacket Commander designs. In fact, you even drafted an amazing plan where the E energy attracted by the Yellow Jackets is actively channeled into the Jacket Commander that oversees them in an attempt to produce artificial pseudo-champion units. Even if you left out this last part, the base implementation of the Energy Weaver Mech Ecosystem alone could have amplified the combat power of large swarms of Yellow Jackets by a large margin. Why do you insist on depriving the Swarm Project this benefit when it has the potential to significantly affect the war effort?] That was a good question.

Chapter 6407 The Jacket Commander

Ves frowned.

He did think about implementing the Energy Weaver Mech Ecosystem in the Yellow Jacket designs.

Initially, he thought about developing exclusive editions for the Larkinson Clan. He later thought of the potential of making it available to the public as well.

He eventually decided to trash this idea. The final iterations of the Yellow Jackets and the Jacket Commanders which could have become stronger eventually returned to more reasonable standards.

Jovy clearly disagreed with this decision. As a Survivalist, he was strongly inclined to support any initiative that made red humanity stronger.

Letting the first Carmine mechs manipulate the power of E energy radiation in a deeper and more profound fashion could have made a significant difference on the battlefield!

The effect of the mech ecosystem was akin to allowing a large group of living mechs to produce a pseudo-domain.

In practice, leveraging this pseudo-domain was difficult, but not impossible as long as the living mechs continued to grow older and more experienced.

This was why most applications of the Energy Weaver Mech Ecosystem were a bit slow to pick up steam within the Larkinson Clan.

The newer generation of mechs that incorporated this feature were only just starting to grow old and powerful enough to make active use of the Energy Weaver Mech Ecosystem.

When Ves decided to cut the Energy Weaver Mech Ecosystem from the Swarm Project, he arguably sabotaged the future of his own civilization.

Perhaps the difference in power may be significant enough that red humanity may end up retreating from the border regions and open up the hinterland to alien raids! This would lead to a lot more human death and misery that could have been prevented if the mechs were a little stronger.

However, Ves did not completely believe in this sequence of events.

[Jovy, the Energy Weaver Mech Ecosystem is a new and advanced application of E-technology. It is not refined and can occasionally produce accidents. I also reserved it for the exclusive use of the Larkinson Clan. You can't expect me to give up one of my clan's competitive advantages and make it available to the masses through the mechs of the Swarm Project. This is a dangerous dwarf galaxy, and it always pays to have a few trump cards in my hands. The most recent battle has vindicated my decision as far as I am concerned.]

That was a pretty heavy hint that he did not appreciate the ambush over the Mazepan System.

Although the battle eventually turned out to be immensely profitable for Ves and Saint Tusa, that did not change the fact that they could have fallen under other circumstances!

While the more radical and braindead cosmopolitan cells genuinely wanted to do whatever it took to eliminate Ves, they couldn't have gathered so many powerful forces without the secret collusion of the Huntsman and other supremely powerful human leaders!

If those bigshots were bored enough to bully Ves like this, then they shouldn't blame him for withholding this extra benefit!

[You are expressing an unnecessary degree of pettiness, Ves.] Jovy sighed. [I have already given you an explanation on what has happened. Besides, this issue is not related to the subject matter. Do not forget that the collapse of the fourth and fifth defensive bands will harm your Larkinson Clan just as badly as the rest of us. Any means of strengthening a Carmine mech that is bound to become extremely popular can save the lives of many people.]

Ves did not fall for this guilt trip. [I am not the only mech designer who is obligated to stand up for red humanity. There are many other mech designers who may be able to fill in the gaps that I have left. Whether it comes in the form of E-technology or hyper technology, the Yellow Jacket designs can easily accommodate other solutions. Even without these additions, the Yellow Jacket is already packed with far more features than a typical budget mech. I do not think it is a good idea to overload all of those new and inexperienced Carmine mech pilots with E energy shenanigans. Maybe I will reconsider this matter in the future when I work on another commercial mech design project.] [Then please think about implementing your Energy Weaver Mech Ecosystem in the Mark II editions of the Yellow Jacket. Enough individuals should have gained enough mastery over their bonded Carmine mechs by that time to welcome a new challenge.] That was not a bad idea, but Ves was not in the mood to consider it. He did not have any reasons to change his current policy towards the Energy Weaver Mech Ecosystem. Another minute passed. Ves finally stepped forward now that he was ready to kick off the next phase of the product reveal.

"Thank you for your patience. The three mechs of the same series that I am about to introduce are not Carmine mechs, and deliberately so. They are conventional mechs where the neural interface serves as the primary control system. It is possible to convert them into Carmine mechs, but it is not necessary. They hold an important responsibility. The mechs that we are about to reveal to you are not primarily designed to fight the enemy. Instead, they are expressly designed to support the Yellow Jackets who are expected to bear this burden."

Three similar-looking mechs rose from the floor. Their shapes and contours all looked similar, but they were clearly divided into third, second and first-class mechs.

The three mechs even possessed a similar banded color scheme as the Yellow Jackets. This was a deliberate design choice as it made the new mechs less noticeable among the Carmine mechs.

The biggest differences between the new mechs and the previous Carmine mechs was the overall mass and thickness of their mech frames.

The newly emerged mechs boasted thicker armor, a more classical humanoid shape, more auxiliary systems and a single luminar crystal rifle.

The prominent antennas and other arrays clearly revealed them to be command mechs! "These are the Jacket Commanders." Ves announced with a smile. "They are expressly designed to lead the swarms of Yellow Jackets that will soon appear in large quantities. While it is very much permitted to use other command mech models to lead the Carmine mech piloted by inexperienced and undertrained individuals, the Jacket Commanders excel at this role. They are expressly designed to work with experienced mech pilots who know their way around a battlefield and are capable of keeping a flock of Carmine mech pilots in line."

Projected overlays came to life, giving the audience an overview of the performance characteristics of the three different editions of the Jacket Commanders.

"No thorough explanation is required to understand the Jacket Commander designs. They are designed to function the same as other command mechs. In order to facilitate this function, they are equipped with strong sensors and communication systems to ensure they maintain a good overview and remain in coordination with other mech units. The more advanced versions of the Jacket Commander possess a more powerful and more comprehensive range of relevant features, but even the least sophisticated third-class Jacket Commander can serve as the sole command mech on a battlefield in the Lower Zone if necessary."

On the surface, the overall designs of the Jacket Commander could be described as adequate and without any obvious flaws. However, the mechs also lacked any clear distinctions or strong advantages that could persuade customers to favor them over other command mech models.

"The main role of the Jacket Commander is to lead a unit of Yellow Jackets and keep them alive whenever possible. To help the command mechs achieve their purpose, they are armed with luminar

crystal rifles that can help shoot down enemies that pose a threat to your most vulnerable subordinates."

Ves continued to explain the fairly industry-standard properties of the Jacket Commander.

He did not present any exciting information so far that could persuade customers to use them to corral their Carmine mechs. The Jacket Commander was not a bad mech per se, but Ves had yet to make a convincing case why customers should use it as their preferred command mech.

He did not keep his audience waiting for too long. There was only so much he could say

about the relatively boring properties of the Jacket Commander.

"The Jacket Commanders possess one advantage that other command mechs do not enjoy. They are sixth generation living mechs. They possess similar advantages to the Yellow Jackets, though expressed in different ways. Their design spirit is also Titania, which should help them coordinate and command the Yellow Jackets under their command. I cannot describe the exact benefits to you. The mech commanders should explore this by themselves, but Saint Commander Casella Ingvar of our clan has always worked well with Titania."

The mention of the third ace pilot of the Larkinson Clan added a bit more credibility in

his statement.

If a Larkinson mech pilot worked well enough with Titania to the rank of ace pilot, then that would make people a lot more interested in working with this mysterious design

spirit!

After Ves briefly explained how Titania could benefit the pilots of the Jacket Commander in an abstract sense, he quickly moved to the most exciting part about these command

mechs.

"Now, I am sure that you have been waiting for the key features of the Jacket Commander. While I have already mentioned that all three editions of the Jacket Commander can more easily connect and communicate with Yellow Jacket mechs. What I did not mention is that they can communicate through E-technology rather than more conventional communication methods. Strong interference and jamming cannot inhibit this method of communication, so there is a much higher chance of maintaining contact

all of the time."

People began to look a little more impressed, but this did not exactly floor them in an instant.

"The second key feature of the Jacket Commanders are their Ultimate Modules. Just as with the case of the previous Carmine mechs, the Jacket Commander comes with an Ultimate Module that can produce a powerful effect at a crucial time. Unlike the Sacrifice Ultimate Module that I have presented earlier, the Ultimate Modules installed inside these command mechs will not transform the Jacket Commanders into bombs.

They are too precious and important to discourage this kind of waste." People would have complained if this were the case. As command mechs, the Jacket Commanders should never be deployed in great numbers. They are meant to serve as force multipliers to the Yellow Jackets under their guidance. The Ultimate Module that I have designed for the Jacket Commanders reflect this purpose." Another overlay formed over the chests of the Jacket Commanders. They clearly exposed a portion of the internal architecture, but also highlighted the blocky module installed in the middle of the abdomen!

"The Clairvoyance Ultimate Module is largely geared towards rapid analysis and planning." Ves explained. "It possesses no direct combat function, but can offer a great amount of guidance in a pinch. When activating the Battle Planner Ultimate Ability, it will expend a large amount of electrical energy and E energy to mobilize the mind of the mech pilot, the spiritual foundation of the Jacket Commander and a portion of the vast intelligence of the Titania to build an overview of the battle. The Ultimate Module will then draw upon that knowledge and wisdom to rapidly develop a personalized plan on how you can best tip an ongoing battle in your favor with the assets under your control." People did not know how to react to this. Compared to the much simpler and more straightforward Ultimate Ability of the Yellow Jackets, the one that Ves bestowed on the Jacket Commanders sounded a lot more vague and dubious!

Ves was not surprised by the lack of enthusiasm from the crowd. The Jacket Commander

was not designed for direct combat, so he felt it would be stupid to enhance its direct combat capabilities.

An Ultimate Module that could help mech commanders gain an overview of the battle

and tell them what they needed to do in order to accrue advantages could be very handy in the right scenarios!

Chapter 6408 Complementary Mechs

Many people did not feel too impressed with the Clairvoyance Ultimate Module at first, but then they started to think further.

"It is actually difficult for less experienced mech commanders to maintain a good overview of the battlefield and make the right calls. When you are on the battlefield yourself, it is too easy to get dragged into the action. If this 'Ultimate Module' does what it claims to do, then it may truly be useful in helping a mech commander obtain clarity when he needs it the most."

"That doesn't sound particularly unique. This Ultimate Module is just a dedicated unit for data analysis and problem solving. There are generic pieces of hardware and software that can perform similar functions. It is not a good idea for mech commanders to become too reliant on computing systems to calculate what they should do. No decision-making model is perfect, and trying to apply rigid rules to a dynamic battlefield will make it easier for the enemy to read your intentions."

"As nice as it sounds to have an additional analysis engine at my disposal, I would rather have an Ultimate Module that can boost the performance of the Jacket Commander more directly. The command mech will probably attract more attention from the enemy than usual, so having better defenses is important."

"Why did Professor Larkinson choose to strengthen his Jacket Commander designs with a function that can easily be substituted? As long as the interference is not too excessive, it is normally customary for think tanks and analysts in the rear to draft detailed plans and instructions for the mech units fighting on the battlefield."

Most knowledgeable mech insiders knew that command mechs did not necessarily need this particular function. There were already several other viable solutions that could substitute the role of the Ultimate Module, but they did not think that Professor Larkinson and his collaborators added this module without good reason.

Ves smiled as he faced the skepticism of his audience.

"The reason the Jacket Commander models incorporate slightly different versions of the Clairvoyance Ultimate Module is because we took into account the kind of mech pilots that will probably be assigned to pilot these machines. Think about it. True mech commanders that have completed formal officer training are rare and in high demand. Many mech forces have problems filling up all of their available mech officer slots with pilots that possess the right knowledge and inclination. Any mech commander can make a greater impact on the Red War by leading conventional mech units. It is a waste to reassign them to supervise a large number of undisciplined Yellow Jacket pilots." That was unfortunately true. Mech pilot training tended to be very demanding, especially for those that wanted to become a hero and break through in battle.

The vast majority of mech cadets usually got caught up in the martial atmosphere when they attended a mech academy. There was a high drive towards scoring well in various

exams where fellow cadets had to defeat each other while piloting virtual or practice mechs.

Losing was not only extremely embarrassing, but could also form a stigma if it happened a bit too often. Poor results in practical tests could cause a mech pilot to fail a class or gain a poorer record upon graduation.

All of these recorded failures could affect a newly graduated mech pilot's chances of finding a good and well-paying job at a respectable company or military institution! Therefore, most mech pilots that graduated from the mech academies tended to have more brawn than brain, relatively speaking.

While they still took enough theoretical classes to understand the basics of physics, orbital mechanics and electronics, they would rather spend extra hours practicing their weapon skills than memorize complicated theories!

True mech commanders could not avoid the fate of taking a lot of theoretical classes. They had to be proficient enough in piloting mechs, but also learn how to manage soldiers and figure out how to apply the right tactics on the battlefield. They needed to learn a lot of protocols and study the great mech battles of the past. They also had to be able to maintain a sober mind on the battlefield when all of their fighting instincts told them to give into their bloodlust!

Only the more talented and intellectually capable potentates had the potential to become serious mech commanders.

There was always a shortage of such people, so it was no surprise that there were always more vacancies for these positions.

A lot of mech lieutenants and mech captains ended up getting promoted from the bottom. They had to make up for their lack of formal education by completing a scattered collection of training courses and hope they could at least follow orders.

Even those kinds of mech officers were usually far too precious to watch over a bunch of Yellow Jackets.

"I see you understand the significance of what I have said earlier." Ves spoke with a smile. "The Jacket Commander should ideally be assigned to an experienced or retired mech pilot that possesses the temperament to lead a group of Yellow Jackets. It is not necessary for the mech pilot to possess all of the competences of a mech commander. The missions undertaken by Yellow Jacket units should generally not be complicated, at least at first. If external instructions are not sufficient, then activating the Battle Planner Ultimate Ability can provide help when it is necessary."

That made a lot of sense. Many leaders and officers had already begun to work on drafting brand-new doctrines and rules regarding the use of the newly announced Yellow Jackets.

The Carmine mechs were clearly positioned at the bottom, so they needed to be treated as such. It was best not to devote too many resources on them, as they were expressly

designed to be useful with only a modest amount of effort.

However, letting the Yellow Jackets fight by themselves was a clear recipe for disaster. The Carmine mech units all needed to be led by experienced mech pilots who knew their way around a battlefield. The combination between rookies and an old hand should produce good results without sacrificing anything too precious.

Therefore, the Jacket Commander suddenly became a lot more attractive than before.

Though Ves had not demonstrated the power of the Clairvoyance Ultimate Ability, as long as his description was valid, then it could truly help a conventional mech pilot figure out what to do next!

Of course, this only applied in forces where the mech officers had enough leeway to make independent judgments. This was not always the case.

"Remember that the Clairvoyance Ultimate Module possesses the same advantages as the last Ultimate Module. The older the Jacket Commander and the more battles it has participated in, the more intelligent and knowledgeable its Ultimate Module becomes. Even if a penetrating attack happens to destroy it, no progress will be lost if the command mech receives a replacement. Different Ultimate Modules will develop different biases and preferences based on the actual experiences of individual Jacket Commanders. As long as the command mechs are able to operate for a long time, their Ultimate Modules may one day be able to process far greater information and produce much better battle plans than other analysis engines."

After Ves completed a rather inadequate and incomplete explanation on the uses and virtues of his Clairvoyance Ultimate Module, he was finally ready to wrap up the reveal

phases.

"This concludes our presentation on the Jacket Commander models. Before we proceed with the final Q&A session and lengthy demonstrations that will run all day, let me discuss where you can purchase the mechs of our Swarm Project. The command mech models share the same purchasing channels as the Yellow Jacket models. Currently, I have positive confirmation that they are sold by the Living Mech Corporation, Isthmus Manufacturing and many different manufacturing partners that are directly affiliated with the Red Association. Third-party mech manufacturers are welcome to license the mech designs and fabricate their own versions of the Yellow Jacket and Jacket Commander. However, they must abide by the special rules attached to the licenses, or else they will not be able to produce the best living mechs."

The virtual portals of the LMC and all of the other relevant companies had just been

refreshed.

"The new Carmine mechs are on sale!"

"Wow, the LMC can already ship my order right away. How many Yellow Jackets do they have in stock?!"

"Buy 10,000, no, 50,000 copies of the Yellow Jacket B at once!"

The entire exhibition hall grew noisy again as a lot of people already decided that they had to obtain a Carmine mech as quickly as possible!

Ves smiled at this outcome. He was glad to see that his product reveal managed to do an excellent job at selling the Yellow Jacket.

The sales for the Jacket Commander nearly weren't as hot, but that was okay. The less impressive command mech was starting to increase and would probably settle in a nice ratio compared to the Yellow Jackets.

Now that people had finally gained a comprehensive understanding of the entire Swarm Project, people began to form a lot of questions yet again,

The people attending the product reveal in person were able to submit their own questions at the same virtual portal yet again.

Ves followed the previous process in filtering out the junk and keeping the most serious and important questions.

A woman rose up from her seat as the front of a private box became transparent. "Professor Larkinson, these Yellow Jackets are clearly Carmine mechs designed for the common folk. When will you release a more powerful Carmine mech design? Your elemental Carmine mech concept may give us far more options than before."

Ves stood up and faced the questioner.

"I do intend to design an elemental Carmine mech and make it available to the public in the future. Before that, I will design more attribute-less Carmine mechs that are targeted to the middle and upper layers of society. Such mechs will present much more attractive options, but at a corresponding price."

"How soon will your next Carmine mech models become available?"

"I cannot say." Ves genuinely replied. "It depends on many factors, one of which is how well the Yellow Jackets are received. If the Yellow Jackets are widely embraced, then there is not too much pressure to rush the development of a premium Carmine mech. If you want me to work harder, then I am willing to do so if there is a strong enough gap in

the market."

This would never happen in reality. The Yellow Jackets had gained so much popularity that all of the virtual purchasing channels had become congested within an hour! "How much stronger will your next. Carmine mechs become, professor?"

"I am not sure myself. I do not have access to sufficient information to make a clearer judgment. Only actual experience can improve this quality"

Ves easily dealt with a few simple questions before he received a more significant one.

"Professor, if the mech pilot and a Jacket Commander wants to form a Blood Pact, is it possible for the latter to install a Carmine System to make this happen?"

He reluctantly shook his head. "This feature is not available in the current versions of the Jacket Commander. The Jacket Commander is already filled with components. There is not any space left to fit even a small child. Future iterations of this command

mech may include an optional Carmine mech, but we have left it out this time because we believe it is not necessary to share any further information."

The absence of a Carmine System was not a flaw to many customers. They already made

up their minds to fill the seats with professional mech pilots that possessed the right genetic aptitudes.

This thought caused many leading figures to look back at their own manpower pools.

Perhaps they may be able to use the enhanced guidance of the Jacket Commander to mass produce mech officers!

Chapter 6409 Forging a Carmine Dawn

The question and answer session this time gave the attendees a chance to submit questions on a wider variety of topics.

Ves recognized that this was also a good opportunity for him to share his philosophies and spread his vision of the future.

He keenly remembered that the founding ceremony of the Red Collective was scheduled to commence just 3 days later.

The entire reason why Ves deliberately scheduled the product reveal of the Swarm Project for today was to give him an enormous boost to his ambitions related to the Red Collective.

Now that he had already succeeded in liberating red humanity from the genetic aptitude tyranny, approval ratings had probably spiked to an unprecedented height!

The more time passed, the greater people appreciated his massive contribution to the mech community.

For the first time since mechs became a part of human society, every person possessed the ability to pilot a mech!

Even if Carmine mechs came with all sorts of restrictions, most people had no problem with them. They just wanted to get their hands on a Yellow Jacket as soon as possible and fulfill their forgotten dreams of becoming a mech pilot, if only on a part-time basis. The stronger their obsession, the more gratitude they felt towards the man who made it all possible.

They had probably turned into the most hardcore fans and supporters of Ves. This strengthened his political position and solidified his place in high society.

Previously, Ves relied on the twin pillars of the Evolution Witch's backing and his control over the Coalition of Faiths to maintain his leadership position in the Red Collective.

Neither pillars were reliable.

The Evolution Witch may have good intentions, but her volatile nature made her inherently dangerous to be around.

The Coalition of Faiths may have accepted Ves' authority for now, but his hard power was nowhere strong enough to suppress the unruly and self-serving religious organizations.

As long as Ves was able to leverage his newly gained status as the Father of Carmine Mechs, he could finally secure his leadership position for real!

This was because he alone earned the support obtained from gifting the Carmine System to red humanity. This was not borrowed strength, but genuine gains from his own work.

No one could take this support away from him. Even if he completely disgraced himself in the future, he would always bear the gratitude of many norms who could live out their childhood dreams after so long.

"Professor Larkinson, thank you for allowing me to pose my question to you. I sincerely admire the Yellow Jacket designs that you have published. I, along with who knows how many other mech designers, wish to license your work and design my own 'Carmine mech' around your existing template. Do you have any tips or guidance on how we can do so, and what do we need to be careful about when we are working around the Carmine System?"

The Carmine System was such an amazing innovation that the entire mech industry couldn't wait to make use of it! They already recognized that a lot of customers did not have much use for the Yellow Jacket models and vastly preferred to pilot other kinds of Carmine mechs.

Though Ves already revealed that he intended to design a more powerful Carmine mech in the future, who knew how long that would take. A single mech designer could never cater to the demands of the entire mech market!

This was why Ves had no intention of keeping Carmine mechs to himself. He actually felt glad if the rest of the mech industry embraced his innovation and proliferated the Carmine System in different forms.

"I do have a number of tips that I wish to share with mech designers such as yourself" Ves responded. "First, unless you know what you are doing, do not alter the organic components of the

Carmine System. Second, the Yellow Jacket design is highly malleable and adaptable. Do not be afraid to experiment. Just make sure to preserve the Carmine System's surface contact with as many components as possible. The greater the connections, the easier it is for the pilots to interface with the Carmine mechs. Third, try your best to treat your works as living mechs. I highly recommend you study the lectures and reports on this subject that have become available on the galactic net. It is not necessary for you to possess a deep understanding of my design philosophy, but if you do not respect it at all, then do not be surprised if your attempt to design a Carmine mech will lead to a failed result. Remember that a Blood Pact can only be formed between two living entities."

He shared a few other smaller tips on this matter before he let another person ask a question.

This time, a senior administrative official from a powerful first-rate state took the word. After he introduced himself and explained his own position, he finally proceeded to voice his question.

"Carmine mechs will change our society. That is a foregone conclusion. However, is it not too little too late? Bridgehead One is cut off from the rest of the Red Ocean. The Red Tide Offensive has already toppled 3 out of 5 our defensive bands. Our mech forces are being depleted at an unsustainable rate. The lack of resources and our limited industrial capacity is making it increasingly more difficult to feed our war machine. Are

you of the opinion that this is a rational allocation of resources?"

Ves shrugged. "I am a mech designer, not an industrial planner, economist or whatever. I do not concern myself with questions like these. The Red Association should have the relevant experts that are much more able to address these issues than myself. You should direct their questions to the mechers instead. I am merely the individual who develops a new technological solution. The fact that the Red Association has supported my Carmine System and the Swarm Project should tell you enough."

"I acknowledge that you are a mech designer, but that does not absolve you from all of the responsibility that your invention has wrought upon our fragile society. Presenting norms the choice to pilot Carmine mechs may sound as if you have done a good deed, but it will also divert a large quantity of resources to form a large number of disorganized, undisciplined amateurs who are unqualified to participate in military battles for at least several years. If the native aliens press us even harder, the distraction and inefficient resource allocation generated by your Carmine mechs may indirectly cause us to lose control over the border regions. The collapse of our civilization will become unstoppable by that time! Do you not fear that you have done more harm than good with your product reveal?"

The bureaucrat's implied criticisms attracted a lot of jeers and contempt from others. The supporters of Carmine mechs especially took offense at the notion that making the Yellow jacket models available to the masses would make human civilization worse off

than before!

Piloting mechs was never wrong!

Ves merely smiled in response. "This is more than a numbers game. Carmine mechs represent much more than giving norms the ability to become mech pilots in the future. Yes, it is true that the combat effectiveness of most Carmine mech pilots will be substandard due to a complete lack of piloting ability. The story may be different in 5 or 10 years, but in the short term, I acknowledge that Carmine mechs will not be able to positively affect the progress of the Red Tide Offensive in a material sense. However, I do not believe my work is burdening our society when it has reached a state of fragility. Instead, I think the opposite has happened. Our society has become stronger and more

robust. Do you know why?"

"Please share your answer."

"It is because we have hope again." Ves stated. "We have regained our optimism for the future. So many people have a chance to pilot a mech in their lifetimes. So many norms can now share the same experiences as potentates. Don't look at the numbers and the complicated mathematical models that calculate the resource usage of our society. Look at the people instead. Look at how much happier they have become. Look at how much they yearn to live in a future where they have a Carmine mech of their own. For the first time in months, red humanity has made a gain that is worth celebrating. These beliefs are strong enough to sustain our civilization in the midst of an ongoing crisis."

His words inspired a lot of people. They truly wanted to fight for a future where red

humanity not only maintained its foothold in the Red Ocean, but also gave each of them a chance to pilot their own Carmine mechs!

How cruel would it be for Ves to release his Yellow Jacket models, only for the defensive bands to collapse and start the countdown of the destruction of red humanity? There was no way these people wanted to let this possible doom scenario come to pass!

The collective will to resist and survive had never become stronger than before!

"We will fight for a new future!"

"We will fight for the right to pilot and master our own Carmine mechs!"

"We will fight a new dawn, a Carmine dawn!"

Ves spoke no further. The reactions from the enthused people who looked forward to piloting their own Carmine mechs already vindicated his argument.

From the moment that Ves had raised the flag of the Carmine Revolution, every person he converted into a revolutionary regarded him as their spiritual leader! "Professor Larkinson, in three days you will participate in the founding of the Red Collective. As an organization that is mandated to promote and regulate 'cultivation, is it not a conflict of interest to give norms the possibility to pilot Carmine mechs? Piloting a

mech is much more popular than investing your time in strange mysticism. In terms of combat, the former will allow you to control machines that can destroy cities, while the latter will only let you launch fireballs from your palm. To us, it seems as if you have directly undermined the Red Collective."

Ves chuckled at that. "I do not see it that way. There are those who see mech piloting and more traditional forms of cultivation as diametrically opposite, but that is not how I see it. Piloting mechs is just a more specialized and powerful form of cultivation. Besides, there is no rule that states it is impossible for mech pilots, whether Carmine or conventional, to achieve success in other forms of cultivation."

"The Red Association has already explained that it is impossible for mech pilots at the expert candidate level or above to engage in other forms of cultivation."

"That is true, but there are always exceptions. Ves retorted. "The companion spirits that I have contributed to society are the perfect solution to solve this supposed contradiction. A mech pilot can devote himself to his primary profession while his companion spirit can practice one of the many cultivation methods that will soon become available at the Red Collective or one of the cults that operate under its sanction. You will learn much more about this in three days. For now, believe me

when I say that mech piloting and cultivation are not in opposition with each other. I am of the opinion that they are actually complimentary. Just look at how powerful the Destroyer of Worlds has become with the help of Emma."

There was no better example that Ves could use than a god pilot. Although it was difficult to compare the strengths of god pilots to each other, it was

well-known that there were hardly any others that could exceed the Destroyer of Worlds in offensive power.

Was this because she was just that good, or was because she was relying on a secret

weapon?

Nobody could say for certain!

Chapter 6410 Blood Is Thicker Than Water

As Tristan Wesseling continued to listen to Ves answer all sorts of questions from the podium, his expression grew increasingly more complex.

His emotions had long turned into a jumbled mess. His friend had truly taken the entire mech community, no, all of red humanity by storm!

As a mech designer, Tristan understood the implications of Carmine mechs a little better than most people. He had already grown fearful for the huge storm that the Yellow Jacket designs was about to unleash!

Everything was about to change!

A huge new market had opened up now that 96.5 percent of the population finally gained the ability to pilot mechs!

Even if the initial Carmine mechs only catered to the bottom end of the market, this shrewd design choice would ensure that the maximum number of people would soon become invested in this new craze.

The entire mech industry was already beginning to tip into a frenzy because of this! Many mech designers and mech companies were frantically trying to license the revolutionary Yellow Jacket designs and try to make sense of them as soon as possible. The faster they worked out a way to design their own Carmine mechs, the sooner they could capture market share in a vast new market that possessed unlimited possibilities! The introduction of Carmine mechs would definitely cause massive shifts in the economy. A lot of factories devoted to producing other war materiel would soon be retooled to produce as many Carmine mechs as possible. This would subsequently cause the supply of other goods to drop, thereby causing their prices to rise by a significant degree.

That was bound to have a negative impact on the war effort!

However, Tristan had already listened to Ves' response to this problem. The Red Association, or at least parts of it, had already known about the Yellow Jacket designs beforehand, so the mechs should have made the corresponding preparations. They should already be prepared to impose regulations to restrict the production of Carmine mechs.

While that was good development, it would definitely exacerbate the problem of meeting the insane demand of all of the norms that had the money and willingness to purchase a Carmine mech for themselves.

So many people would become obsessed with them that they would definitely want to pay huge premiums just to get their hands on a Carmine mech early.

Under all of this ongoing frenzy, other mechs would no longer be able to occupy people's attention as before.

Prior to the Carmine Revolution, only potentates possessed the gift of piloting mechs. Many mech insiders actually consisted of norms, but still paid a lot of attention to mechs because they possessed relations with mech pilots who could make use of these products.

Tristan foresaw a lot of upheaval in the coming years. A lot of mech companies were able to scramble for market dominance in this huge new market. Only the lack of skilled and trained Carmine mech pilots would restrain their commitment to this brand new sector, but that would only last for so long.

Where did that leave relatively ordinary mech designers like Tristan? Did he have to license a Yellow Jacket design as well and figure out how to design a Carmine mech in his own style just to keep up with the crowd?

Personally, Tristan did not see the point in it. His design philosophy did not possess any special synergies with living mechs, and he was not confident that his designs would win over a lot of customers.

He was more comfortable with sticking to his current direction and put most of his focus on developing better hyper gems.

The good news was that Carmine mechs should still be compatible with his gems. He just had to market his solution to other mech companies and hope that they were willing

to incorporate his signature products in their own designs.

Elsewhere, a certain Star Designer quietly corresponded with a number of other

colleagues at the same level.

Every Star Designer that was not engaged in critical affairs that could not be postponed had followed the product reveal.

They would never do so for the introduction of an ordinary mech design, but the Yellow Jackets and their revolutionary Carmine Systems fully deserved their attention.

This was a supreme honor for any Senior Mech Designer.

Holed up in his private box which he already reinforced with his own smart metal, the Nanolord comfortably corresponded with his fellow Star Designers about the many implications of today's product reveal.

"I agree."

"It is true that he has broken the rules, but who of us has not done the same? Certainly, we usually wait until we have become Masters and reach a dead end in our research before we break the rules and customs that keep our industry in order, but the Age of Mechs has passed. It is high time we shatter the overly conservative restrictions and allow the youngsters to redefine the game."

"Do not think I am unaware of what you are planning to do. You are taking the materials previously reserved for upgrading the Invictus to design a Carmine mech for yourself. You should answer to the Fist of Defiance first before you proceed with your plan. None of us will save you if he comes to you and flatten your work with his fists."

"No, the Evolution Witch has become even more secretive than before. She has entrusted none of her secretaries and subordinates with her latest scheme, nor spread any data that we can lift. This speaks to how much value she attaches to her plan. This is strange. Her recent movements indicate that she is planning to unveil an initiative that will have a drastic impact on our society, but she has not done anything to leverage the necessary infrastructure."

"These god pilots are becoming increasingly more difficult to control. Unlike in the Milky Way, there are too few of them, which gives them too much leeway to pursue their own personal interests and obsessions. The Spacelock and the Light of Sol are still reliable, but the remaining 6 are a lost cause. I advise you to give up on them and place our hopes on the next generation of god pilots. It does not take much for us to win the favor of promising ace pilots. Let us monitor them and select the ones that are more amenable

to reason."

"Do not repeat that quote in front of us. I have not forgotten our purpose. We serve mech pilots, but that does not mean that we must provide our unconditional service. Too many god pilots are becoming increasingly less restrained. They are becoming more aware that they have become powerful enough to reshape our society according to their own ideas. Only other god pilots can constrain them, but there are too few to form meaningful restraints."

"I agree that stepping forward and demonstrating our own power is a flawed solution, but we may not have the luxury to remain low key. Let us wait and see how the Red Tide Offensive develops. The release of these Carmine mechs has invalidated our calculations. We must form new projections that incorporate the new variables. Let us not be too hasty about moving forward based on outdated plans. We should not follow in the footsteps of the Polymath."

As the Nanolord continued to speak about subjects of great import, many more people held simpler talks about everything surrounding the Carmine System.

Back in the expeditionary fleet, the gathering of high-ranking mech pilots had produced

quite a few discussions.

The Carmine System was not exactly a secret to them due to Venerable Jannzi and Venerable Benjamin, but they never expected that their patriarch would come out with

a product that could actually be used by the masses!

"Has anyone mentioned how soon our own clansmen will be able to pilot these new Carmine mechs?" Venerable Joshua asked. "Casella? Benjamin? Do you know?" The pilots shifted their attention to the Saint Commander and the patriarch's grandfather. If anyone should know, it was one of them. The others probably remained in

the dark.

"I have not received any messages related to the Carmine System or the Yellow Jackets." Saint Commander Casella spoke up, her Saint Kingdom affecting everyone, but in a gentle and unobtrusive manner. "I do not think the Yellow Jackets are designed to be used by our clan. The patriarch has always tried to assign our forces with more premium mechs. The Yellow Jackets are too flimsy. Even if their Biodomes are better at preserving the lives of the mech pilots, the casualty rate will not be low. Our clan cannot handle the deaths of so many friends and family."

Venerable Benjamin Larkinson nodded in agreement. "The readiness of the new volunteers are also questionable. I like to believe that the norms of the Larkinson Clan

are braver than average, but that does not turn them into good soldiers. It takes time to train them to a standard that we can rely upon. Until then, their chances of dying on the battlefield will remain unacceptably high. Our patriarch will never permit our clansmen to die at an excessive rate."

"Benjamin, you have been piloting the Blood Star Mark II with the help of a Carmine System for many months. How is it compared to using a conventional neural interface?" "I cannot describe the differences to you." The oldest man in the room stated. "What is

new to me is not only the Blood Pact, but also the fact that I am fighting together with an intelligent and living machine. The experience is much different from what I used back when I was in my old prime. The Carmine System has proven to be more generous. If I have to make more concrete observations, then I can say that my ability to exert direct control over the systems of my Blood Star Mark II has slightly decreased. However, my closeness to the living mech is helping me impose more control over the

mech frame."

"That sounds as if you are slowly beginning to merge with your living mechs. Are you not afraid of suffering accidents?"

Benjamin crossed his arms and smiled. "I have already reached the verge of death before my grandson pulled me back. I do not mind returning to that point if I fail to win a bet. I enjoy life, but I have also lived long enough that I do not have any regrets if I die overnight. It is true that it is becoming more natural for me to become closer to the Blood Star Mark II. Both of us desire this. It is strange, but it feels natural to us. Where

this will lead, I cannot say. I should ask my grandson, but we do not speak on a daily

basis."

Benjamin actually corresponded more with Gloriana and her children over the galactic net than talk to Ves himself.

It was not because they were avoiding each other. They simply did not really have much

to talk about. They were also busy with their own priorities, so they rarely had any excuses to talk to each other in person.

Now that Ves finally pulled the veil of secrecy from the Carmine System, Venerable Benjamin now felt a greater urge to contact his grandson.

He had been thinking about why he had failed to break through despite all of the good

conditions. Speaking to the likes of Saint Tusa and Saint Commander Casella had given him a few more clues.

The Blood Star Mark II was a good expert mech, but there was always room for improvement. Benjamin Larkinson had hunch that he could benefit from having a more powerful version of the Carmine System at his disposal.

The brief mention about the so-called 'elemental Carmine System' may just be the solution he had been waiting for! Benjamin just needed to pick an element that fit him best.

The name of his expert mech already gave him a hint.

"Blood is thicker than water."