

Mech Touch 6471

Chapter 6471: The Inconsequential Voice of the Weak

Ves felt grateful to the Evolution Witch for clarifying the properties of Orphedeian Glow Glass and Abalask Eyes to him. It at least gave him a better understanding how difficult it was to acquire them and how they might benefit the System.

The explanations also gave him a better idea on the future upgrade directions of the System.

After securing a vague and uncertain promise from the Evolution Witch that she would find a way to import the super-class goods to the Red Ocean, the two quickly moved on to more important business.

"I had a good talk with my mother and your 'friend' over in the other galaxy." Ves spoke as the Evolution Witch resumed her inspection of all of the goods shipped from the Milky Way. "I did not know that I have become an accomplice to a plan that calls for starting mass conflicts and even outright civil war in the old galaxy. Even if original humans are not my people anymore, it is still horrifying to learn that my mother is planning to expand the Nyxian Gap for the express purpose of devouring all of the surrounding star systems... as well as the people who live on the surface of the affected planets!"

The heavy and earnest emotions expressed by Ves compelled the god pilot to pause her inspection and give him her full attention.

"

What do you expect to hear from me, Ves? I am not your mother, and you are not a child anymore. If you wish to know whether I am aware of your mother's intentions to expand the Nyxian Gap, then the answer is yes. If you want to know that I invited the Beast of Fear to become a part of the Oblivion Gate Consortium knowing that it would fuel his hidden desire to engineer the downfall of the Big Two, then yes, I was also aware of that. The Oblivion Empress is a woman who hides many secrets, but the two of us have agreed to be as forthcoming as possible when it relates to the Oblivion Plan.

"

That meant that the Evolution Witch was aware of all of the unethical decisions, the horrifying plans and the catastrophic consequences of failure.

Although Ves felt conflicted about whether he should throw his support behind the Oblivion Plan, he still felt disappointed that Divine Lucie Miyazaki did not seem to object at all to all of the crazy plans the conspirators in the Milky Way had devised.

Perhaps it was foolish to expect a god pilot that was often called the Human Biodisaster to express any form of remorse towards facilitating a plan that would kill more humans than during the dark days of the Age of Conquest!

"Is there no other alternative?" Ves pressed on. "All I have heard from my mother and the Beast of Fear is taking high-risk gambits in the hopes of obtaining extremely high payoffs. While they try their best to sound noble, there is no way for them to hide the self-serving nature of their extreme actions. They are literally plotting to sacrifice the lives of a huge amount of humans just to fuel their own cultivation!"

The Evolution Witch crossed her arms. "

If you expect to hear condemnation from me, then you have approached the wrong god pilot. I do not entirely agree with their approach, but I broadly approve of their plans and intentions. Selfishness is a powerful driver for evolution. Many of us want to become stronger, richer and more successful. It is because of these drivers for motivation that we work hard to evolve to a more superior form of ourselves. Our actions subsequently inspire others to work harder to improve in any fashion. As this is a competition, it is only natural that there are winners and losers. It is the fate of the latter to surrender their resources to the former. Only the strong and the most adaptable have a right to prevail. Sympathizing the weak is the entire reason why the current order in the Milky Way has grown so stale and stagnant.

"

Great. The Evolution Witch shared the same ideology as her fellow conspirators in the old galaxy.

While Ves couldn't help but agree with many parts of her explanation, he still disagreed with her on the crueler and more heartless aspects of her ideology.

He felt the same when he heard the justifications from his mother and the Beast of Fear, but it was only now that he was able to articulate the reason for his disgust towards the Oblivion Plan!

"With all due respect, Your Divinity, human civilization is made up of many humans who are weak through no fault of their own." Ves retorted while trying to maintain his calm. "You guys all seem to have big grievances with the Big Two. I don't exactly like them either. However, if there is one trait from them that has earned my appreciation, it is their willingness to protect and stand up for the ordinary people that live in our society. The mechers and the fleeters have done a good job of protecting many of the innocent people that live in many different states. The Big Two can be overly patronizing bastards at times, but they at least lived up to their promise of granting humans relative peace and stability for 4 whole centuries after a devastating period of genocidal conflict."

The mechers and fleeters were arrogant, insufferable and disdainful towards the space peasants.

That did not necessarily mean that they were the bad guys. Ves never characterized them as evil, even if they worked hard to suppress the states and cling to power over the centuries.

The conclusion that Ves drew from this was that the MTA and the CFA did not deserve what was coming for them. The Oblivion Plan sought to induce the mechers and the fleeters in both internal and external strife.

It was one thing if the Big Two had become outright tyrannical hegemony that ruled the Milky Way with an iron fist.

It was another thing if the Big Two remained true to their original mission and protected the human race for centuries as it gradually recovered from its self-inflicted damage!

Even if the Big Two's had already fulfilled their mission and allowed humanity to climb to a greater height, that merely weakened the justification of their continued existence.

It did not mean that it was morally right to drag the MTA and the CFA into a series of violent crises that would inevitably lead to bloody warfare on an unheard scale!

What was worse was that all of this fighting would hurt the innocent people that the Big Two had spent so much effort on protecting all these years!

When Ves thought about all of the death and destruction that would ensue if his insane mother and her fellow conspirators were actually able to pull off their unlikely schemes...

Had he become the bad guy?

As if the Evolution Witch was accurately able to decipher his train of thought, the god pilot tried to give him perspective.

"

Do not feel guilty for what must inevitably come to pass. Evolution is never a peaceful affair. Competition between groups will always occur in a location that is characterized by finite space and resources. Evolution is a bloody struggle no matter whether it happens on an untamed planet filled with savage exobeasts or across entire galaxies filled with humans and aliens that have plenty of reasons to fight against each other. The fundamental reason why this outbreak of violence is inevitable is because the 'winners' of the previous competition have held the reins of power for too long. They have continually monopolized the best resources, thereby denying all of this bounty to the latecomers that have grown up during the Age of Mechs. Sooner or later, the contradiction between the old guard and the new guard will culminate in a galactic war. At most, the unholy alliance seeks to detonate this conflict hundreds of years in advance.

"

Ves could understand the Evolution Witch's logic and find much of what she said to be plausible.

Yet he still felt that she was twisting the facts in a way that justified her radical views.

Her words betrayed a complete lack of empathy for the innocents and the weak that lacked the power to protect themselves.

Even if they were 'losers', they did not necessarily deserve to die for other people's ambitions!

There was no reasoning with these crazies. Ves might disagree with their intentions and the depths they were willing to go in order to realize their ambitions, but he saw no point in trying to change their minds.

They were too fixated on gaining power, and too uncaring towards all of the innocents that would suffer and die as a result of their schemes.

These True Gods were not so different from the Polymath after all. They were all self-serving bastards who grasped at the first justification that they could find to excuse their destructive actions!

"Do you truly think that the mess we are about to start in the Milky Way will end up benefiting original humanity?"

"

I do, Ves. Many parts of human space in the Milky Way are already becoming increasingly more overcrowded. There are too many people but not enough conflicts to cull the weak from the strong. War is never pleasant, but it can serve as a productive force that can cleanse our society and strengthen the foundation of our race. It is cruel to keep original humanity in its current cage. I would love nothing more for the people over there to rebel against the Chosen Human's hypocritical vision as red humanity has done under my leadership. If my own plans succeed, then I may one day return to the Milky Way... and bring that obstructionist man to his knees myself.

"

Ves frowned. It sounded as if the Evolution Witch was more than glad to trigger mass turmoil in the Milky Way just to get back at the Chosen Human!

He sighed. "I don't think that spreading complete anarchy is the best way for humans of the Milky Way to initiate reforms and get better in the end, but it is clear that I can't convince you all to switch to less extreme approaches."

"

That is at least one wise remark you have made since. No, you cannot persuade us. Do you wish to know why, Ves? You are weak. No matter whether you are a Senior Mech Designer, a cat or a pretender god, none possess the might or influence to force us to moderate our plans. Your mother has taught you that might makes right. This is one of the applications of this universal truth. We are stronger and more evolved, so we can back up our actions and decisions with superior force. If you wish to moderate us, then you must be able to challenge us first. You are far from reaching that point. If you take your self-evolution more seriously and work harder to transcend your weaknesses, then you may one day be able to persuade us to follow your personal vision, as questionable as it may be. No matter whether your logic is sound or not, it does not matter as might ultimately makes right.

"

Right.

The same rule was spoken in a much different galaxy. Ves was growing sick and tired of people repeating this phrase to him. The entire saying completely disregarded the value of having principles and ideals that were greater than the individual.

It was already bad enough if the Evolution Witch and a bunch of other True Gods believed in this self-serving adage.

It would be worse if many others started to live by these words as well!

Cultivators were especially prone to doing so considering their constant efforts at self-improvement granted them a lot of power, but not always with the necessary restraint!

Ves may be able to use his limited power and authority to mitigate the damage, but he could do little to stop the tier 1 galactic citizens from enacting their ambitious and destructive schemes.

That was because he was among the weak!

He finally knew what he had to do in the following years.

Chapter 6472 Finish What You Started

The disappointing meeting with the Evolution Witch concluded shortly after Ves gained a better understanding of what she was like.

The only good outcome of their brief talk was that the god pilot had no immediate use for him at this time.

Aside from telling him to grow his foundation in the Red Collective and make sure he did not do anything scandalous enough to get kicked off the Upper Council, he was free to do what he wanted.

"You should spend your time on designing the Milky Way-compatible Carmine mechs requested by your mother and my old friends." The Evolution Witch dismissively said as she turned around to visually inspect the secure containers shipped over from the old galaxy."

Hehehe...

Ves was weak, huh?

His mother, the Beast of Fear and the Evolution Witch were not necessarily wrong. He readily acknowledged that he was weak compared to these powerful True Gods. Yet that did not mean that weaklings such as himself were harmless.

He could still pose a threat to those who were much more powerful, weather or commanded more troops than himself!

His many innovations proved that he was able to make far greater contributions to society than many Master Mech Designers and maybe even Star Designers!

This alone proved that their theories were not entirely correct.

Ves grew resentful at the dismissive and callous attitudes of the conspirators of the Oblivion Plan.

They hatched all of these ambitious and enormously destructive plans just so that they could fuel their cultivation and attempt to evolve into God Kings somehow!

While Ves did not necessarily object to their goals, what he did have a problem with was their complete disregard for the lives of all of the space peasants that they were supposed to protect!

Since the strong were so obsessed with the adage that might makes right to spare even the slightest sympathy for the weak, then Ves took it upon himself to stand up for the little guys!

When Ves concluded his meeting with the Evolution Witch, he already came up with the perfect answer to the Oblivion Plan.

ambitions of the conspirators.

The more he thought about it, the more he knew this was a response that he could fully get behind. It satisfied the demands of the conspirators on the surface, but would also cause them to pay for underestimating the 'weak' like himself.

Ves became certain that his mother and all of the other conspirators in the Milky Way would get way more than they bargained for once his own devious little plan had enough time to unfold!

"Hehehe.... just you wait." He sneered.

As Ves and Lucky finally returned to the Tarrasque and settled down, Veronica finally got to meet with Master Willix.

Now that the Master Mech Designer had exposed her participation in the Oblivion Gate Project and proven the viability of her research, she had become an 'honored guest' of the Oblivion Empire.

Naturally, the Oblivion Empress gave a wide variety of rights and privileges to her. Now that it became inconvenient for Master Willix to return to the embrace of the MTA and make use of its many facilities, she had decided to set up shop in the Throne of Light.

The heavy cruiser possessed better than average mech facilities. After all, the Devil Tiger required a lot of high-quality infrastructural support now that it had become an ace smart metal mech.

The current facilities inside the Throne of Light did not meet Master Willix's exacting requirements. She was partially able to compensate for that by bringing over the high-quality instruments and production equipment that she owned in her own name. However, she was not able to do the same for the property that directly belonged to the MTA. She needed to rely on the Beast of Fear and other contacts in order to acquire the specialized machines that she needed to further her research and design projects.

When Master Willix's dropped by the design lab that Veronica had claimed for herself, the latter eagerly welcomed the arrival of an old friend and teacher.

Now that both mech designers managed to get out under the thumb of two scary True Gods, Veronica and Willix were able to speak a lot more freely with each other this time.

"Ves, or is it Veronica? It is good to meet you again. Your mother has described your unique... condition to me. It is interesting to see that you have developed a unique solution that allows you to

maintain a physical presence in both galaxies at the same time. I am eager to study your body and construction to help me understand how you have been able to do that, but I fear my insights into E-technology and biotechnology

are not up to standard."

The silvery cat floated in front of Master Willix. "Call me Veronica when I am in this form. It makes it easier for me to distinguish between my incarnations. It is good to see you again as well. I never expected for us to reunite again, especially in this context. As for how I am able to do this, I am afraid that it has more to do with cultivation science than mech design. I don't even know how this works. I just copied and bastardized an alien ritual while employing special means to raise my success rate. I highly recommend you to never think about replicating what I have done. Creating a true incarnation cannot be done without splitting up your spirituality, which my mother and other cultivators refer to as a soul. That is not the kind of stuff that people should be messing with. You are liable to turn yourself braindead if your spirit gets damaged."

The Master Mech Designer did not show any sign that she doubted Ves' explanations and theories.

"I shall keep that in mind. I have my own specializations, and I am currently highly occupied with advancing my current research direction"

The two mech designers chatted with each other for another minute before Veronica finally couldn't hold in her curiosity any longer.

The Cyborg Cat took a deep breath, "Master, I have been meaning to ask you... why are you here? Why have you chosen to cooperate with my mother to enact the incredibly destructive Oblivion Plan?"

The atmosphere in the design lab grew tenser now that Veronica finally touched upon a sensitive topic.

Master Willix's amiability faded away. She had clearly fallen back to a more rational attitude.

"I will not lie to you, Ves. Your mother is highly persuasive. We met each other by coincidence, and when she saw hope of creating her wondrous Oblivion Gates with the help of the wormholes that can be partially generated through technological means, she enlisted my expertise to the Oblivion Gate Project. At that time, she made no mention of her much more ambitious Oblivion Plan. I

merely believed that I could do both original humanity and red humanity much good by reviving the possibility of material trade."

Veronica had a pretty good idea what happened after hearing this. "So my mother lied by omission to you. She only talked about creating the Oblivion Gates, but she never told you what she intended to do with the advantages gained from controlling them. By the time she unveiled the Oblivion Plan to you, it was already too late for you to back out, is that correct?"

"That is an accurate characterization of what has taken place." Master Willix said.

decided to continue your work on the project despite knowing that it will encourage my mother and her dangerous allies to trigger a massive wave of violence and unrest throughout human civilization?"

"I cannot stop half-way. I have greater confidence than before that my work on the Oblivion Gate Project will fuel my ultimate advancement." Willix declared with greater fervor, "Humanity already has many Star Designers, but one more is always helpful. What is more important is that I will still be the only individual who can effectively create mature versions of these small but fairly cost-effective Oblivion Gates. They can never match the performance of the greater beyonder gates, but I should still be able to make it profitable for them to be activated on a quarterly or monthly basis. I believe that many shortcomings can be solved as long as we lower the difficulty of transporting goods and eventually people between the two galaxies. Once original humanity and red humanity are able to link up to each other again, it is not impossible for both branches of our race to give each other what they need." That... was a fairly optimistic outlook of the future. Ves knew that Master Willix had chosen to cling to it because it was a good justification for her to continue her work.

Ves was too cynical to believe in this hope. "There are only two Oblivion Gates, and they are both controlled by the Oblivion Empress and the Evolution Witch. The Oblivion Gate Consortium is clearly meant to function as a tool to exploit trade. As long as it maintains a monopoly on intergalactic material exchanges, the consortium will never allow goods and individuals to transit freely. By limiting the frequency of trade and other exchanges between the Milky Way and the Red Ocean, both sides will still have to solve most of their problems by themselves."

The Red Ocean desperately needed more god pilots and other powerful champions to defend its frontlines.

The Milky Way had an extremely high demand for phasewater and high-quality hyper materials.

Both types of materials could be used to develop and apply all sorts of new and powerful upgrades to the senior ace mechs and god mechs of original humanity! The god pilots of the new frontier had already managed to develop their strength by

leaps and bounds.

This was not entirely due to their frequent fighting in the border regions. Tech and materials also played a large role.

Original humanity still managed to collect a lot of phasewater keep it in reserve, but the finite supply would deplete eventually.

Hyper materials were even more troublesome to find. Anomalous regions such as the

Nyxian Gap did not produce them on occasion, but their quantity and quality were usually not particularly good.

any other force that was capable of fielding ace mechs and god mechs!

This was clearly the outcome that Moira Willix was aiming for, but it was likely that

the Oblivion Empress would block such trades.

While Master Willix hoped that her Oblivion Gates would create a circumstance that

would make both branches of humanity stronger, her plan could only come true if the

gates were controlled by a benevolent organization.

That was clearly not the case. Was she hoping to leak the design schematics of the Oblivion Gate Project?

Her mother would never permit that to happen.

Even if the MTA managed to get its hands on the design of an Oblivion Gate, the

mechers would still face an uphill battle when they attempted to develop their own version of this tech!

The current Oblivion Gates were especially designed to function with the powers and abilities commanded by the Oblivion Empress and the Evolution Witch.

Trying to make the Oblivion Gates function without the active participation of these

True Gods was different!

Veronica shook her head. It was foolish for Master Willix to rely on this to redeem herself. She should have other motivations to persist in her work.

"Let me ask you this. Do you believe in plunging all of original humanity into a

galaxy-wide test of the Societal Revival Theory? Do you agree with the masterminds of the Oblivion Plan that human society over here has grown stagnant and weak? Do you think that all of them needs to go through an extensive period of hardship and

suffering in order to get better in the end?"

That was another difficult question to answer, but Veronica needed to know where

Master Willix stood.

The Master Mech Designer's answer would determine whether Veronica would invite Willix to collaborate on her ambitious and subversive Carmine mech project!

Chapter 6473 Mech Designers Design Mechs

A woman as intelligent as Master Willix definitely understood why Veronica asked such a sensitive question.

She stared deeply at the cat that served as the avatar of the most brilliant young mech designer that she had the pleasure to meet and guide.

Those days were long over now. The young Journeyman had grown up into a fine Senior and even managed to break the genetic aptitude tyranny.

Master Willix only felt regretful that the state of the mech community in the old galaxy had become so solidified that the mere hint of releasing Carmine mechs was already enough to throw all of human civilization in a massive upheaval!

Thinking about this caused the older woman to frown.

"In order to explain my views on the state of humankind in the old galaxy, let us begin by making a comparison." Willix spoke up. "It is normally difficult to gauge the health of a society when it is the only kind of its existence, but we are fortunate that we have a direct comparison on hand. The situations of the two branches of humanity differ enormously, but we can still take advantage of the fact that we are still the same race to make direct comparisons. How have people reacted to the introduction of Carmine mechs?"

"Enthusiastic." Veronica immediately replied. "Anyone with enough free time, money, connections or whatever is desperately trying to get their hands on a Yellow Jacket. The excessive demand threatens to destabilize our society by depriving other sectors of crucial workers, but the RA and the various states are closely cooperating with each other to mitigate this problem. The good news is that we can get away with a lot more now that martial law is in effect in most jurisdictions. One of the new rules that the Red Association has imposed is that every resident that chooses to become a Carmine mech pilot must volunteer for military service if he is living in a state that has declared martial law. After all, in times of war, we cannot afford to waste precious resources, industrial capacity and manpower on frivolous waste. Red humanity is braver, fiercer and more prepared to suffer hardships."

That rule did not deter volunteers as much as the mechers wanted, though. Mech mania was still too strong even during these dire times. Too many low-ranking mech designers, doctors, farmers, naval specialists and other essential workers all abandoned their comfortable and respectable jobs just so they could fulfill their childhood dreams of becoming a battlefield hero!

Veronica hoped that the mech mania would fade in the coming weeks and months as reality set into the minds of these latent mech fanatics.

"According to your description, red humanity is fully capable of integrating Carmine

machs into its cociate without causing it to brank in that correct?"

"Yes. We are ultimately at war, so the native aliens have repeatedly taught us not to underestimate their threat. What they lack in quality, they more than make up in quantity. Since the disparity between us is so great, all humans have realized that they must do their utmost to win the Red War."

"That is a somewhat enviable state, Veronica. The threat posed by the aliens of the Red Ocean has fully woken red humanity up and invigorated its society for the better. The same cannot be said for the humans of the Milky Way. We are in such a dominant state that we no longer fear our external enemies anymore. On the surface, this should be a good outcome. As a member of the Survivalist Faction, I believe that we have succeeded in reaching a near-ideal state where our race is no longer at risk of going extinct, at least if we take the Milky Way and its immediate surroundings into account. If nothing special has occurred, then I am fully supportive of maintaining the status quo, even if not everyone benefits from this age of lasting peace."

For a long time, humanity only remained on guard against two kinds of threats.freewebnovel.com

Humans always took internal threats seriously. Humans knew how to harm other humans best.

Since there were no alien races in the Milky Way that could defeat humanity, then the latter could only turn to itself for enemies!

The other kind of threat was external. The Seven Apex Races still possessed strength beyond the level of ordinary alien races. Several of them had suffered catastrophic losses and even became homeless for a time after ceding all of their territories to humanity.

However, humanity had beaten all of these aliens so badly that they had already been broken. It was difficult for them to challenge the Big Two no matter whether they fought alone or by uniting all of the surviving alien races.

Considering that the aliens of the Milky Way and possibly the other aliens native to the other surrounding dwarf galaxy did not represent significant threats anymore, humanity had little reason to be on guard against them these days.

The humans of the Milky Way had lost respect for the potential threat posed by the aliens.

The people who emigrated to the Red Ocean actually suffered from this problem as well.

Far too many overconfident pioneers had brought their vast colonization fleets in the Red Ocean, only to lose a part of all of their assets as the native alien shredded the invaders with their formidable warships!

"So you are essentially saying that original humanity has grown too soft," Veronica said. "That is fine when there are no significant internal and external threats, but when the circumstances have changed, all of that softness has suddenly become a

Master Willix nodded. "Correct. I am in agreement with the leaders of the Oblivion Gate Consortium in this regard. While I have only heard descriptions of this 'Subjugation King' and the possible threat of the aliens native to Messier 87, I believe these accounts are credible enough to take this distant threat seriously. If these supposed God Kings are only able to effectively move around their own galaxy cluster, then we do not have to take them seriously. However, the displacement of the Red Ocean to the vicinity of this new and dangerous galaxy has changed that. Granting the native aliens of accurate intelligence and awareness of the Milky Way is already adverse enough. Granting them access to more than enough phasewater to cross the vast divide and invade our original galaxy is worse. Whether this possible threat arrives within a century or several centuries, we must use all of the time we have to prepare for a possible invasion."

Her logic was sound. Veronica knew first-hand that the intelligence on the alien God Kings was more likely than not correct. She had spoken to the Subjugation King in

person!

"If everything goes right, the humans of the Milky Way won't have to face this threat themselves." The Cyborg Cat hopefully said. "We are working hard to close the gap ourselves. The Red War at least provides all of our soldiers and champions with the best possible tempering. Who knows whether one of our god pilots will be able to advance into god king pilots in the next decades."

Master Willix shook her head. "We cannot rely on others to protect ourselves, Veronica. It is foolish to put all of our hopes in the strength and luck of red humanity. Even if there is a chance that our preparations are in vain, it is always prudent to account for failures. The lives of far too many humans are at stake. As a Survivalist, I am already mentally prepared to account for the death of 99 percent of the total population of humans. As long as the remaining 1 percent can still preserve their lives, their culture and their heritage, we have avoided the worst outcome."

Ah, that was typical Survivalist talk. While Master Willix was not as extreme as the Oblivion Empress and the Beast of Fear, she could still be ruthless when she deemed it

necessary!

"Do you want this to happen, though?"

"No. Absolutely not. The more humans perish as a result of... shall we say desperate

measures, the more flawed our plan has become. We should not have to resort to causing strife and unrest in order to wake original humanity up. However, the Oblivion Gate Consortium's motives are not entirely pure. Your mother and the Unbounders aligned with the Beast of Fear seek to trigger a titanic civil war in order to secure their own survival and grant them opportunities to grow their power. By plotting these steps, they have betrayed how little they care about the people they are supposed to be responsible for. When human leaders begin to treat the lives of ordinary individuals as worthless, then they have proven that they are not fit to bear

Veronica fully agreed with the Master Mech Designer. This was also one of the key reasons why the Cyborg Cat couldn't fully support her mother and the other conspirators.

"The more accomplishments I make as a mech designer, the more I realize that each of us must bear greater responsibilities." The floating cat expressed her earnest feelings. "Our greater priority is always thinking about how to make our customers stronger and our society a little better with our works. Other cultivators think a lot more about how to increase their power and longevity. The wellbeing and concerns for the ordinary folk are far too low in priority."

Both cat and Master Mech Designer developed an implicit understanding with each other. They felt a little more comfortable in each other's presence. Their words had already confirmed to each other that they possessed similar stances on the issues that

mattered.

"Mech designers exist to serve." Master Willix affirmed.

Veronica began to grin. "In contrast to other professions, mech designers solve

problems by developing new mechs. So let us do that. Since my mother and friends has tasked me with designing a series of Milky Way-adapted Carmine mechs, I will need to borrow your extensive familiarity with the mech industry of the old galaxy. I am unfamiliar with the prevailing technical standards, material availability, legal landscape and more. If I want my Carmine mechs to appeal to the broadest possible audience, then I can sorely use your expertise to guide my work direction."

"I am honored and willing to collaborate with you, Veronica. I have no issue with allowing you to work as the lead designer of your new project. My own specialization in gravitic systems is not too relevant to your upcoming Carmine mechs, but as a rational mech designer, I can simulate a wide variety of fairly uncomplicated design philosophies of other notable mech designers. I can therefore provide enough assistance to lightly empower aspects such as offense or mobility. You do not have to collaborate with any other mech designers. This should make it vastly more convenient for us to maintain secrecy during the next crucial months."

While the Evolution Witch and the Beast of Fear already planned to introduce Carmine mechs to the Milky Way, they could not yet do so without solid Carmine mech designs in their hands.

This was why Veronica was more than happy to withhold any announcements and use the buffer time to strengthen his ability to survive the upcoming problem period. For example, the Cyborg Cat was eager to increase his own combat capabilities. He also wanted to prepare a few escape routes for himself.

Still, Carmine mechs would become available sooner or later. Her mother accepted no

other outcome and would definitely watch him carefully to see that he was diligently 'doing his homework' every day!

Veronica needed to release these Carmine mechs on a fairly short deadline, so he was more than happy to secure the assistance of a highly competent Master Mech

Designer.

As the two settled in front of a desk terminal, the Cyborg Cat began to draft a very loose sketch of a humanoid Carmine mech.

Chapter 6474 HALM

Mech designers communicated best when they practiced their profession.

Although it was kind of weird for a cat and a human Master to talk about mech designs, the two were immediately able to get into sync with each other.

Part of it was because they already collaborated with each other in the past. Another part of it was that both of them had confirmed that their goals were at least partially aligned.

As mech designers who still stayed true to the original principles and values of their profession, there was no obvious discrepancy between the two. Their perspectives and knowledge base may differ substantially, but the beauty of designing mechs together was that their contributions were often additive.

Since Veronica was the lead designer of this new Carmine mech design project, she naturally took the lead by specifying the starting parameters of her proposal.

"I have been thinking about designing a very straightforward adaptation of the Yellow Jacket design, but I do not think it is suitable here." She said. "For one, the Yellow Jacket is optimized to counter alien strike craft and warships. They can still fight decently well enough against the mechs that the people of the Milky Way will most often fight against, but they are not too great at this job. I also think that it will be harder to convince all red humans to pilot a wasp mech. It is still better to stick to a humanoid mech."

The Cyborg Cat laid out her arguments while simultaneously using her claw to expertly sketch the outline of a humanoid mech in the projected interface.

Master Willix thoughtfully stared at the rudimentary draft design. There were many variations of humanoid mechs. The one sketched by Veronica was especially adapted for simplicity and ease of use.

"I see that you have chosen to design a modular or semi-modular mech." Veronica nodded. "I don't believe in one-size-fits-all approaches. The Milky Way is huge. Humans hailing from different states and star sectors can have vastly different preferences for mechs. One state may be crazy about swordsman mechs, and will prefer configurations that enhance flexibility and striking power. Another state may be filled with people who are avid marksmen. They prefer to pilot machines that are agile and very precise in their movements. Instead of trying to cater to all of them with a single design, its best to add sockets to our Carmine mechs so that the customer can decide what to choose."

This was not the first modular mech platform that she had designed in her career. She borrowed many lessons from the last iteration of the Bright Warrior design and readily applied them to her new project.

Naturally, Master Willix could clearly deduce from the sketches that Veronica knew what she was doing. There was no need for the older mech designer to hold a lecture on this subject.

In the interest of saving time and reducing the cost burden, Ves tried not to go overboard on the modularity. She intended to keep the head and torso consistent, but add modularity to the arms, legs, flight system and optional backpack elements.

This was the most basic way to design a modular mech, but it was a tried and tested formula that worked particularly well for low budget options.

Her design so far immediately told Master Willix that she wanted the base model to be fairly economical, but not as cheap as her Yellow Jacket design.

After all, original humanity was not as shabby as red humanity. The humans were the overlords of the Milky Way. They possessed abundant access to low to mid-grade exotics. Such materials were so widely available that it should be easy to churn out billions of Carmine mechs.

The economic and industrial development of human civilization in the Milky Way was also much higher.

The occupied star systems in the galactic heartland and the galactic center were so highly developed that there was hardly any room for cost-effective expansion anymore!

There were a huge amount of mech manufacturing complexes. Many of them should easily be able to retool their production lines to fabricate Carmine mechs at huge volumes.

There was only one hindrance, though.

"The Carmine System of a Carmine mech is largely organic or biomechanical in construction, correct?" Master Willix asked.

"That is right." Ves said. "This is another reason why I don't think the Yellow Jacket designs are suitable for this market. Back in the Red Ocean, the Red Association has the industrial capacity and the willingness to centralize the mass production of Biodomes that function as oversized organic cockpit systems. We cannot expect the MTA to do the same. We can only leave it up to the local production companies to grow the organic components of the Carmine Systems themselves. Their quality and performance may fluctuate, which can lead to danger or outright failure, but there is no other choice. I can only hope that the mech community will be able to figure out a solution that most parties can agree upon."

The Carmine System was almost just as sensitive as neural interfaces in this regard. Only trusted manufacturers should be allowed to produce them, but Ves had no way to enforce this rule.

In order to minimize the varishlar operated by inconcitantcies she tried to shrink

and minimize the footprint of the Carmine System of her new design as much as possible.

This was the exact opposite of what she attempted to do with the Yellow Jacket series. "You have made the most appropriate design choice." Master Willix opined. "Too many humans in the Milky Way have a strong rejection towards biotechnology outside the medical field. As long as the performance is not heavily impacted, shrinking the Carmine System will lead to less complications and less issues related to field repairs." The Cyborg Cat continued to sketch out her proposed vision for her Carmine mechs. She did not draw out a single machine. Instead, she showcased the modularity of the new design by depicting other possible variations.

In order to account for a wide variety of mech archetypes, combat doctrines and preferred fighting approaches, Veronica tried to settle for a middle ground whenever

possible.

This caused the modular Carmine mech to lean towards a balanced but rather

mediocre performance profile.

This meant that while her upcoming work could never excel in any area, it should not possess glaring weaknesses that should drag it down.

Neither Veronica nor Master Willix needed to point this out. They both understood

the implications.

The sketching continued for a while. The two only occasionally spoke as there was no need to clarify the basics.

Once the Cyborg Cat had drawn the basic outlines and configurations for the proposed MW Carmine mechs for all 3 tech levels, that was the point where she allowed her passion to run free.

This was the point where Veronica intended to augment the basic foundation of her next Carmine mech design with her special sauce.

It was these unique additions that were supposed to define her next work, and not the Carmine System!

As far as Veronica was concerned, the Carmine System should play the same role as a neural interface.

Carmine Systems should be treated as part of a Carmine mech's basic foundation. What truly distinguished a machine was how it fought on the battlefield. Blood Pacts did not necessarily make any difference in this regard.

"Carmine mechs will be treated very differently in the Milky Way Galaxy," Veronica surmised. "In the Red Ocean Dwarf Galaxy, the Red Association is still able to exert strong control over the mech community. It is able to convince mech academies to

JJ.

RA is also able to enforce any instances of reckless piloting by Carmine mech pilots that vastly underestimated the training required to control their powerful machines. Here in the Milky Way, we cannot expect their counterparts from the Mech Trade Association to do the same."

This entire plan was clandestine and illegal to begin with. The Oblivion Plan also called for a Carmine mech that was specifically designed to spread turmoil, so the mechers should definitely not be happy to see this machine proliferate through the

galaxy!

"It will be difficult to arrange systematic training for new and aspiring Carmine mech pilots in the Milky Way." Master Willix agreed. "Too many civilians here have been isolated from the danger posed by mechs, so they will inevitably cause accidents as they inexpertly control their own Carmine mechs. The issue is time. It takes too much time for Carmine mech pilots to attain a level of competence that allows them to fight. effectively in actual battles."

Veronica's artificial eyes glowed as she grew more enthused. "That is why I want to massively reduce the need for 4 or 5 years of training and education on how to pilot a Carmine mech. I would never try to pull this off in the Red Ocean where I have to abide by all of the rules of the RA, but since we don't intend to make our new mech design conform to the many rules imposed by the MTA, I might as well take advantage of the situation and pursue an extreme in my design philosophy."

It was difficult to depict this intangible quality in the draft design, so Veronica settled

on writing annotations with her delicate foreclaw.

The Master Mech Designer quickly figured out what the Senior cat had in mind.

"You wish to enhance the autonomy of your Carmine mechs so that they can fight. more actively by themselves?"

"Yes!" Veronica grinned. "This is one of the special features of my MW Carmine mechs. I call them HALM: High Autonomy Living Mechs. They are preloaded with a basic but

solid set of piloting and fighting skills. They are also adaptable and learn really well. They can learn all of the relevant fighting skills from their Carmine mech pilots, and they can also learn from their own combat encounters. This may produce a circumstance where the Carmine mech is actually better at controlling its mech frame than its human pilot!"

This was a pretty radical and subversive proposal!

Master Willix clearly did not like it because it broke one of the central tenets of mech design, but she clearly understood the need for this design solution in this unique

context.

"If you are doing this for the purpose of quickly enhancing the combat effectiveness of Carmine mech controlled by undertrained and unqualified pilots, then this is an

eveneable decian choice" The older mach decimmer reluctantheid "I fear the

consequences should too many of these HALM begin to grow into their power. What if these highly autonomous machines decide that there is no reason for them to be ordered around by humans?"

Veronica could only shrug at that. "I can't think or care so much. The two of us can implement numerous safeguards that should reduce this possibility from occurring or make it easier to shut them down if they go rogue. However, there is no other way to make these machines combat effective unless we convert them into outright AI-controlled battle bots."

That was unacceptable for obvious reasons. For better or worse, human mech pilots must still retain substantial control over their machines.

"If you wish to rely on the living Carmine mechs to execute maneuvers and launch

attacks against actual enemies, then you do not have to simplify their designs to this degree. Giving your machines greater freedom of movement can raise their ceiling on their combat effectiveness at the cost of making the learning curve steeper." The Master Mech Designer began to use her finger to draw small tweaks and

additions to the draft design.

All of her design choices were both thoughtful and elegant. Veronica just knew that

her new Carmine mechs would definitely be able to make more achievements on the battlefield due to these changes.

Master Willix even proposed to add extra limbs to the Carmine mech!

"Hm, I haven't thought about that," Veronica said. "This is the first time since the Devil Tiger that I am purposefully designing a living mech with much greater autonomy than the norm. It looks to me that we can exploit that in many ways."

Chapter 6475 Partial Convergence Blood Pact

High Autonomy Living Mechs violated a taboo of the mech industry.

Veronica knew more than well that humans must always be in control of the technology they commanded.

This was why they never dared to let AI automate everything and allow humans to sit back and relax. Every artificial system is vulnerable and prone to subversion. It would be incredibly idiotic to automate an entire society, only for a hostile alien force or a rival human power to hack the master control system and hijack everything!

Even though there were countless examples throughout human history that emphasized the harm of relying too much on automation, Veronica still chose to rely on her new HALM concept to develop her MW Carmine mechs.

It couldn't be helped. The training and education of a potentate into a competent and professional mech pilot took at least 10 years. It was possible to add or subtract 5 years to that duration, but that would substantially affect the quality of the pilot in question.

The Oblivion Gate Consortium couldn't wait for 5 or more years for most brand-new Carmine mech pilots to become skilled enough to wreck stuff with their new machines.

Veronica could probably shave a few years off that training period if she chose to simplify the Carmine mechs like she did with the Yellow Jackets, but this was not a good choice.

Many people believed that the most ideal mech was a humanoid machine. Such mechs held greater attraction to people than a frontline mech that lacked articulating arms.

While there should still be enough people who would be glad to pilot a frontline mech, such machines were limited in other ways that were detrimental to her overall purpose.

Therefore, even if she knew that it would make the process of mastering the Carmine mech a lot harder for their bonded pilots, Veronica still decided to adopt the shape that held the broadest appeal.

Besides, the Cyborg Cat already compensated for the added difficulty of piloting a humanoid mech by letting the living mech itself take charge of its own movements!

"Carmine mechs are not normal mechs." The silvery cat explained her reasoning to Master Willix. "There are two important traits that distinguish the former from the latter. The presence of the Carmine System and the fact that every Carmine mech is alive can be used as the foundation of a new paradigm in mech piloting. Instead of relying on the old model where a mech pilot is taught to control every large and significant process of a mech, we instead turn the pilot into a commander that delegates the fine control of his machine to his bonded partner."

Master Willix immediately understood the underlying implications of this reasoning.

"You are advocating an abolishment of traditional mech pilot training for this new class of warriors. You place so much faith in the reliability and trustworthiness of your living mechs that you believe that it is acceptable to allow them to retain this role. The Carmine mech pilots will play a role that is equivalent to a tank commander where he oversees the battlefield and relays instructions that his living partner must follow."

The Cyborg Cat smiled. "I have put a lot of thought behind this alternate model. I know it is flawed. This approach is extremely unlikely to produce high-ranking mech pilots. The pilots must take the effort to learn and master the art of controlling his own weapons. Relying too much on others to do the actual fighting will put too much distance between himself and the critical decision making process. Despite this major flaw, I think it is completely acceptable in the short term if a beginner Carmine mech pilot relies a lot on his HALM to do much of the actual fighting. I fear that many pilots will grow overly dependent on their HALM. In order to prevent this from happening, I plan to develop an additional measure to make sure the Carmine mech pilots will actually learn how to fight by themselves if necessary."

"What do you have in mind?"

Veronica did not explain directly, but instead began to add new lines to the draft design.

She sketched the model of a mech pilot and began to connect it to one of the Carmine mechs.

Then, the cat slowly pushed the pilot closer and closer to the machine.

There was a lot of significance in this move. Master Willix was already able to decipher much of the other mech designer's intentions.

"You are planning to develop a variation of your Blood Pact." The older woman speculated. "You wish to emulate the Mech Body Merger Process for the purpose of transferring piloting skills from machine to human. This is... both dangerous and unprecedented. I do not believe that you have conducted any studies on this, so the viability of this proposed solution is still in doubt."

"You have made an accurate deduction. I call it the Partial Convergence Blood Pact, as the distance between man and machine will shrink as a result of this new measure." Veronica said. "We can investigate this ourselves by conducting experiments. I am sure my mother will find suitable volunteers to test whether forcing a partial merger between human and living mech will yield the desired results. I am well aware that we cannot force a complete merger. From what I have witnessed in the past, if we want the mech pilot to remain healthy, sane and in control, he must possess strong enough willpower to protect his own sense of self."

"You must conduct live trials with Carmine mechs that possess the capacity to form these dangerous Blood Pact and witness for yourself whether the mech pilot can absorb the piloting skills mastered by the Carmine mech without too many side effects."

This was difficult to accomplish as Veronica was almost certain that contamination would take place.

He just hoped that the side effects would be mild enough to dismiss them as an acceptable prize to accelerate the training of the Carmine mech pilot.

If the cat was able to make this work, then Carmine mechs would have great significance in both galaxies!

If the Red War took a turn for the worse, then Veronica could always modify the Yellow Jackets or quickly whip up another Carmine mech design that incorporated this new feature!

No longer would humans have to train for years to be able to competently pilot mechs. They could rely on HALM to get by in the first few months while they steadily absorbed the piloting and fighting skills of their own machines.

If the Carmine mech pilots had done a good job at absorbing the fighting methods of their living machines, they should finally be able to take back control and thereby increase the probability of breaking through!

Becoming an expert pilot, ace pilot and god pilot held a strong attraction to any mech fanatic. Veronica did not fear that too many Carmine mech pilots refused to take back control once they learned how to control their machines.

Doing so would deny them the opportunity to break through!

"This may not be enough." Master Willix commented. "The new Carmine mech pilots may not be patient or disciplined enough to spend long hours on practicing skills that their Carmine mechs have already mastered. You need to add another incentive to encourage them to work hard to attain their own breakthroughs. Otherwise, they will all remain slaves to their machines."

Veronica began to grin. "That is why I intend to add the transcendence glow to these Carmine mechs! By turning Lufa as the Aspect of Transcendence into the design spirit of this mech and focusing the glow onto the cockpit, the Carmine mech pilots will operate under a different mindset that will motivate them to work harder to transcend their own limitations."

Master Willix was not unfamiliar with the glow in question. "That... may not work as well as you wish, Veronica. The Carmine mech pilots may become acclimated to this glow, thereby reducing their effects over time."

"That is why I will program the transcendence glow to vary in strength." Veronica eagerly explained her plan. "The transcendence glow will start out at low strength, but it will rise and maybe even peak if the Carmine mech pilot does anything that advances his personal strength. This can range from conducting drills to fighting actual enemies on the battlefield. Whenever the pilot risks his life and finds himself in a situation that brings him close to death, the transcendence glow will peak, thereby maximizing the chance of breakthroughs!"

Veronica did not anticipate that expert pilots would pop up everywhere by using the transcendence glow in this manner, but it should definitely make a difference!

As long as enough humans became mech pilots, then the absolute quantity of expert pilots that might emerge among Carmine mech pilots should definitely not be small!

Master Willix fell silent for half a minute. She began to think about all of the potential consequences and ripple effects of releasing a Carmine mech model that brought its own transcendence glow.

She suddenly managed to unravel Veronica's true intentions.

Although Willix did not possess the complete picture yet, the pieces that she managed to fit together already allowed her to deduce the essence of the Senior Mech Designer's greater plan!

She looked deeply at the Cyborg Cat. Neither of them mentioned anything out loud. The Oblivion Empress would definitely be able to learn what Veronica actually had in mind and take steps to stop the plan in its tracks.

This was Veronica's counterattack.

The Oblivion Gate Consortium looked down on the masses. The conspirators only used the human population of the old galaxy as tools to further their own ambitions. This was why the former was eager to grant Carmine mechs to the latter.

While it was inevitable for all of these humans to use their new machines in petty conflicts, these battles could hone a lot of Carmine mech pilots.

Normally, it would take a long time for these amateurs to develop genuine piloting skills and strengthen their willpower to the point where they might break through.

The combination of HALM, the Partial Convergence Blood Pact and the transcendence glow could massively cut down the time it took for Carmine mech pilots to ascend to the next rank!

While there were serious dangers and side effects to employing both controversial measures, Veronica was confident that the potential outcomes would be more than worth all of the risks!

However, Master Willix still observed a significant gap in this layout.

Veronica's plan for this Carmine mech was unlikely to produce the critical success that she was truly trying to attain.

The Cyborg Cat wanted nothing more than to spread her Carmine mechs far and wide, thereby allowing many hidden talents to bloom and break through at a much more accelerated rate than normal!

Even though it sounded impossible, who knew whether there was a talent akin to the Chosen Human among the stupendously huge population base of original humanity?

With all of the enhancements to the Carmine mechs, their progression was bound to speed up, perhaps to the point where they might become expert pilots in a year, ace pilots within 5 years and god pilots within one or two decades!

As long as the Carmine mechs produced god pilots fast enough and in significant quantities, the 'space peasants' of the Milky Way that every major player had disregarded for so long may eventually be able to rise up and rebel against the tyrants and hegemony that exploited the common people for so long!

This was the ultimate ideal and expression of Veronica's design philosophy towards the crisis that was about to engulf original humanity!

This was the most beautiful layout of Mutual Growth in Adversity that the Cyborg Cat could gift to all of the oppressed humans!

There were only one or two big gaps that needed to be filled for Veronica to allow her ambitious and deviant plan to come to fruition!

Chapter 6476 Cultivating Monsters to Fight Monsters

So far, Veronica planned to combine multiple new and innovative features in her upcoming Carmine mech design.

Although she casually explained her new proposal as if they were ordinary design applications, the truth was that they were incredibly dangerous!

She would never be able to get away with publishing a Carmine mech that contained any of these controversial, let alone multiple of them in a single design!

Veronica completely liberated herself from the restrictions imposed by the mech industry.

As a Senior Mech Designer, she was fully cognizant why those rules and restrictions existed.

She even agreed with them in principle.

The difference this time was that. Veronica could no longer afford to play by the rules.

Her mother and her fellow conspirators forced the Cyborg Cat to play a very different game this time.

Since Veronica did not have to pay any attention to the MTA, she may as well go all the way and incorporate all of the insane and controversial design applications that she previously imagined!

Veronica actually had a lot more dangerous and questionable design ideas in her mind, but she did not dare to bring out most of them. Her Carmine mech could only accommodate so much, and many of her more fantastical ideas were either too expensive or did not fit his vision for the current design.

However, the handful of subversive ideas that she intended to implement should already be enough to design an absolutely revolutionary Carmine mech!

It would definitely detonate the Red Ocean if the people over there ever received word of this insane mech design!

If there was one upside to the mission imposed by the Oblivion Gate Consortium, it was that Veronica actually enjoyed the opportunity to design a completely 'unrestricted' mech!

Naturally, the Mech Trade Association would absolutely grow horrified if they encountered his new Carmine mech in the wild. The mechers would definitely do everything in their power to prohibit its

use, yet the fact that the Carmine System could actually enable norms to control mechs meant that their attempts were doomed to fail.

Unless the MTA secretly solved the genetic aptitude tyranny in advance but never published the solution for whatever reason, Veronica's Carmine mechs would most.

definitely be able to conquer the hearts of countless norms!

While Veronica felt guilty for using the Carmine System to lure a lot of gullible fools into bonding their lives to machines that might spell their doom one day, this was already the best she could do to give them a fighting chance.

When gods fought against each other, the mortals suffered.

At least Veronica was being a lot more earnest than others about giving the common people a chance to quickly grow strong enough to defend themselves... and maybe even take revenge one day.

However, the current layout was not enough to constitute a viable framework for her new Carmine mech designs for the Milky Way.

Master Willix no longer communicated with the Cyborg Cat with words, but instead raised her fingers to make purposeful and targeted changes and additions to the draft design.

For example, she fiddled with the power reactor and the cockpit of a draft mech.

This was essentially a way for the Master Mech Designer to convey her doubts on how the Carmine mech would be able to accelerate the growth of a Carmine mech pilot to such an exaggerated speed.

Not many mech designers were aware of this, but a knowledgeable Master such as Willix definitely knew that it took a lot of time for mech pilots to grow their willpower! It usually took decades if not a century or more for expert pilots and ace pilots to strengthen and expand their extraordinary willpower to the next threshold!

None of the solutions that the Cyborg Cat outlined so far addressed this particular issue.

So far, Veronica came up with the concept of HALM in order to turn Carmine mechs into basic but serviceable combat assets that could immediately be employed on the battlefield.

She proposed the development of Partial Convergence Blood Pact to quickly compress the training time of Carmine mech pilots and allow them to master their machines much faster than usual.

These two solutions were only relevant to low-ranking Carmine mech pilots.

Once any of these individuals broke through once or twice, they should quickly be able to close the gap with professional mech pilots and even break the limits of what humans were capable of under normal circumstances.

That was the point where the Carmine mech pilots of the Milky Way no longer had much use for HALM and Partial Convergence Blood Pacts anymore. After all, they should be able to control their bonded mechs with far better skill and precision!

The Transcendence glow might be able to speed up the progression of these Carmine. mech pilots before and after they surpassed the extraordinary threshold, but it did not function as a universal cultivation elixir.

As far as Veronica aware of, the transcendence glow mainly helped to solve a mech pilot's confusion and conflicting ideas. It strengthened the primary obsessions of mech pilots and amplified all positive and neutral emotions. It also diminished any negative thoughts and emotions, thereby cutting a lot of distractions of the affected individuals.

What the transcendence glow emphatically could not do was to supply the huge amount of E energy that the Carmine mech pilots needed to quantitatively grow their

resonance strength!

High-ranking mech pilots needed to develop their extraordinary skills in a quantitative as well as qualitative fashion in order to qualify for their next

breakthroughs.

Veronica's solutions only addressed the qualitative requirements up to this point. She had yet to address the quantitative demands, and unless she did that, her ambitious Carmine mech design would never work fast enough to produce the desired results.

If Veronica designed her Carmine mech according to this incomplete layout, then it would still take at least a century to produce the first god pilots among its adopters, and these were just the outliers!

By that time, the Oblivion Gate Consortium should have already pulled off their schemes long ago. Veronica did not think it would take a hundred years for all of the infighting and a potential civil war between the MTA and CFA to last for so long. Veronica intended to give the common folk a means to develop power quickly enough to fight against the monsters that sought to destroy their homes and eradicate their

lives!

To address the problem related to speed, the Cyborg Cat added another key feature to her Carmine mech design.

The cat very purposefully began to add more lines and technical specifications in the sketches. She too fiddled a lot with the power reactor and the cockpit, as if the two were intricately related to each other.

These actions were completely valid and legitimate from an engineering perspective, but only mech designers at the Senior level or above should be able to glean the true message that Veronica attempted to convey.

The Master Mech Designer sitting next to the incarnation narrowed her eyes. She definitely interpreted the message correctly.

Veronica intended to solve the E energy deficit problem by allowing her Carmine mechs to harvest them from their opponents!

In other words, she wanted her Carmine mechs to grow quickly in a quantitative

fashion by practicing a form of demonic cultivation!

If she was designing a Carmine mech for the Red Ocean, then she had no need to bother with such a dangerous addition, The Carmine mech and pilot should easily be able to speed up their growth by absorbing E energy radiation. This was the advantage of operating in a medium-energy environment.

However, Veronica needed to adapt her work to a low-energy environment, which meant that she had to resort to less ideal methods to achieve the same results.

Her solution was to impart a form of demonic cultivation to her MW Carmine mech. Instead of behaving as 'herbivores' like his Yellow Jackets, her upcoming Carmine mechs would turn into all-out predators that grew stronger by harvesting the spiritual energy of other life forms!

This included humans, living mechs and other mechs to a lesser degree!

Every mech possessed a spiritual foundation, but they were not necessarily as strong

as that of his own works.

The theory was sound, but the implications were heavy.

The most obvious problem was that it introduced a dangerous new incentive

structure.

Any Carmine mech pilot that had fought for a while would soon discover that they would grow stronger as long as they defeated and killed other mechs and people. More killing produced greater rewards, which encouraged the Carmine mech pilots to kill even more individuals!

In the worst case scenario, this might end up producing mass murderers who were way too eager to resort to lethal solutions!

Perhaps the Carmine mech pilots might become just as bad as demonic cultivators of

ancient times by wiping out all life in cities or planets in order to fuel their own

cultivation!

Veronica absolutely did not intend to let this happen. She would only end up

accelerating original humanity's demise at the hands of its own deranged people!

Fortunately, the Senior Mech Designer already thought of how she could prevent the rise of all of these genocidal maniacs.

The cat began to use her claw to tinker with the draft design. She raised the output of the power reactor, but then proceeded to cut the power lines. These little actions and more caused Master Willix to grow a little more reassured.

Veronica essentially conveyed her intention to limit the destructive behavior of Carmine mech pilots by disincentivizing any improper behavior.

While she did not want her machines to turn into nannies, she felt responsible enough

for her work to implement a mechanism that reduced the reward level when

the Carmine mech pilot crossed an egregious line.

Veronica was able to control the levers that determined the efficacy of the transcendence glow as well as the practice of demonic cultivation.

If a Carmine mech pilot ever went mad and attacked an entire city's worth of innocent civilians, then the Carmine mech would automatically dial down the effectiveness of all of the aforementioned features that sped up the quantitative accumulation of

resonance strength!

In the worst case scenario, the Carmine mech would permanently disable its ability to harvest gains from both the transcendence glow and the practice of demonic

cultivation!

Few if any Carmine mech pilots should be willing to cross the line once they learned of the heavy consequences if they went too far!

Even so, Veronica did not think that would deter the edge cases from achieving enough success.

In order to accelerate the growth of a large enough population of Carmine mech

pilots, Veronica could never impose too heavy restrictions on the gains made by practicing demonic cultivation.

What was the criteria that she intended to use to distinguish between permissible and impermissible acts of killing?

Only honorable combat dialed up the settings of the transcendence glow and demonic cultivation yields!

Honor was the one quality that should be able to prevent her MW Carmine mechs from degenerating into completely evil machines!

While the Cyborg Cat only intended to use a loose definition of honor to make this

distinction, she was confident enough that this incentive system should be enough to limit the damage inflicted by all of her MW Carmine mechs!

Master Willix digested these implicit messages and began to tweak the draft design,

asking several questions about the less stable elements of the proposed Carmine

mech. Did Veronica fear that she may end up raising killers that were dangerous enough to destroy human civilization in the Milky Way even when they upheld their honor? Warfare involving mechs tended to produce a lot of collateral damage, especially if the

fighting had reached the surface of developed planets.

Many innocent people may lose their lives, homes and workplaces regardless of the restraint exhibited by the Carmine mech pilots!

Honor or not, these battle-hungry pilots may easily be regarded as monsters! Veronica knew that too many cases like these may end up happening as a result of releasing her upcoming work, but she still believed it was for the best. Carmine mech pilots could not afford to work under too many restraints. That would

just end up delaying the emergence and subsequent growth of high-ranking mech

pilots.

As far as she was concerned, a little collateral damage was no big deal as long as the most successful Carmine mech pilots grew quickly enough! Veronica began to sketch a few target dummies and loosely simulated the

transformations that the Carmine mech and mech pilot would undergo after participating in many battles.

The difference between the Carmine mech pilot and his enemies became smaller as time passed by. This hinted at another form of convergence. Veronica essentially conveyed the belief that if original humanity wished to slay the monsters that tormented them from above, people needed to make difficult sacrifices in order to gain the strength they needed to make a counterattack!

In the absence of better solutions, only monsters could defeat other monsters!

This was Veronica's way of dealing with the apparent truth that might was right!

Chapter 6477 The Ultimate Illegal Mech

The Carmine mechs that Veronica had in mind were designed to help humans fight against monsters.

By monsters, Veronica meant any god pilots, Star Designers, other True Gods, admirals and other warlords that sought to exploit the common folk to advance their own selfish desires!

However, it was far too difficult to raise humans into new generations of god pilots that could effectively launch a counterattack against the schemers and unwitting accomplices that destabilized their society!

If this experiment was successful, then his MW Carmine mechs would become responsible for birthing a lot of god pilots, many of whom previously lived ordinary lives, yet managed to distinguish themselves repeatedly on the battlefield.

Veronica had no expectation at all that most people would amount to anything. Norms that did not undergo formal mech piloting training should generally perform worse than professional mech pilots even with the help of HALM and Partial Convergence Blood Pacts.

Even so, there were always expectations. Those with greater talent, luck or discipline should be able to rise above the rest and excel in their own ways.

How many geniuses comparable to the Chosen Human had humanity missed out upon due to the fact that 96.5 percent of the population was not able to pilot mechs with the help of neural interfaces?

Now that the Carmine System completely eliminated this restriction, Veronica believed that the expanded mech community could welcome the rise of many new heroes whose hidden talents finally became useful!

Those were the true talents that Veronica designed his new Carmine mechs for. HALM and Partial Convergence Blood Pacts were meant to help these raw and uncut gems survive their first years as soldiers. This was when they were at their weakest and most vulnerable as they had not yet developed their potential or proven themselves worthy of greater investment.

Once they managed to survive this vulnerable period and successfully broke through, that was when they would get taken seriously.

They should no longer have any problems with controlling their mechs or beating most of the cannon fodder they encountered in battle.

What they truly had to be careful against was other champions, especially those that fought and honed themselves a lot longer!

Veronica did not expect that high-ranking Carmine mech pilots with poor foundations to be able to win duels against their professional counterparts.

The best way to increase the win rate of the former was by accelerating their growth! As long as their resonance strength was higher than that of their opponents, these expert or ace Carmine mechs should still be able to trounce other experts and aces! In order for Carmine mech pilots to speed up their growth, they still needed to participate in a lot of battles. Demonic cultivation was a process where these pilots could only grow stronger by preying on their defeated opponents.

This was very risky as Carmine mech pilots did not have the luxury of starting over if they ejected their cockpits.

Unlike the Yellow Jacket designs where their oversized organic cockpits or Biodomes essentially served as the cores for the living mechs, the cockpits of his MW Carmine mechs lacked this crucial advantage!

Once the mech frame was lost, the Carmine mech was as good as dead.

The Carmine mech pilots of the Milky Way therefore only had a single chance to make the most out of their piloting careers.

It was not that Veronica wanted to implement a version of the Biodome in her Carmine mech designs, but it was not feasible for several reasons.

The more extensive use of biotechnology increased the logistical burden on the Carmine mechs to an unacceptable level.

Veronica also could not count on Lady Romanda Devos to extend her design philosophy to the Milky Way.

If she had a P.P., then that would give their enemies an incentive to destroy it. There was no way to replace or substitute it as the secretive member of the Cosmopolitan Movement did not have an incarnation equivalent to Veronica in the Milky Way.

It was best to minimize the failure points of his upcoming Carmine mech design by limiting the design team to just Veronica and Master Willix.

While the limitations of the Carmine System would result in a lot of tragedies and setbacks for his future customers in the Milky Way, the harsher penalties for failure should at least draw out the potential of the best of them even further.

None of these Carmine mech pilots could afford to fail!

Only the best of them would be able to rise above their peers and become champions! Once they became high-ranking Carmine mech pilots, their employers should be able to commission a design team to upgrade the corresponding machines into expert. Carmine mechs or greater.

That still wouldn't remove the fundamental problem, but the upgrades should still increase the survival rate for all of these precious and irreplaceable expert and ace Carmine mechs!

could retreat with their machines intact.

As Veronica indirectly outlined her vision by expanding upon her sketches, Master Willix played devil's advocate and thoroughly queried the more questionable points of the bold new proposal.

For example, when Master Willix sketched out a few versions of upgraded Carmine mechs that possessed a few subtle vulnerabilities that might result in catastrophic failures in the cockpit, she posed a very important question in their shared mech designer language.

The Master Mech Designer essentially pointed out that the rate of breakthroughs was largely determined by the rules that governed the behavior of the Kingdom of Mechs.

If the Mech Trade Association wanted to hinder the MW Carmine mechs from producing expert pilots and ace pilots, the mechers could strangle breakthroughs by abusing their control over their Kingdom!

This was indeed serious concern to Ves. The current rules of the Kingdom of Mechs were already restrictive. Mech pilots needed to pass all sorts of invisible character tests in order to trigger a breakthrough process.

Veronica already thought about this potential vulnerability. She would never give the MTA an opportunity to blackmail her or invalidate her vision by changing the rules of the Kingdom of Mechs.

The Cyborg Cat grinned as she hastily sketched two different modular flight systems.

One was based on older but more stable technological paradigms. The other was based on newer and less proven technological advances, much of which originated from research conducted in the Red Ocean.

The cat eventually swiped the older flight system aside and paired the newer one with the proposed MW Carmine mech.

Veronica conveyed her decision to pair her upcoming MW Carmine mech design with the Red Kingdom as opposed to the Kingdom of Mechs!

She was confident that her clout and influence in the Red Ocean was great enough to prevent the Star Designers over there from blocking his insane and highly illegal Carmine mechs.

Of course, she would also have to promise that this mech would never show up in the

Red Ocean.

Master Willix certainly did not expect that the cat would resort to such a radical

solution!

It introduced multiple problems, such as weakening the ability of mech designers in the Milky Way to add their own specializations to the variants of the Carmine mech

designs.

It also prevented Master Willix or other mech designers from applying newer design philosophies that had only been realized in the Kingdom of Mechs as opposed to the

Red Kingdom.

The two used to be one, so they shared the same common base. Unfortunately, starting from the final day of the Survivalist conference, the two intangible Kingdoms had gone their separate ways, thereby causing subsequent advances in mech design to get split up as well.

This was not a big problem for now as only a couple of years had passed, but once a decade or more had passed, the divergence in mech development would become

increasingly more severe!

Veronica could only shrug and scratch her head at this problem. It was not a crippling

problem, just an annoying one.

The only way to truly solve this problem was to connect her MW Carmine mech

designs to the Kingdom of Mechs, but that was unlikely. The Cyborg Cat refused to believe in the goodwill of the Star Designers of the Milky Way, especially since she was not familiar with any of these legendary creators.

Master Willix contemplated the framework that Veronica had expanded upon.

It was only now that it looked viable enough to work at every stage. The combination of HALM, the Partial Convergence Blood Pact, demonic cultivation and the Red Kingdom should result in a deviously effective Carmine mech design, but also one that broke a record in terms of MTA violation!

Veronica would cement herself as one of the best innovators but also the worst war

criminals of the MW mech industry!

Countless norms would celebrate her as the Father-, err, Mother of Carmine Mechs!

Many mechs and other worried people would simultaneously curse her for designing exceedingly dangerous mechs that possessed more risk factors than a flimsy light skirmisher!

The danger of piloting his MW Carmine mechs was not small!

All of the aforementioned design applications devised by Veronica could go terribly

wrong.

High Autonomy Living Mechs introduced the risk of machines rebelling against their human masters.

Veronica liked to believe that her living mechs were all honest and obedient to their human mech pilots, but that was an unrealistic expectation. A conflict between Carmine mechs and their human pilots was bound to happen sooner or later. Partial Convergence Blood Pact came with the risk of contamination of the Carmine mech pilot by his Carmine mech.

This meant that the personality of the pilot might get overridden by the personality of his own machine, resulting in a partial or complete loss of identity!

The transcendence glow altered the behavior of the Carmine mech pilots, particularly

during stressful and dangerous situations, and encouraged them to make reckless decisions that they would otherwise reject!

Veronica feared that repeated exposure to the transcendence glow would indoctrinate

the Carmine mech pilots and permanently distort their personalities and attitude towards combat.

After a decade of hard fighting, would the pilots still retain enough of their former

selves to constitute the same individuals?

Demonic cultivation brought its own obvious risk factors. It was not for nothing that the mere idea of it was enough to disgust a lot of people, particularly the old guard who originally rebelled against the Five Scrolls Compact.

While Veronica tried to make sure to set up her upcoming Carmine mech designs to disincentivize mass slaughter and other dishonorable behavior, this was not a foolproof method.

It was still possible to 'hack' a Carmine mech and disable this secure measure if a

mech designer or cultivator knew what he was doing.

The Cyborg Cat could only do her best and hope that others would not be able to

jailbreak her Carmine mechs on a wider scale.

Finally, connecting her MW Carmine mechs to the Red Kingdom introduced another

host of problems.

Veronica was pretty sure that distance was not a problem due to the insane properties

of this off-shoot pinnacle work.

However, using the Red Kingdom to support a mech that was solely designed to be

used in the Milky Way might constitute a hostile incursion!

This was a big deal!

Once this connection became exposed, red humanity effectively proved its intention to conduct active sabotage on original humanity.

That would escalate this problem to the highest level!

Even if the Star Designers and the god pilots of original humanity were too far away to launch any counter attacks against red humanity, they could still point their crosshairs at the Oblivion Empire!

Veronica, Helena and their mother would come under an even greater threat! The Cyborg Cat had very little confidence that the natural environment of the Nyxian Gap could protect them against the fury of so many tier 1 galactic citizens. Perhaps... the only way for them to safeguard their lives was by accepting the shelter of the Five Scrolls Compact!

Chapter 6478 Mech Designers Represent

After presenting her MW Carmine mech proposal to Master Willix and receiving her covert feedback, Veronica had set her mind to design the most unrestrained machine of her career up to date.

The new Carmine mech design project had a profound impact on her psyche.

The Cyborg Cat felt that the project broke so many taboos at the same time that she had taken a decisive step towards an unforgivable direction!

If Veronica hadn't committed other professional violations in the past, then she would scarcely be able to bring herself past this mental threshold!

While the cat believed she was doing the right thing in the end, it was still difficult for her to bear this feeble justification.

The incarnation shook her head. There was not much point in procrastinating over her decision. Her motivations were righteous and her logic was sound. She believed in her vision, and as long as that was the cause, she would still hold on to her creed as a mech designer.

Mech designers existed to serve mech pilots.

Veronica's work would still abide by this commandment, even though her work put them in much greater peril than before.

With at least 4 huge risk factors, she could not prevent her upcoming Carmine mechs from endangering her future customers as well as the people around them. Even if the probability of anything going wrong was less than 1 percent, the popularity and attraction of Carmine mechs was so high that they would undoubtedly take the Milky Way by storm!

When a huge number of Carmine mechs quickly got produced and sold to gullible norms that did not fully understand the risks, then a lot of people were bound to experience both joy and suffering.

Veronica had little control over what people would do with her machines. Perhaps she could program additional restrictions and refine the incentive structure of her MW Carmine mechs to a much greater degree, but it was not a good idea to overcomplicate the matter.

She even thought about constructing a more precise and well-defined incentive and punishment structure modeled after the Mech Designer System.

This new System would give both the Carmine mech pilots and their living partners clear rules and guidance on what they needed to do to maximize their growth. However, an overly complicated System might cause these pilots and their living mechs to become too dependent on guidance from a third party. If they ceased to

think by themselves, then the mech pilot would ultimately fail to develop the extraordinary willpower that was necessary for them to accomplish great deeds.

It was best to keep her design as simple as possible, especially when the Cyborg Cat already planned to incorporate a lot of new and experimental features.

Before Veronica concluded her initial discussion on her ambitious mech proposal, Master Willix asked an important question.

"What codename will you choose for this project of yours?"

The silvery cat paused in thought. "This mech... breaks almost every boundary set by the MTA and the mech industry of this galaxy. It allows norms to pilot mechs. It grants unprecedented autonomy to mechs. It partially merges the man and machine ahead of schedule. It encourages breakthroughs by forcing mech pilots to be more decisive. It also answers to the Red Kingdom as opposed to the Kingdom of Mechs. Since this singular project is associated with so many egregious violations... I'll just call it the Rule Breaker Project."

The name granted a definite 'bad boy vibe' to the mech design project. Anyone who heard this label would definitely make the assumption that the mech design implied nothing good!

This was exactly what Veronica wanted to achieve. She did not want to treat this mech design project as a routine job, but rather a massive deviation from her normal design process.

The mech designs that she would prepare for this highly illegal project ignored all of the laws and taboos of the Mech Trade Association.

The very existence of the Rule Breaker Project was nothing less than a giant middle finger towards the MTA!

Veronica briefly felt rather guilty about it. She had her complaints about the MTA, but that did not change the fact that she benefited a lot from its regime.

From providing a stable market and industry environment for destructive war machines, to keeping the peace in human civilization for over 4 centuries, the power superinstitution had undoubtedly done a lot of good for everyone.

The MTA's overall policies were highly slanted towards the weak and ordinary citizens of the human race.

Sure, the mechers also looked down on space peasants, but the former never egregiously mistreated the latter.

When Veronica used to be weak, the MTA was her savior.

Now that she had become stronger, she finally began to suffer under the MTA's

suppression of rival players.

No matter what, the Mech Trade Association was still a hegemonic power that did not tolerate any challengers to its authority other than the Common Fleet Alliance.

It was not just third parties such as the Oblivion Empress and the first-rate superstates that chafed under the reign of the Big Two.

The new guard within the ranks of the Association that got squeezed out of the true seats of power by the old guard also got treated like losers!

This created a faultline within the MTA that the Oblivion Gate Consortium sought to take advantage of. If this internal division did not exist, then Veronica believed her mother wouldn't be so bold as to plot the downfall of the Big Two.

Whatever the case, Veronica tried not to think too hard on how culpable she would be for all of the deeds that her mother and her fellow conspirators planned to commit. As far as the little Cyborg Cat was concerned, she was just a mech designer. Her only job was to fulfill her commission and present a set of Carmine mech designs. What people did after she handed over her work was none of her business. She had already satisfied her conscience by adding a basic incentive structure to discourage

unnecessary killing.

After the two mech designers discussed the preparations they needed to make in order to guarantee smooth progress after they formally embarked on the project, Master Willix gave one more word of advice to her junior.

"Our works are not merely products. They are also statements. The Carmine mechs that you and I are about to design for the countless norms that reside in the Milky Way have never been served by any mech designer in the past. We, but primarily you, will be the first to communicate to them with a level of respect usually afforded to mech pilots. This is a novel privilege to them, and I am certain that our message will leave a profound impression on their minds."

The Cyborg Cat tilted her feline head. "What are you trying to say, Master?"

"Our upcoming works are destined not to conform to the rules set by the MTA, but I hope that you will still do your best to ensure that your Carmine mechs uphold the honor and integrity of our profession. Do not get too absorbed by the power and possibilities of your Rule Breaker Project and treat your potential customers as test

subjects."

It just so happened that Veronica precisely began to regard the many future users of her upcoming Carmine mechs as test subjects.

It couldn't be helped as she planned to conduct multiple simultaneous live experiments on features that she had not yet tested in reality.

Veronica had done this so often in the past that this mindset came natural to her. It was not until Master Willix felt the need to give this reminder that the cat evaluated

her current attitude.

"I don't see a way to think about our customers as anything other than test subjects." The Cyborg Cat honestly admitted. "I mean, it is not as if I can reduce the scope of the Rule Breaker Project and design a watered down version that is safer but also has much less potential. We don't have the time to conduct safety studies. I can only put my trust in our design capabilities and hope that our end results satisfy our expectations without producing too many accidents."

The Master Mech Designer understood just as well as the cat how the circumstances did not permit a better process.

"Do the best you can, Veronica. You do not only represent yourself, but all of the mech

designers in both galaxies. Do not tarnish the reputation and dignity of our profession to the people of the Milky Way. As long as you remember that we are their servants as opposed to their masters, other mech designers will acknowledge your sincerity and try to forgive your many... transgressions. They may give you unexpected support when it matters, so do not dismiss the value of doing what is right."

The MTA did not stand for all of the mech designers of original humanity. There were far more professionals out there that did not have a good relationship with the overbearing superorganization.

This may include other Star Designers, many of whom carried a lot of political weight.

in human society!

Veronica slowly nodded, expressing her willingness to follow the Master's advice.

Now that she had concluded most of her immediate business in the Milky Way, the Cyborg Cat turned back to her desk terminal and began to look up academic literature relevant to her Rule Breaker Project.

She came up with a lot of new and subversive features for her upcoming Carmine

mechs.

While she was confident she could design all of them from scratch, who knew if there were other mech designers who conducted research into comparable mech systems.

It was always faster to get stuff done if she copied someone else's homework.

At the very least, referencing the work of others should at least strengthen the theoretical basis for her upcoming design applications.

Meanwhile, back in the Red Ocean, Ves began to wrap up his business trip to the Yernstall Central Star Node.

Ves had fulfilled most of the goals he set for this visit. While he could stay in his office

at the Astral Octagon for another week and exercise his duties as the chief councilor

of the Upper Council of the Red Collective, he saw little value in doing stuff in person. The only advantage of doing all of this work himself was that he would get to know the officials working for the Red Collective on a personal level.

While it was important for Ves to expand his network within the Red Collective if he

wanted to strengthen his influence over it, he had too many other priorities to attend to. Politicking did not come naturally to him. It was better to delegate this responsibility to his chief of staff, who appeared to be more than capable of forging new connections with her new colleagues.

Of course, letting Eliza Mo Ragadan do all of this work would make Ves overly

dependent on her continued service to him, but he was not too worried. Eliza's authority originated from himself. She would never be able to borrow his clout and authority without his sanction. She had also joined the Larkinson Clan, so Ves did not have too many concerns about her loyalty.
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If it turned out that he had misjudged her, then Ves would just treat this as another life

lesson.

Just a day after the Evolution Witch's shocking announcement, Ves boarded the Tarrasque once more.

Freshly repaired and upgraded, the slightly expanded Bluejay Fleet slowly departed from the orbit of La Reine in full view of the public.

Ves was sure that a lot of enthusiastic ship owners would have commanded their

vessels to form an honor guard or just create a lane in respect for his latest and most significant contribution to red humanity.

Already, so many people had begun to take their brand-new Yellow Jackets for a spin

and already fell in love with their machines... as well as the mech designer that made it

all possible.

Unfortunately, the security risks were too high to approve a bombastic sendoff. Not a single starship or other vessel hovered anywhere close to the flight trajectory submitted by the Bluejay Fleet.

It was only after the entire fleet transitioned into FTL travel that Yernstall gradually

returned to normal.

Chapter 6479 The Best Carmine Mech Pilots

The journey from Yernstall to New Constantinople proceeded without incident so far. The Red Association and more notably the Red Collective had already deployed more scout vessels than last time to keep a close eye on the star systems situated in between.

Not only were they trying to make sure that the cosmopolitans and the native aliens wouldn't be able to sneak close to launch another ambush, the RA and the RC also sought to hunt down the remnants of the enemy forces that had snuck behind enemy lines two weeks prior.

Not all of the phase lords and alien warships had crossed the border and returned to alien space. This concerned Red Two... err, Red Three a lot as these enemies could inflict a lot of damage on supply convoys and unprepared warfleets transiting to the border regions.

The current suspicion was that many of the phase lords and alien warships had fallen back to a nearby pocket space.

There were still many pocket spaces spread throughout the entire dwarf galaxy. Red humanity had only mapped out a fraction of them as they almost gave no clues of their existence.

These phase whale enclaves posed a substantial hidden threat to red humanity. Uncovering them and collapsing them had always been in high priority, but it was easier said than done.

Only expensive and specialized scanning devices could detect these well-hidden pocket spaces, but space was so vast that it took far too many vessels to manually scan so many star systems in a reasonable amount of time.

The lack of assets and the urgency of the Red Tide Offensive diverted far too many soldiers and mobile assets to the frontlines. The only vessels the RA and RC could spare for this chore was dispatching a lot of cheap easily mass producible frigates.

As small and fragile they may be, they possessed a considerable advantage in speed and numbers.

While it was mostly the heavy cruisers and battleships that got showcased in the news articles, it took too much time and resources to fabricate them on a large scale, especially since red humanity's industrial capacity was still deficient.

This meant that frigates and destroyers happened to be the most numerous warships fielded by humans. They were handy little ships that possessed enough power to defend themselves but still remained affordable enough that losing a dozen of them practically did no harm.

Unfortunately, everything had a price. The smaller escort ship classes offered much

less room for weapon systems, so their ability to punch above their weight and take down larger enemies was very limited. They had a lot more in common with mechs than capital ships, and were only truly suited to fend off strike craft other escort vessels in most cases.

The only notable exception to this rule was warships equipped with spinal-mounted
cannons.

The Mennis Rebode, the latest RF destroyer to join the Bluejay Fleet, was exactly such a vessel.

During the journey, Ves contacted the recently promoted Commodore Zonrad Reze and managed to get his hands on the basic design schematics and technical specifications of the siege-oriented destroyer.

While the documents transmitted by Sigrund mostly contained publicly available information, the additional details provided Ves with enough understanding of what the Ygritte Balsen-class vessel was capable of under ideal circumstances.

The ship only truly possessed one big gun, but if fully charged, the Mennis Rebode may actually fire a shot powerful enough to breach through the Tarrasque's azure energy shield and damage her exterior plating!

This was great for creating gaps in the defenses of enemy assets.

Even if the Mennis Rebode was not powerful enough to strike down enemy warships with a single blast, other mechs and warships could launch follow-up attacks based on the opening created by the transphasic hyper laser spinal cannon.

This was highly respectable damage for a destroyer that was only a fraction as large or expensive as the Tarrasque!

"It's a pity it takes too damn long to charge the main cannon."

The Mennis Rebode had to charge her spinal cannon for at least 6 minutes to fire a massive laser beam.

The upsides were that the spinal cannon was remarkably precise and accurate for a weapon of this exaggerated scale.

The naval designers paid a lot of attention to this as they originally envisioned the Mennis Rebode to serve as a siege weapon in smaller flotillas.

Most frigates and destroyers possessed enough firepower to swat down mechs and beat up warships of the same sizes.

Unfortunately, they usually lacked the punch to bring down fortified space stations and groundside fortresses.

This was where ships like the Mennis Rebode came in. As long as the target was stationary, her spinal cannon could blast open the defenses at a luxurious range that ruled out nearly all forms of direct counterattacks.

If the target happened to be a large moving starship, then the Mennis Rebode could still play a useful role, though the probability of missing was much higher.

It was actually better for the Mennis Rebode to fire her spinal cannon at quarter power in these cases. The higher attack frequency reduced the consequences of missing the target while also exerting more pressure.

All in all, Ves could have used this vessel during the Battle of Mazepan. The Mennis Rebode was able to launch precise, long-ranged attacks that inflicted damage comparable to tactical weapons of mass destruction.

It would have been great if the Bluejay Fleet had an entire squadron of Ygritte Balsem-class destroyers at its disposal!

If Ves had a dozen of these destroyers on hand during the last battle, then the defenses of those annoying arche phase lords would have been cracked much sooner!

"Warships can still be useful, isn't that right, Lucky?"

"Meow." The gem cat yawned as he aimlessly floated around.

Ves rolled his eyes and turned to Vector Loban, who had entered the design lab in order to provide an update on various matters.

"So I no longer have any pressing assignments, is that correct?"

"That is true, Ves. The Evolution Witch has issued no further demands to you, so you are free to do what you want as long as you make sure to allocate enough time to fulfill your duty to the Red Collective. You are currently regarded as her agent within the new organization, so many of your actions will reflect back to her. So do not neglect your responsibilities and pay attention to what you are saying."

Ves nodded in understanding. "I will make sure to do that. I don't have time to mess around in the Red Collective anyway. There are a bunch of old mech design projects that I really need to complete, and I also have to design a bunch of new Carmine mechs to satisfy the demand of richer and more powerful norms."

He also had to fabricate a custom Yellow Jacket in order to complete a past transaction, but that was a minor chore that he could complete over the course of the

journey.

"It is good that you are not letting your newfound power and authority dominate your attention. You are still a mech designer, so the best way you can continue to make contributions to the war effort is by doing your original job." Vector agreed with Ves' decision before glancing over at the projected design interface. "By the way, what are you planning to design? Is that another Carmine mech? This... is a contradictory design. It not only lacks a Biodome, but it is also based on another low-end mech, although you have chosen a humanoid shape this time. The demand for this mech will not be as great when the Yellow Jacket models are already released on the market." Ves did not expect for the Transhumanist to talk about his draft design for the Rule

Breaker Project.

Perhaps he had been a little careless about working on a mech design that clearly

looked out of place.

However, since Ves dared to work on this mech design in the Red Ocean, he was not

afraid of exposure either.

Who knew how many secret intergalactic communication channels that humans from both galaxies had managed to retain.

Not everyone in the Milky Way had obeyed the order to destroy these rare and technologically advanced communication methods. There were bound to be more people than just Ves and his mother that were able to connect with people who

resided in the other galaxy.

This meant that once Ves published the illegal mechs he designed for his Rule Breaker Project in the Milky Way, the people of the Red Ocean would find out sooner or later!

It would be better if Ves exposed this dangerous mech design project to the Red Association right at the start. Being transparent would build a lot of trust and remove

the surprise factor.

"The Oblivion Gate Consortium commissioned a series of special Carmine mechs for use in the Milky Way." Ves briefly explained. "There's a lot of complicated stuff associated with this project, but it shouldn't directly impact the Red Ocean

I can say. The Evolution Witch knows more, so you can go to her if you want more

answers."

all

That was a nonsense statement. Ves was not even able to get a hold of her most of the time. Professor Vector Loban did not have enough status in the Transhumanist Faction to earn the privilege of speaking to a god pilot directly.

He knew that as well, so he decided to drop the conversation even though he already detected a number of alarming clues in the draft design.

"Very well... have you already begun to outline the Carmine mechs for the premium segment of the expanded mech market?"

"Not yet." Ves shook his head. "I have a few tentative ideas in mind, but I still plan to

wait a few weeks to observe how red humans are reacting and making use of the Yellow Jackets. Their strengths and shortcomings will help me design premium Carmine mechs that are capable of filling in some of the gaps that the Yellow Jackets cannot cover. I don't have enough market information at the moment to define the premium Carmine mechs that our target audience truly needs."

"That is a prudent approach, but do not wait too long. Demand for Carmine mechs

remains high. It would be a shame if all of the talented and better trained elites resort to piloting Yellow Jackets because of your slow progress."

"Every norm starts out from scratch, Vector. Perhaps there are norms that have spent

a lot of time on playing virtual mech games, but you know as well as I do that most of the piloting skills can't be transferred over due to the highly simplified control systems." "You are correct, but we have already found that there is one broad group of people that are able to adapt faster to piloting Carmine mechs. Their preexisting skillsets, discipline and fighting spirits even allows us to remove two or three years out of the training period needed to transform them into acceptable Carmine mech pilots."

Ves already had a good clue of what sort of people the Transhumanist was talking about.

"Are you talking about the Swordmaidens?"

"Much more than that, Ves. I am speaking of infantry troopers. Any professional soldier trained for infantry combat possesses adequate to excellent fighting skills. The majority are adept at close quarters combat and they have also gained enough proficiency in marksmanship. They know how to fight as a team, they are good at following orders and they understand the importance of hierarchy. Since they do not require too much weapons training to get accustomed to handling the weapons of the Yellow Jacket models, they can spend much of their time on learning how to control the machines themselves. This does not require 5 or 10 years as long as the training is focused enough. Best of all, there are so many infantry troopers that we can quickly raise a large amount of Carmine mech regiments that can be made battle ready in just.

2 or 3 years. We plan to allocate more Carmine mechs to these soldiers and future Carmine mech pilots."

That actually sounded really fantastic. Prioritizing shipments of Carmine mechs to

already trained and capable infantry soldiers was a good way to reduce the amount of years it took to flood the frontlines with cheap and semi-disposable Carmine mechs!

Chapter 6480 Infantry Conversion

The people of the Red Ocean learned pretty soon that giving Carmine mechs to completely untrained civilians was a big waste.

It was not impossible to train them into effective combatants, but the time it took to instill so many essential fighting skills and theories was so long that the Red War might already be over by the time these folks could prove themselves on the

battlefield.

Clever people quickly realized that by prioritizing existing infantry soldiers, they could not only shave valuable years off that lengthy training period, but also gain a large amount of obedient and disciplined Carmine mech pilots!

More importantly than that, these pilots might not all be blooded, but their prior training should have already hardened them for warfare. This meant that they were much less likely to lose their morale and trigger a premature rout.

If Carmine mech pilots did not possess the courage to stand their ground when the battle went against their favor, then they were practically useless in the current war. Compared to ordinary civilians who were still not used to the reality of warfare, infantry soldiers could at least be counted upon to know when to stand their ground and when to retreat.

This was why a lot of states had suddenly begun to reserve a lot of Yellow Jackets for their newly raised Carmine mech units.

Many infantry soldiers had already begun to sign up for a coveted transfer to these experimental units. Only the best and most qualified among them would earn a chance to become military Carmine mech pilots!

Ves paid loose attention to this new and emerging trend. Since many states were currently under martial law, it was not that difficult to divert a lot of Carmine mech production to service military needs as opposed to private demand.

This made it a lot harder for civilians and private mech forces to get their hands on Carmine mechs. This subsequently tempered the insane demand spike as the civilians could not justify why they should get their Carmine mechs first before actual soldiers. After all, ever since a consensus had emerged that every Carmine mech pilot had to volunteer for war duty, a lot of people who initially

reacted with great enthusiasm towards the Yellow Jackets had suddenly grown a lot less eager to obtain their machines.

Ves could clearly see that this was Red Association meddling at work. With a number of deft policies, the mechers elegantly solved the problem of excess demand and rising dissatisfaction stemming from an inability to obtain a Yellow Jacket.

Hopefully this would keep the masses satisfied for a few years. After all, unless they

were rich or possessed good connections, it was really not possible for common folk to fulfill their dreams of piloting actual mechs.

"What about the Jacket Commander?" Ves asked his personal assistant. "Many people are talking about the Yellow Jacket models and Carmine mechs in general, but there is hardly any mention of the command mech in the news. Are they selling on a proportional basis, or is everyone ignoring the Jacket Commander because it isn't shiny enough?"

Gavin Neumann shrugged. "The sales of the Jacket Commander are currently meager, but we do not expect this to stay this way. Once our customers know what the Yellow Jackets are capable of, they will eventually acknowledge the value of the Jacket Commander. The purpose of this command mech still exists even if the Yellow Jackets are piloted by trained infantrymen."

No matter what, infantry troopers that only spent a few years in Carmine mech boot camp could never develop all of the necessary skills. They would still remain rookies in many aspects related to mech piloting. It was fully worthwhile to allow a professional mech pilot to accompany them in a purpose-built Jacket Commander.

"If sales of the Jacket Commander doesn't pick up in the next few months, then consider lowering the price and marketing it more aggressively. I really don't want to see Carmine mechs flying around like headless chickens on the battlefield because infantry soldiers don't know how to orient and navigate in a space environment" Infantry soldiers should not have too many issues with acclimating to landbound mech combat, but it was a different story if they were piloting Carmine mechs in space.

Real mech pilots devoted entire years in the mech academy to learn physics and orbital mechanics, and how to apply these stuffy theories in practice by piloting spaceborn mechs in reality or in simulation programs.

The younger the mech cadets began to learn how to fight in space, the more fluently they would be able to navigate space battles.

Infantry soldiers who were already past their adolescence would have a harder time picking up the necessary skills as they had already exited their rapid growth stages. This was why they needed the guidance of a trained and seasoned mech pilot that knew his business in a space environment.

"I will pass on your recommendations to the LMC." Gavin affirmed.

"How much production is the LMC handling by itself?"

"Very little on a proportional basis. The LMC has essentially lost control over the production and proliferation of the Yellow Jackets and the Jacket Commanders to a lesser degree. So many mech manufacturers have licensed our new mech designs so they are free to dominate the mech market and tap into a much larger customer base that had previously been neglected. Every large and respectable mech company has realized how crucial it is for 'their' Yellow Jackets to capture the hearts of all of the norms that they previously treated as bystanders. If the mech manufacturers are too slow, they will miss out a critical chance to develop a good 'first impression' to a brand-new customer base."

That made a lot of sense. The LMC did not have to join this rat race as it was the only mech company that produced and sold the most original versions of the Yellow Jackets, but other mech companies were eager to stand out from the competition! Ves briefly browsed the galactic net. He could already find brand-new entries of hastily modified variants of the first commercial Carmine mechs. More third-party variants were bound to flourish in the next month as many people sought to improve upon the base models!

"Okay, I understand. Let these companies play with my mech designs. They are already out there, and we will receive the appropriate fees even if we have deliberately set them at a low level to encourage proliferation. Enough about the Yellow Jackets. Is there anything else on the agenda?"

Gavin nodded. "Another matter has come up, boss. Vice Director Maria Abselon wishes to enter into a discussion with you on how to handle all of the phasewater organ projects that you have foisted onto the Larkinson Biotech Institute's lap. According to her words, she believed it would take far too long to research and decipher the working principles of all of the phasewater organs that you have recently acquired. The vice director wants to discuss numerous different possibilities on how to handle your demands. I believe that there is a high probability that she will request that you arrange a collaboration between the Larkinson Biotech Institute and the Red Collective's Phase

Lord Department. She is convinced that it will massively cut down the research time and grow artificial new phasewater organs that fully fit your physique. What are your thoughts?"

The idea was sound on the surface, but had one big problem.

Ves would be exposing a large amount of details of his own combat system to third parties.

He did not have enough trust in the collies that worked in the Phase Lord Department to protect his privacy.

Many researchers and others who worked in the Phase Lord Department originally came from other forces such as the RA, RF, Terran Alliance, Rubarthan Pact and more. It should be an expectation that they would leak all of the sensitive information about Ves' true body to the other players.

This might be fine so long as Ves remained friendly with them all, but there may come a time where he had to treat them as his enemies.

If they got their hands on detailed information that described the functioning of all of his phasewater organs, then they could plan out a targeted ambush that may very well claim his life!

"Let us investigate whether we can afford to divert our course to the Reticula Corein System." Ves proposed. "As far as I remember, the Dragon's Den is still parked in orbit of the untamed planet. What's going on with Reticula Corein V anyway?" "The Dragon's Den has indeed remained in place, primarily to conduct research on Solus Gas and how the local exobeasts have adapted to frequent exposure to this exotic substance. The situation on the surface of Reticula Corein V has shifted, but the local garrison reports that the planet remains calm for the most part. The calamity beasts that we have detected so far remain content to stay in their own territories." Ves felt pleased after hearing that. "How is the harvesting of Solus Gas?"

"It is proceeding smoothly, but we are only piling up canisters of this special gas in any

warehouse or cargo hold that is convenient. We have not yet begun to produce a new Larkinson-exclusive mech that utilizes Solus Gas on a wider scale. However, that may be about to change as one of our mech designers is on the cusp of completing our

latest mass production mech design."

"Oh yeah. I remember. Ketis is about to complete her Stormblade Samurai Mark II that is designed for commercialization. We don't intend to use any Solus Gas for commercial products, though."

"Ketis has also designed a variant that is Larkinson-exclusive. The Stormblade Samurai Mark I is still a respectable mech model, but it has already turned into a lastgen mech. Your former protege is eager to equip the Swordmaidens with a relatively affordable but still very modern hyper mech for the rank and file of her mech

legion."

"Hm, that is a good idea. We could use every advantage that we can get, and all of the ad-hoc hyper technology upgrades that our mech designers have applied to our outdated mechs is getting rather annoying."

"When you return to New Constantinople, you should discuss with your wife on diverting more design teams to upgrade all of our outdated mech lines. The fact that we are still relying too much on older mech models that hail from the Phasewater Generation is a travesty. Ketis is doing her Swordmaidens a great service. The rest of you need to respond to the demands of others."

His assistant made a good point. Ves should spend more time on updating other Larkinson-exclusive mech lines, but he was so busy that he might not be able to spare enough time for this chore. He should delegate this task to other design teams as the straightforward upgrades did not necessarily require his personal intervention. "Speaking of Ketis, has she come in touch with the Heavensword?" Ves asked his assistant. "I am 99 percent sure that the autonomous sword that immigrated to our

dwarf galaxy the other day is on its way to a certain Journeyman Mech Designer. When I looked back at the footage and extrapolated the direction of travel, it is pretty obvious that the sword is heading straight to the location of the expeditionary fleet at the time. There is only one swordmaster that is remotely worthy of wielding this blade. If the Heavensword hasn't already arrived, then it should still be on its way." Gavin made a brief check. "The Heavensword has not made a

reappearance. Neither Ketis, the expeditionary fleet or any third parties have discovered the presence of this remarkable weapon. If it is relying solely on warp travel based on the spatial manipulation abilities of a lesser phase whale, then it may take multiple weeks or even months for the sword to traverse all of that distance. Perhaps Ketis can speed up this rendez-vous by boarding a fast courier and try to intercept the weapon in advance." "That is a good suggestion, though I doubt she will agree."