

Mech 4501

Chapter 4501 Distorted Equity

"Hahahaha."

CRACK!

"Hahahahahaha!"

CRAAAACK!

"HAHAHAHAHAHAHA!"

CRACK CRACK CRACK!

Ves had beaten the game!

He opened his arms and welcomed the bolt of lightning raining down from the skies.

The bolt struck his cyborg cat first and immediately lost much of its strength.

Then it passed through Blinky's intangible body. Despite his immaterial nature, the cat managed to swallow and digest much of the weakened lightning bolt.

Whatever was left after passing through these two cat-shaped filters struck Ves' body with the force of a heavy wind.

Though his body could definitely feel the shocks coursing through his mind, body and Spirituality, the destructive energy trying to inflict ruination on him failed in their purpose.

His strongest parts of himself bore the brunt of the assault with nary an injury. This forced the destruction energy to put its focus on his weak points. More and more of it pooled towards his brain, his internal organs and all of the other delicate and fragile bits of himself.

The attacks were incessantly cunning and impossible to evade. An extremely powerful source provided automatic guidance to the lightning bolt attacks so that they always tried to seek out the path of least resistance.

As Ves endured repeated lightning strikes, he figured out more and more of its rules and properties.

The strength of the attacks that filtered through his defensive lines no longer fried his brain cells to an unacceptable degree.

He was able to retain his full faculties under the current load.

In fact, the constant injection of creation energy and the integration of the galactic energies from the Milky Way and the Red Ocean upgraded his cognitive functions with each passing minute!

He could maintain more parallel trains of thought. He could memorize a lot more data points than before. He could accelerate his thinking speed with effort. He could make more observations whenever he looked at something.

His ability to think and process information was constantly moving further and further away from the human baseline. It was rather scary how comprehensively he was improving.

Not just his brain, but even his modified Archimedes Rubal bioimplant was undergoing a qualitative transformation after getting injected with creation energy!

Ves became increasingly more fascinated with the existence and the wondrous properties of creation energy.

He had a feeling that calling it 'creation energy' was a disservice to its true nature. Ves simply did not have the theory and the observation ability to analyze it on a deeper level.

He could only behold its surface appearance and deduce its workings by looking at all of the changes it had brought in its wake.

"It's so familiar, though."

It was definitely related to the spiritual energy attributes he was familiar with. It displayed a lot of familiar characteristics that Ves was accustomed to when he manipulated his own life-attributed spiritual energy.

At the same time, it also showcased characteristics that Ves associated with universal life energy.

This became most evident when he looked at how the creation energy handled his self-inflicted injuries.

As his open wound on his chest started to course with unnatural lightning and other energies, the power of creation not only mended what was broken, but conjured matter without repurposing it from the other parts of his body!

Ves could see how it only took a relatively small quantity of creation energy to produce brand-new organic cells.

His injured and diminished Jutland organ slowly became whole as organic tissue slowly grew out of the injured side.

Not only did this regeneration restore what was missing, but also strengthen a vulnerability that allowed the injury to happen in the first place!

Evolution was taking place in real-time as guidance from either an unconscious part of himself or the entity responsible for the lightning storm caused his Jutland organ to develop numerous new mutations.

One of those biological changes entailed the formation of a thin but hard bone covering that enveloped the entire Jutland organ!

No longer would a powerful stab from a sharp weapon be able to nick the Jutland organ without impunity!

Ves became both horrified and fascinated by these changes. Though he accepted these modifications because they were helpful to his own survival, he was put off by how little control he had over the entire process.

The creation energy did not ask for his explicit approval.

The creation energy did not listen to his input.

The creation energy did not give him a chance to supply his own designs or specifications.

Instead, it acted like a rogue human augmentation surgeon. Just like Dr. Jutland, the creation energy or its guiding intelligence implemented far-reaching operations that radically changed his body as well as the more intangible parts of himself!

The only reason he didn't freak out and try to resist the intrusive changes with all of his might was because he recognized that this was ultimately a benign process.

"An upgrade is an upgrade. Whether it comes from me or another developer is not too important at the moment."

Ideally, he would like to exert precise control over every augmentation of himself. He was tired of letting others change him against his will.

The current circumstances left him with no other choice, though. If the creation energy did not do its job, then his body, mind and Spirituality wouldn't be able to grow strong enough to keep pace with the gradually improving strength of the ongoing lightning punishment.

"How come you are still ramping up after all of this time?! Aren't you tired of raining down so many lightning bolts? How much energy are you willing to waste on poor little me?!" Ves asked the dark and stormy clouds.

CRAAAACK!

"Can you communicate in a way that is different from striking me with your energy?!"

CRAAAAAAACK!

"Urgh!"

The more lightning bolts rained down on him, the more he could understand the possibilities and limitations of creation energy.

Ves found it odd that it did not appear from the beginning, but only came into existence after the incoming destruction energy had done its job and inexplicably transformed into its polar opposite.

This phenomenon reminded him of the theory of yin and yang that his eldest sister Helena had once talked about. According to her, opposite elements shared an intricate relationship. They were two sides of the same coin, and were therefore able to cooperate with each other in ways that sounded counterintuitive.

"I don't have the theoretical background to explain why all of this is happening."

This frustrated him as he was a curious mech designer by nature.

Fortunately, this wasn't the first time he was stumped by a phenomenon that far exceeded his level of understanding.

Since he couldn't decipher what was taking place, he shifted his priorities.

"How can I take advantage of this situation?"

He thought about the duality of the lightning storm sent by an influence that was greater and more powerful than anything he could imagine.

Destruction and creation. Death and life. Decay and rebirth.

On and on the repetitive cycle continued. The lightning storm became less of a punishment mechanism and more like a reward mechanism now that Ves had found a way to cope with the more harmful elements of the incoming lightning strikes.

Ves found that to be an odd idea, but the stronger he became, the more he embraced this strange idea.

"It's... as if the justice enforced by the lightning storm only applies to the weak." He uttered.

He gained a frightening glimpse of the ideology of the source of his lightning baptism.

Those who succumbed to the power of destruction were undeserving of any mercy or sympathy.

They were the dregs who toyed with powers beyond their comprehension and suffered the consequences of overreaching.

If they died over the course of their punishment, they were guilty.

"As for those like me..."

According to the increasingly more detailed impressions he was able to glean from the storm clouds, people like him didn't suddenly turn innocent if they happened to survive the lightning strikes.

A mass murderer was still a mass murderer.

However, there was a sense of... respect towards those who could endure the lightning baptism. As long as Ves was able to pull himself through this inescapable judgment, the authority behind the lightning storm would absolve him from any guilt!

The underlying message was fairly clear.

"The rules no longer apply to the strong."

It was a profoundly flawed and primitive stance to his modern sensibilities, but a part of him resonated with this idea.

Besides, the fact that the lightning storm adhered to this ideology was an advantage to him at the moment!

Ves just had to make sure that he remained strong and competent enough to take whatever this lightning storm could throw at him in order to earn his absolvment!

While he was a lot more confident than before in his ability to survive this ordeal, he was not satisfied with sitting back and letting the lightning strikes shock his body as if he was submitting himself to a particularly unorthodox electric massage technique.

"I can do more with this." He frowned.

When Ves replaced the mindset of an unjust victim with the mentality of a mech designer, he began to view the current processes from a different perspective.

"The lightning storm is acting like an engine of evolution." Ves affirmed. "The destruction component of the lightning bolt is like a force that weakens my entire being, with a special emphasis on my weak points. The creation component of the lightning bolt is a force that repairs and improves upon all of the damage that I have suffered earlier, allowing me to resist the next attacks with greater ease!"

That wasn't all. Increasing his resilience was only one of the effects of the lightning strikes. The creation energy was capable of inducing more complex changes such as improving his cognitive functions and dramatically expanding the technical specifications of his cranial implant.

The best part about all of this was that Ves did not even need to know any complicated theories and design any of the improvements in advance! A higher authority already took care of all of the difficult work!

This suggested to him that as long as he could direct creation energy in a more purposeful manner, he could make use of it as an exceptionally powerful resource to realize powerful augmentations that were normally impossible for him to make.

He looked at his transforming cyborg cat that had seamlessly grown a copy of his Jutland organ!

Ves could have never imagined that his living divine artifact could possess its own Jutland organ.

He had thought about doing this before, but he did not possess the technical expertise, resources and advanced medical equipment to produce this result.

"However... the lightning storm doesn't care about any of these limitations. It is so powerful and so mutable that it can produce anything it needs on the spot. To the weak, it is the most terrible engine of destruction. To the strong, it is the most wonderful engine of creation!"

Ves became fixated on the latter as he made a powerful realization, one that shocked him more than all of the lightning strikes he endured!

"This is the closest manifestation of the legendary mech touch that I have ever experienced!"

Each lightning bolt that struck him from above was like a celestial tap from a giant and unnaturally long finger.

Each moment of contact was like a brief workshop session.

Each shocking experience made him stronger and more capable.

A grin appeared on his face.

"If this is the case... what if I can hijack the workshop where I am being worked upon? What if... I exert more control over my ongoing evolution process?"

He had already confirmed that it was possible for him to do so. Since he was able to upgrade his cyborg cat by granting it a miniature Jutland organ, what else could he do if he let his imagination go wild?

He looked at his incarnations and his own body. When he analyzed himself through Gloriana's perspective, he spotted countless different shortcomings and suboptimal implementations.

The lightning storm didn't seem to be interested in addressing all of these issues. It was capable of doing so much, but its lack of greater intent meant that it was squandering far too much of its potential.

"No more! If you won't put your power to good use, then I will!"

His passion and his imagination became stoked by all of the possible changes he could make!

"I'm going to need more tools."

Chapter 4502 All You Can Eat Buffet

Ves did not know how long this lightning baptism was supposed to last.

He had the vague idea that it was far from done with enacting retribution for his many alleged misdeeds, but he could not guarantee that it would last long enough for him to go through his entire wish list.

This forced him to structure his list so that he could realize his most essential augmentations.

In order to do so, he first had to figure out what he wanted to improve the most.

"I'm a mech designer, so it makes sense that I improve my ability to design mechs."

This could be done through many ways, from inducing his altered Archimedes Rubal bioimplant to elevating its technical capabilities to installing a second cranial implant into his head!

However, Ves did not use the tools he retrieved from his Unending Regalia to drill a hole through his skull right away.

As much as he trusted in the lightning baptism to fix any damage that he inflicted on himself, he was not sure whether he could get back everything that he lost.

"It's like replacing a memory chip. If I destroy the chip, I can put it back together, but I won't be able to retrieve the data that it used to store."

What if poking around in his brain resulted in the loss of essential knowledge? What if he lost entire Skills and Sub-Skills because of his reckless actions? What if he lost the motor skills that allowed him to work with the tools he used to craft his mechs and products?

Ves couldn't afford to impair his mech design capabilities in any way, so he shied away from executing any plans that centered around manipulating his brain and spine!

It was disappointing for him to rule out the improvements he needed the most, but he recognized that he shouldn't be too greedy.

The ongoing lightning baptism had already boosted his design and research capabilities by a substantial degree. He was so far removed from the level of a typical Journeyman that there was no proper word to describe his current state.

He thought about other essential improvements that he could apply to himself. They had to be useful enough to matter but safe enough to avoid any permanent damage or reduction in capabilities.

He looked down at his missing lower left leg. Ves had repurposed a portion of his biomass in order to supply the organic parts for his cyborg cat, but who said that the sacrifice had to be permanent?

He originally intended to wait until the crisis back in reality had blown over before he commissioned a replacement leg from the Larkinson Biotech Institute.

However, now that he entered a unique situation where he had access to a constant supply of extremely high-grade creation energy, he was convinced he could do better!

"The question now is what I want in place of my missing lower leg?"

He could try to redirect the creation energy to regenerate his original leg. This was great for pretending that nothing had happened once he finally exited the System Space.

He immediately shook his head. "This is the most boring option."

He would much rather augment it in a way that made it much more powerful and much more useful than before.

"The only question now is whether I want to make it mechanical, biological or both."

A biological leg would complete his body in a way that allowed his entire physical structure to improve in ways that corresponded to the evolutionary processes of the indigenous alien races.

The phase whales came to mind as they eschewed conventional technology in favor of biotechnology.

"There are good reasons for that. This is probably the orthodox method of transcending into godhood in the tradition of the Red Ocean."

Did he want to follow the indigenous tradition? Not really. It was foreign to him and did not match his inclinations. He was a mech designer, not a phase whale, and he needed to remember this essential truth.

When he listened to his heart, he developed a much more different idea on what he should do about his missing limb.

He glanced up at his cyborg cat that was still absorbing lightning attacks like a champ.

"The fusion between flesh and metal can often produce better results than sticking to one of them. The synergies that I can produce by combining their advantages of both may be a lot more useful to me. I just have to decide the focus of my cybernetic leg."

He wanted a limb that could aid in battle.

He wanted a limb that could help him survive difficult encounters.

He wanted a limb that could provide helpful assistance in his attempts to either design or build his works.

"I know what to do." He declared.

He wasted no further time. He picked up his tools and began to rip off armor plating and other parts from his Unending Regalia.

He tried to take away as little as possible. He did not take away too much material as he just wanted enough to be able to set a direction.

"Now for the biological ingredients."

He no longer needed to use his knife to cut away parts of his flesh anymore. Part of the evolutionary process that he had undergone was gaining much more active control over his body.

He concentrated hard to the point where the stump of his left leg started to squirm.

"Ahhh. This hurts!"

A leg bone slowly poked out of his stump as Ves tried his best to cannibalize his own biomass to regenerate his leg piece by piece!

Even though he only possessed a shallow understanding of how a human leg and foot was put together, Ves only needed to supply the intent in order for the creation energy to shape the available biomass into an intricate biological structure.

As for the flesh and bone that Ves had cut away from the existing parts of his body? The creation energy that coursed through his flesh and bones slowly regrew the parts he had taken away.

"Hahahaha!"

So what if he didn't have access to any ingredients? As long as the supply of creation energy remained intact, he could generate as much raw materials as he needed!

Of course, the speed of production left a lot to be desired. Converting energy into matter was always a difficult and lopsided transaction. It took a humongous amount of energy to create a tiny bit of matter. If not for the fact that creation energy was so powerful and high-end, it might have taken weeks or months for Ves to regenerate all of his missing biotissue.

Ves even developed the notion that if this lightning baptism went long enough, he could essentially form an entire biomech by continually cutting off pieces of himself!

"I can think about that later. First, I need to make more essential improvements."

Although he did not have a solid and precise design in mind, he had intent, and that was enough.

He copied many of the concepts and design solutions that he applied to his cyborg cat on his new limb.

By growing an organic inner core before surrounding it with a metallic shell, he would be able to reform just enough of a complete body to make his blood circulation whole again.

If he resorted to a limb that was 100 percent mechanical, then his blood circulation would stop short of reaching it. That would be bad because his metallic leg would be treated as a foreign object instead of a core part of his body.

Once enough flesh and bone had grown out of the original stump, he tried to restrain the creation energy as best as possible.

The autopilot that was directing its work tried its best to 'complete' the regeneration of his lower left leg, so Ves wasn't able to stop its efforts for long.

"It can't go against its own nature!"

He had to work quickly. He began to pick up lots of different internal parts that he had taken from his Unending Regalia and placed them on different spots of his half-regenerated leg.

The creation energy smoothly attached them to his naked flesh, just as he expected.

Not only that, but the parts themselves also changed and expanded as he continued to direct his intent towards the process.

Although he had no certainty that his attempt to construct a working cybernetic leg was proceeding correctly, he just had to trust in the process and have faith that the creation energy would fill all of the gaps that he was missing.

"Ugh, this is definitely the most haphazard design project that I have ever embarked upon. I still don't have a good idea what I will get at the end!"

Ves had to think on the fly and come up with new ideas and design applications on the spot.

He found out that while he was limited by the quality of the parts and materials he had available, that still left him with plenty of possibilities.

In the following hour, he stuffed lots of different miniaturized systems into his cybernetic leg.

He first added a redundant computing system. He wanted a part of his leg to function as a substitute or supplementary data processing and data storage system.

This not only multiplied his ability to process data or retrieve information that he had stored in his body, but also provided him with a backup option in case someone disabled his cranial implant.

It should be a lot harder for outside influences to disconnect him from his Archimedes Rubal bioimplant now that the creation energy had upgraded it and deepened its integration into his brain.

However, Ves could not rule out every possibility. What if an assassin planted a gauss round in his head one day?

"Wait, why leave it there? Why not not create a backup of my brain while I am at it? It's a genius idea!"

It was practically impossible to integrate a redundant brain in a human body without turning the patient crazy, but Ves didn't have to worry about screwing up the procedure under these exceptional circumstances!

"I don't need to make a backup of my entire brain. I just need to add enough brain tissue to store my most important memories and whatever else is essential."

It was a great redundancy plan. Although a part of him was already transitioning into an energy-based life form that had no need for brains to maintain his cognition, he was still a long distance away from reaching the end of this transformation.

His brain still played an essential role, and it was quite dangerous for him to rely on a single point of failure.

"Let's grow a second brain, then!"

Ves had to be clever about it. He not only had to free more space inside the organic part of his cybernetic leg, but also find a way to protect it against damage.

Somehow, he managed to squeeze in enough brain matter to include the elements he wanted the most.

"Oh, I also need to make sure it doesn't develop an independent consciousness."

He did not want his body to get taken over by an alternate Ves that was rooted in his backup brain!

Ves applied changes to his brain matter that hopefully ruled out that possibility.

Once he was happy with this addition, he proceeded to add other features to his leg. Some of them were mechanical in nature while others were based on organic components.

The most interesting additions were those that made use of both flesh and metal to accomplish a unique job.

For example, Ves added a kinetic weapon system to his ankle.

In order to make it as powerful as possible, Ves had to make most of it out of mechanical components.

What was different was the ammunition. In order to make sure he could always generate ammunition in the most remote places, he created a mechanism where his own body would grow and accumulate small spikes made out of organic bone.

This way, anything he ate and digested could be used to replenish his ammunition reserves over time!

The quality and performance of his hidden kinetic weapon would vary depending on his nutrient intake.

In order to make sure he could grow stronger bone spikes, he even went back to his digestion system and made sure his stomach could ingest and process raw metals if necessary!

As he carefully went to work on modifying his own stomach and guts, he momentarily froze as he made a shocking realization.

"Wait... am I turning myself into a humanoid version of Lucky?!"

Chapter 4503 Too Many Augmentations

As soon as Ves made the connection between his current state and Lucky, he became astonished by the similarities.

He never expected that he would be put in a position where he could reproduce Lucky's functionary in this early stage of his career!

A crazy grin appeared on his face.

"Damn, doesn't that mean I can take over Lucky's job and produce my own gems?!"

He had always been dissatisfied with the limited production rate of Lucky's gems. If Ves could make it so that he could produce his own gems, then he no longer needed to cater to the whims of his lazy cat anymore. He could rely on his own 'output' to empower his mechs!

Now that Ves latched onto this idea, he eagerly tried to turn it into a reality!

Unfortunately, his efforts could not keep up with his ambitions.

"Damn!"

He had no choice but to suspend his current activities. He got stuck because he understood far too little how Lucky was able to work. Though it wasn't necessary for him to understand everything, the lack of any foundation meant that he was unable to direct the incoming creation energy to produce the functionality he sought!

"I'm also missing a lot of essential materials."

A lot of advanced and powerful systems required the support of exceptional materials. Ves could not reproduce materials out of nothing. He could only gradually increase the amounts of materials that were already at his disposal such as Unending alloy.

"Oh well."

Ves was only reluctantly able to modify his digestive system so that he would not poison himself to death by putting raw metals in his stomach.

Instead, it would digest the metals that it was strong enough to handle and void the ones that were too tough or troublesome to bother with. He had to make sure that none of the metals got stuck on the way out. He did not look forward to visiting the infirmary one day in order to request the doctors to 'clear' the congestion!

Ves did not have much confidence in the capabilities of the digestive system that he had shaped through his haphazard actions.

He could probably digest most low-grade exotics, but he was iffy about anything better.

"This will probably improve over time. The more my body evolves, the more it can transcend the boundaries of reality."

He could attain much better results if he implemented the same sort of digestive system to his cyborg cat. The divine artifact had absorbed the bulk of all of the exceptional energies, after all. It was much closer to reaching the state of a True God than Ves himself!

Ves turned his attention back to his self-augmentations.

In order to prevent his teeth from breaking if he ever bit on a piece of metal, he strengthened them to an unnatural degree.

Though he didn't expect to be able to chew through mechs as easily as Lucky, the strengthening was sufficient for the time being.

He moved on to adding an energy weapon to his leg.

This time, he decided to integrate a small laser weapon into his big toe. He possessed a great understanding of how energy weapons worked, and he even found a way to fool the creation energy into making tiny luminar crystals!

"It's a good thing I integrated a few luminar crystals in my Unending Regalia."

The laser weapon was incredibly small by necessity, but Ves did not ask for much. He didn't think he would ever have to depend on it to get out of trouble, but who knew what the future might hold.

In the end, Ves stopped with adding any further weapons at this point. He could think of much better ways to make use of the limited internal volume than adding more weapons.

"The CyKin Gun and the CyLas Gun should be enough."

The two names corresponded to the Cybernetic Transphasic Kinetic Ankle Gun and the Cybernetic Transphasic Laser Big Toe Luminar Crystal Gun. Though the names were a bit too unwieldy, he didn't have the time to come up with more elegant labels.

One of the factors that made these compact weapons so powerful was that they were both transphasic in nature.

The galactic energy supplied by the Red Ocean was already making its mark on Ves. Not only was his entire body slowly morphing into a state that allowed him to start integrating minute amounts of phasewater, his intuitive and theoretical understanding of phasewater had also been boosted!

It was as if he had spent years in a foreign country while struggling to learn the local language, only for him to 'get it' one day!

Right now, all of the difficult textbooks about phasewater and transphasic technology that he painstakingly read in the past became a lot more comprehensible than before.

It was as if he had whacked himself with his Hammer of Brilliance and understood all of the theories and associations that eluded him in the past!

"So that is how phasewater works!"

While he had hardly turned into an authority on phasewater, he no longer felt as stupid as before.

This was why he was able to make both of his weapons transphasic in nature.

As for where the phasewater is coming from? The creation energy directly converted a small portion of his blood into phasewater!

This was not as impressive as it sounded. His evolution was not that great, so he estimated that only 0.01 percent of his total blood volume had been converted into phasewater.

Increasing the concentration any further would begin creating health problems that Ves was highly keen on avoiding!

Ves already figured out that the concentration of phasewater was an important variable. He guessed that reaching 100 percent phasewater blood concentration was the end state for many indigenous 'gods'.

"If my guess is right, then the local versions of True Gods are incredibly powerful organic beings that have successfully converted all of their blood into phasewater!"

The fact that pretty much all of the indigenous alien races referred to phasewater as 'godblood' made a lot more sense all of a sudden!

In other words, this was the alien variety of divine ichor!

So what did it say that 0.01 percent of his own blood had turned into phasewater?

"I guess I can pass myself off as a demigod in front of the natives of the Red Ocean."

This was starting to become confusing as humanity already attached the label of a demigod to expert pilots.

"Urgh, I can think about the semantics later."

Ves took a close look at his cyborg cat.

Compared to himself, his divine incarnation was much further ahead in its evolution. He estimated that approximately 5.3 percent of his cyborg cat's total blood volume had transformed into phasewater, and this proportion was slowly rising over time!

"I knew it was a great idea to add blood circulation to my divine artifact."

In any case, the large disparity between himself and his cyborg cat showed how much weaker he was compared to his divine artifact.

Ves had to show a lot more constraint as he continued to work on himself.

"Let's finish the remaining features."

He proceeded to add a lot of systems that might be handy one day.

For example, he added a mineral scanner that would allow him to prospect for ores and metals from the environment.

He also concentrated a lot on life support systems. He added a life support suite that consisted of many small systems that could help keep him alive if he ever got stranded on an untamed planet.

The oxygen extractor could pull out oxygen from both water and air. The moisture extractor could prevent him from dying from thirst. The heat generator could keep him warm in a frozen environment. The refrigeration module could vent a lot of excess heat when it was too hot.

While these features were all useful, they took up a lot of leg real estate. Ves did not have much room left, so he needed to be careful about his remaining choices.

"Let's add a few mobility systems next."

He worked to integrate a miniature antigrav module that could allow him to float and support his entire weight under standard gravity conditions.

He also added small maneuvering thrusters that allowed him to change his trajectory if he ever ended up in deep space.

Now that he had filled up the interior, he proceeded to surround his limb with an exterior that largely consisted of Unending alloy armor plating.

"It will be difficult to hide how powerful it is if I leave it be. It's a good thing I thought about it in advance."

He integrated active and passive ECM systems inside his leg that largely served to hide and obscure its powerful functions.

Yes even extended his original skin over his cybernetic lower leg to camouflage it as a normal leg!

"Hm, this isn't enough to hide all of my new changes."

Though he did not expect to hide his radical transformation from everyone once he returned home, he hoped to avoid attracting as much attention as possible.

He at least needed to ensure that the MTA did not sniff out his extraordinary changes before he grew powerful enough to get away with it. Who knew what they might do to him once they discovered that he had 'gone native'!

Now that he had finished creating a new cybernetic leg for himself, he devoted his remaining time to tweaking the rest of his body.

He glanced upwards. The storm clouds had grown more active and violent than ever, but his defensive lines were holding just as well as before.

"The storm is beginning to run its course."

He had a hunch that his 'punishment' had gone past the halfway point and was well into its second half.

"Damn, I need to hurry up before this buffet comes to an end!"

Ves proceeded to poke his own body in many different places to direct the creation energy to augment himself in different ways.

For example, he reinforced his bones with different biometals. He especially paid great attention to reinforcing his skull and his spine as they contained and supported his central nervous system.

He enhanced his flesh to make them stronger, denser and more efficient. He also paid extra care in making his arms more dextrous and precise.

He augmented his senses so that they could switch over to a high sensitivity mode where they functioned similar to organic sensor systems.

His eyes, ears, nose and even his skin could gather and interpret a lot more data than before!

He made sure to keep their sensitivity at normal levels if he did not need all of the extra input.

He did not need a nose that was 10 times sensitive as before when he was doing his business in the bathroom!

After that, he spent his remaining time on the most important body modification of all, which was hiding his transformation as best as possible!

While his CyLeg's ECM systems already helped with blocking surface scans, he needed to do more to hide his shocking changes.

"I need to implement two different solutions. First, I need to be able to block any scanning that can reveal what is really going on inside my body. Second, I need to apply a camouflage layer on my exterior that can fool most observation devices into thinking that I am just an ordinary baseline human.

Neither of these changes were easy to implement, but Ves possessed enough of an understanding in this field to be able to manipulate the creation energy into growing the necessary organic components.

Ves added the two aforementioned systems to his body with great effort and a bit more time than he originally thought.

By the time he was done, he used his Unending Regalia's intact sensor and scanning systems to sweep his own body.

The combat armor failed to decipher his true nature.

Granted, his Unending Regalia was not dedicated towards scouting, but Ves had made sure to integrate it with the best possible miniaturized observation systems that he could obtain at the time.

Was it enough to block the high-powered scans of the MTA? Ves seriously doubted it, but he hoped that as long as he continued to evolve and increase his phasewater blood concentration, his camouflage systems would eventually become good enough.

After implementing these essential changes, Ves wanted to spend his remaining time on adding exterior protection to his body.

Unfortunately, the lightning storm finally had enough of Ves!

As the storm clouds had reached their most oppressive level, a humongous lightning bolt that was twice as powerful as the last one overwhelmed the defensive line and struck Ves' body with plenty of power to spare!

"YEEOUCH! THAT HURTS!"

A part of his body had grown crispy again, though the ensuing creation energy already healed much of his overburdened flesh and organs.

In the meantime, the air above his head rapidly cleared up. The storm clouds dispersed rapidly now that they finally lost their support.

Ves grew incredibly disappointed as his free source of creation energy had disappeared. He wanted this part to go on longer so that he could morph his augmented body even further.

"I had so many ideas!"

As the lightning tribulation finally came to an end, Ves quickly donned his half-functional Unending Regalia while recalling a fat and happy-looking Blinky back into his mind.

After that, he glanced at his cyborg cat that had become much more extraordinary than before!

Already, the connection between him and his divine artifact allowed Ves to sense the huge concentration of power locked within his deceptively small divine artifact.

Yet before Ves could inspect his latest cat any further, his eyes widened in alarm as he noticed that his proud creation was not as stable as he thought.

Powerful energies continued to circulate throughout the cyborg cat's body.

What was especially notable was how much Worclaw energy its miniature jutland organ had produced after absorbing and converting so much excess energies!

"Damnit, my cat will blow up if this goes any further!"

Ves tried to command his new incarnation to vent the excess Worclaw energy, but his cat had so little control over it that it would drain itself completely if it opened the floodgates.

He looked around. He could command his new cyborg cat to expend all of its excess Worclaw energy right here, but that was a massive waste of power.

"Wait... what if I let my new cat unleash its power back in reality?"

His plan couldn't keep up with the circumstances. He originally intended to continue to milk more Ascension Points from the System so that he could develop a superweapon that could harm the unclean whale that had broken out of the Palace of Shame, but perhaps Ves had accidentally created the weapon that he already sought!

Ves tried to determine his cyborg cat's phasewater blood concentration.

"It should be around 6.9 percent."

Was this a lot? Ves had no idea, but he guessed that it was already enough to produce powerful results.

His cyborg cat inspired a lot of confidence from him. It might not be large or strong enough to defeat a cannibalistic phase whale by itself, but it should have enough power to disrupt the enemy's actions!

Ves made a spontaneous decision.

Its phasewater concentration was not the only reason that gave him a lot of confidence.

As far as he was concerned, Worclaw energy was one of the most potent energies that could be found in the Milky Way.

The lightning baptism had unintentionally caused his cyborg cat to generate so much while simultaneously keep his cat from blowing up due to all of the pressure.

Yet now that his cyborg cat no longer received any creation energy, it was finding it increasingly more difficult to contain so much power!

"It's either now or never. I'm betting on you. Don't let me down!"

He did not dare to waste any more time. He reached up and grabbed his new cat and issued a command that would seal his fate.

"Take me back to reality. It's time to end this crisis!"

Chapter 4504 Perceptual Slowdown

Ves left as a man, and returned as a demigod.

...Well, as a manner of speaking.

He did not believe in the notion of gods in the first place. The only reason why he would possibly attach the label of 'demigod' to himself was because it was the word that best described the native concept to his current state.

What was important was that Ves gained more power than he could ever imagine!

The sequence of events that led to the creation of his divine artifact infused him with strength through unknown means but miraculous means.

Different high-grade energies from vast and immensely powerful sources merged into his entire being.

Though Vulcan had sadly been left out as he was an external incarnation that remained frozen in time during the entire ordeal, Ves, Blinky and the new cyborg cat became powerhouses in their own right!

The cyborg cat that Ves hadn't even gotten around to naming yet was the most powerful part of Ves. It had exceeded the strength level of its principal due to how well it was able to progress in this manner.

The fundamental purpose of a divine artifact was to assist Ves into ascending to godhood by clearing the way ahead!

Though its form still resembled its original design, massive influences had elevated its quality, design and material composition to a ridiculous degree!

There was no better way to quantify how much progress it had made to becoming an existence akin to a True God than to measure its phasewater blood concentration.

With 6.9 percent of its blood volume comprising of pure and potent phasewater, the cyborg cat had become a powerhouse in ways that still needed to be explored!

In comparison to his amazing divine artifact, Ves himself only received a fraction of the benefits of the dangerous ritual that he had just concluded.

With the knowledge and experience that he possessed at this time, he recognized with greater clarity how reckless and foolish he had been to undergo a messed up ascension ritual at his level of strength.

It was as if the Quint attempted to defeat an expert mech like the Everchanger in a mech duel!

There was no way a standard mech could defeat an expert mech under any reasonable circumstance.

The Quint would just break after suffering just one or two casual attacks from the Everchanger because the latter was just that strong!

Yet... Ves could still come up with scenarios where the Quint could prevail in single combat.

One of them was through the use of powerful external equipment such as the Instrument of Doom that had been able to punch through the defenses of formidable alien warships.

Though it was still unlikely for the Quint to prevail, it at least had the power to punch through the Everchanger's defenses!

Its mech pilot just had to be able to resonate with the Phase King and aim the weapon precisely enough to strike a fast-moving expert mech, neither of which was as easy as it sounded.

Ves grew nervous as his circumstances were just as difficult. He was as weak as a Quint in the face of the power of an expert pilot. His main reliances were

his divine artifact, which acted as an external power focus, and the Mech Designer System, which made it easier for him to pass the various checkpoints.

Somehow, those conveniences were enough for him to make a leap that countless alien individuals in the Red Ocean had dreamed about!

He honestly did not know how he measured up in the strength hierarchy of the mech community at the moment.

He was still a Journeyman. That hadn't changed. Even though his design seed had definitely changed in an immeasurable way by absorbing a portion of the high-grade energies, it hadn't fundamentally changed in state.

The only way to become a better mech designer was to design mechs and come up with more ingenious ways to make them better. No amount of raw combat power could help him advance to Senior, Master or Star Designer in a single leap.

Yet... Ves had an incredibly strong hunch that his path to reaching the pinnacle of mech design had become a lot smoother than before.

Just like how first-raters enjoyed all kinds of helpful conveniences such as better implants, excellent schooling and access to fantastic resources, Ves had also improved his own background through the messy ritual.

The best way that he could describe it was that while his software remained unchanged, his hardware received a massive boost!

It was like transitioning from using a 3D printer to using a superfab. The latter was faster, more precise, more capable of handling difficult materials and more able to produce difficult components! This made it a lot faster and easier to produce better and more powerful mechs!

The same went for Ves after he had undergone so many changes.

The comprehensive transformation of his Spirituality, the upgrades to his main cognitive functions, the physical upgrades to his main brain along with the creation of a brand-new secondary backup brain which he had buried deep inside his 'CyLeg' completely upgraded his thinking processes to a degree that he could only dream about before his latest transformation!

He still had to explore how all of the upgrades to his 'hardware' affected his productivity in mech design. His conservative estimate was that if he previously had to spend a year to complete the Dullahan Project, he could probably get it done in half that time.

In fact, he could have probably completed it sooner if he didn't have to wait for collaborators such as Gloriana and Sara Voiken to complete their own contributions to the expert mech design project!

Aside from being able to design mechs at greater speeds, his ability to learn and comprehend brand-new theories must have skyrocketed as well!

Ves especially looked forward to immersing himself in Phasewater Theory. He just knew with every fiber of his being that phasewater was no longer as abstruse and foreign to him as before.

Even if the earlier trials and tribulations only converted 0.01 percent of his total blood volume into phasewater, what it actually represented was that he managed to get his foot into the door!

His affinity to phasewater had definitely grown. His mentality towards this substance had changed. His intuition was able to grasp it to a much greater degree than before. He even developed a completely new sense that allowed him to sense both phasewater and spacetime manifestations within his range.

With all of these advantages, Ves was in a much better position to design mechs and transphasic mechs in particular than ever before!

Of course, that was the least of his priorities at the moment.

He couldn't go back to his greatest passion and complete his design projects with greater fervor and ability than ever before if he couldn't do anything against the unclean whale that was threatening his entire expeditionary fleet and more!

As Ves descended back to reality, his perception of what was happening had slowed to a crawl.

This was one of the many handy new features that he had managed to obtain from his transformation into a half-native demigod.

Currently, his two brains had entered into something of a mental overdrive mode. His upgraded neurons and gray matter were working several times harder than before, burning more calories and generating heat like nothing else!

Ves could sense that his brains couldn't endure the strain too long. They were too fresh and too new. They still needed to settle down and consolidate their new states.

However, Ves did not need to spend so much time to get up to speed with the current situation.

First, he could confirm that his perception of the passage of time had truly slowed to a crawl.

His upgraded eyes could peer through the transparent face plates of his bridge officers and catch them in the middle of blinking their eyes.

Ves could perceive the slow and gradual motion of moving their eyelids with excellent clarity.

It was akin to a slow motion effect.

When he tried to move his body, he could feel that he was subjected to the same effect, though not to the same degree as others.

The comprehensive enhancements of his body and mind had significantly boosted his reaction speed and his movement speed.

The former allowed him to pass on commands to his body a lot faster than before.

The latter enabled him to actually move his body with greater speed and force!

This was why he was able to move at the speed of a geriatric turtle while everyone else was moving a lot slower.

He could already see that his two daughters had only just begun to notice that their father had changed in a radical and profound way.

One of the changes that Ves had tried to implement on himself was a way to camouflage his extraordinary nature. It was difficult for him to manipulate the creation energy produced by the lightning strikes to perform the necessary upgrades.

He was most afraid of getting exposed by advanced, high-powered sensor and scanning systems, so he mostly focused on impeding technological detection methods.

It had been enough to fool the Unending Regalia's sensors, and he figured that not even the MTA might be able to detect the minute amount of phasewater running through his veins.

The solution to disguise his body as that of a baseline human was a little crude. It would be obvious to the MTA and many other parties that Ves deliberately hid the true state of his body considering that it used to be a lot more alien and abnormal in the past.

Ves didn't mind too much, though. He only wanted to avoid drawing attention whenever he passed through a security checkpoint whenever he visited a new

destination. It would be annoying if the scanning devices picked up a void in the space where he was standing!

The point was that while he was confident in his ability to evade electronic detection methods, he was less certain that he was able to hide his extraordinary nature.

The changes to his Spirituality were even more dramatic. Just like expert pilots, an invisible part of Ves had grown too powerful for people to ignore.

Hiding his true nature as a demigod was an exercise in futility. Just like how all of his design spirits openly radiated their own presence and domains in the form of glows that ordinary people could perceive, Ves had gained his own glow!

He immediately attributed this change to the galactic energy bestowed by the Milky Way. It had primarily fused with his Spirituality, strengthening it and changing it to a form that resembled that of other familiar entities such as Qilanxo and the Superior Mother.

In other words, he had become a lot more similar to his sister Helena than before! The family resemblance was much more convincing!

While Ves still had to explore the full implications and additions of this dramatic change, for now Ves could immediately tell that everyone on the bridge had come under the open influence of his glow.

That was bad.

The abrupt appearance of a brand new glow had interrupted the work of his bridge officers and evoked considerable surprise and vigilance from his honor guard.

Meanwhile, his two daughters had sensed his changes much more clearly than anyone else in the vicinity!

They would have started to panic if not for the fact that they were incredibly familiar with his spiritual signature, but as it was Ves did not have the time to explain his dramatic transformation.

Time was of the essence!

The unclean whale that was in the middle of weaving the fabric of spacetime in the distance had to be stopped before he could address people's doubts!

He sent a brief glance of apology to his two children before he returned his gaze towards the cyborg cat in his arms.

His new divine artifact was saturated with so much Worclaw energy that it would probably explode if it didn't find a way to vent all of its excess power!

"Gooooooo!"

The cat only needed an instant to lock onto its target. The unclean whale's presence was unmistakable and was also the source of all of the surrounding spatial fluctuations.

The silver-plated cat released a blindingly bright flash of light before his body propelled forward at a blazing speed while phasing through the entire hull of the Spirit of Bentheim at an astounding speed!

Ves had launched his payload!

Chapter 4505 Identity Check

As Ves exited his mental overdrive mode and granted his two overstrained brains a much-needed respite, a lot of changes happened in a short amount of time.

"Ah!"

First, the bridge operators reacted against the bright flash of light that briefly illuminated the bridge.

Their sophisticated helmets protected them from getting blinded by the excess brightness, but that didn't mean they had failed to notice anything.

"Papa!" "Papaa?"

Second, Aurelia and Andraste both turned to their father and became alarmed and afraid by how much their father had changed all of a sudden.

His spiritual presence had become qualitatively and quantitatively stronger.

His physical body exuded a sense of might and power that resembled that of powerful indigenous alien creatures.

Fortunately, his personal suit of combat armor blocked or dampened most of this effect.

The problem was that the Unending Regelia had undergone substantial changes as well, and not for the better. Those who looked at him would definitely be able to tell that something extremely weird had taken place in a short interval.

In one moment, Ves sat in his observer's seat while wearing a complete suit of combat armor.

In the next moment, Ves was still sitting in the same seat, but he had not only launched something powerful from his hands, but also wore a suit of combat armor that looked as if he had pulled it from a workshop while it was in the middle of getting serviced!

It was missing several pieces of armor plating throughout its entire exterior. There were many areas where those gaps either exposed other armor layers or exposed circuitry.

Even the latter looked a bit wrong as there were numerous places where it looked as if they used to contain electronic components but looked a lot emptier than they should.

Of all of the people who reacted adversely towards the dramatic changes, the honor guard were the most horrified of all. They were literally honor-bound to protect and guard the patriarch of the Larkinson Clan. To see their charge look as if he had been teleported away only to be replaced by a bad and incomplete copy was one of their worst nightmares!

"SUBDUE!" One of the heavily armored honor guard troopers roared!

The elite bodyguards hailing from the Battle Criers didn't need to be reminded of their duties.

They had studied and practiced so many different contingency plans that they could execute their drills without conscious thought.

Most of the honor guards began to rush towards his seat while the remainder lifted up their heavy assault rifles and kept an eye on the surroundings.

A few of the ones that drew closer lifted their bulky arms and launched thick projectiles that quickly unfolded into nets that quickly engulfed Ves and locked him down in his seat!

This kept him in place long enough for the closest two honor guards to reach his sides and grasp his arms and hands, preventing him from drawing any weapons or grabbing anything dangerous.

The next two honor guards knelt and grabbed onto his two legs and tried to lock the limbs down with all of their considerable might!

The remaining guards that came last performed other duties. A few turned outwards and watched out for any enemies that might possibly target the patriarch.

A few had armed their weapons but did not point them straight towards the figure that looked like Ves. They were ready to fire but would only do so if

there was an immediate threat. They kept their muzzles pointed towards the deck for the time being.

Another bunch firmly grabbed hold of the suited forms of Aurelia and Andraste and tried to pull him away from a potential danger zone.

"No!"

"That's our papa!"

Only a single honor guard confronted Ves upfront. Nitaa had opened her thick and intimidating helmet so that she could take a long, hard look at the man she had guarded for many years on a near-daily basis.

"Errr... I know you guys are doing your jobs, but it's me." Ves sheepishly said in a tone that completely contradicted the power flowing through his entire being. "I may have... changed a bit, but there is no reason to overreact."

"If you are not a clone of our patriarch, then you should understand our protocol. We cannot allow you to remain in command until we can thoroughly verify your identity."

Ves had written some of those protocols himself, so he knew that this process could take days!

Many different people would come and talk about old times to see how much he knew. This was not a problem for him, but numerous doctors and other specialists would also examine his body and undoubtedly notice that it had completely changed beyond recognition!

The entire clan would freak out and everyone would continue to suspect his identity until a long time had passed.

Ves couldn't waste so much time!

He not only had to stay in command to ensure the unclean whale suffered the defeat he deserved, but also had to handle the aftermath including the vital looting process.

"Blinky!"

Mrow!

His companion spirit immediately left his head. Though the purple Star Cat had become a lot stronger than before, his appearance remained virtually unchanged.

Though the honor guards around him grew tense for a moment, the sight of his companion spirit also reassured them to an extent.

They knew that no matter how much others tried to clone Ves, it was probably impossible to copy his unique companion spirit, especially since no one else possessed the capability to make them in the first place!

Of course, that did not rule out the possibility that powerful or obscure cults could have copied the method, so Nitaa and the other honor guards weren't completely convinced.

This was why Ves proposed another verification method.

"Nitaa, we don't have time for this. Goldie, come out and tell them who I am!"
He demanded!

Nyaaaaaa!

A second glow engulfed the bridge as the manifestation of the Golden Cat dove out of the Larkinson Mandate that was attached to Nitaa's heavy combat armor.

The warm and reassuring ancestral spirit happily floated towards Blinky and greeted the competition spirit with a head bop.

Mrow~

Nyaaa~

After that, Goldie continued onwards and licked Ves' face in a familiar and friendly manner.

"Is that enough?"

"It is... sufficient for the time being." Nitaa affirmed as she silently commanded the surrounding honor guard to stop pressing Ves down. "We will continue to keep you under observation. I hope you understand."

"Hey, I completely understand. It is better to be safe than sorry when it comes to matters like these."

It was his own fault for being so paranoid and encouraging his honor guard to think in the same way.

While Ves tried to reassure his guards and the people around him, the situation outside of the Spirit of Bentheim hadn't remained static!

Pretty much every mech with the power to attack from a distance were continuing to bombard the unclean whale that had exposed himself from his position in the depths of the Palace of Shame.

The large and messy asteroid base had taken ruinous damage as countless attacks converging from multiple directions callously drilled through its rocky structure.

All thoughts about preserving the Palace of Shame and its rich reserves of phasewater and other alien loot had disappeared.

Many of the mechs hailing from the Gemini Family, the Golden Skull Alliance, the Adelaide Mercenary Company, the Lehrer Foundation, the Santana Group and the Boojay Family tried their best to overcome the powerful spatial barrier of the unclean whale.

Even their ace mechs brought as much power to bear as possible in an attempt to break the seemingly unbreakable spatial barrier!

"I refuse to be denied by this defense!" Saint Jelmer Osenring roared as his Thunderer Mark II unleashed a blindingly powerful salvo of piercing rounds! "If I can break an orven battleship, I can definitely clean up a wild beast!"

The unclean whale was no mere feral beast, however. The corrupted phase whale did not even flinch when the powerful rounds continued to strike his spatial barrier.

The other ace mechs fared no better.

The Mars for example tried to break the spatial barrier by unleashing all of his ranged and melee attacks at the same time!

The full might of its ARCEUS System, its shoulder-mounted missile launchers, its transphasic axe and its transphasic shotgun stressed the spatial barrier but did little to destabilize its integrity.

The Infinite Gear and the Royal Jeem built up momentum before they charged head-on against the spatial barrier, only to produce slightly larger ripples than before.

The Jedda Sandivar was the least useful ace mech out of the seven as its attack power fell behind due to its light and compact frame.

The Gemini Saints did not hold back in their own efforts to prevent their own family from coming to ruin. They did not hide their trump card this time as the Embodiment of Love and the Embodiment of Sacrifice came together and actually merged as one!

Many mech designers who had the mind to pay attention to the two mechs became astonished as the ace rifleman mech and the ace space knight physically integrated with each other to form a two-seater machine!

Coated in light blue and pink, an exceptionally powerful pink Saint Kingdom surrounded the combination mech.

The twin ace pilots who not only grew up together but made a vow to become eternal lovers resonated with each other to such a powerful degree that it was no longer possible to distinguish one from the other!

The amalgamation of Saint Sandro Gemini and Saint Kaia Gemini had just managed to surpass the threshold of a senior ace pilot, allowing it to exert much more power than any other ace mech!

When the merged Gemini ace mechs lifted its rifle, it unleashed an incredibly powerful resonance-empowered positron beam that soared towards the unclean whale with the wrath of the Gemini Family!

"No!"

Again, the spatial barrier held!

Though the protective field had taken a considerably more damaging hit than before, the unclean whale seamlessly diverted more of his awesome power to reinforcing his defenses.

The former alien prisoner understood that as long as he could stop these strange beings with their oddly-shaped starfighters from punching through his defenses, he could complete his grand weaving without any suspense!

Just as the unclean whale thought that his current adversaries had no way of stopping him from leaving the site of his captivity, he abruptly detected an acutely powerful threat heading straight in his direction!

The giant whale's eyes widened as his powerful senses scanned the entire surroundings.

By the time his phasewater senses detected the powerful but tiny projectile, the unclean whale could barely strengthen his spatial barrier in the right direction!

All of the mech pilots in the vicinity including the strongest among them recoiled as several powerful spatial shockwaves coursed through the surrounding space!

The spatial barrier that had previously managed to fend off everything the human coalition could throw at it no longer looked as whole as before.

"There's a hole in the barrier!"

Though the humans were disappointed that the unclean whale hadn't lost all of his defenses, it did not change the fact that the monster's defenses had been breached!

"The target has been wounded! There is a small impact crater on his upper left flank!"

The unclean whale unleashed a silent roar as his tentacled body roiled and squirmed as if he had received an injury that was much greater than was obvious!

As several seconds passed by, it became increasingly clearer that the condition of the corrupted phase whale was getting worse!

"The spatial barrier is weakening!"

"The enemy creature's body is exhibiting more signs of stress and pain."

"Our expert pilots are reporting that the aura of the enemy beast is growing weaker and less stable."

"The latest attack has interrupted the phase whale's technique! The spatial fluctuations are already fading. We are not at risk of getting displaced anymore!"

Cheers erupted once the scientists confirmed the news. The tables had turned!

"SLAUGHTER THAT WHALE!"

Chapter 4506 Inside And Out

The great enemy that was on the cusp of swinging down the Sword of Damocles had sustained a powerful injury that forced him to drop his weapon to the floor!

From the moment an unknown but exceedingly powerful projectile had punched through the spatial barrier and struck the unclean whale, the massive beast's concentration had shattered!

The alien creature could no longer pay any attention to completing his great displacement technique when a much more immediate threat was coursing through his massive body!

Unseen by all except for Ves who maintained an active and unbreakable connection to his divine artifact, a cyborg cat found that it had punched deep inside the body of its target!

Its passage had created a tunnel of wounded and torn flesh that only stopped when the cyborg cat had collided against an enormous whale bone.

Already, the unclean whale attempted to remedy his serious injuries by accelerating the regeneration of his injured body.

Dark and sickly flesh squirmed and expanded as the massive beast urgently tapped his prodigious fat reserves to provide the biomass to undo all of the damage.

At the same time, humongous flesh walls were about to press against the invading cyborg cat from all sides.

Already, the walls were beginning to grow tougher and more impenetrable in an attempt to stop the cat from escaping this organic cage!

The living divine artifact did not exhibit any concern.

This was strange as the cyborg cat was much smaller and much weaker than the unclean whale.

Regardless of their phasewater concentration, the stupendous volume and mass of the latter meant that the corrupted phase whale had a lot more power at his disposal!

Once the alien beast regained his wits, he gathered as much concentration as possible and began to launch a powerful spatial attack before his hard flesh walls pressed the intruder flat!

The spatial attack failed to land on its intended target!

The unclean whale grew confused. Where was the intruder? Why couldn't he sense the tiny metallic creature anymore?

A spike of pain soon altered the unclean whale to a hole in its bone membrane.

It turned out that the cyborg cat had dove to the side and somehow managed to drill through the hardening bone layer!

That was not necessarily a disaster.

Even though the unclean whale possessed much less control over his own body than a more proper phase whale, the powerful aquatic beast could still command the surrounding flesh to squeeze and crush any foreign elements that were hiding in their midst!

The gigantic flesh contracted several times, yet nothing had been crushed.

The unclean whale grew confused as he lost track of the intruder. How could the cyborg cat hide its presence when it should have been drilling through his body?

Did the intruder employ a phasing ability?

The giant creature grew suspicious enough to apply a wide area spatial technique in his body that inhibited phasing.

Nothing changed. The intruder did not reappear.

It wasn't until a few more seconds had passed that the unclean whale experienced another spike of pain.

One of its internal organs was sustaining damage!

When the unclean whale utilized his senses to detect the intruder, he still wasn't able to find anything that didn't belong inside his body.

This was clearly impossible because his organ was getting eaten by what appeared to be itself!

The unclean whale experienced more shock than it had in centuries!

The earlier attack that punched through his defenses was already strange enough. This follow-up attack that somehow caused his own flesh to rebel against itself was even more confounding.

What strange and unusual alien race had entered this region of space? How come their small and tiny war machines could perform so many strange and unusual feats?

Though the scale of the damage inflicted by the invisible threat was small, the fact that it was harming one of his many important phasewater organs was greatly distressing!

The unclean whale squeezed his flesh until they crushed half of the phasewater organ!

Though the damage was grievous, it was worth it as long as he managed to destroy the internal threat.

Yet moments later, the intact half of the phasewater organ was getting torn as if nothing changed!

The unclean whale grew mad! The intruder was like a virus that managed to avoid his internal detection methods.

None of his means of detecting the tiny threat was working. No matter how many times the unclean whale attacked his own body, the undetectable intruder always managed to slip away before resuming its attacks a short distance away!

Though it was impossible for the intruder to inflict massive damage to the unclean whale in a short amount of time, the most distressing fact about the ongoing intrusion was that the foreign element was moving closer to the brain cavity!

This was why the unclean whale doubled his efforts into trying to crush or drive out the tiny attacker!

Back on the Spirit of Bentheim, Ves smirked as he used his connection to his living divine artifact to supervise and direct the ongoing sabotage.

Compared to himself, his cyborg cat received much greater enhancements. His theory that the transformation process would upgrade the existing capabilities of his divine artifact was true!

This happened to be extremely relevant to what was happening inside the body of the unclean whale.

One of the greatest strengths of the cyborg cat was not its ability to harness Worclaw energy.

It was its camouflage and other anti-detection measures.

Despite the fact that the unclean whale should have easily been able to detect such a foreign element tunneling throughout his body, the cyborg cat's upgraded camouflage abilities were too much for the giant creature!

What the old and powerful corrupted whale didn't entirely realize was that the cyborg cat had actually transformed the exterior part of its body into a copy of the surrounding biomass!

This was one of the reasons why Ves had been eager to apply Permanent Mimic Arcutuleum Platinum to the cyborg cat's outer layer!

Its ability to mimic any matter it came in touch with was already impressive in its base form.

After the cyborg cat not only absorbed a lot of galactic energies, but lived through a lengthy lightning baptism that thoroughly transformed and elevated its camouflage abilities!

Not even Ves was able to figure out how much better his cyborg cat was able to hide its true nature!

While he expected his divine artifact to be able to delay the unclean whale's attempts to detect the intruder, what actually happened was that the stupid alien beast still hadn't found a way to distinguish the camouflaged cat from his own flesh!

It was an absurdity that Ves never expected to see! For all of his power, the unclean whale had always been a raider, not a scientist like the rest of his kind.

A proper phase whale would have never exhibited such poor control over his own body!

It couldn't be helped. An unclean whale only came into power by stealing and absorbing the organs developed by other phase whales.

Many of the organs that the cyborg cat targeted had never been developed by the unclean whale.

At most, the giant creature spent much of his years in captivity to make up for shortcoming, yet his scientific foundation was far too poor for him to understand more than 10 percent of the theory behind all of his foreign organs.

As a result, the cyborg cat found great success whenever it attempted to hide inside the many stolen internal organs of the giant phase whale!

"Hahaha! This unclean whale is not as strong as I thought. He's all brawn but no brain!"

Ves was the opposite as far as he was concerned!

Though there was a part of him that wished that he had opted for a larger and more powerful divine artifact, discretion was the better part of valor at his current stage.

Meanwhile, Ves still had to pay attention to his situation back inside the bridge of his flagship.

He tried his best to exert his leadership and reassure his fellow Larkinsons that the MTA hadn't secretly teleported him away and put a botched doppelganger in his place.

"Papa!"

"Hug me, papa!"

"Hahahahaha!"

His honor guards might still harbor doubts about his identity, but his children knew 100 percent that he was still their father!

Though the guards pulled the bodies of Aurelia and Andraste back for safety's sake, Nita'a still allowed their companion spirits to gather in midair.

The three cats looked especially cute as they curled around each other.

They rolled against each other until Blinky managed to wrap his front paws around both of his kittens at once.

Mrow mrow mrow~

The cute and furry Persian kitten wiggled her tiny limbs as her 'father' licked his face. Mana could clearly feel that Blinky had become a lot stronger than before!

Mew~ Mew~

The black-furred spiritual kitten pressed next to Mana squirmed and naggged Blinky for attention as well. It wasn't until Blinky started to lick her face that Yaika grew content.

Maaw~ Maaw~ Maawwww~

Though not everyone was familiar with the companion spirits, those that had the privilege to learn about them understood that Blinky was one of Ves' calling cards.

Of course, what truly convinced most Larkinsons that Ves was the real deal was Goldie's obvious affection.

The spiritual cat had become especially affectionate and joyous towards Ves since his return!

The Golden Cat knew more than any other member of the Larkinson Clan how Ves had played such a major role in lifting the immediate crisis.

She was also able to sense how extensively Ves had changed and evolved through his active connection to the Larkinson Network.

The spiritual feedback that Ves was able to supply to Goldie was so much greater that she almost became intoxicated by the potent energy!

Nyaaa~ Nyaaa~ Nyaaa~

Ves grinned as the cat nuzzled against his cheek.

"I'm happy to see you again as well. Thank you for vouching for me, Goldie. I really needed your help."

Nyaaaaa!

"Heh, you don't have to concern yourself much anymore. The most dangerous aspects about the unclean whale was his amazing defense and his threat to displace us all to a completely different region of space. Neither of these issues are hindering us anymore."

The interruption of the mass displacement technique bought a lot of time for the human coalition. They were no longer forced to scramble for a solution in a matter of minutes.

The breach in the all-powerful spatial barrier was even more significant!

Though the unclean whale tried his best to fill up the gap created in the cyborg cat's initial approach, six nearby ace mechs had pounced on the opportunity and managed to sneak inside the defensive envelope in time!

"Hahaha! We're in! There are no more spatial barriers in our way!"

All of the human ace mechs aside from the Thunderer Mark II

The Embodiment of Love and Sacrifice struck first. The merger between the two Gemini ace mechs resulted in the emergence of a super ace mech that produced exceptionally powerful resonance between four different participants!

This allowed the combination mech to power up its energy rifle and unleash a humongous transphasic resonance-empowered positron beam that finally struck and burned a serious portion of the unclean whale's outer layer!

Though the massive beast attempted to block or mitigate the powerful attack by projecting a small directional spatial shield, its defensive power was far from matching that of its main spatial barrier.

The truth was that the unclean whale derived all of his main abilities from stolen phase whale organs.

Perhaps the developers of all of these phasewater organs would have been able to exert more control over all of these abilities, but that was out of the question for the unclean whale!

This was why the unclean whale hadn't been able to close the breach in its defenses fast enough. It was also why most of his attempts to block all of the attacks launched by the ace mechs at close range weren't working!

Though the unclean whale was still distracted by his attempts to crush the invisible intruder that was drilling inside his body, he still recognized the need to neutralize the threats hovering outside his massive body.

Several more organs went into motion!

"Watch out! The phase whale is attempting to sweep us with his massive tentacles!"

Chapter 4507 Monstrous Abilities

The tentacles of the massive unclean whale were no ordinary limbs.

As one of the rare products researched and developed by the cannibalistic phase whale himself, the tentacles possessed great strength and were long enough to envelop and restrain his preferred 'prey'.

The unclean whale obviously cared a lot about the prowess of his main capture tools. From the moment he grew them out of his body, he consistently used what little science and biotechnology he mastered to increase the length and toughness of his tentacles in order to ensure they could entangle more formidable targets.

Right now, over two-dozen ferocious-looking tentacles swayed across the vacuum of space!

Fortunately, their thick girths and exaggerated lengths made it awkward for them to attack comparatively tiny parasites that were sticking close to the unclean whale's hide.

The fleshy and disgusting limbs curled around so that they could sweep throughout the bubble of space between the unclean whale and his recently restored spatial barrier.

The six ace mechs that had managed to sneak through the gap created by the cyborg cat's passage knew that they were locked in a fight where retreat was out of the question!

Patriarch Reginald succinctly described their current situation as his ace hybrid mech's ARCEUS System blasted another salvo of powerful positron beams at his enormous adversary.

"We either defeat this accursed whale or die from getting crushed by his tentacles. None of us can back off at this point." The aggressive ace pilot grinned. "That's just the way I like it! Let us lift up our weapons and carve out the heart of this monstrous foe!"

His awesome fighting intent propelled him to weave through the forest of tentacles and continuously launch as many attacks against the massive unclean whale as possible!

However, despite the potency of the attacks launched by the Mars, every resonance-empowered strike only inflicted minute damage to the indigenous beast's surface.

Patriarch Reginald quickly frowned as he saw the results of his effort. His masterwork ace mech's firepower was prodigious, but the problem was that he wasn't fighting an opponent of comparable size.

He was fighting against an aquatic beast that was comparable in size to that of a warship but possessed a density that surpassed that of a well-made biomech!

What the unclean whale lacked in subtlety and finesse, he made up for his shortcomings with raw power and resilient flesh.

It took quite a bit of effort for the Mars to create a new crater on the surface of the unclean whale. Even then, the damage did not impair the massive beast that much since the outermost layer of his body consisted almost entirely out of blubber!

"This phase whale did not starve that much during the centuries of his captivity." Saint Kalasandra Boojay keenly observed as her Royal Jeem maintained a respectful distance while shooting at the target with a powerful plasma pistol. "All of this blubber is acting as a giant damage buffer. What is worse is that the whale has enough control over his body to move this fatty tissue around to plug the gaps that we have made."

This was a primitive but effective organic defensive measure for a creature of this size!

As long as the unclean whale was able to use spare blubber to fill up any potential breaches the ace mechs had made, the whale could resist the attacks of the six human ace mechs for a long time!

None of the ace pilots were unfamiliar with this scenario. It was similar to how starships and warships could resist extreme bombardment by rotating their hulls so that they always presented their most intact sides to the incoming attacks.

Suffice to say, none of the ace mechs wanted to fight for such an extended period. They weren't even certain that they would be able to outlast a phase whale that outmassed them by so many times!

"We cannot allow ourselves to get embroiled in a contest of attrition." Saint Sandro Gemini and Saint Kaia Gemini spoke at the same time in eerily perfect coordination over the communication channel. "We must land a killing blow on the heart or the brain of this monster to vanquish the final remaining threat on the battlefield."

"I agree." Saint Kalasandra Boojay concurred. "Don't forget what this creature tried to do earlier. If we continue to get locked in a stalemate, he might decide to initiate a smaller but faster displacement technique... taking us all with him in the process."

Ace pilots no longer experienced fear, but that did not mean they had lost the ability to feel concern.

If the damned tentacled phase whale managed to teleport himself and everything within the immediate vicinity away, then all six nearby ace mechs would get separated from their fleet and become stranded in an unknown star system that was far away from friendly support!

Although every ace mech possessed transphasic mobility systems, not all of them were equipped for interstellar travel.

There was a large chance that they would all remain stuck in an isolated star system and die after running out of food and having their machines fall apart from lack of long-term maintenance.

"Avoid those tentacles! Don't get hit by them. They may be slow, but they're covered in weird slime that can inflict serious damage against our mechs!"

When one of the ace mechs experimentally tossed an object at a tentacle, the ace pilots all saw that the acidic slime dissolved the metal in a matter of seconds!

Though none of the ace mechs were as fragile as they looked, they could not afford to remain within contact with this powerful transphasic slime.

As the ace mechs continued to circle around while trying to avoid getting hit by the slow but numerous tentacles, the ace pilots found that the unclean whale was not entirely unaccustomed to fighting off small enemies that were close to his body.

"Most of these tentacles are placed at the front half of the body." Saint Kalasandra Boojay remarked as her Royal Jeem continually tried and failed to get past the forest of tentacles. "They're all placed in an array that makes it dangerous for us to get close to the cranium of the beast."

"That is not all." Patriarch Reginald Cross spoke as his Mars continually struck the tentacles that were doing a good job at blocking its attacks. "These tentacles are forming makeshift flesh shields that are hindering my attempts to attack the skull."

None of the ace mechs had the firepower pierce through all of this raw flesh. Any wound they inflicted on a tentacle or a piece of blubber soon filled up as the unclean whale's remarkable body control allowed him to sacrifice other flesh to remedy his injuries.

"This is ten times worse than fighting a biomech!" Saint Marissa Lewandowski complained as her Jedda Sandivar was reduced to blinding the unclean whale's massive eyes with its smokey domain field. "We need to find a way to stop this whale from regenerating its wounds. Ordinary attacks won't cut it anymore!"

The ace mechs tried to concentrate their attacks as much as possible in an attempt to drill through the unclean whale's blubber at the rear, but that just made it easier for the massive beast to redirect spare biomass to fill up the gap again!

All the while, the creature also became more proficient in his attempts to smack the ace pilots that were circling around his body.

"Watch out! Those tentacles are splitting!"

The amount of tentacles swinging around suddenly doubled as the unclean whale made a costly but effective modification to his own body.

By splitting up the tentacles, they not only became a lot lighter and more agile, but also made it possible to form fleshy nets that were much more difficult to avoid!

At one point, the Royal Jeem found itself in a situation where it was surrounded by tentacles from every direction.

As soon as one of the tentacle nets entered the ace spearman mech's Saint Kingdom, the fleshy trap slowed to an extent as Saint Kalasandra Boojay exerted a portion of her massive willpower and strength.

"I decree that you are slow!"

Though the tentacles within range had slowed, they soon sped up again as the unclean whale's extremely resilient flesh resisted the extraordinary effect!

Saint Kalasandra Boojay almost miscalculated due to this. Her Royal Jeem had sped up and just managed to squeeze through a gap between the tentacles before the closest fleshy tendrils abruptly began to spawn a row of giant bony teeth!

The Royal Jeem's Saint Kingdom was hardly able to stop these teeth from crunching against the ace mech's armor!

"Uff."

The older ace pilot repressed a painful grunt as her Royal Jeem finally managed to escape the net of tentacles with a noticeable dent in its armor.

"Watch out for those teeth." The ace pilot of the Boojay Family warned as she analyzed her earlier experience. "The tip of those teeth are infused with a surprising concentration of phasewater. They can cut through your transphasic armor systems as if they are made of mundane metals. It's likely that these teeth are used to ensure that this cannibal whale can keep hold of his prey."

Saint Marissa Lewandowski added her own observations. "That's not all. This phase whale is barely getting affected by my Saint Kingdom. I can feel that my influence is getting blocked shortly after sinking below the surface. This guy's mind is too vast for us to manipulate while his body is like an impenetrable fortress that resists every foreign incursion. Our Saint Kingdoms cannot shake this beast!"

From the standards of the indigenous alien community, the unclean whale was a god or at least a being that was transitioning into a god. The light but noticeable concentration of phasewater along with the corrupted whale's immense mass had turned it into a formidable foe that could put up a decent against any other god-like entities.

That included ace mechs piloted by the Saints of the human race!

Patriarch Reginald and all of the other ace pilots took in these revelations and continued their efforts. They concentrated their attacks towards the rear of the unclean whale because that was where the density of tentacles was the lowest.

They had little chance of damaging any vital organs in this area, but few of them thought it was wise to fight around the front half of the unclean whale.

The tentacles became much more difficult to evade now that they had multiplied their numbers. It also didn't help that they all spawned teeth that could crush an ace mech should they be able to envelop one of the machines!

The Jemma Sandivar was the only light mech that dared to pressure the front of the unclean whale. It was the only light mech among them and possessed the greatest chance of evading the forest of tentacles that were concentrated around the massive head of the creature.

Though the ace light skirmisher was doing a good job of keeping many of the tentacles busy, it was tempting fate as the unclean whale became increasingly better at anticipating the elusive machine's evasion patterns!

Fortunately, the Jemma Sandivar's distraction paid off as the remaining ace mechs concentrated their attacks on the base of one of the tentacles at the rear.

After launching successive attacks in an extremely short interval like they did with their attempts to punch through the segmented energy shield layer of the orven battleship, the powerful machines managed to sever one of the disgusting fleshy limbs.

Only for them to unleash a new monster.

"Watch out! That severed tentacle is coming to life!"

"That's ridiculous! It's no wonder the phase whales tried to lock this monster in a place called the Palace of Shame."

The severed tentacle parted into several sections before each of them morphed into smaller versions of phase whales. Each of them began to chase after the ace mechs as if they were eager to please their progenitor!

Chapter 4508 Resilient Adversary

Though the unclean whale was far from his prime, his ability to resist the aggression of the nearby ace mechs was surprising for a beast that had remained in slumber and captivity for many years.

This was not a pariah that had been drained of strength and phasewater!

Ves would have expected such a dangerous and murderous alien to be stripped of his ability to threaten his captors.

In fact, his crimes should have merited the death penalty! Few species tolerated cannibals among their own kind. Their continued existence among their own kind was a sign that the society of a race had become depraved.

Though the phase whales had taken the trouble to isolate the unclean whale in an obscure asteroid prison that was situated far from the center of the dwarf galaxy, for the creature to retain so much health and combat strength was perplexing!

Many different minds worked to analyze the context of the unclean whale and the Palace of Shame in an attempt to figure out a way to fell this powerful foe.

Although the unclean whale had clearly suffered a setback after he failed to complete his mass displacement technique, he was already starting to show greater and greater strength.

This was despite the fact that a camouflaged cyborg cat was ravaging his insides while a bunch of ace mechs were attacking his exterior!

"The unclean whale is too massive of an opponent." Director Ranya Wodin's projection reported the most pertinent findings and conclusions of her research teams. "That is not bad in itself, but what makes this enemy different from that of the V'gahnt-Zezne is that the whale has high control over his own biological structure. The ability to rapidly redirect biomass effectively increases our opponent's ability to resist damage by over a hundred times."

General Verle's protection frowned. "The most direct method of defeating a regenerating defensive system is to launch an attack with single, overwhelming attacks such as... the strike that briefly broke open the whale's defenses."

Ves awkwardly coughed as he settled on his observer's seat. Now that his own clansmen no longer suspected his identity, he was able to resume his old job.

"Don't expect a repeat of that earlier show." He told his advisors. "That was a single-use trump card. I would have never resorted to this option if our situation wasn't dire. The only good news that I can tell you is that the... projectile that I have launched is still wreaking havoc inside the unclean whale's body."

Both Director Ranya and General Verle looked interested.

"How much damage are we talking about, sir?"

"I can tell you that my projectile is tearing through the unclean whale's internal organs. It has been doing so for a while."

Director Ranya's hopeful expression dropped. "Oh. We have not noticed a significant reduction in the phasewater abilities of our adversary. Whatever damage your surprise weapon is doing is not great enough to cripple his ability to project a powerful spatial barrier, at least for the time being."

The difference in scale was too great. No matter how well the cyborg cat was able to hide its presence and deal damage without interruption, there was no getting around the fact that he was like an ant to the unclean whale!

"My payload is attempting to get closer to the cranium of the unclean whale, but it is not moving as fast as I would have liked." Ves continued. "There is simply too much biomass in the way."

In order to ensure that the cyborg cat did not get singled out by the unclean whale that was still hellbent on destroying the intruder, the living divine artifact had to stop and allow itself to mimic any adjacent flesh or organs in order to expose its whereabouts.

The cyborg cat would be much less effective at its job if the unclean whale could precisely track the intruder rummaging through his body. It was much harder for the cat to phase or drill through meters of dense and solid phase-water-infused bone!

"Does this mean we are relegated to stalling for time in the hopes that this... intrusive element can reach the brain of the unclean whale?" General Verle frowned.

"It is an option." Ranya thoughtfully said. "I would not be surprised if the unclean whale has a secondary brain that is buried deep within the core of his belly. You may never know when it comes to members of this race. Their mastery of biotechnology is unparalleled in the Red Ocean, though this particular specimen is not the best example of their kind."

Ves and the others grew frustrated. Despite the progress they had made, they had fallen into another stalemate.

It was not the fault of the cyborg cat. The newly born living divine artifact had done what others couldn't and created enough of a breach for the ace mechs to be in a position to inflict real damage onto the unclean whale.

The problem was that the cyborg mech and the six ace mechs didn't have the firepower to finish the job!

They were simply too small and few in number to exceed the regeneration of their foe!

The only meaningful damage the ace mechs could inflict on the unclean whale was to concentrate their attacks on a tentacle in an attempt to sever the long and toothed limbs, but that only caused the limbs in question to split into sections and transform into mini-whales!

"These living tentacles are much faster!" Saint Robert Montagne observed as his Infinite Gear was doing its best to avoid getting swarmed by the voracious mini-whales. "Poking them to death is not enough. We need to burn or destroy their flesh before it can merge back into the unclean whale's body again!"

Every ace mech possessed the means to annihilate the flesh, but the amount of energy required to burn so much dense and tough biomatter was so excessive that even the Mars would run out of energy over time!

The unclean whale was not an enemy that the human forces could defeat through brute force.

"It would have been nice if we had a battleship or two at our disposal." Ves sighed. "The V'gahnt-Zezne's primary plasma cannon batteries would have been able to wear down or punch through the defenses of this unclean whale a lot more effectively."

This was a situation where Ves grew frustrated at the continued prohibition on the use of warships. The inability to employ warship-grade weapons was seriously hindering their efforts to defeat a foe that ate smaller scale attacks like breakfast!

"It is interesting that this deviant whale has retained so much combat effectiveness despite his long-term captivity." Calabast's projection noted with

an intrigued expression. "It makes you wonder whether this unclean whale is an undesirable member of the phase whale community to begin with. It may be that we're not dealing with a prisoner at all. I cannot guess what his true status may be, but it is likely more important than we initially realized."

Ves nodded in agreement. "I suspect that might be the case as well, but we cannot abort our current fight against this unclean whale, not after we have antagonized him to this extent. We don't need to figure out his entire life story. We can spend time on that later after the dust is settled. Right now, we need to figure out how to defeat this powerful whale. Any ideas?"

A short pause ensued.

"We have a lot of firepower at our disposal." General Verle waved his arm as if to encompass the entire temporary coalition. "Our allies and us have brought over 60,000 mechs to bear in this fight. The aliens have managed to defeat thousands of them, but that still leaves us with enough machines. If we can bring their collective firepower to bear on the unclean whale's body, we can overwhelm our adversary's effort to regenerate all of his wounds."

Ves let out a frustrated noise. "We can figure that out as well, but that damn spatial barrier is still going strong. Even if we can generate another breach, the unclean whale will just mend it with the help of its many phasewater organs."

The cyborg cat had been rampaging through the body of the unclean whale long enough to find out that the beast possessed a ridiculous number of phasewater organs! There was so much redundancy that the total strength of the spatial barrier had only declined by roughly 6 percent after all of this time!

This was the first time that Ves truly gained respect towards the local equivalent of a god.

The large amount of phasewater organs as well as the small but respectable phasewater concentration allowed the unclean whale to succeed where the V'gahnt-Zezne failed.

The considerably larger and more massive orven battleship might be an absolute powerhouse in ranged firefights, but she had proven to be completely incompetent in trying to stop a bunch of ace mechs and dismantle her many powerful weapon batteries and other ship systems at close range.

The unclean whale on the other hand took advantage of his superior biological advantages to keep the ace mechs at bay.

It was so bad that the melee mechs such as the Jedda Sandivar and the Royal Jeem didn't even dare to drill into the body of the unclean whale so that they could deal crippling damage to the monster's internal organs.

Their ace pilots could clearly feel that this was a suicidal act!

"Calabast, have you discovered any advice or tips that can help us out?" Ves asked. "How the hell are other indigenous aliens able to defeat the phase whales in open combat?"

The spymaster pressed her lips. "We're not entirely clear about that. Violent incidents against the phase whales are few and far in between. Most of the battles where the aliens have managed to fend off a phase whale basically involve gathering enough powerful warships before unloading with as much firepower as possible. There are hardly any records that describe a battle where a phase whale is defeated through other means, and I do not think we can replicate those methods."

Ves refused to accept this situation. The unclean whale had been hanging over his head long enough. The longer it stayed alive and active, the greater the chance it would pull off a powerful move that either destroyed a lot of human forces or teleported them all elsewhere.

As he continued to observe the unclean whale resist the might of six human ace mechs that were attacking at close range, he noticed that the Thunderer Mark II remained conspicuously out of the fight.

The powerful ace heavy artillery mech had remained at a safe distance and had been unable to slip through the breach created by the cyborg cat.

This left Saint Jelmer Osenring with little choice but to direct the potent firepower of his Thunderer Mark II against the unclean whale's spatial barrier.

Ves bet that if the Thunderer Mark II could land its attacks against the unclean whale's naked flesh, Saint Osenring's powerful shockwaves would definitely shake a lot of flesh apart!

The problem was getting the Thunderer Mark II to break or bypass the all-powerful spatial barrier. Not even its best shield bypassing rounds were potent enough to slip through this defensive layer!

"What if I can do something about this?" Ves wondered.

Normally, it was impossible for him to upgrade an ace mech in active use, especially one designed by a completely different team of mech designers.

Though Ves was tempted to dismiss this idea, he suddenly recalled that he was not the same mech designer as before.

He had gained a lot of power and new abilities after he exited the System Space. Perhaps... there was a way for him to intervene.

It had to be quick, though. Ves did not have the time to run to the hangar bay in order to board a shuttle that flew all the way to the Thunderer Mark II so that he could modify it on the spot.

His eyes lit up when he came up with another solution.

"There is no need for me to get close anymore."

Chapter 4509 An Unprecedented Feat

"Pardon me, sir, but are you sure this will work?" Venerable Joshua asked over the private communication channel. "We have never tried this before. What if we end up wasting our time? What if the Santana Group rejects your proposal?"

Ves tiredly sighed. "Don't underestimate my power, Joshua. I always make it a habit to have a few tricks at my disposal. Besides, there is little harm in trying. I am sure the executives of the Santana Group are just as desperate to neutralize the threat as us. Who knows whether the unclean whale can regain enough strength to destroy all of our ships in a spacetime anomaly."

He did not bother to contact the Santana Group directly but left the job to his subordinates.

A communications officer soon passed on the good news. "The Santanas have agreed to allow us to execute our plan provided that we do not direct any malicious intent towards their ace mech and ace pilot. The Thunderer Mark II will retaliate with lethal force if Saint Osenring thinks we are harming him and his machine."

Ves grimaced a bit. That meant that the Larkinson Clan had to put a lot of trust in the foreign ace pilot.

"Tell the Santana Group that we agree to its terms, but that we reserve the right to abort our own plan at any time if there is a lack of sincerity."

Both sides needed to trust each other in order for this initiative to succeed.

As Ves refined his initial plan, the Everchanger stopped firing its rifle at the distant unclean whale's spatial barrier and flew towards the Thunderer Mark II as fast as possible.

The expert hero mech even chose to activate its combat drive to speed up its passage and reach its destination faster now that the spatial environment had stabilized.

Soon enough, the Everchanger slowed down as it approached the edge of the Thunderer Mark II's Saint Kingdom.

It was considered to be a great taboo to intrude in an ace mech's domain field without permission.

Getting closer not only put units at the mercy of the ace pilot, but also exposed the ace mech to potential danger.

However, ace pilots weren't ordinary people. They were potent transhuman warriors who possessed extremely keen senses.

From the moment the Everchanger came close, Saint Osenring had already begun to scrutinize the newcomer.

Much to his surprise, the ace pilot did not sense one individual inside the Larkinson expert mech, but three different traces of life!

"I see now what these Larkinsons mean by living mechs." The artillery mech specialist remarked.

Venerable Joshua and his battle partner tried their best to remain on their best behavior. They tried their best to lower their guard and showcase their goodwill as the Santana Group's ace pilot thoroughly scanned their intent.

"You may proceed." Jelmer Osenring announced. "While I do not fear your attacks, please keep your weapons powered down and out of the way. We cannot afford to create any misunderstandings."

"Understood, sir."

The Everchanger respectfully flew forward. Both Joshua and his living mech immediately felt oppressed to the point where their true resonance began to wobble.

They had entered the domain of a completely foreign ace pilot, one that rippled with shockwaves!

This was a considerably new experience for Joshua. He compared Saint Jelmer Osenring's domain to that of Patriarch Reginald Cross and figured out that there were many differences between the two ace pilots.

This was not the time for him to contemplate the strengths of mech pilots who were a step ahead of him. He had a job to do and he couldn't afford to waste any further time.

"Do I have your permission to proceed with our plan, sir?" Venerable Joshua politely asked as his Everchanger stopped a short distance away from the large and massive ace heavy artillery mech. "I have been told that we will be attempting to execute an invasive procedure onto your Thunderer Mark II. This will result in permanent changes that we may or may not be able to reverse."

A ripple of unease spread throughout the Saint Kingdom.

"I would not agree to this desperation measure under ordinary circumstances." Saint Osenring said after a short pause. "My ace mech is my steed and I have always entrusted its development to the mech designers that I have known and trusted for decades. I acknowledge that your Larkinson Patriarch is brilliant for a mech designer of his age, and now that I have examined your masterwork mech up close, I can even admit that he can change my ace mech for the better. That does not mean that I am willing to give him free rein."

"Don't worry, sir. You can block our efforts at any time if you sense anything amiss."

After gaining the ace pilot's agreement, Venerable Joshua took a deep breath before starting the strange and unusual plan that his patriarch had proposed.

"Everchanger... switch your glow to that of your maker."

"WITH PLEASURE, PARTNER. THIS WILL BE FUN."

Joshua expected his expert mech to take a bit of time to connect to a 'design spirit' that it hadn't connected to before.

In fact, the young man still wasn't entirely convinced that the plan could even work. It went against everything he thought was possible, but oh well. He would just give it a try and see whether the patriarch wasn't being delusional.

"WAIT. THIS IS DIFFERENT. MY PROGENITOR... IS CLOSE!"

Back inside the bridge of the Spirit of Bentheim, Ves continued to track the state of the unclean whale, the progress made by the different attacking ace mechs and the overall state of the other mech forces.

He also maintained a dialogue with his advisors while also making sure to pass on his wisdom to his two curious daughters.

Even after doing all of this, Ves still had plenty of attention left to spare on other matters.

It was surprising how much his consciousness and focus had expanded after his first sublimation. His mind and Spirituality had grown so much after absorbing the galactic energy provided by the Milky Way Galaxy that it was tempting to call himself a god.

He consciously had to reject this absurd notion. He had seen where this could lead. Many different examples such as the dark gods of the Nyxian Gap or the

cultist leaders of the Five Scrolls Compact had shown how all of these pretender gods were no match to the power of human civilization!

Even so, his transformation had expanded his consciousness to a degree where it became a lot easier for him to split his attention into many parallel thought processes.

This reminded him of his design spirits. Each of them possessed the ability to pay close attention to hundreds if not thousands of individual mechs and mech pilots at the same time!

Though Ves' newly acquired parallel thinking ability had not reached such an exaggerated level, he could think of several useful ways he could exploit this advantage in his work!

He still had to get through this battle first, though.

"How do I do this?" He asked.

He was grasping at straws at first. He had never done this before and did not have the benefit of prior experience.

It was only after he concentrated on Venerable Joshua's expert mech that he felt his own work actively trying to reach out to its maker.

"I'm here, Everchanger. Accept my embrace!"

From the moment the Everchanger cycled its glow, it assumed a substantially different air.

Both the expert mech and expert pilot became reverent as a familiar but also different presence descended upon them both!

"Patriarch! It's really you! I can feel you, sir!" Venerable Joshua gasped. "I can even resonate with you. We've never been able to resonate with each other to this extent!"

As Ves became used to serving as the Everchanger's current design spirit, he began to experience many new sensations. It was as if he had started an entirely different job in an entirely different sector. So many new possibilities had opened up to him that he could spend a lot of time on exploring what he could do in this new capacity!

Unfortunately, he didn't have the time to explore what it was like to mess around with mechs in this fashion. He needed to work on another machine this time.

"Joshua." Ves spoke over the communication channel, though he didn't need to bother with it considering that he had also formed a more direct connection to the expert pilot. "Pay attention to my actions and intentions and follow my lead. I can only do this if I can leverage your power."

All of them tried something completely new. Though Ves had come up with the plan, he had no idea whether it would work.

He just guessed that it was viable based on what he knew about Venerable Joshua, the Everchanger and his boosted strength.

The Everchanger's vibrant green corona began to shake before increasing in brightness.

The sense of life and vitality exuding from the expert mech became stronger, so much so that the machine was spontaneously beginning to reverse the minor damage and the wear and tear it had incurred over the course of the battle!

While the Everchanger did most of the work, it did so at Ves' deliberate direction. His deepening connection with his own work allowed him to understand the state of the mech frame to a surprising degree!

He wasn't satisfied with gaining greater awareness over his own work, though."

"Give me more control." Ves requested. "Allow yourselves to turn into my vessel."

It was hard for both Joshua and his battle partner to do so. They trusted Ves on an unconditional basis, but it was still hard to go against their instincts to guard their sense of self.

The more the new 'design spirit' intruded into their territories, the more strain they experienced.

"Okay, this is enough." Ves happily smiled. "Good job, you two. Try to maintain this state as best as possible and do not resist."

"Roger that, sir."

When the glowing Everchanger began to move, it moved as a mech designer rather than a combat machine!

Saint Osenring couldn't believe how the Everchanger's entire personality and demeanor had changed all of a sudden. Everything that belonged to Venerable Joshua and his expert mech had been pushed to the background in order to make way for this brand new presence.

When the abnormal expert mech continued to move closer, the ace pilot had the feeling that he was being approached by a giant-sized mech designer!

It took a lot of effort for the ace pilot to suppress his reflex of lashing out. This was completely unknown to him and he did not like it when mysterious factors drew close to his machine.

Heavy artillery mechs were extremely vulnerable to enemies that got close, and Saint Osenring had always trained himself to be sensitive towards these kinds of approaches!

"I can feel your discomfort." Ves spoke over both the communication channel and through his own glow. "Please be assured that I do not mean any harm. Do I have permission to touch your ace mech?"

"...Just get it over with, mech designer."

From the moment the Everchanger's two palms pressed against the thick armor plating of the Thunderer Mark II, a completely foreign influence accompanied by a foreign energy attempted to intrude inside the ace mech!

It was impossible for Ves to spread his awareness inside the Thunderer Mark II, but Saint Osenring tried his best to lead this powerful stranger into his inner sanctum.

As the mysterious resonance-empowered energy began to course through the ace mech, it began to make its mark.

Saint Osenring became increasingly more astonished and even a bit alarmed as his trusty Thunderer Mark II changed in a fundamental way.

"What... what are you doing to my ace mech?"

"It's a bit complicated." Ves replied as he invested more and more concentration into this wondrous effort. "I'm infusing your ace mech with the spark of life. This won't do much since I have never worked on your ace mech, but that is what my current actions are about. I am affecting changes to the intangible parts of your machine that will allow me to gain just enough ownership of your ace mech to apply two specific design solutions."

"And those are...?"

Ves grinned. "Good question. First, I am granting your ace heavy artillery mech a design spirit. Second, I am turning your transphasic heavy gauss cannons into blessed weapons. As long as I can pull it off, your problems will probably be solved!"

What he was doing at the moment was absolutely unprecedented!

He did not believe that any mech designer below the rank of Star Designer had ever managed to empower a mech in the field to this extent!

This was probably the first time that Ves could ever claim to wield the legendary mech touch on an active battlefield!

If Ves succeeded in this attempt, he would probably be adding a new entry to the history of the mech industry!

The only downside was that Ves did not look forward to subjecting himself to the inevitable investigation from the MTA.

He already pulled out several new rabbits out of his hat during this battle. A part of his mind was already starting to come up with plausible excuses for all of his amazing feats.

Chapter 4510 Tired Ves

Ves was tired.

Ves was tired of this battle.

Ves was tired of fighting through multiple hordes of alien warships.

Ves was tired of exposing his troops to the city-blasting, continent-razing primary plasma cannon batteries of the V'gahnt-Zezne.

Ves was tired of trying to wrack his mind to stop a hidden unclean whale that had just woken up from hibernation from displacing them all to a completely new star region.

Ves was tired of pulling himself into the System Space in an act of desperation, before spending a lot of days on trying to earn as many Ascension Points as possible in a single continuous run.

Ves was tired of undergoing a strange and exhausting ascension ritual where he had been forced to confront the demons in his heart.

Ves was tired of getting exposed to greater truths about 'gods', divine artifacts, Divine Cores, the nature of so-called True Gods and how entire galaxies were involved.

Ves was tired of undergoing a surprise lightning baptism that went on so long that he even had to squeeze his design skills once again to take maximum advantage of the free opportunity to modify and upgrade his body even further.

Ves was tired of putting all of his hope of solving the remaining threat once and for all by returning to reality and unleashing his powerful new cyborg cat against the target, only for his massive strike to fail to live up to his expectations.

Ves was tired of seeing the six out of seven human ace mechs slip past the powerful spatial barrier of the unclean whale, only for them to get stumped as their opponent's thick phasewater-infused flesh blunted all of their formidable attack power.

Ves was tired of worrying about the unclean whale recovering from his earlier blows and pulling off another technique that could screw over the entire human coalition that was trying and failing to put him down.

"I AM SO GODDAMN TIRED!" He burst out as he gritted his teeth while remaining seated on the bridge of his flagship. "I am going to put you down once and for all so that I can finally enjoy a good night's sleep!"

His crew and his children did not expect their leader to lose control over himself like this at all! Their leader had changed too much all of a sudden and there was no way to hide the fact that his presence had somehow become greater and more substantial than ever.

No matter how much Ves relied on his camouflage measures and his diminished Unending Regalia to hide his presence, there was little he could do to prevent other people from detecting that he had become a lot more special.

It was the nature of the weak to fear and respect the strong. The entire basis of glows was based around this fundamental spiritual interaction, and now that Ves had gained a lot of spiritual power that hadn't been squirreled away by his design seed, he had become an entity akin to some of his more powerful design spirits.

Yet for all his newfound strength and capabilities, his mental state had suffered after all of this time.

He had never enjoyed a decent rest after starting this battle. He hadn't even dared to sleep after he had taken an initial break because he was too stingy to waste too many Ascension Points on rest when he could have spent his time on more productive pursuits.

Perhaps he had managed to save a few extra Ascension Points due to his frugality, but this did not leave him in the best of moods after seeing that the unclean whale was still going strong after getting struck by his new divine artifact!

"I am ending you once and for all." Ves hissed towards the distant unclean whale. "If you just focused on escaping the Palace of Shame by yourself, then I would have let you go without a fuss. Trying to take us all with you was a grave mistake. I am not going to let you get away with threatening me. Our mechs may be weak against an opponent like you, but don't underestimate the power of synergy and teamwork!"

His plan to deal with the unclean whale once and for all was radical and unorthodox, but Ves might just have the right mix of abilities to make it work!

So far, his attempt to augment the Thunderer Mark II by applying his unique design solutions on the ace mech was working, if only tentatively.

Venerable Joshua and the Everchanger played indispensable roles in this plan.

The former strengthened the connection and generated the true resonance that was necessary to induce real changes in the Thunderer Mark II.

The latter's malleability and versatility allowed Ves to turn the machine into his avatar for this operation.

Ves had only theorized that this was possible. It astonished him to see that he could actually pull it off and turn the Everchanger into a substitute of himself of sorts!

By taking advantage of the unique strengths and properties of his favorite expert pilot and his favorite expert mech, gained the potential to participate in battles more directly than before.

There was nothing wrong with sitting back and letting the professionals he hired and trained at great cost do their jobs. It just frustrated him to be unable to use his power to destroy his enemies more directly like he had done in the past.

A part of him still missed the 'good old days' where he wasn't surrounded by so many guards and mechs. He still had to fight and kill his way out of many crises and conflict zones by blazing a path through his enemies with the scorching laser beams of his Amastendira.

It no longer made sense for him to fight in the trenches like before. He had become too successful as of late. He not only became an indispensable part of the economic engine of the Larkinson Clan, but also put a lot of effort into elevating his status as clan patriarch.

All of this meant that he was too important to risk on the frontlines!

While there were times where he fantasized about hopping into the cockpit of a mech so that he could ride alongside one of his expert pilots into battle, his honor guards would tackle him before he could pull off his crazy scheme!

The fact that his own guards were right to stop him from engaging in high-risk behavior didn't make it any better.

"It will be different from now on." He whispered. "Now that I know that this is possible, I will definitely exploit the hell out of this ability in the future."

It was too much of a waste to possess the Everchanger. The powerful expert hero mech was made for combat. Its job should be to fight powerful champions and to support other friendly mechs. Ves would be depriving Joshua and his battle partner of valuable growth opportunities if he kept commandeering them to act as a field mechanic.

This time, it was okay. There were no more meaningful alien enemies left on the battlefield.

The expert mechs along with the regular mech forces had already swept most alien forces aside. Aside from remnant starfighter squadrons that had opted to flee and blend into the denser asteroid clusters, there weren't any threats worth guarding against.

This allowed Ves to 'possess' the Everchanger without any concerns.

"It's strange."

Ves had never done this before, but he already know how to do it on an instinctual level.

It helped that he was working with a familiar expert pilot and a mech that he had passionately designed.

It also helped that he had been working with design spirits for years. He observed them at work and he even made a fair amount of them himself.

Together with all of his new senses and abilities, he quickly acclimatized to this new mode of working.

Already, the part of himself that was possessing the Everchanger had affected a lot of changes to the Thunderer Mark II.

Though it wasn't possible for his expert mech to apply physical changes to the ace heavy artillery mech of the Santana Group, Ves focused on the one area that he excelled at, which was improving the spiritual design of the powerful machine.

Suffice to say, he encountered a lot of resistance. The ace mech hadn't exactly been alive before Ves had touched it, but it had received a huge amount of baptism from Saint Jelmer Osenring's Saint Kingdom.

The ace pilot's strong willpower not only strengthened the spiritual foundation of the Thunderer Mark II, but also shaped and altered it in a way that reminded Ves of earthquakes.

From a spiritual perspective, Saint Osenring unconsciously molded the Thunderer Mark II to channel and embody his characteristic shockwaves. The powerful machine became more attuned to his domain and was able to propagate any true resonance abilities centered around his specialty to a much greater degree than before.

Many mech designers mistakenly attributed the relatively quick boost of strength after an ace pilot interfaced with a new ace mech to the former's accelerated growth.

The reality was that the latter also deserved a lot of credit for allowing itself to get molded into a more suitable vessel for its principal user.

All of these insights were extremely fascinating to Ves. Ace mechs became increasingly less magical and obscure to him. Understanding how they worked and why they were so much more powerful not only gave him the confidence of designing a suitable ace mech for the Larkinson Clan in the future, but also encouraged him to make his mark on the Thunderer Mark II!

What he was doing to the Thunderer Mark II was not proper mech design. The professional side of him felt as if he was intruding on another design team's masterpiece. It was rude for him to vandalize the work of other colleagues without asking for their opinions, but the situation was too dire to wait that long.

Ves could only make do with obtaining the emergency approval of the leading Santanas who commanded the local fleet.

"Saint Osenring." He conveyed over the communication channel and through his current mech avatar. "You are clinging too tightly onto your ace mech. I know it is uncomfortable for you to stand by and feel how your precious machine is changing into something different and alien, but please bear with me. We can reserve all of this after we have concluded this battle. You can either do it yourself by 'washing' your ace mech with your willpower or I can do it for you by pulling back what I have bestowed. Until then, please follow the instructions of your superior and let me do my work."

The Everchanger could clearly sense an increasing sense of discomfort and alienation.

"I... am trying my best... patriarch." Saint Osenring spoke while exerting as much of his willpower as possible to keep a lid on his own power. "You are asking for the impossible. I have trained all my life to defend against intrusions that hit too close to home. I am not entirely certain what you are tinkering on at the moment, but I can feel that you are enabling a new and distinctly alien creature to contaminate my pride and joy. I am this close to unleashing my

power to drive it away. The more you corrupt my mech, the less I am able to hold myself in. Please do not push me any further."

Ves scowled. He was far from done with his work. Though he had probably managed to make an initial transformation to the Thunderer Mark II's spiritual foundation, it was only capable of channeling and supporting the descent of the Phase King.

"I thought you ace pilots had more control over yourself."

The Santana ace pilot tried his best to remain polite. "I can understand why you have developed that impression, but you cannot expect us to reverse our entire beliefs and fighting systems in a single day."

"I'm making your ace mech stronger!"

"It doesn't look that way to me, Patriarch Larkinson!"

"Ugh! Why can't you take me at my word? Try out my changes if you don't believe me. Just make sure to keep an open mind and accept the new influences that I have introduced. They won't do anything if you keep them in a corner."

"I will try, but I can make no promises."

Seeing was believing. Ves was more than tired of dealing with Saint Osenring skepticism and disbelief.

He looked forward to hearing the ace mech's reaction once his Thunderer Mark II started to open fire again.