

# **The Mech Touch**

## **#Chapter 7171: The Dark Mouth - Mass Release Day 5/5 - Read The Mech Touch Chapter 7171: The Dark Mouth - Mass Release Day 5/5**

### **Chapter 7171: The Dark Mouth – Mass Release Day 5/5**

A very awkward silence ensued after the Dark Apostle asked his bizarre question.

For a moment, both humans and giants grew confused.

Even Ves froze after hearing his alter ego utter those outrageous words.

Admirably, the Unshakeable King still managed to maintain his cool. His face which looked as if it was chiseled from marble looked completely unflappable. The only visible change was that his stare towards the Dark Apostle had intensified.

“Pardon?”

“Are you deaf? You heard what I said? How loose are your underpants beneath that thick raiment of yours? As Ascended Giants, we grow and shrink in size in proportion to our former mortal forms. This means that if you were a big boy from the beginning, your ascended form will proportionately remain the same. So tell me, how much free space is there inside that section of armor? I bet it must be big enough to fit more than a dozen humans in that cavity. Did you use them to fill up the free space? You must have done so, or else you wouldn’t have enough padding for your raiment.”

“...”

“No response? Then you admit that the body is naturally inadequate in this area! It must have been so bad that no amount of medical treatment could have solved this congenital deficiency of yours. It appears that not even becoming a giant has remedied this shortcoming, because you wouldn’t be such a shameful coward who thinks about surrendering our people to the Red Cabal. Instead of letting us rule over ourselves, you would rather sell your fellow Ascended Giants into slavery just so that the phase whales can appoint you as their puppet satrap! To call you a giant is a misnomer due to how frail your masculinity must be to think that serving the native aliens is the best future for our people!”

The Unshakeable King was clearly putting a great amount of effort to reflect his name.

No matter what, he had to remain unmoved by the Dark Apostle’s provocations!

Ves and many others still grew perplexed at the Dark Apostle's effort. Why would he issue such juvenile insults at this time?

It was unlikely to work against an opponent of this caliber. Soldiers dealt with profanity and insults many times during their career. They might appear nothing less than professional when facing a friendly audience, but in private they could be a lot rougher underneath their uniform exterior.

When Ves tried to figure out this puzzle, he came up with a few theories.

One reason may be to make the Unshakeable King angry enough to prevent him from conceding the match too soon.

If the Ascended Giant gave up too quickly, then the Dark Apostle would lose his chance to end his opponent's life.

Just because the Unshakeable King was used to insults did not mean he liked it. He hated the Dark Apostle a lot more than before!

Another reason may be to publicly declare his stance in order to reassure Ves and the Red Collective that he would not go traitor anytime soon.

It was an unexpectedly clever move. Whether the Dark Apostle was sincere or not, his public declaration had committed him to this stance. Everyone would expect him to follow through on his words.

In the end, the Divine Harpoon stepped forward and interceded for his troubled colleague.

"A leadership challenge is fought through arms, not words. Please save your accusations for when you are able to assert your leadership over us. Your words are empty so long as you have not proven yourself to be strong enough to earn our obeisance. Please arm and armor yourself. We have waited long enough."

The Dark Apostle did not bother to argue with the Divine Harpoon.

The challenger instead turned to the locked container that held his wargear.

It slowly parted open after transmitting a command. Panels of solid and protective metal slid apart.

Slowly but surely, a rack that held up a fairly heavy raiment along with a thick backpack module emerged upright from the middle of the container.

The armaments also appeared upright and by the sides. The large and prominent long spear along with a slim but ominous knife completed the ensemble.

Everyone grew silent as they beheld the finished works.

To many people who had been able to catch a glimpse of the design schematics or was involved in the development of the raiment, the current works looked drastically different from what they had last observed!

The developers of the raiment exhibited the greatest degree of shock.

“What is that?! This is... this is completely different from what we have made on the chief councilor’s behalf! This raiment looks as if someone has taken our work and let a moody teenager warp it beyond recognition! The armor has sharp angles where it should have none! There is absolutely no reason for those spikes to exist! Its energy readings have also become much more volatile than before!”

The ‘Flame Lord Raiment’ was supposed to be a clean and efficient product. Despite being developed in a hurry, the red-coated armor incorporated many best practices in the fields of infantry armor design and mech design.

Although it lacked many frills such as integrated weapon modules and so on, it managed to make the best out of its limited capacity by adding in the most essential functions such as a hyper shield generator based on the fire element and a strong but compact space suppressor.

Much of the internals had been designed with care so that the internal architecture could best transmit the potent amount of energy produced by the reactor backpack module to the other parts of the machine, such as its flight system.

The developers all became pleased at how well they managed to put their design together in so little time.

To see it all perverted by an unknown influence was like a nightmare come to life!

“What happened?!”

What few people noticed was Blinky’s disturbingly human-like smirk.

Demoncasting happened.

Though Ves was only able to integrate a ‘mere’ Minor Demon into the Flame Lord Raiment, it was enough to elevate its performance by a small but still significant degree!

The Flame Lord Raiment did a better job of living up to its name. Red lines glowed across the exterior. They pulsed as if they were synchronized to a demon lord’s heartbeat. The sharper angles and the ‘decorative’ spikes made it look much more menacing.

What was most important was that its ability to attract fire energy had improved significantly. The reactor mounted on the rear benefited greatly from this as its energy output exceeded its standard norm!

Perhaps it was due to the size of this raiment, but the degree of deviations was not as exaggerated as Ves expected. It was still very much usable, and the Minor Demon that unwillingly inhabited the red raiment was not strong enough to rebel against the likes of the Dark Apostle.

The same applied to the armaments.

Both the Teragon Plasma Spear and the Murder Knife had gone through a round of Demoncasting.

The Teragon Plasma Spear's tip had inexplicably lengthened in size. Spikes also jutted out along the shaft, which might make it a little more complicated to wield, but the fact that they were able to produce a weaker version of a plasma edge made them deadly to an unwary opponent!

The plasma edge burned hotter and brighter despite its lengthening. Just as with the Flame Lord Raiment, the Teragon Plasma Spear was able to absorb more fire energy and thereby raise its output in so many different ways.

This was a weapon that was capable of burning its targets with two different fires.

How it would fare against the Unshakeable King remained to be seen, but the human phase lord in question's expression seemed to grow a little more dour after catching sight of the demonized equipment.

The final addition to the arsenal was the Murder Knife. This was in fact the only knife that Ves designed. It was meant to be used by him during all four duels, so he made sure that it remained focused and effective when used correctly.

Although the wicked knife did not look like a big deal in comparison to the Teragon Plasma Spear, much of its potency was hidden in plain sight by design. Even its demoncasted form somehow maintained its subtle side even as its edge grew more menacing.

The Dark Apostle began to equip his raiment. This was a partially automated process, so he did not encounter too many problems, even if the different parts of his armor were not as obedient as they should.

"Behave." Ves commanded through Blinky's body.

Soon enough, the Dark Apostle looked like a true warrior this time. When he stepped forward again, the difference in equipment was incredibly stark.

The challenger looked like a much more ideal embodiment of what the Ascended Giants strove for. His menacing red raiment radiated heat and power. Nobody dared to accuse him of being a pushover.

Paired with the Teragon Plasma Spear held in two gauntleted hands, the Dark Apostle looked like a war god who had descended from the heavens in order to show the mortals how war was truly supposed to be waged!

“You.” The Dark Apostle pointed the unactivated edge of the Teragon Plasma Spear straight at the Unshakeable King. “You shall have the honor of becoming the first Ascended Giant to die at my hands. Do not even think of squirming away from my challenge. No matter whether you manage to save your life or not, I shall kill you and mount your head on a trophy. I must set an example to all of you who secretly aspire to betray your honor and your oaths just so that you can claim the bounty on my head and present it to the Red Cabal.”

The Unshakeable King did not attempt to defend himself or offer any response. He knew how the game was played, and he did not want anything to do with it. He would rather let his martial valor speak for itself.

As the other three Ascended Giants began to retreat from the center of the dueling ground, the two duelists continued to stand on opposite ends of the metal plaza.

The Unshakeable King’s raiment should have looked fairly impressive if Ves hadn’t stolen the show with his D-arms.

Even so, his armor was still thick and reliable enough to withstand all sorts of attacks.

He held his two Impact Hammers in a steady grip. Nothing about his stance betrayed any sense of frustration or rage.

The Unshakeable King behaved as if everything around him was temporal and inconsequential.

He was the only solid rock in a temperamental river.

To him, it was a given that he would punish the Dark Apostle’s impertinent behavior. There was no reason for him to wind himself up when beating down the arrogant mech designer provided much greater satisfaction than any verbal response.

The tension grew in the air as both sides readied to commence the duel.

A single bot flew in from afar and stopped at the exact center.

The bot projected a large countdown.

[10]

“You know, I respect you, Mr. Unshakeable King.”

[9]

“You managed to climb your way up to become the strategos of the Ur-Titan Phalanx.”

[8]

“This is an unexpected accomplishment given your congenital deficiency.”

[7]

“Clearly the Oscillating Fist appointed you for a reason.”

[6]

“I think I know why you don’t bother to say anything in response.”

[5]

“You have dedicated your lips for a different purpose than speaking.”

[4]

“Since the bottom half of your body has proven to be inadequate, you can only compensate with the upper side of your body.”

[3]

“How many times have you bent the knee to the Oscillating Fist and greeted him with your mouth?”

[2]

“A hundred times? A thousand times? It must be a great number, for I can see no reason why you are allowed to keep your position when you are so lacking in spine courage in spine.”

[1]

“Before this duel comes to the end, the last object your mouth shall wrap around will be the shaft of my plasma spear.”

[START]

The Unshakeable King unexpectedly exploded into action at this time!

“DIE, YOU CRETIN!”

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## **Chapter 7172: Impact Damage**

The Dark Apostle had done the impossible.

He had shook the Unshakeable King.

This should have been impossible.

The Unshakeable King embraced his new name in every way possible. He had tried his best to become both a physical and mental bulwark. He was supposed to become the most solid backbone of the Ascended Giants, the leader who could endure every horror the Red Ocean could throw at them and remain completely unaffected in response.

The man’s background led up to this evolution. From starting out as an ordinary footsoldier, to discharging and becoming a law enforcement officer, the man formerly known as Keirzan Hoslin followed a different trajectory than most of his fellow Ascended Giants.

He had spent the most formative years of his life working to police the rowdy and heavily urbanized capital planet of his home state.

It was there that he became exposed to the hidden depth of human nature.

Keirzan Hoslin came into contact with the most degenerate and rotten humans. From gang enforcers with the blood of innocents on their hands to deranged nihilists who thought that life was futile enough to go on a murder spree, his understanding of humans had sunk to the bottom.

He also became exposed to the corruption and sin that took place in the gleaming halls of power. He learned of the indifference of bureaucrats and politicians who may talk a nice game, but actually did precious little to serve their constituents.

Though Keirzan Hoslin still tried his best to cling to his duty as he had been taught when he served in a military organization, the complexities and ambiguities of law enforcement in a flawed society gradually filled him with pessimism.

In the end, he gave up on humans at this point. He declared his fight to maintain the law and uphold order to be an exercise in futility and surrendered his badge.

It was at this point that self-interest began to trump duty in his mind. He chose to enter the private sector, working first as a bodyguard to rich and vain clients who wanted to have a strong body between themselves and anyone who wished them ill.

These gigs paid much better, especially when Mr. Hoslin was able to leverage his prior experience and qualifications for better pay and conditions.

A part of him even believed that he should have entered the private sector much sooner.

Whatever the case, he earned so much that he eventually started his own security company.

With his understanding of the people who served his previous employers, it was easy for him to connect to younger soldiers and law enforcements. Hoslin had met with many different people over his career, and he learned what made the tick. That enabled him to succeed in recruiting more qualified employees, those that possessed records that looked good when skimmed over and could command better rates.

Yet even as his business was doing better and better, he still couldn't dig himself out of the hole he ended up in. Once he had recognized and gotten caught in the darkness of the human race's heart, he found himself bereft of any meaningful hope and joy in his life.

There was only so much that money could fill this gaping void.

He emigrated to the Red Ocean in a desperate search for a light to dispel the darkness.

Though it had taken a few twists and turns, he had finally found what he was looking for after becoming a part of the Phase Lord Department.

He could finally distance himself from his dirty human roots and assume the identity of an Ascended Giant, a new and pure race that had yet to be stained with the sins and ugliness of humanity!

Much like the other Ascended Giants, the Unshakeable King despised the phrase 'human phase lord'. It was too mundane. The very act of attaching the word 'human' to his new race was an affront to his sensibilities!



He refused to allow the filth of the human race to defile his new divinity!

He also became offended by his progenitor's foul words!

The strategos of the Ur-Titan Phalanx had encountered many foul-mouthed humans over the course of his mortal career, but the fact that the first Ascended Giant not only refused to distance himself from the human race, but actively embraced their filth and degeneracy completely violated his bottom line!

Ves Larkinson or the Dark Apostle had to be killed!

Not because the mech designer childishly questioned his manhood, but because he defiled the Ascending Giant race with his human flaws!

Seriously!

The Unshakeable King was not the fastest of phase lords, but his speed upon bursting into movement still caught the Dark Apostle by surprise!

The Dark Apostle did not ignite the plasma blade yet, preferring to rely on the shaft of his polearm to meet the incoming attack.

As two powerful Impact Hammers swung straight into the red-clad phase lord's direction, the Dark Apostle put his new skills to good use.

He evaded one of the hammers entirely, which was still possible due to the good range of motion of his mutated Flame Lord Raiment.

The Dark Apostle was even able to force the Minor Demon locked into the raiment to lend a hand by activating an impulse booster embedded in the torso that gave his true body a small but helpful push to the side!

This movement not only helped him evade one hammer, but also granted him a bit more force to redirect another hammer!

In the end, the second hammer veered off just enough to skid off the surface of the Dark Apostle's spatial barrier.

Though the energy barrier still took a mean hit, the damage was mostly undone.

At this point, they began to separate again, but neither side had any intentions of backing off.

They circled each other, displaying both speed and power as they began a rapid exchange of blows.

“FILTH.” The Unshakeable King no longer acted pretentious and masked his rage anymore. “I AM ASHAMED THAT YOU ARE THE PROGENITOR OF OUR RACE. YOU DO NOT DESERVE THIS HONOR! I SHALL CLEANSE THE STAIN THAT YOU HAVE PASSED ONTO US BY SLAYING YOU MYSELF!”

The Ascending Giant fought as furiously as his words. His twin Impact Hammers constantly sought to land on his adversary’s spatial barrier, seeking to shatter it through concussive force.

As much as the Dark Apostle attempted to redirect or evade the frustratingly fast hammers, it was difficult for him to defend against two weapons at the same time.

The Unshakeable King may not be the best dual wielder in the Red Ocean, but he was still far more skilled than ordinary soldiers!

The Dark Apostle had to wring out the most out of the weapon skills he had learned to fend off these strikes, but the impact technology incorporated into the hammers made that so much more difficult!

A powerful but silent concussive blast occurred just as one of the flat hammer faces struck the side of the Teragon Plasma Spear’s shaft.

The force was so powerful that the polearm threatened to get wrenched out of the Dark Apostle’s armored grip!

If not for greater strength and mass bestowed by the lesser Marigal organ and the mutated spikes giving the Dark Apostle an unexpected source of leverage, the Unshakeable King may have succeeded in shaking the plasma weapon out of red-clad human phase giant’s hands!

As it was, the effort to maintain hold over the weapon was so great that it left the Dark Apostle open to a follow-up attack from the other Impact Hammer!

Boom!

A huge concussive blow took place as the impact hammer struck directly at the Dark Apostle’s spatial barrier!

The blow was so much that the dust, dirt and ice crystals of Jotunheim exploded in every direction, causing optical sensors to become obscured for a short period of time.

The two giants quickly rocketed out of it as they continued to clash against each other.

The Unshakeable King had firmly taken the initiative and sought to overwhelm the Dark Apostle with an unending tide of empowered hammer blows.

His armored true body fought against the bulk of his heavy armor. Phasewater organs strengthened his muscles and made him move faster than he should.

It was all the Dark Apostle could do to fend off most incoming blows. He had yet to light up the plasma blade, knowing that it was not a good idea to allow its relatively fragile head to get struck by the Impact Hammer.

Despite suffering a few more powerful blows to his spatial barrier, the Dark Apostle did not appear desperate to reverse the situation.

He even had enough concentration left to taunt his phase lord adversary.

“Heh, so much for the vaunted ‘Unshakeable King’. You are as honest and sincere as a puelmer. To think it would take so little to break your composure. How do the Ur-Titans regard their leader now that they have seen you in their state? They must have assumed they completely misjudged you. To think that their supposed unflappable leader has hidden so much rage and shame.”

The Unshakeable King let loose a cry of fury and dramatically accelerated for a moment!

This was a highly uncharacteristic move that he had never shown before!

It was probably a trump card that he had held in reserve to defeat the Oscillating Fist or fend off a challenger who assumed that he was as slow as a turtle.

Instead of saving this capability for a more opportune moment, the Ascended Giant chose to tap into its power early for the purpose of ending the progenitor’s life as quickly as possible!

Though the Ur-Titan leader’s decision was reckless, he had timed it exquisitely.

The Dark Apostle was in the middle of recovering his chance from the latest exchange of blows and could not stop the Unshakeable King from landing both of his Impact Hammers against his spatial barrier!

Much more particles threw up into the air as the simultaneous collision of two Impact Hammers produced a much more blow than expected!

The twin concussive blasts somehow resonated with each other, causing them to amplify each other and inflict a much stronger combined impact that significantly weakened the Dark Apostle’s spatial barrier!

By now, it had probably reached half-strength, which was bad because the Unshakeable King’s defenses had barely suffered any strain since the start of the duel!

Yet strangely enough, neither Ves in possession of Blinky's manifestation nor the Dark Apostle seemed all that alarmed.

They studied their adversary with great attention and scrutinized him in different ways.

The Dark Apostle took the measure of the Ascended Giant's personality and motivations. The more they clashed, the more the split personality gained insight into what made the Unshakeable King tick.

Ves meanwhile paid great attention to the Unshakeable King's gear. He was a mech designer, so he understood far more than these ignorant human phase lords how their technology worked. He could even deduce the overall thought process behind every significant design choice.

The powerful twin impact attack had clearly overstrained the Unshakeable King.

Though he clearly wanted to press on the offensive, he deemed it better for him to pause and allow his abused body and phasewater organs a small period of recovery.

No matter what, the Unshakeable King was still a defensive specialist. Offense was not his forte, though he had clearly proven his competence in this aspect.

"You know nothing, Larkinson." The Unshakeable King spat back. "The Ur-Titans stand behind me, especially once I have claimed your head from your soon-to-be-ruined body. Already your spatial barrier is about to go into shambles. Your edgy excuse of a raiment will follow suit soon enough. By ending your life, the Ascended Giant shall no longer be kept in bondage by your existence! Red humanity shall no longer lay claim to our race! Instead, we shall join our divine brothers in arms across the border and begin our reign as gods in earnest! No mortal sin or weakness shall taint us evermore! For this, I shall gladly have your blood in my hands!"

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Though the Ascended Giant needed to rest his overstrained body, he only needed a short time to allow his unnaturally strong constitution return to a more tolerable state.

The Unshakeable King wasted no further time and began to charge forward, intent on fishing the job!

Yet just as he was halfway to closing the distance, an accident occurred!

A handful of the servos on his legs unexpectedly malfunctioned, causing the Unshakeable King's rhythm to become interrupted!

Though he could still power through this unexpected event, the momentary break in momentum caused him to halt.

"What... did you do, foul human?"

Blinky grinned like a cat that got the canary. "I did nothing. You are solely responsible for your own misuse of your equipment. Did you ever bother to read the manual of your raiment? This thing was never designed to facilitate such violent motions! The developers of your raiment built it like a tank with the expectation that you would fight like one. Your attempt to mimic a charging beast has clearly exceeded the tolerances of your armor, causing it to wear down at an accelerated rate, especially when you burst into motion with extreme force."

The Unshakeable King had been so adamant about keeping his new capabilities secret that he had neglected to test them thoroughly enough!

This clearly proved the Ascended Giants had become so authoritarian that they had neglected the sensible advice and recommendations of their staff officers.

Just because the Ascended Giants assumed they were gods did not mean they were infallible.

They could still be wrong because they clearly did not possess a lot of expertise in many fields, most notably a technical understanding of their raiments.

Servos and motors were not necessary in most light raiments as the physical prowess of an Ascended Giant was more than sufficient to maneuver with so much mass attached to their bodies.

The same could not be said for the kind of heavy raiment that clad the Unshakeable King's form.

While it was outdated, it was truly a good example of robust engineering. Its developers had configured it with the expectation that the Unshakeable King would carry forth the Ur-Titan tradition of being defensive bulwarks.

Enhancing mobility was therefore an afterthought, but in order to make sure that the phase lord could carry all of his bulk around without growing too sluggish, the raiment still contained a number of servos, just like heavy combat armor.

Of course, it could still be argued whether these servos were necessary considering that phase lords were still considerably stronger even accounting for their exaggerated sizes.

Blinky continued to grin as Ves criticized the meathead even further. "We allowed you to wail on us not just because you were doing a good job at abusing your own raiment, but also so we could take the measure of you. We know how fast you can move. We know how much force you can put behind your weapon swings. I have already calculated the force amplification of your Impact Hammer mechanisms. I know how this tech works. I understand its strengths... as well as its weaknesses."

The Unshakeable King did not move.

The more he listened, the more he frowned.

There was a part of him that urged him to disregard the alarms transmitted by his raiment and continue to charge forward. A true Ascending Giant did not need to rely on armor in order to defeat his opponents! He would purge his heavy combat armor if that would help him close the distance faster!

Yet just as this insane idea could take root, the Unshakeable King's discipline reasserted itself and squashed it into pieces!

This was not a sound strategy! To discard the enormous defensive advantage of his raiment was a completely uncharacteristic notion. He would never come up with such an idea during normal times!

It was at this point that the Unshakeable King realized that something greater was amiss.

When he forced himself to reflect on his recent words and actions, he realized that he had comported himself in a completely different manner than he should. The strategos broke his own rules and answered too readily to his adversary's provocations.

Even now, the Unshakeable King's had to resist several tempting but ultimately stupid ideas to go on the attack.

One of them even called for throwing one of his hammers at the Dark Apostle!

"You dishonorable cur." The Unshakeable King pinned his opponent with an accusing stare. "You did this to me. There is something about your presence that is quietly forcing me to lower myself to your level. What foul human sorcery have you cast on me that is responsible for clouding my judgment?"

"Do you think I would be stupid enough to give you the answer?" Blinky huffed and swished his black-tipped tail. "We did nothing aside from exposing your true self that is hidden behind your stoic mask. If you were truly as noble and exemplary as your public persona suggested, then you would have shown such an ugly face to your fellow Ascended Giants."

Only Ves and the Dark Apostle knew that the reason why the Unshakeable King behaved with fewer scruples and inhibitions than before was due to the Corrupting Orb.

Ves had not wasted the recent golden lottery ticket prize. He had thought about how he could put it to good use in the upcoming duels. There was no time to develop anything fancy, so he simply decided to create a hidden slot inside all of the raiments that just happened to accommodate the new artifact.

By surrounding it with darkness hypers and channeling more darkness energy into it, the Corrupting Orb strengthened its capacity to corrupt the minds and spirits of anyone that came in close proximity.

Ves and the Dark Apostle were virtually immune to the orb's insidious influence, but the same could not be said for others!

The Unshakeable King's mentality, discipline and phase lord endowments may have granted him much more resistance than most, but one of the dangerous aspects about the Corrupting Orb was that it exploit any chink in the armor.

Even the greatest of heroes possessed one weakness or another. The Corrupting Orb played in on that, ignoring what others were good at in favor of preying on their weakness.

Although the Unshakeable King was not an ordinary figure, his mind and spirit were still relatively weak compared to his undaunted true body.

The close proximity of the earlier confrontations combined with the Unshakeable King's existing mental flaws meant that the Corrupting Orb only needed to induce a few small pushes here and there to induce a significant change in the human phase lord's behavioral pattern!

Although it was a pity that the Unshakeable King caught on to his own abnormalities so soon, Ves was still happy at the results.

The Unshakeable King's unambiguous words exposed his treasonous thoughts and ideas to both enemies and allies.

There could be no mistaking his positioning, and Ves had every right to defeat and kill this traitor to the human race.

There was a difference between killing a beloved hero and killing a traitor that would have led them to damnation.

The Dark Apostle finally activated the plasma edge of his weapon.



The Teragon Plasma Spear finally assumed its proper form. The Minor Demon locked inside the D-arm had been waiting long enough for this moment. It had become far too frustrated at all of the heavy defensive actions!

That was not all. The Dark Apostle's Flame Lord Raiment entered into a second phase of readiness. Heat radiated from different ports and most notably the backpack module as the large reactor had become fully active!

The Dark Apostle already felt a lot of heat wrapped around his physique. The insulation of his raiment was rather poor due to lack of time and capacity, so the phase lord had little choice but to allow his enormous true body to act as a makeshift heatsink.

The flood of fire energy converging from the surrounding environment completely overshadowed the other elements.

This included darkness energy which actively sought to shy away from all of the hot and scorching fire energy!

All of this fueled the D-arms even further. Their energy levels had become notably higher. The flight system mounted in the rear even spread out and produced flaming wings!

The Unshakeable King observed all of this. His raiment tried to analyze what was going on and make sense of it, but it was unable to come up with any coherent answers.

Now that he had recognized his own faults, the Ur-Titan leader resolutely slipped back to his old ways.

He did not choose to stand his ground, but instead lifted off and floated in the air.

"I see you have decided to get serious now, Larkinson. Come join me in orbit. Let us end this fight in space. That is the true arena of our kind."

The more pragmatic reason for insisting on fighting in space was that the Unshakeable King did not have to strain his raiment that much when fighting in space.

His flight system as opposed to his legs were responsible for his mobility. There was less chance of equipment failure if he relied on the former to move around. It was already designed with a lot of rigorous activities in mind.

The Dark Apostle did not refuse this invitation. He could have charged and forced the Unshakeable King back onto the ground again, but he too preferred to fight in space whenever possible.

It took a bit of time for both of them to ascend to an acceptable height.



The Unshakeable King finally stopped and maintained orbit while adopting a full defensive posture.

He even activated his Tarsei organ to affix his body into the same relative coordinates and make him fully live out his name for becoming unshakeable.

The Unshakeable King did not mount any offensive actions. He simply hovered in place and silently invited for the Dark Apostle to go on the offense.

"The Unshakeable King seeks to exhaust us to death. His earlier displays of martial valor should have earned him a hefty amount of points. He can afford to stall us for the remainder of the duel. It is not honorable, but it was a much more effective approach."

"We must go on the offensive as we originally planned." The human phase lord accurately judged. "Forget about other goals or side objectives. We must solely set our sights on the greatest threat."

As the Corruption Orb took a backseat due to concentrating so much fire energy, the Teragon Flame Spear and the Flame Lord Raiment both sought to have a taste of phase lord blood!

The Dark Apostle became determined to oblige them. He called upon their power and charged forth like a comet soaring through a star system!

As the attacking party came close to the Unshakeable King, the Dark Apostle suddenly experienced discomfort and involuntary slowdowns as changes in gravity along with strange illusions was doing its best to distract him from his mission!

This was the lesser Tarsei organ at work. It served as an excellent way to prevent starships from escaping the star system and to secure high-risk adversaries.

Though the Dark Apostle already anticipated a move like this, he still grew clumsy despite all of the psychological preparation.

Yet despite his lack of experience and the newness of his newly acquired fighting skills, the Dark Apostle pushed through all of these hindrances and thrust his plasma spear forward just as twin hammers either sought to demolish the plasma weapon or successfully blast it out of its current owner's grip!

"As if that would work!"

Short of striking the Unshakeable King's bulky form, an energy construct grew from the tip of the spear and struck the phase lord's spatial barrier!

The briefly empowered Teragon Plasma Spear burned with unnatural hotness. Its tip had lengthened and was able to inflict damage considerably easier with the help of the extra reach!

The spatial barrier of the Unshakeable King began to suffer intense blows!

Though the human phase lord tried his best to compensate, his twin Impact Hammers felt like a burden and his maneuverability in space was not too great.

## Chapter 7174 Impact Hammers

The Unshakeable King dominated the initial engagement. In his fury and his loss of control, he exposed much of his strength and showed off how fearsome of a phase lord he had truly become.

His strength was indeed formidable. His physical strength surpassed that of normal phase lords due to relying on several phasewater organs. His ability to boost his movement speed was also quite respectable. His Impact Hammers did a great job of channeling his strength and amplifying his blows.

On top of that, he was also able to anchor himself in space and turn the surroundings into a spatial quagmire, making it a lot more difficult for attackers to maneuver around and create useful openings.

Now that the Unshakeable King had come to his senses, he truly became a tough nut to crack.

His Impact Hammers may have a relatively short reach, but they could lash out at Ves at any time when the Ascending Giant abruptly abandoned his space anchoring and unexpectedly lunged forward.

The threat of getting whacked at any time prevented the Dark Apostle from treating his adversary as a punching bag.

The Unshakeable King was not a harmless wall. It was a hedgehog. It was a fortress with teeth.

Yet the Dark Apostle did not fight as feebly as before.

Ves and the Dark Apostle had completed their initial observations of their foe.

They had taken the measure of the Unshakeable King, and concluded that it was well within their capability to defeat the strategos.

Of course, this was just an initial evaluation. There was no way the leader of the Ur-Titan Phalanx possessed so little depth. He most definitely kept a few trump cards in reserve, but fewer than ideal due to his earlier impulses.

Then again, Ves and the Dark Apostle did the same. They still kept a few secret weapons in reserve as the right time had not yet come.

All that mattered now was that the pair needed to regain the lead by making short work of their adversary's vaunted defenses.

"The difference in strength between you and him is smaller than expected." Ves privately communicated to his phase lord side. "The lesser Marigal organ developed by the RC is not anything special, but it has given us a crucial jump in physical prowess. While the Unshakeable King can still overpower us with the help of other strength-boosting phasewater organs, they are more exhausting and temperamental in use."

"That sounds nice, but I am still going to suffer if I get hit."

"Then make good use of the reach of your plasma spear. It is admittedly not as long as we wish, but it still gives you a pronounced advantage. Call upon the power of your D-arms. Draw upon the power of the fire element. The Teragon Plasma Spear and the Flame Lord Raiment were originally designed to work with each other. You have yet to unlock their full potential. You can't just use the hardware. You also need to draw upon the power of the Minor Demons themselves."

The Dark Apostle frowned. "I have learned the same theory and techniques as you, so you should know that I can only do that with one D-arm at a time. Besides, they are so hungry that they will compete much harder to absorb the surrounding fire energy."

"Use your brain a little more. You are not alone. I have designed the Flame Lord Raiment for situations just like this where I want to control its more advanced technological functions. The Demoncasting process should have preserved most of them. I will be taking root in your armor. Do not be surprised if it does stuff without your explicit command. While I am there, make sure you execute your new Demonic Possession Spearmanship techniques that I have reshaped to draw upon the fire element. Blinky is fully prepared to let you draw as much fire-attributed E energy from the Blinkyverse as possible. Don't worry about consumption. The duels won't last long enough for any critical imbalances to occur."

Both of them had to work together in order to get the most out of their gear. As Blinky began to inhabit the Flame Lord Raiment, it soon began to light up even more.

The equipment lit up even further. A fire hyper energy shield came online that closely followed the contours of the active spatial barrier.

Aside from that, the space suppressor became more powerful while specialized sensor systems paid a lot more attention to specific phenomena.

Fire energy also began to radiate from the raiment. Blinky tried to supply as much fire energy to his gear as he could manage. This caused the armor to

show faint illusions of flames, making it seem as if the entire phase lord had become a living inferno!

The Dark Apostle worked hard to draw out even more fire energy in order to power up the Teragon Plasma Spear.

The strong infusion of fire energy caused the D-arm's plasma tip to grow longer, thicker, and more hotter than ever.

The massive energy boost clearly made the Unshakeable King more concerned.

The enemy phase lord braced himself even harder in space with the expectation that he would have to fend off a very powerful attack.

"Ready?"

"Ready."

The two sounded like harmonious teammates. In the face of a common enemy, their own animosity towards each other had been reduced to a minimum. Both personalities understood the importance of winning this duel with as little

consumption as possible.

"Go. Be patient and sap his spatial barrier. Target his Impact Hammers whenever possible. Attack the shaft of the sides of their hammerheads. Do not attack their flat faces."

The Dark Apostle kept this advice in mind as he went on the attack.

The closer he came, the more his form blazed with the power of fire and determination.

Like a phoenix swooping in for the kill, the flaming Ascended Giant attempted to inflict a heavy blow with his first charge.

When he almost reached his target, the Dark Apostle only became somewhat disoriented due to the change in environment.

One of the Unshakeable King's phasewater organs made it a lot harder to navigate in his vicinity.

However, the Dark Apostle was able to push through regardless. As soon as he came close enough, he activated one of the new modified techniques. More fire energy than ever surged from the Blinkyverse and surged right into the

Teragon Plasma Spear.

The plasma edge abruptly heated up a lot more, causing its damage potential to soar, if only momentarily!

With fire energy being expended at such a prodigious rate that the red-clad phase lord looked like a blazing comet, the fire-charged plasma spear struck the Unshakeable King's spatial barrier and erupted in flaming fury!

The damage of this basic power move was astonishing!

The D-arm combined with all of the other factors had drastically increased the Dark Apostle's ability to inflict damage!

Admirably, the Unshakeable King flinched but did not lose his concentration.

Even as the Dark Apostle attempted to fly away, the Unshakeable King unexpectedly altered the expression of his Tarsei organ.

This momentarily generated a fairly strong spatial ripple that caused the Dark Apostle's forward progress to become momentarily interrupted! Though this problem disappeared shortly after it appeared, it still caused the challenger's departure to be delayed just long enough for the Unshakeable King to lunge forward and launch a devastating counterattack with his twin Impact

Hammers!

Yet before the powerful hammers could connect and almost blow away the

Dark Apostle's spatial barrier, the flight system as well as a handful of boosters were hurriedly activated on Ves' command.

The rapid response pushed the Dark Apostle out of the way just enough to evade the devastating blows!

"Missed!"

The Dark Apostle spun around again. The fire energy wafting from his increasingly hotter form made him look alive and full of passion! He looked far more valiantly than his current foe due to moving around.

As the flaming phase lord turned around to commit to another charge, the leader of the Ur-Titan Phalanx responded not with his twin hammers, but with his armored foot.

As the Unshakeable King stomped the fabric of space, the latter shook as invisible space quakes spread from the epicenter!

The Dark Apostle got swept by these powerful spatial ripples. These ripples were serious business, as his alter ego struggled to maintain his balance and positioning in space when the entire fabric of space started to curl up for whatever reason!

It took significantly more effort for the red phase lord to recover his stance and wit.

This came not a moment too soon, because the Unshakeable King had made another short-range dash that would put him right on top of the Dark Apostle. However, just before the Unshakeable King could unleash his twin revenge

strike, the Flame Lord Armor released a seemingly uncontrolled blast of fire energy as well as reactor in every direction!

The entire surroundings momentarily heated up! The Unshakeable King lacked the means to look past the particle cloud, so when she headed straight into the mist field, the Dark Apostle had already made a getaway!

"Where?!"

Behind!

The Unspeakable King rapidly tried to turn around to meet the incoming attack, but his own bulk and lack of grace hindered his movements.

By the time he was more than halfway through completing his rotation, the

Teragon Plasma Spear did not strike the Unspeakable King spatial barrier as expected, but changed course last-second in order to land a serious strike on the hammer's side!

Alloys melted while other parts started to exhibit signs of fracturing. The plasma spear ultimately inflicted moderate damage to the Impact Hammer, though the progress was not yet obvious.

"This is good! The Impact Hammer is still working, but if you wack it on this

same side for a few more times, something eventually has to break. The design of the Impact Hammers makes it clear that it is designed to resist physical damage absurdly well, but it does not possess the same durability when it comes to blocking energy attacks."

The Unshakeable King discovered the concerning condition of his own weapon.

None of his adversaries had ever targeted his weapon specifically with the intent of disabling it first.

Then again, the Unshakeable King was sure that his Impact Hammers were resistant against plasma damage. He specifically made this request when he commissioned their development!

"This is impossible!"

"Anything is possible! My tech happens to be better than yours! This isn't your grandma's plasma weapon!"

"You craven mech designer! Fight me, not my weapon!"

"Hah, why would I when you are dangling them so confidently before my eyes?"

From the moment the Unshakeable King realized that the mechanisms of his

Impact Hammer was vulnerable to the plasma spear, he showed a lot more restraint than before.

He absolutely did not want his weapons to get ruined too soon, so he stopped

his attacks when he judged that there was a risk that they would get smacked by a fire-charged plasma weapon on the side.

This caused him to become less threatening, enabling the Dark Apostle to drain his spatial barrier with less risk than before.

After a number of attack passes, the Unshakeable King's first layer of defense was on the verge of failing.

It took a fair bit of time, because that was because the enemy phase lord activated his raiment's azure energy shield on an intermittent basis to delay this breakpoint.

Though the Unshakeable King's effort failed to save his spatial barrier from deteriorating so much, he at least managed to buy a bit more time.

To a defensive expert like him, trying to run out the clock and win the duel on points was a familiar strategy to him. He was not in a hurry.

"What a hard energy shell. How many phasewater organs are reinforcing your spatial barrier."

The Unshakeable King did not respond with words, but made an unexpected move by lifting his foot and crashing it down, causing space to ripple just as violently as before!

While the Dark Apostle anticipated this move and already started to back off and go on the defensive, the ripples were stronger than last time, causing him to remain off-balance for a moment longer!

If that was not enough, the Unshakeable King made another surprising move!

He spread his arms and swung them into each other, causing the two Impact Hammers to collide against each other in their faces!

A powerful spatial shockwave burst forth and destabilized the space around the Dark Apostle!

Though the event only lasted for a short amount of time, this was enough for the Unshakeable King to take advantage of certain spatial characteristics and blink right next to the Dark Apostle!

"What?!"

"MEET YOUR PUNISHMENT, YOU PROFANE WORM!"



## Chapter 7175 Equipment Reliance

Ves underestimated the capabilities of the Impact Hammers.

He also underestimated the Unshakeable King's mobility.

Although he only teleported a short distance away, he happened to do so during a moment where the surrounding space was still destabilized by his own actions!

The idea was genius now that Ves thought about it a little further.

There were two ways to inhibit spatial phenomena.

The first was to strengthen the fabric of space. The harder it was to change it to facilitate a certain ability or action, the less capable a phase lord was able to do anything useful. The effects of their manipulation would either be lessened or suppressed entirely.

Another way to stop phase lords from casting their weird space magic was to destabilize the fabric of space. Making it looser should normally facilitate spatial manipulation, but causing it to go into chaos made it almost impossible to perform any structured techniques!

Almost.

In a situation where the Unshakeable King was able to generate a highly focused, uniform and consistent destabilizing effect, it was theoretically possible for him to perform a simple spatial ability.

A short-ranged instant teleportation ability barely fell within this scope.

The initial attempts would definitely fail. The Unshakeable King likely also needed the support of an entire staff whose job was to collect readings, analyze the data and advise the Ascending Giant on how to thread the needle through all of the destabilized space.

Through persistent practice, the Unshakeable King may eventually succeed in his endeavor.

Where other human phase lords found themselves stuck, disoriented and unable to activate most of their spatial abilities, the Unshakeable King was able to power through his own disorder and resist the discomfort of ending up in the middle of an unstable area.

"You are unworthy to lead the Ascended Giants! Your overreliance on gear has made you soft!"

The Unshakeable King began to wail at the Dark Apostle's spatial barrier with his Impact Hammer.

The bad news was that the challenger was completely out of position and unable to fend off the attacks right away.

The good news was that the mechanisms responsible for producing powerful concussive forces endured excessive strain and couldn't be activated for the time being.

That being said, the Unshakeable King still possessed plenty of power on his own. Combined with his ability to anchor himself in space for greater leverage, he was able to strike at the spatial barrier with so much power that it was already on the verge of breaking!

Though the Dark Apostle initially tried to put distance between himself and his teleported opponent, the spatial disruptions were much greater and hindered his forward progress just enough to enable the Unshakeable King to stick to him like a barnacle.

After realizing that retreat was impossible for the moment, the Dark Apostle turned around and held his spear like a staff.

He proceeded to use his acquired fighting skills to block or redirect the hammer blows.

There was no opportunity for him to use the plasma tip to launch any counter attacks because the Unshakeable King had entered into his full offensive rhythm. His hammers struck like galloping legs. While their force was not the greatest, the repeated strikes took an awful toll on the spatial barrier.

Soon it cracked and disintegrated as the Dark Apostle was no longer able to retain his first line of protection!

"You are just as weak as your barrier! Now stay in place so that I can pulverize your entire body aside from your head!"

The Dark Apostle was not about to let that happen. Though his spatial barrier was gone, it had lasted long enough for him and his other self to prepare a so-called power move.

Blinky had been saturating the surrounding with as much fire energy as he could spill out of his Imaginary Universe. He had also been channeling as much fire energy into the Flame Lord Raiment in preparation for a fierce counterattack.

After the preparation period had passed, Ves immediately issued a command. "Break plasma containment!"

At the same time, the Dark Apostle had drawn his spear back and held it in a very close grip by holding it right behind its rapidly heating plasma tip.

The beleaguered phase lord aimed the tip right at his adversary while doing his best to activate an improvised technique.

"Dragon's Breath!"

The D-arm's plasma edge suddenly lost definition. The plasma that was normally supposed to be tightly contained had now come loose!

A stream of thin but extremely deadly plasma struck the Unshakeable King's spatial barrier without any issue!

The range was so short that it was impossible for the Dark Apostle to miss. The heat and brightness released by the stream of plasma was so bright that the enemy phase lord was unable to persist in his attack!

The fire energy channeled into the Teragon Plasma Spear and floating in the environment significantly amplified the power of this dangerous torrent, causing it to inflict even more damage to the Unshakeable King's defenses! Unfortunately, the Teragon Plasma Spear was not primarily designed to function as a ranged weapon. It endured great strain to maintain this output, but once it neared its limit, the Dark Apostle was forced to cut off the plasma stream lest it melt through the internals of his main weapon entirely.

It had done enough. Not only had the emergency move interrupted the Unshakeable King's offensive, his spatial barrier had depleted rapidly during this sequence!

It should not take too many strikes with the plasma spear to collapse it entirely, though the Dark Apostle knew he had to give the weapon enough time to cool

down.

He therefore chose to back off and let his deactivated weapon rest for a short amount of time.

Blinky nodded in approval. "Be careful of another sneak attack. I do not know how often the Unshakeable King can pull off his earlier combo, but the act of generating a field of destabilized space in front of him must definitely be hard on his Impact Hammers. In fact, I am not even sure whether they can recover their original concussive enhancement effect."

Although the Unshakeable King looked a little affected by the earlier move, he quickly began to sneer as he held his hammers at the ready.

"Again, you think you can save yourself with your technology. True strength comes from our bodies, not these toys of yours."

"I can say the same for you." The Dark Apostle huffed. "Those Impact Hammers

of yours caught us off-guard, but that will not happen a second time. Besides, your hammers have become a lot more boring now that they don't produce extra force anymore. What is wrong? Have they failed to withstand the violence of your own moves?"

"I DO NOT NEED ANY TECH TO FINISH YOU OFF! NOW THAT YOUR SPATIAL BARRIER IS GONE, THERE IS NOTHING THAT CAN STOP MY HAMMERS FROM BLUDGEONING YOU INTO PIECES!"

As the Unshakeable King soared forward, the Dark Apostle flew backwards. No matter what, the Dark Apostle still possessed superior mobility! The enemy phase lord quickly recalled the futility of going on the offensives

and stopped in place. He shook his head as if he discovered that he let his emotions overrule his good sense yet another time.

"I do not need to come to you. It is you that needs to come to me." The Unshakeable King smirked. "If you do not hurry, then the clock will run out sooner or later. I shall definitely be able to win on points, thereby denying you

of a victory."

He was right.

There were multiple reasons why the Dark Apostle had to go on the offensive.

The challenger did not charge forward straight away. He instead waited to give his weapon a little more time to recover. Blinky had already dove into the D-arm in order to inspect its internals and facilitate its recovery through means that the human phase lord did not understand.

A lull had formed. The two phase lords continued to hover in orbit of

Jotunheim.

The Unshakeable King did not mind the pause because his spatial barrier slowly recovered with each passing second.

The Dark Apostle needed to make intensive use of his Teragon Plasma Spear very soon, so it was important to inspect it and wait for it to recover as much as possible. The two once again fell into a tense discussion.

"Despite your traitorous words, I think that you are not so different from myself." The Unshakeable King regained his cool to an extent. He was doing his best to maintain a tight grip on his emotions. "You claim you fight for red humanity, but the way you fight is like a mercenary. You fight for greed, not for ideals. You are only getting along with these red humans because they have pressured you with a combination of enticements and threats."

The Dark Apostle frowned. "How did you know?"

"I used to be one of them. I know how those who possess wealth and the illusion of power operate. To them, you are a threat that cannot easily be controlled, a being who has transcended the scope of their pitiful humanity. Instead of worshiping us as the superior beings we are, they reject our divinity and seek to enslave us, as they have done with others deemed different from their own race. Humans are one of the most xenophobic races in the Milky Way

as well as the Red Ocean. You will never belong in their society. If they do not look at you with fear, they will look at you with loathing."

This caused the Dark Apostle to frown deeper. Though he identified with the Unshakeable King's description, that did not mean he was willing to embrace the other extreme.

"Humans fear what they do not understand. We... are strange to them, but who knows whether that will remain the same in a couple of centuries. Besides, the

opinions of these worms do not interest me that much. I like the identity of an Ascended Giant, but there is a difference between standing up for your own race and volunteering to become a slave to the Red Cabal. Instead of working towards independence, you are working towards surrendering yourself and your fellow brothers to a band of aliens who have many reasons to hate us for

our human heritages. Switching from one slave master to another is a stupid idea." "You would not think so if you realize the true corruption that is festering in our society! Red humanity is too far gone. Only the native galactic community can lead us to a newer and better future. We are gods. We have embraced their enlightened ways. As long as we

present ourselves to the alien phase lords and phase whales, they will recognize us as king and agree to add us to their governing council or whatever body that makes all of the decisions." "Hah!" The Dark Apostle sneered. "You are utterly delusional if you think the

native aliens cannot see past your human facade! You may hate the mortals all you want, but you have far more in common with them than any alien." "Insolent brat! I know what you are doing, Larkinson. If you want to persuade me that my course is wrong, then convince me with your fists, not your words!" The Dark Apostle finally went into action again seeing that the Unshakeable King still don't want to move on a whim.

The plasma tip lit up and began to release a familiar heat again. The D-arm had survived the earlier emergency move and would stay operational until at least the end of this event!

As the Dark Apostle almost came close enough to attack, he veered to the side at the last moment and managed to tag the Unshakeable King's faltering spatial barrier by another fraction.

Nothing special happened.

The Dark Apostle repeated the hit-and-run attacks and found that the Unshakeable King had practically turned himself into a rock! This was not a guy who would respond to provocations anymore!

## Chapter 7176 The Father of Companion Spirits

The Unshakeable King painted the illusion of weakness at this time.

His attempts to defend his faltering spatial barrier was considerably more feeble than before.

Ves was not fooled. He urged the Dark Apostle to prioritize caution over recklessness, and this time the alternate personally obeyed without restraint.

It appeared more and more clear that the Unshakeable King had pushed his weapons and armor beyond their safety levels.

His raiment still performed fine more or less, but his Impact Hammers had taken an awful toll in a short amount of time.

The Dark Apostle knew that so long as his adversary's main weapons remained partially disabled, the Unshakeable King was unlikely to overcome the spatial suppression and teleport himself or others in close proximity to their designated targets.

The question was whether those Impact Hammers were truly stuck in a disabled state.

Not even Ves was able to make this determination.

"Bring me closer." He instructed. "I need to get a good look at them. Maybe I will pay them a visit. I won't be able to boost you as much as before, so you are on your own for the next few minutes."

"I do not need you to hold my own against the Unshakeable King." The Dark Apostle arrogantly said. "My earlier performance was just a warmup. Now that I have become used to fighting with these D-arms, I am sure I can inflict wounds on this guy."

He did not intend to make idle boasts. Just after he said that, he boldly began to fight against the Unshakeable King!

This time, the Dark Apostle properly took advantage of his better mobility and the reach of his weapon.

He did not take any excessive risks and made sure to strike with his plasma spear lunged as far forward as possible.

This put his armored form out of the reach of the Impact Hammer most of the time. While the Unshakeable King made various attempts to shift forward without warning, the Dark Apostle's caution and strategy foiled these attacks. The Unshakeable King's stressed spatial barrier only recovered by a small extent. Now, the Teragon Plasma Spear invalidated that recovery and inflicted even further damage onto it, causing it to move closer to total collapse.

The Dark Apostle grew more and more eager to see this happen. He couldn't help but fight a little more aggressively in order to hasten this favorable

outcome.

That did not mean he was unaware that this may be an elaborate trap. He practically expected it to be given the depth previously shown by the Unshakeable King.

During these exchanges, Blinky remained absent on the surface.

The Star Cat had secretly slipped inside one of the Impact Hammers.

This was very much possible since it was a pure technological product that did not possess any inherent protection against his intrusion.

It was not a weapon held by a high-ranking mech with willpower that was strong enough to rebuke an intruding spirit.

It was not an artifact that possessed varying degrees of resistance against an unwelcome visitor.

It also was not a D-arm that was inhabited by a hostile demon.

The lack of protection gave Ves the confidence that Blinky could safely take a peek inside the weapon.

Trying to understand the Impact Hammer from the inside was a challenging exercise. Ves did not gain access to a clean and organized blueprint. He instead felt as if he was a blind person trying to work out how a device worked by touching its parts with his fingertips.

While Blinky was a lot more sophisticated than a physical limb, there was only so much he could do to help Ves piece together the blueprint.

It took a lot more time than he expected for him to understand the mechanisms that powered the concussive force effect.

It was indeed a clever piece of high technology. Ves had figured out the basic principles and could even replicate it to a lesser degree with the help of his stolen insights.

What he could determine was that the tech was not as robust as it appeared on the outside. The hammer as well as its internals had to resist enough shocks with every violent impact.

After all, Newton's Third Law still applied in this situation!

The designers did make use of a variety of exotics to mitigate the opposing reaction and dampen the shocks coursing through the Impact Hammers. They only worked up to an extent as there was not enough room for more dampening effects.

What Ves also noticed was that many parts possessed self-repair functionality. The developers of the Impact Hammer had made a good effort to prolong its lifespan and preserve its most powerful feature. The incorporation of self-healing exotics slowly restored the advanced electronics that were prone to breaking. Although their rate of recovery was slow, enough time had passed for the hammers to return to their full strength.

Ves could not let that happen!



He decided to take action himself. Just as Blinky was about to approach one of the more critical parts and got ready to ruin it by performing a small spell, another spiritual being suddenly entered the Impact Hammer, causing it to become a lot more crowded all of a sudden!

A shrunken, unarmored and translucent version of the Unshakeable King flew in front of the intruding spiritual cat.

"You do not belong here, you human slave!"

"Mrow. Figures I would get screwed by my own invention."

Ves remembered that every Ascended Giant received their own companion spirit fruit. The human phase lords possessed powerful bodies, but their minds and spiritualities may still be vulnerable to targeted attacks, so they were advised to nurture companion spirits that could fend off such assaults. "For your attempts to desecrate my weapon, I sentence you to death!"

The miniature giant, which sounded ridiculous to say the least, uttered a warcry before charging straight at Blinky with fists rearing to punch!

The hostile companion spirit was practically shaped for battle against other spiritual beings. He closed the distance quickly and began to wail onto Blinky's manifestation with blows that were infused with the concepts of force, oscillation and space!

In other words, the giant attempted to leverage the same concepts mastered by the Oscillating Fist by deliberately shaping his qi cultivation around them. Though the companion spirit was too young, his superficial understanding of those concepts was still enough to empower him in battle!

Blinky on the other hand was more of a generalist and a supporter. Though he was still able to block the incoming attacks by conjuring a spiritual shield that was constantly being sustained by the energies pouring out of the Blinkyverse, the miniature giant proved to be surprisingly good at punching! Ves was momentarily stunned as he did not expect to be confronted by a

hostile spirit.

Yet just because he was caught off-guard did not mean he was defenseless!

The spiritual shield held. Although it was just a simple ability that shouldn't have lasted as long as it should, the difference was that it was constantly being fed by the energies of the Blinkyverse.

While the miniature giant was inflicting greater damage than what Blinky was able to recover, the latter's effort was still helpful because it dramatically delayed how long it would take for the spiritual shield to get broken. Blinky had no intention of sitting back and doing nothing. The Star Cat's purple

form began to darken slightly as he opened up his mouth and tried to suck in the miniature giant, or at least the ambient E energy radiation.

The cat had to reduce the amount of E energy being fed to the spiritual shield in order to free up enough 'bandwidth' to devour ambient E energy, but the hostile companion spirit found himself in dire straits.

The miniature giant felt an attracting force that was attempting to pull him into a dark, unfathomable and terrible space!

The companion spirit instinctively knew that if he got pulled into the mouth of the purple cat, he would never be able to break out by relying on his own force! He no longer cared about protecting the Impact Hammer and tried to get away.

Yet because he attempted to assault Blinky at such a close distance, the feline companion spirit's devouring force had grown strong enough to slow down his forward progress!

"Abomination! You... you are not human!" "Well, duh. I am a cat, silly!"

"You are engaging in cannibalism!"

"Pfff, you are wrong. This form is modeled after a cat, while you are modeled after an Ascended Giant. We are not humans. We are predator and prey. It was a mistake for you to show up to me with your level of power. I am the Father of Companion Spirits! Do you truly think I would have no defense against my own creations?"

Though the miniature giant was gaining more distance with every passing second, the shining white jewel embedded on his forehead briefly shone brighter.

A small but focused beam of Worclaw energy crossed the imaginary space and struck the miniature giant, inflicting a serious wound!

"Ahhh! How can you be so powerful?!"

Ves did not deign to answer this question.

Although Blinky had to use a small amount of precious and slow-to-replenish

Worclaw energy, its power was not in doubt.

The Star Cat could have killed the miniature giant if he pumped more Worclaw

energy into this attack, but Ves wanted to save as much of it as possible for the subsequent duels.

There was a large probability that Blinky might need to bail the Dark Apostle out if the latter had put himself into no-win situations.

In any case, the Miniature Giant's injury not only broke his concentration and

caused him to suffer a form of pain that he had never experienced in his short

lifespan, but also weakened him just enough that the balance tilted against his favor!

His translucent humanoid form was slowly moving closer and closer to Blinky's open maw.

The devouring force felt unnatural. It was not only strong, but conveyed a strong sense of doom and despair.

If the miniature giant was not the companion spirit of a powerful strategos of the Ur-Titan Phalanx, he may have already chosen to give up by this time! Yet it was exactly because he was the partner of a human phase lord that he

continued to remain unyielding.

The miniature giant began to scream as he felt parts of himself breaking down

into a more regular form of E energy before being sucked straight into the Star Cat's metaphorical stomach!

Blinky did not taste flavors in the conventional sense. E Energy was E energy. It possessed its own characteristics. The companion spirit merely 'tasted' a small measure of the spirituality that ultimately belonged to the Unshakeable King. At this time, his body froze minutely. The Ascended Giant most definitely felt

the injury to his spirituality, long enough for him to mistime his defensive response.

The plasma spear struck his spatial barrier and finally overloaded it after several minutes of fighting!

This was a significant victory for Ves, because the Unshakeable King's spatial barrier was notably stronger and more resistant against damage with the help of at least one defensive phasewater organ.

Now, it had turned useless as the Unshakeable King could only rely on the protection offered by his raiment and his thick physical body to block subsequent attacks!

Meanwhile, Blinky kept unraveling the hostile companion spirit in slow-motion.

A trickle of imprinted E energy constantly drew away from the miniature giant and passed straight through the Star Cat's gullet.

As this took place, Ves began to experience slightly stronger hallucinations of the Unshakeable King life before he became a human phase lord. The hallucinations remained relatively harmless for the time being, but he could easily guess that the chances of suffering a backlash was much greater if Blinky attempted to absorb a much more powerful being!

No data found.

## Chapter 7177 Spirit Wound

The duel between the Dark Apostle and the Unshakeable King had entered a new and much more intensive phase.

Two confrontations took place at the same time.

On the surface, the Dark Apostle finally made proper use of his advantages and successfully managed to whittle down the Unshakeable King's spatial barrier without incurring any serious injuries to his exposed true body.

Yet what happened out of sight of the vast majority of observers was the secret competition between companion spirits.

Blinky's special traits and abilities happened to turn him into a nemesis towards many energy-based life forms!

The furry and adorable looking Star Cat might look innocent, but he assimilated the infamous devouring ability of the Unending One!

Even if Blinky was unable to replicate the full might of the deceased dark god's frightening ability to devour nearly anything, the companion spirit was still able to pose a serious threat against a younger and relatively less developed counterpart.

The miniature giant was quite impressive for being able to make so many gains in his focused training. He had also matured a lot faster than he should.

Ves guessed that the Phase Lord Department must have fed the miniature giant and other companion spirits with cultivation resources.

If the Red Collective still supplied the rogue department with elixirs and such, the miniature giant definitely wouldn't have been as easy to disrupt!

As it was, the enemy phase lord's companion spirit was ultimately wholly unprepared to fight against a companion spirit as remarkable as Blinky.

At this time, the Star Cat dispelled his spiritual shield so that he could fully reverse the flow of the aperture that led into his Imaginary Universe.

He wanted to see what would happen if he devoured the miniature giant in his entirety!

Would the companion spirit remain intact when he found himself trapped inside a completely different universe that operated through completely different rules?

Would the Unshakeable King lose his connection to his companion spirit, and would he suffer grievous damage to his mind and spirit if that happened?

There were so many questions swirling in Ves' mind that he couldn't wait to complete this sequence!

While the Unshakeable King grew alarmed at what was happening to his companion spirit, what could he do? His amazing physical prowess and his specialized spatial abilities may be useful against corporeal opponents, but they pretty much posed no threat against a pure energy-based life form like Blinky!

The miniature giant was supposed to be the phase lord's answer against more esoteric threats, but it was too bad that this companion spirit was at least several years too young to pose a credible threat against Blinky.

After letting out a haunting wail, the companion spirit unraveled into a spiritual yarn before getting sucked right into the Blinkyverse!

The miniature giant died before he could reach the other side. He was ultimately not strong or tough enough to stay in one piece before he passed through the other side.

Nothing was left of him aside from the spiritual building blocks that used to make up his existence. The Blinkyverse was rapidly beginning to assimilate them by wiping out their original imprints so that they could integrate properly in their new universe.

The loss of such a precious companion spirit had a very pronounced effect on the leader of the Ur-Titan Phalanx.

He suffered a headache like nothing else! His composure broke and he completely lost his cool!

Yet despite suffering such a serious spiritual injury, his resistance abruptly grew stronger as he held nothing back anymore!

"YOU DESERVE TO DIE! BOTH OF YOU DESERVE TO DIE! NO MORE GAMES! NO MORE WORDS! SINCE YOUR COMPANION SPIRIT SAW FIT

TO DEVOUR MY OWN, I SHALL DO THE SAME TO YOU! PROGENITOR OR NOT, I SHALL FEAST ON YOUR FLESH AND GNAW ON YOUR BONES! YOUR SKULL SHALL BECOME MY NEW WINECUP!"

The Unshakeable King's body swelled beneath his raiment, causing it to become much more strained than before.

The furious phase lord moved with alacrity and struck with greater force. He no longer abided by the normal limits of his enhanced physique, but pushed himself to the utmost even if he was threatening to tear his own muscles!

If that was not enough, he decided to supercharge his phasewater organs!

He did this by decisively burning the phasewater that was embedded in his own lifeblood.

His phasewater concentration dropped by the second, undoing an escalating amount of his hard-earned progress.

Yet for the time being, he was able to strengthen his abilities far above their usual levels!

The surrounding space almost completely fell into the sway of the Unshakeable King. His control over it had reached a decisive level. The Dark Apostle was no longer able to pull off any effective external spatial techniques because he was unable to exert any control over the surrounding environment!



The Unshakeable King suddenly disappeared from view and abruptly appeared behind his foe with both hammers swinging down to dent the Dark Apostle's exposed rear!

Defective or not, if those hammers struck the backpack module containing the power reactor, there was a large chance that it would malfunction, causing the plasma spear to run out of power!

Fortunately, the sudden turn of events did not cause the Dark Apostle to lose his complacency. He had seen his adversary pull off this trick once, and he had already prepared a response in case it happened again.

He was actually thankful that the Unshakeable King had made the predictable choice to approach right from the rear. It would have been trickier to fend off the traitorous phase lord from other angles.

Just before those twin hammers could strike, the azure shield generator that had already been primed to respond briefly activated while putting much of its power in the rear rather than the other directions!

Since the hammers were made of a higher standard of transphasic alloys, the azure energy shield only lasted for a short moment before bursting apart.

The hasty activation had done it no favors, but the shield had thankfully lasted long enough to do its job!

The Unshakeable King had wasted a lot of energy and effort to launch this teleport strike, yet failed to do anything but disable a backup measure.

The backpack reactor module remained intact, which came in really handy as it began to channel greater power into the Flame Lord Raiment.

Boosters helped the Dark Apostle spin around fast enough to be able to score the chest plate of the Unshakeable King with the Teragon Plasma Spear!

The empowered D-arm burned and vaporized deeper across the thickest chest portion than the enemy phase lord expected!

This was the power of a D-arm!

Even a hastily designed and fabricated product was able to carve through the thick armor plating like a hot knife through butter.

Though the weapon was enduring a lot of abuse due to operating at a higher level than it was rated for, the effects were more than satisfactory!

While the Dark Apostle had launched a successful counterattack, he did not think it was wise to stay so close to his berserk foe.

As the challenger attempted to create more space and back away he found it difficult to move away due to the enemy's superior control over the surrounding space.

It was as if an empty vacuum had turned into a confining tunnel network. It became a pain to maneuver through.

If that was not enough, the Unshakeable King utilized another means to ensure his opponent remained within the reach of his twin Impact Hammers.

His raiment launched four tethered hooks that instantly found purchase on the Dark Apostle's raiment!

Although the Flame Lord Raiment was already beginning to burn the hooks and tethers, they were made out of extremely resistant materials.

Only the plasma spear or another potent weapon could cut through them quickly!

"YOU SHALL NOT ESCAPE!"

The Unshakeable King did not intend to give his adversary an opportunity to cut even a single tether. He closed in and swung at the red-clad phase lord with his hammers!

This time, the Dark Apostle was only able to partially fend off the incoming attacks. He was completely forced on the defensive as he relied on the shaft of his weapon to block as many hammer blows as possible.

The fact that Blinky had quietly ensured that the concussive force mechanisms remained inactive only provided a small measure of consolation as the hammer blows kept dinging against the Flame Lord Raiment.

The red armor plating did not break, but they most definitely began to deform while also transmitting a lot of painful forces to the flesh underneath.

The Dark Apostle gritted his teeth as he prioritized the defense of his helmet and his head.

A powerful blow to his head could rattle his brain and leave him wide open!

"YES! I NEED YOUR HELP!"

"I am already on it! Just hold out for a few more seconds!"

The Dark Apostle suffered multiple more hammer blows to his raiment, but finally the time had come!

"ARMOR PURGE!"

Several occurrences happened in a short sequence of time.

First, an excess of fire energy channeled into the sections of armor that covered the sections of armor that had been hooked by the enemy.

These armor sections abruptly exploded from the main armor and launched straight at the Unshakeable King!

Since the hammer-wielding phase lord was stuck in a full offensive posture, there was nothing he could do to prevent the glowing armor sections from smacking into his own raiment!

At the moment of contact, they exploded, generating small but potent explosions that dented and damaged the thicker armor!

While the damage did not seem trivial, it finally freed the Dark Apostle and interrupted the Unshakeable King long enough to interrupt his routine.

By the time the angry phase lord was ready to resume his offensive, the Dark Apostle had already approached him at an angle and thrust out with his plasma spear.

The powerful D-arm almost burned a hole through the entire side of the raiment!

The Dark Apostle flew back around and did his best to push through the hostile space to strike another powerful blow.

This time, the leader of the Ur-Titan Phalanx was ready! He teleported just a few giant steps forward, but that was enough to mess up the attack run and cause his raiment to suffer several painful hammer blows!

Despite the pain, the Dark Apostle muscled through it and turned around to launch another attack run.

However, none of them inflicted more than surface scarring on the enemy phase lord's raiment as the Unshakeable King relied on all of his remaining advantages to meet the incoming attacks and retaliate with his own hammer blows.

The Dark Apostle saw little hope of making progress with this method and decided to back away for the time being.

"GET BACK, YOU COWARD!"

The Dark Apostle was not in the mood to obey. Even if his current actions impinged on his honor, he knew he needed to be smart in order to win against this fierce Ascended Giant.

"If I toss the plasma spear at him in his current state, will it end his life?"

"No." Ves answered through Blinky. "The integrity of his raiment remains high. The damage you've inflicted on it is fairly respectable, but they do not generate enough structural weaknesses to blow it all apart. The Unshakeable King's raiment will absorb much of the explosive force released by the self-destructing plasma spear. That is an inescapable fact. However, I can guarantee you that there will be nothing left of it at the end. His physical body will also suffer light to moderate injuries. These are only surface wounds. His more crucial phasewater organs remain well-protected. If you decide on this course of action... you will have to finish the fight with the Murder Knife."

"Fitting." The Dark Apostle formed an ironic smile. "It is only right that a knife named for the deed gets to be the first to claim the life of an Ascended Giant. That has to be a ritual of sorts, right?"

"Our knife fighting skills are not as good as our spear handling."

"I know, but what else can we do? As long as the explosion wrenches those Impact Hammers away, I think I have a good chance of ending the fight. My Flame Lord Raiment is still mostly intact. That should give us enough breathing room... hopefully."

"...Fine. You are the one who is in control of our true body now, so you get to make the call. Just do not regret your choice."

Exlor

# **The Mech Touch #Chapter 7178 The First Spear Throw - Read The Mech Touch Chapter 7178 The First Spear Throw**

Chapter 7178 The First Spear Throw

The duel did not go according to plan.

That was okay.

Neither Ves nor the Dark Apostle harbored an obsession about following a plan to the letter.

Anyone with enough experience in life would know that the future could never be completely calculated.

Perhaps the Polymath might disagree, but Ves never assumed he could predict with 100 percent certainty how a sequence of events would play out over time.

That did not mean that plans had no value, but people needed to be adaptable and ideally have contingency plans in place to account for accidents and the like.

Ves and the Dark Apostle entered the dueling ground knowing that the Unshakeable King was the second-strongest member of the Phase Lord Department.

What he had demonstrated so far truly exemplified his combat power.

Compared to conceited and close-minded alien phase lords that the Larkinsons had battled over the years, the overall qualities of this human phase lord was undoubtedly superior. His training and his use of tech and equipment already made him considerably stronger than the average lesser phase lord.

That made it difficult for the Dark Apostle to outfight the Unshakeable King, especially now that the latter had suffered a soul injury that sent him over the edge.

The Unshakeable King was overdrafting his strength. His phasewater concentration burned faster whenever he was actively clashing against the challenger. He seemingly had no other goal left in his mind aside from demolishing the man responsible for killing his companion spirit!

The logical response to such an unhinged display of aggression was to back off and let the Unshakeable King tire himself out. The greater the delay, the more his lack of fulfillment put him in a depressed mood.

However, the fight had already taken more minutes than it should have.



A duel between phase lords could potentially last for days or even weeks depending on how timid they were and how big their bodies had become.

The more mass at their disposal, the more hits they could take.

While it was possible to kill a phase lord quickly by targeting his brain or his most essential phasewater organs, the Unshakeable King understood this truth extremely well.

Even in his deranged state, his excellent fighting instincts and acumen still shone through. He defended his head and his torso against any attempt made by the Dark Apostle to target them directly.

The Teragon Plasma Spear had not been able to scorch the helmet once, and only inflicted marginal damage to the torso armor.

The Unshakeable King's raiment had plenty of buffer left to expend. The plasma spear would have to repeatedly scorch the same sections of armor in order to create a breach.

Then the Dark Apostle would have to slip in and target this single weak point, which the Unshakeable King would defend with great effort!

It was much easier for him to block or redirect the plasma spear strikes when he knew what it was targeting!

The only way to overcome this disadvantage was to create other armor breaches, but that would take precious minutes.

The Unshakeable King knew that time was on his side. As recklessly as he was fighting at the moment, he had never truly made any risky moves.

Whether he did so with or without intention, he had turned his furious display of aggression into a brilliant defensive posture, making it far too dangerous for the Dark Apostle to mount his own offensive.

This was why the Dark Apostle wanted to make use of the Sacrificial Spear Throwing Method sooner than they originally planned.

They ended to break the situation and strip the Unshakeable King of his signature thick raiment.

Now that they had come to this point, the Dark Apostle assumed a static position relative to his adversary and began to grip his weapon in a very different manner.

A mechanism hidden in the end of the spear shaft unfolded, exposing an integrated atlatl-like construction that would enable the human phase lord to hurl his spear forward with greater force and leverage.

There was nothing wrong with the classical way of throwing a spear, just like there was nothing wrong with building your own rocket if you were stuck on a planet and wanted to launch into space.

Ves at least tried to stick to the spirit of primitive warfare and kept it barebones. He did not add any electromagnetic launching mechanism nor did he add any aim assistance or target guidance functions.

This meant that there was a larger-than-zero chance that the Dark Apostle could miss his crucial throw.

In practice, this should not happen.

The Sacrificial Spear Throwing Method was not a joke. It imparted a great amount of expertise to Ves and his alter ego on how to throw spears, to the point where they could probably join a sports competition and achieve good results.

Perhaps their real experience may be lacking, but at this distance, the probability of missing was minimal, especially now that the Unshakeable King's control over the surrounding space had degraded!

One of the downsides of losing his cool was that he was unable to maintain enough concentration to shake or solidify the surrounding space with his phasewater organs.

He was still able to cause momentary disruptions, but these effects ended far too soon to divert a spear thrown at this distance.

As the Dark Apostle assumed the right stance, he utilized his own spatial abilities to anchor himself into position as much as possible.

Unlike the Unshakeable King, the Dark Apostle had yet to implant the lesser Tarsei organ, but that did not mean he was unable to pull off this particular trick.

Just as phase lords were already capable of teleporting short distances without the use of specialized phasewater organs, the Dark Apostle was able to anchor himself in a specific coordinate in space, though only relative to a nearby satellite such as Jotunheim.

It was much more difficult to pull off this technique well outside of any nearby gravity wells.

Though the Dark Apostle had to strain himself a lot more to keep his position fixed, it was more than worth it as he could leverage the full power of his leg and back muscles into his throw.

At the same time he relied on his acquired skills in spear throwing to execute the correct throwing posture, he also used the more esoteric side of the method to pump the Teragon Plasma Spear full of fire energy.

They did not blindly mingle with the hyper materials, but they also activated the D-arm's ability to saturate itself with far more fire energy than was safe!

As the fire continued to absorb more fire energy, it grew increasingly hotter and less stable.

Heat and light wafted from the shaft as an excess of energy induced greater strain onto the structure of the weapon.

Even if it was designed to contain all of this fire energy, it did not mean that it was able to maintain this state forever.

Once the Dark Apostle chose to sacrifice the spear, he started an irreversible process that could only end with the weapon destroyed.

There was no going back at this point.

The Minor Demon that had been forcibly reshaped to serve as its artifact spirit also knew what was going on.

It had previously cooperated perfectly with the Dark Apostle.

It facilitated the offensive by powering up the plasma edge just before the moment of impact and lowering it when it was not being used to burn through anything.

The demon also helped to regulate the flow of fire energy and prevented it from burning anything that was not supposed to endure so much heat and fire.

Yet now that the Minor Demon knew that its vessel and likely itself would become sacrificed to fuel a powerful explosion, all thoughts of cooperation disappeared.

He resisted with all his might!

Spikes grew out of the spear as he sacrificed portions of his own strength to sting the hand that held the spear.

The Minor Demon also tried to sabotage the priming process by creating malfunctions and redirecting fire energy elsewhere.

Yet before he could go any further, Blinky appeared and brutally used one of the more forceful demonology techniques to suppress and immobilize the Minor Demon.

"You shall do nothing to ruin this moment. Know that in the short time of your second existence, your life shall be used to fuel the redemption of hundreds of human phase lords."

With that complication settled, the Dark Apostle was ready to execute the Sacrificial Spear Throwing Method in reality for the first time.

His eyes and his other senses locked onto the Unshakeable King.

There was no hiding the Dark Apostle's intention.

In response to this imminent throwing attack, the Unshakeable King first decided to charge forward and whack the Dark Apostle into concussion before he could complete his throwing attack, but suddenly thought better of this foolish course of action.

He stopped and hunkered down instead. He did not anchor himself in space, but he hunched his body and held his hammers across his chest in preparation to block the incoming spear as possible.

A short moment of stasis passed.

Both human phase lords appeared frozen as they faced each other in orbit of a frozen planet.

Many observers held their breaths as they awaited the outcome of this critical move.

They knew nothing of what was about to come, but most of them were smart enough to deduce that throwing a plasma spear that had performed so well up to this point was not a trivial move.

This was especially the case when it was absolutely stuffed with far more fire energy than any hyper weapon had any right to contain!

Just a few seconds passed in reality, but to those involved in the fight, it felt as if an eternity had whizzed past their gazes.

Then, the moment passed, and both Ascended Giants grew tense as they knew that the time of action had come.

As the Dark Apostle stretched his body backwards just a bit further, he finally uttered the decisive words.

"THE FLAMES OF HELL HAVE COME TO PUNISH YOU OF YOUR SINS."

The Dark Apostle's armored body made an exaggerated bow-like motion as he hurled the Teragon Plasma Spear forward with great force!

The atlatl construction enabled him to exert extra leverage into his throw, causing the volatile D-arm to soar towards the Unshakeable King with enough speed to ensure a hit.

The plasma spear seemed to scream as it rapidly crossed the distance!

This was not a scream that was audible to normal ears, as space did not carry any air that was capable of transmitting sound.

The scream was of a more spiritual nature. What the people in the vicinity managed to hear was the deathcry of a Minor Demon who knew he was racing directly towards his demise!

This silent scream cut off almost as soon as it started, for the Teragon Plasma Spear struck the Unshakeable King head-on without any deviations!

A massive explosion erupted instantly afterwards, causing the armored form of the strategos and the immediate surroundings to become engulfed in an expanding fireblast!

An excess of heat and force completely consumed the local area. Even the Dark Apostle who made sure he was well outside the danger zone had to back off a bit further in order to remain unaffected!

The fireball continued to blaze well after the initial explosion had ended. The excess concentration of fire energy took its time to disperse. There was just so much of it that they continued to fuel the flames!

The Dark Apostle and Blinky both watched on with astonishment at the magnitude of the explosion.

"That is more powerful than you described."

"My calculations were... off. I failed to account for a number of variables. I think that the conversion into a D-arm is the biggest mutating factor. I simply had no way to determine how it would interact with the Sacrificial Spear Throwing Method."

"Now you know."

"Yes."

Chapter 7179 Ves the Field Engineer

The awe-inspiring explosion proved how well Ves had spent his 35 Ascension Points.

This was no mundane explosion or hyper explosion.

This was a sacrificial ritual that ended with a potent detonation.

The fact that a Minor Demon had become part of this violent ritual made the explosions even stronger!

A Minor Demon was actually not a big deal. Ves could not have imagined how much more powerful the explosion could have been if he casted a Middle Demon into the Teragon Plasma Spear!

As it was, the D-arm may have existed for a short amount of time, but it had fulfilled its purpose in an impressive fashion.

As the lingering fireball finally began to shrink and disperse, everyone could finally observe the Unshakeable King's condition.

He was in bad shape. His raiment had clearly taken the brunt of the sacrificial ritual. Its thick layers and its other protective measures had only held out for so long before it was almost entirely blown away.

Only scorched and blackened pieces and fragments were left of what was once the thickest and arguably the most damage resistant raiments used by red humanity.

All of the hard work put into combining the strengths and advantages of mech design, infantry armor design and alien phase lord raiment design had met its end. The generous amount of phasewater used to augment the protective properties of the mid and high-grade materials had done their best to keep their wearer safe.

They partially succeeded.

It was pretty clear to see that by the time the initial blast had wiped out a lot of armor plating — especially at the front — not much force was left to batter the flesh underneath.

The Unshakeable King certainly did not enjoy a relaxing hour in a sauna. His front torso remained intact, but it had been cut and bruised to hell. A few of his ribs may have been broken as well.

What was even more important was the burn damage.

Phase lords were highly resistant against fire due to the enhancements brought by phasewater.

The phasewater organs they chose to integrate also played a big role. The Unshakeable King definitely possessed a lesser Marigal organ, just like Ves, and likely integrated other phasewater organs that improved his physique.

All of this enabled phase lords to resist attacks from mechs and even warships with their physical bodies alone.

In fact, the Unshakeable King could have resisted incoming attacks a lot more effectively if they reached the full size of their true bodies.

Being restricted to their current height did the leader of the Ur-Titan Phalanx no favors. He remained small enough that the entire front side of his body became exposed to the blast as well as the lingering flames!

Though phase lord bodies were resistant to flames, it was still possible for their transphasic flesh to succumb to them. This was especially the case when the flames were fueled and empowered by fire energy!

The burns certainly looked bad on the surface. Entire portions of skin and flesh had become blackened into ash and coal. The less affected portions of the body also suffered varying degrees of burn damage.

The wounds on the face looked especially ugly. As well protected as his head had been, the Unshakeable King's helmet had also been blasted apart by the explosion despite his attempts to shield his head with his hammers.

While his weapons provided critical protection to the head, the sacrificial explosion hadn't been kind to them. The hammerheads had separated from their shafts, likely colliding into the helmet before getting flung away.

Whatever the case, even if the helmet had done their job to shield the Unshakeable King from the worst of the explosions, it offered little protection to what came next.

The lingering flames burned through the skin of his face, exposing blackened flesh, browned teeth and eyeballs that still bore a strong look of hatred.

Neither Ves nor the Dark Apostle could explain why the eyes remained intact. Perhaps he activated an emergency device or a failsafe phasewater organ that preserved his most essential body parts during a time of crisis.

The burns had done far more than melt off half of his face. His torso and limbs lost that aesthetic masculine quality that made him look handsome and heroic.

Now, all that was left was a monster that resembled a burn victim.

From the glaring eyes of his adversary, the Dark Apostle could easily tell that the explosion and subsequently burning had hurt his opponent, but had hardly taken him out of the action.

The phasewater organs buried inside his body remained unaffected for the most part. They may have been bruised due to suffering a powerful concussive blow, but they should still remain in working condition.

Several more seconds passed by in silence as everyone beheld the strategos defiantly clinging onto his life.

Slowly but surely, he began to move.

He moved slowly but without acknowledging the huge amount of pain generated by his many injuries. Since he had lost his weapons, he was able to use his blackened and burned hands to remove the remnants of his raiment.

They no longer offered complete protection aside from the rear, and even that had mostly become a hindrance due to losing all power and functionality.

They had become a burden to him at this point.

Even as he removed every single piece of artifice from his true body, he still glared straight at the Dark Apostle as if he only had murder in his eyes.

He opened his mouth to speak, but could not convey any words.

The loss of his raiment deprived him from transmitting his voice, and the loss of his companion spirit deprived him from alternate means of communication.

His eyes grew increasingly more erratic. They shook and became more frenetic. His body, which had truly appeared unshakeable after the explosion, suddenly twitched and shook as if he was losing control over his own limbs.

Blinky looked surprised.

"What did you discover?"

"Remember the Minor Demon? He has not entirely died. Most of him disappeared with the Teragon Plasma Spear, but enough residual negative energies managed to get out and jump into the Unshakeable King to contaminate his spirituality. The opportunity was too good to resist. After I devoured his companion spirit, a temporary gap had formed. The remnant of the Minor Demon exploited this very obvious vulnerability and has seemingly merged with the phase lord."

"What does that mean for us?" The Dark Apostle asked.



"I am unclear, but my guess is that the Unshakeable King will become more violent and unpredictable. He is easier to rile up, but his aggression will fuel his final stance. It will not be easy for us to finish him off, but the deed has to be done. Do not let him raise his arms and admit surrender."

The time had come to finish this lengthy and difficult duel. The Dark Apostle had so far incurred little actual damage, but he reminded himself that this was just the first of four duels.

He unsheathed his Murder Knife.

As his second offensive D-arm, the Murder Knife looked exactly like how one would expect it to appear with such a name.

The power of darkness suffused the weapon. It had been stuffed with as many darkness hypers as Ves could fit in such a slender blade. This gave it an ominous aura that dimmed the space around it and enhanced the lethality of the blade in ways that no one could explain.

This was a knife designed to end lives, simple as that. It was a weapon of final resort that lacked the reach and heat of the Teragon Plasma Spear.

The D-arm was not made for throwing. Ves did not incorporate any of the adapted tech that could turn it into a powerful hand grenade. He instead utilized solutions that made it tougher and sharper so that it could do its sole job as best as possible.

A knife was hardly the most ideal weapon to use in a duel between phase lords, but it was all the Dark Apostle had at his disposal.

At least that was originally supposed to be the case.

"I added a last-minute surprise to the raiment. It is time to use it. Give me control over your true body for a moment. I need to do a bit of field engineering and I don't trust your clumsy hands."

The Dark Apostle did not question Ves' request and straightforwardly gave the original owner access to the true body.

The human phase lord efficiently went to work. He immediately transmitted a special command that detached the reactor backpack module from his raiment.

The reactor was fairly compact and had already expended much of its power to feed the hungry Teragon Plasma Spear.

Now that the weapon no longer existed, there was not much point to keeping the reactor.

Ves began to use his armored limbs to push and pull at different grooves and other seemingly innocent parts of the backpack module.

Soon enough, the casing started to part from the construct. Ves folded up the pieces of casing and linked the amalgamations together. He then retrieved a wrench and other basic tools scaled to his current physique from the sides and the internal cavity of the reactor module.

He used these tools to cobble together... a staff.

By the time Ves was almost done with his bizarre crafting session, he produced a complete metal staff with a round shaft and decent balance!

It was not nearly as good as the shaft of a proper spear, but it was still impressive that Ves had managed to anticipate this kind of situation and made preparations in advance.

Ves proceeded to place the handle of the Murder Knife into an open slot that just happened to match the exact dimensions of the weapon!

A few actions later, the knife solidly became affixed to the shaft.

Ves had managed to produce a glaive!

Though it literally consisted of a knife at the end of a pole, it had a lot in common with spears, so much so when Ves withdrew his control, the Dark Apostle immediately felt at home while wielding the improvised polearm!

He spun the shaft of his new polearm before pointing its dark blade directly at the Unshakeable King.

"Your reign ends here. I enjoyed this fight. For all of your ideas, you fought with honor and tenacity. I will respect and remember you for the rest of my long existence as the first Ascended Giant who perished at my hands."

The Dark Apostle wasted no more time and went on the attack!

He encountered much less spatial interference than before as the Unshakeable King was no longer in a good physical and mental state.

Despite his erratic tics and his absence of control, his fighting skills and instincts were still mostly intact!

In fact, his partial demonic possession caused the strategos to fight with greater brutality and a complete disregard of how much abuse he was putting his body through!

His pain stoked his rage, and his rage propelled him to strike at the Dark Apostle with his fists and legs!

The difference in mobility was much less than before. The Unshakeable King may have suffered serious injuries, but the removal of his thick raiment made him a lot faster than before.

He was even able to outmaneuver his opponent at times!

A large amount of blackened fists and feet struck the Dark Apostle's raiment.

This was despite the latter's effort to preserve his armor and avoid as many attacks as possible!

The Unshakeable King was so fast, while the Dark Apostle's own raiment slowed him down.

The flurry of attacks weren't negligible either. The Unshakeable King already displayed an abundance of physical strength when he was wielding his Impact Hammers.

Even without his familiar weapons, his unarmed combat skills and raw physicality were still enough to pose a serious threat against the Dark Apostle!

## Chapter 7180 The End of a Dream

Everyone knew the final phase of the battle had begun.

The Unshakeable King suffered a grievous injury that should have eliminated most other Ascended Giants if they had received the same attack.

It was a testament to his formidable defenses that he survived and managed to retain enough combat effectiveness to still pose a credible threat to his opponent.

The duel was not over.

Whatever people may say about the strategos of the Ur-Titan Phalanx, he attracted a lot of admiration from his men due to his resilience and his refusal to surrender to his pain and injuries!

Even now, when his body was put in such a serious condition that his body must be generating a lot of agony, the Unshakeable King continued to demonstrate unrelenting aggression.

Only murder was on his mind!

He had to kill the man known as Ves Larkinson at all costs if he wanted to have any hope of proving his godhood and lead the Ascended Giants in the right direction!

The Unshakeable King still had plenty of phasewater left to power his final stand. It did not matter that his phasewater concentration was shrinking at a worrying rate. So long as his phasewater concentration remained high enough to sustain his current scale, anything surpassing this threshold may as well be regarded as tribute to his dreams!

The powerful strategos knew how to fight against spear users. He utilized his damaged but still relatively nimble body to move faster in space. He used his ability to anchor his body or just a body part to the fabric of space by creating 'footholds' for his feet.

This was a means to maneuver across the battlefield by 'sprinting' across it with the help of invisible platforms!

This granted him a surprising mobility advantage, which he put to good use by circling around the Dark Apostle's armored form and performing lunging attacks at angles where the glaive could not easily reach in time!

The Unshakeable King pummeled the Dark Zephyr with a flurry of punches and kicks before darting out of reach.

These blows struck like jackhammers. The power of the attacks was not much, but they were still strong enough to stress and deform the metal plating.

The Dark Apostle was not having an easy time at the moment. His lack of real combat experience left him flustered and unable to figure out a proper response.

Though he managed to use his glaive to cut into the opposing phase lord's body a few times, the wounds were too shallow hinder the Unshakeable King all that much.

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The Flame Lord Raiment released more heat and fire energy as it struggled to endure the accumulation of damage. Armor plating got deformed, parts started to break and glitches occurred in other adjacent systems.

Yet despite this unrelenting aggression, the Dark Apostle quickly got the hang of his new weapon and initially held it like a staff in order to block or redirect the incoming attacks.

Once the Dark Zephyr finally managed to create a bit of distance, he finally chopped the glaive from top to bottom with the intention of cutting right through the Unshakeable King's skull!

"#\$@&#@!"

The Unshakeable King finally uttered a wheezing cry of pain just after he made a last minute dodge which spared his head from damage.

Instead, the Murder Knife attached to the pole bit deep into the shoulders!

Though the blade of the glaive failed to cut through the shoulder entirely, the wound still represented a serious blow!

The Dark Apostle wrenched his glaive back and quickly attempted to distance himself from his opponent.

He could have chosen to double down and launch a follow-up attack, but he was too afraid that the Unshakeable King was about to launch a powerful counterattack now that he was well within striking distance.

As the Dark Apostle took stock of the situation, he saw that the Murder Knife-turned-glaive had done its job.

The wound to the shoulder looked ugly and serious. It may have damaged a number of muscle tendons, making it challenging to heal those injuries in a short amount of time unless he possessed phasewater organs that promoted cellular regeneration.

That may actually be possible, but there was another factor that made the wounds more serious than was apparent on the surface.

The power of darkness festered in the wounds.

The Murder Knife did not just cut flesh.

It corrupted anything it touched.

This was the entire purpose why Ves had integrated as much high-grade darkness hypers into the weapon, to the point of making other concessions that reduced its performance in other aspects.

Ves knew that it needed to function as a finisher first and a tool to induce weaknesses second.

The latter was important when fighting against enemies with plenty of fight left in them. Each strike with the Murder Knife was supposed to bring them closer to death as the injuries corrupted by darkness were not only more difficult to heal from, but also threatened to fester and spread its corruption further!

The Unshakeable King made an admirable effort to power through this injury, but it was very clear that the punches launched from the arm attached to his injured shoulder simply weren't the same anymore.

The Dark Apostle had a significantly easier time with coping against his opponent for this reason. It did not take long before he managed to cut deep into one of the legs.

This significantly reduced the Unshakeable King's ability to move around in space like he was jumping on solid ground. More cuts followed that weakened his limbs further, but remained shallow enough that he was still able to maintain his aggression!

The wounds did not discourage him at all despite the very obvious fact that he was growing weaker. He uttered silent screams as he obsessively tried to beat the Dark Apostle to death.

The Flame Lord Raiment did an admirable job of absorbing a lot of blows.

Although the Unshakeable King was decent at unarmed combat, it was very clear that he was more comfortable with wielding weapons. His drive to win still remained strong, but his execution became increasingly more flawed.

He gave his all. His life was on his line, but his self-control continued to dwindle with each passing second.

To be honest, the Unspeakable King no longer appeared as valiant and strong as before.

After suffering a small soul injury and getting contaminated by the remnants of a Minor Demon, the powerful phase lord's cognition had gone downhill.

He had become the epitome of the worst kind of phase lord, namely a madman who only knew how to solve his problems by pummeling them to pieces!

Many members of the Ur-Titan Phalanx had grown disappointed at their strategos. They had never solely admired his martial prowess. They also admired his intelligence, his leadership and his ability to maintain his composure under the direst of circumstances.

Where had all of that gone?

Right now, the Ascended Giant had gone feral. He was no longer able to communicate with any measure of coherence. He had more in common with exobeasts than humans or aliens at this point.

It was a shameful end to the short career of an Ascended Giant who used to be respected as the number two of the Phase Lord Department.

Perhaps that was no point in killing the Unshakeable King. He no longer posed a threat anymore now that his mind had become completely scrambled.

Yet... neither Ves nor the Dark Apostle had any intention of showing mercy.

Once they drew the Murder Knife, they were not going to rest until their blade had snuffed the life of their opponent.

After sufficiently weakening the Unshakeable King without crippling him to the point where the duel should automatically come to an end, the Dark Apostle easily backed off and thought on how he should end this inaugural duel.

"The Unshakeable King is a traitor who has clung onto detestable ideas, but he is still a human who has done a good job of leading the Ur-Titan Phalanx." Ves softly said. "If you want to take over the Phase Lord Department, then you must earn the respect and appreciation of the phalangites who make up the best of the best. You don't have to show mercy to your opponent, but you should not engage in pointless brutality. Make it quick. Don't ruin his body any further than necessary. Let the Ur-Titans retrieve the body of their fallen leader and send him off with respect. This will provide closure to them and allow you to command them without too many hard feelings. This is a leadership challenge."

The Dark Apostle actually wanted to make his opponent suffer further, but... there was little honor to be gained from torturing a crippled duelist.

Everyone increasingly understood that this fight had already been decided. Any further delays would only annoy everyone who knew quite well that the Dark Apostle could have ended it sooner.

He gripped his glaive with a stance that preceded a charge.

Though the Dark Apostle thought about unmaking it so that he could land the killing blow up close, he clamped down on this idea.

Even now, the Dark Apostle still feared the Unshakeable King. The powerful enemy had produced a number of surprises. What if he had another one in reserve?

No. This had to be done in the safest and most effective manner.

After mentally preparing himself, the Dark Apostle stared straight at the rabid but increasingly more tired eyes of the Unshakeable King.

"Your dream ends here. After your passing, I shall ensure that no Ascended Giant or other humans shall pick up your torch and turn your goals into reality. This is the price of defeat. My vision shall trump yours, now and forever. Rest easy knowing that you have successfully strengthened my resolve. I shall do whatever it takes to lead the Ascended

Giants to a better future, one where they can coexist peacefully with red humanity. No matter how strong we have become, we must always remind ourselves that we are not the only gods in town."

With this final declaration, the Dark Apostle initiated a fateful charge.

With his weakened and underpowered Flame Lord Raiment, he did not leave a handsome trail of fire behind.

He instead charged with silent momentum, as if he did not need to pour any passion or aggression into this final attack.

The Dark Apostle already treated this as an execution rather than a desperation move.

Even if he was secretly poised to abort and back away if the Unshakeable King unexpectedly recovered, no such freak occurrences took place.

When the distance had shrunk to spitting distance, the Unshakeable King raised his weakening arms as if that would help.

It didn't.

The blade of the Murder Knife neatly bypassed them and swung straight through the exposed neck of the Unshakeable King.

It was a lot harder to cut through the neck than it sounded. So much thick transphasic flesh and bones were in the way that a normal strike would have stopped before cutting much deeper into the spine.

Yet because the Dark Zephyr had built up a fair amount of momentum during his charge, he was able to channel enough force for the corrupting blade to go all the way through, ultimately beheading the Unshakeable King!

The head of the human phase lord tumbled away from the rest of his body with a look of disbelief.

His limbs ceased to move at all while spurts of phasewater-infused blood spurted from the corrupted wound.

The power of darkness seemingly infected the blood as well, causing it to darkens and look more ominous even as they floated further into space.

As for the Dark Apostle... he closed his eyes after he completed his charge. A sense of deep satisfaction sprung from the Murder Knife.



Claiming such an impressive first kill through ritual combat had caused it to grow and evolve in an unusual fashion.

Although it was just a single kill, the strength and status of the Unshakeable King were so significant that the Murder Knife reaped a lot of rewards from being used as the killing implement!