

## **Mech Touch 6181**

Chapter 6181 Doomed Soldiers

Across red humanity's borders, a hurricane crashed against all of the fortified positions at once.

The Red Tide Offensive had begun.

The native aliens spent so much time on building up their assault fleets and equipping them with more modern tech for the singular purpose of overwhelming the barriers that stood in the way of human extinction.

Pretty much every alien soldier yearned to do their part into driving the hateful humans back to the edge of the dwarf galaxy before wiping them out entirely!

This was pretty remarkable. The forces that had answered the call of the Red Cabal were composed of a lot of different races, cultures and other subgroups.

The full answer why this was the case would take too long to explain, but the essence of it was that the native aliens built up far too many grievances towards the humans over the past decade.

Since their explosive expansion across the new frontier, the extragalactic invaders had mercilessly wiped out every native alien that occupied the precious planets that had already been earmarked as future colonies.

The humans did not play by the rules and conventions that had been responsible for establishing a relatively stable galactic community.

The deification of phase whales had long kept the thirteen major races connected in a loose galactic community that transcended the barriers of race and cultures.

Few of the local races liked each other, but they deliberately controlled the intensity of every scuffle below a certain level to avoid any disastrous escalation.

Most of the alien leaders were rational enough to understand that if two civilizations went to war against each other, others would just sit back for a time before swooping in to mop up both sides at once!

When such conditions remained stable for a long time, the native races were unlikely to engage in all-out slaughter.

Despite fielding massive homeships that were capable of unleashing the same scale of destruction as human warships, the natives of the Red Ocean implicitly or explicitly agreed to withhold their most destructive arms in any violent conflict.

This was not actually all that remarkable. A similar status quo existed in the Milky Way before the Age of Conquest.

It was not until the rise and explosive expansion of human civilization that this uneasy but fairly stable balance shattered all at once!

In the old galaxy, the greedy but insecure humans saw no choice but resort to lying, stealing, cheating and other underhanded means to disrupt the regional status quo and supercharge their growth.

In the new galaxy, the much more arrogant and uncaring humans disregarded the rights of the native life forms to an extremely callous degree. Humans only saw everything in the Red Ocean as resources that were just waiting to be harvested!

Unfortunately for the greedy pioneers and colonists, the Red Cabal completely turned the situation around when they teleported the Red Ocean far away from the Milky Way.

Now that the red humans could no longer obtain any form of support from their much more powerful cousins in the old galaxy, the native aliens that previously got beat up more times than they could count finally gained a chance to exact their revenge!

Regardless of the alien language they used to express their feelings, the crew members of all of the alien fleets unanimously cried out for blood and vengeance!

The sheer collective fury and bloodlust among all of the aliens taking part in the first wave of the offensive boiled over to the point where it looked as if they dyed the space around them in red!

The red nebula background that suffused the dwarf galaxy seemed to become a little richer and darker. It was as if the Red Ocean itself heralded the true beginning of the Red War and all of the bloodshed that was about to ensue!

In the face of this momentous tide of red, the soldiers assigned to guard the strategically valuable border systems were all the first to face the brunt of this aggression.

The pressure among the star systems located in the most forward and vulnerable 1st defense band was especially high!

It went without saying that practically no sane human would want to reside in a star system located so close to angry aliens that wished to do nothing more than to genocide every human population center!

This made it difficult for the Red Two and the other major powers to assign enough troops in these crucial star systems.

The leaders of human civilization briefly considered the option of automating the defenses at the most vulnerable and doomed border systems.

However, they quickly dismissed this idiotic notion.

Automated defenses could always be hacked!

Even if the Polymath herself programmed the cybersecurity defenses of the automated defensive platforms and armies of battle bots, there was always a way to circumvent them, either internally or externally.

It didn't matter that the native aliens were much less capable of hacking state-of-the-art human AIs and algorithms.

The damned Cosmopolitan Movement were just as proficient in hacking, if not more!

These degenerate human traitors had proven many times that they were superior hackers, as they relied on their ability to subvert electronic systems to engage in untold amounts of data theft and sabotage!

The hidden presence of an unknown amount of cosmopolitan cells throughout human society was one of the real reasons why people developed such an unreasonable degree of fear towards extensive automation.

No matter how convenient AIs may be, as long as one competent bad actor came around and completely messed them up, a disaster would occur!

Human intervention and control therefore remained an essential component of red humanity's defensive layout.

This forced the Red Ocean Union, the Terran Alliance and the Rubarthan Pact to come together and hammer out a necessary addendum to the New Elites Program.

Only after offering additional incentives were the three colonial alliances able to attract enough soldiers to the most dangerous star systems in the new frontier.

Right now, hundreds of mech pilots assigned to an elite mech unit had gathered in one of the briefing rooms of an orbital space fortress.

A gloomy atmosphere pervaded in the compartment. All of the uplifting and motivational banners displaying thrilling scenes of human victories or blood-pumping slogans failed to lift the mood.

A relatively old 55-year old mech pilot called Josh Ketter stood in the middle of a crowd of fellow soldiers.

Each of them adopted grim expressions as they listened to the speech of the RA liaison.

"Your hour has come." The well-dressed and impeccably handsome man said. "After months of waiting, the native aliens have unleashed their Red Tide upon us all, seeking to flood the defenses that we have painstakingly built in the border regions. As one of the many nails that

our race and civilization has hammered into this star system, we must stand up and hold our ground no matter the cost."

None of the mech pilots showed any cowardice or hesitation. Sure, they might harbor a lot of fears inside their minds, but they possessed enough discipline to avoid exposing their insecurities.

"Each of you have chosen to do their most sacred duty to uphold the 1st defensive band. I shall not lie to you. Our forces are stretched too thin. The entire 1st defensive band is projected to fall within a week if not less. This means that most of us may end up dead by the time seven days have passed."

The gathered mech pilots did not show any strong reactions towards this news. They already expected as much. They knew what they signed up for. It would be stupid for them to change their stance on the matter now that so much time had passed.

The mecher liaison continued to address the honored soldiers. "Our preliminary analysis on the alien fleets that are on their way to break our planet's orbital defenses and bombard our strongholds on the surface has revealed several lethal threats. The more updated warships are not only armed with greater quantities of tertiary gun batteries, but also feature many more missile launchers. Do not get close to them, and do not group up too much. These anti-mech warships can shred entire mech companies in a matter of seconds under the right conditions."

A projection of several different alien ship models appeared. Josh Ketter already recognized the distinctly broad hulls as warships belonging to the orven race.

Just as the liaison had said, the orvens had chosen to install less primary gun batteries in favor of installing a lot more tertiary gun batteries!

The largest orven hulls boasted over a thousand tertiary gun batteries, thereby allowing them to vastly exceed the firepower of a typical ranged mech regiment!

"Aside from that, the native aliens have also prepared another specific counter to our mechs in the form of phasefighters."

The projection changed to display several civilian cargo haulers that had hastily been converted into dinky carriers.

Although the conversions had been completed in haste, the terrible qualities of these former cargo haulers did not affect the immediate combat power of the state-of-the-art alien phasefighters!

Not only did they look fairly new and modern by human standard, their quantity was absolutely dazzling!

"These cheap capital carriers have shown up on every star system under siege." The RA liaison said. "They may look fragile, but don't think they can be blown up with ease. They are equipped with strong enough transphasic energy shields to resist sustained attacks. What truly matters is the fact that they can all transport at least 2000 phasefighters each. Since there are so many converted carriers within the alien fleets, we have already estimated that our mech forces will be outnumbered three to one."

That caused the mech pilots to finally express more emotion. Many looked dismayed at the prospect of trying to fend off three times as many phasefighters!

"Do not be intimidated!" The speaker shouted! "The alien phasefighters are difficult to eliminate, but you can still do it! The more you are able to eliminate, the more time you buy for us all. No matter how hopeless the battle may seem, remember what you are fighting for. As the most selfless linefighters to exist, each of your names will be remembered in our greatest halls of honor for as long as our civilization persists."

A lot of mech pilots puffed up their chests after they heard this. It was a dream to many of them to matter in some way. So many humans lived and died that it was too difficult for any of them to leave a notable legacy behind. If these elite mech pilots were able to receive one of the highest honors by sacrificing their otherwise mediocre lives, then they would gladly make this trade!

While Josh Ketter desired this honor as well, it did not excite him as much as his other goal.

His thoughts strayed to his teenage daughter who resided in a much safer star system far away from the dangerous border region.

"Many of you are not just fighting for yourself, but also for your families. The Red Association has already guaranteed that all of your offspring will be awarded with the title of Warchildren, thereby officially recognizing them as the immediate descendants of war heroes. The better

your performance, the more generous the pensions, subsidies and other privileges we bestow on your spouses and children. Our Association will further grant all of your Warchildren a chance to pass a low-barrier test to join its ranks. The greater your contribution, the more bonuses your offspring will receive."

The eyes of many mech pilots lit up as they heard this! Many of the veteran soldiers signed up for this duty for this express purpose!

They fought not for themselves, but for their precious children!

In a galaxy where many humans were about to experience a deterioration in quality of life and life opportunities, it would be great if their children could become a part of one of the most powerful human organizations in the Red Ocean!

#### Chapter 6182 Warchildren

Warchildren had become a new class of people within the New Elites Program.

It was a way to reward linefighters for answering the highest calling.

After all, by sacrificing their lives for a greater purpose, they would not be able to live to enjoy the rich rewards that they deserve.

This was why the Red Two and the first-rate colonial superstates came together and figured out a fair and reasonable way to transfer contributions to the next of kin.

The class of Warchildren therefore came into being. Any child or adolescent below the age of 30 that bore this special title could enjoy a lot of conveniences.

From pensions to easy access to prestigious educational institutions, these offspring who had lost their fathers or mothers to the Red War gained a much easier ride to success and prosperity. The benefits were substantial enough to motivate a lot of soldiers to volunteer for the ominous duty of trying to hold the line against the powerful aliens!

Josh Ketter smiled as he thought about how his daughter would live far better than him. As a second-rater, he never dared to dream that his girl would be able to exceed him to this degree, but this time was different!

"Under the guarantee of the three colonial alliances of red humanity, each of your Warchildren will gain enough wealth and access to promising opportunities to fast track their way to success." The liaison from the Red Association continued. "All Warchildren can expect to retain all of these benefits until they have reached the age of 30 or 10 years since they have received this title, whichever period is longer. After that, the Warchildren can retain their titles, but lose all of the corresponding pensions and other privileges. If they cannot stand on their own feet after gaining so many promising career opportunities, then that is their responsibility."

It was not the intention of the higher ups to raise a growing number of good-for-nothings.

The New Elite Program must always retain its essence, which was to promote the development of elites among the masses that normally lacked these opportunities!

Josh Ketter did not begrudge the limits on Warchildren. He had full faith and confidence that his daughter would be able to make good use of all of the benefits.

Many of his fellow colleagues shared similar sentiments. They did not believe their sons and daughters would dishonor their parents by squandering the advantages of becoming Warchildren.

If they somehow failed in their studies and squandered all of their pensions on recreational stimulants, then their ghosts would come back from the dead and punish their useless children!

"Before I leave, I wish to announce one recent change to our battle plan." The liaison said, causing the gathered mech pilots to pay closer attention. "The additional time bought by the prior delay of the Red Tide has allowed us to make additional preparations. Our Association has assigned a small stealth ship in the orbits of many fortified planets, including this one. The purpose of this ship is to wait until the attackers are on the verge of attaining orbital supremacy before quietly evacuating key personnel from this star system."

How was this relevant to the mech pilots? None of them possessed a high enough status to earn a place on this secretive evacuation ship. It would have been better if the liaison never mentioned it, as there was a higher chance the news might leak and prompt the native aliens to hunt the vessel down!

The liaison smiled. "A new opportunity has opened up for you. Yes, you. The coming days will test your mettle like nothing else. We are well aware that each of you have already made the determination to die, but what if I tell you that there is a small chance that you can live?"



The mecher's words did not elicit much of a reaction. The veteran mech pilots were not that easy to hoodwink anymore.

It didn't matter. The mecher was confident that his next announcement was bound to excite his audience.

"The sole criterion for earning a seat in the stealth vessel is not based on wealth, connections or officer rank. You can rest assured that no one in this besieged star system can take the spot of one who is more deserving. This is because the only eligible passengers of our stealth ship will be mech pilots who have managed to break through during the upcoming fighting."

The audience became stunned as they listened to this surprise announcement!

Josh Ketter and the other mech pilots were not stupid. They quickly realized that they had gained a faint but realistic chance to make it out of this doomed star system alive as long as they satisfied a single condition that was very easy to discern.

However, the expressions of many soldiers soon began to fade. Josh was no exception as he thought about how hard he had tried to break through in the past.

As a middle-aged mech pilot who had served for around three decades, Josh never managed to exceed his limits throughout his career so far, and it was not for lack of trying.

Now that his aging caused him to gradually lose his sharp reflexes and agile thinking, the father had gradually let go of his childish dream.

The sensible decision to make was to treat this fleeting chance as a lottery that Josh was unlikely to win. This star system would become his grave if everything proceeded as he envisioned.

Yet... if there was a light at the end of the tunnel, how could a soldier like himself remain indifferent to it? Even if the chance of reaching it was below 0.01 percent, that still motivated pilots such as himself to strive for a breakthrough in what may be their last attempt of their lives!

The liaison smiled wider as he observed the effects of his announcement. The harder the mech pilots fought, the more setbacks the invading aliens would suffer. Any additional losses and delays could sap the enemy's offensive a little more.

"This is a time of heroes and gods. The power of humble soldiers such as yourselves will always remain important, but the best way for red humanity to turn the tide against the native aliens is to draw out your potential and gain strength beyond the reach of mortals. Fight! Kill! Ascend! We ask nothing more or less from you. As long as you become an expert candidate or expert pilot during the upcoming battle, we shall do whatever it takes to protect you and evacuate you from the field. A brand new life awaits you within the ranks of our Association. You will receive the opportunity to master the best skills and pilot the strongest first-class mechs, but only if you fight with the determination to survive! Break through, and you shall live. Die, and your offspring shall become Warchildren."

Many mech pilot's eyes immediately grew red as they processed the implications of the liaison's words.

A lot of mech pilots that had already become resigned with their imminent deaths suddenly began to develop a renewed desire to make it out alive.

Even if their best days were already past them, the veteran soldiers still wanted to fight for the small but not impossible chance to live past this week!

"Josh!" Another mech pilot excitedly whispered. "We can still live, haha! We can still make it of this doomed star system and become a high-and-mighty mecher! I bet none of us ever expected to enter the Association at our ages. Think of how rich and powerful we can become! With the honor, glory and merit of fighting in the 1st defensive band, we'll be treated as heroes everywhere we go. Your daughter and my brats will want for nothing once we get inside!"

As much as Josh wanted to feel as upbeat as his more optimistic comrade, he couldn't help but be realistic about his chances.

"I will try like the rest of you, but... we're old, Franklin. We can't keep up with the younger generation pilots anymore. We already put our best days behind us. We have begun to enter our twilight years. I will already be happy if I can turn my daughter into a Warchild."

Franklin jabbed his elbow into his friend's side. "Don't think like that, Josh. We are living in the Age of Dawn. Any miracle can happen these days! Think about how much happier your

daughter will be if you return from the frontlines alive. Don't you want to live long enough to see her grow up into a beautiful woman and hug your grandchildren?"

The mention of what he might be missing out on created an ache in Josh' heart. His desire to live grew stronger. As long as he broke through, he could return and continue to take care of his daughter in person!

"Thank you for that, Franklin. I don't know if your words will make any difference, but I will fight as best I can."

"That is what friends are for. If... if... you ever manage to make it out without my company, please tell me you will keep an eye on my sons. The RA will definitely take good care of them, but..."

"I will treat them as if they are part of my own family." Josh earnestly promised. "I expect you to look out for my girl if the reverse happens."

After the liaison shared the latest announcement, he quickly left the briefing room so that the mech pilots could receive more mission-specific briefings from their superiors.

Josh and Franklin did not pay too much attention to the final details. Every mech pilot assigned to this dangerous star system had already studied and memorized the main defensive plans. They roughly understood the defensive layout and also comprehended their roles.

The staff only made a number of last-minute adjustments to the plans in order to account for the enemy response.

"Remember to maintain your distance from the enemy warships whenever possible." The officer in front of the stage emphasized. "The native aliens have begun to mirror us by unleashing a large amount of phasefighters in our direction. Leave the enemy vessels to our orbital defenses and our warships. Your duty is to keep the phasefighters at bay. You can think about attacking other enemies after he have cleared the enemy fighter screen."

The mech pilots felt rather mixed about needing to fight against the enemy phasefighters. The annoying transphasic small craft were always troublesome to kill due to their strong energy shields.

The fact that the mechs would be going into the fight with a heavy numbers disadvantage also tempered people's confidence!

However, Josh Ketter would gladly fight against a giant swarm of phasefighters than confront one of those threatening new anti-mech warships!

As the pilots finally got dismissed, Josh and many others proceeded down to the space station's hangar bays in order to enter their respective mechs.

"I am glad that we get to enjoy a good old-fashioned dogfight in what may be our final battle." Franklin said in a light-hearted tone. "Mech pilots like ourselves are trained for this. Those phasefighters might not look like mechs, but the resemblance is close enough, unlike with warships."

Josh nodded in agreement. "Mhmm. It is a good thing I am piloting the right mech for the job. I hope this hangar bay has enough of the right fey in stock."

The two mech pilots stopped before Josh' machine.

As far as second-class mechs were concerned, the Fey Fianna easily stood out from the rest, even if it was just the Standard Edition!

Their silhouettes were unique and their visual design was striking. Their characteristic 'glows' also made it impossible for people to dismiss them as ordinary machines.

"I am so jealous that you get to pilot such a new and well-regarded mech." Franklin did not hide the envy in his voice. "How did you ever manage to get your hands on this machine?"

"Would you believe that I won this machine from a membership raffle?"

Chapter 6183 Siege Weapon

All of the fortified star systems located in the 1st defensive bands were never meant to last.

The Red Two and the first-rate colonial superstates may have a reputation for being wealthy and powerful, but their resources were ultimately finite.

This meant that it made little sense to invest too many resources in the star systems that were ultimately supposed to serve as speed bumps to the alien offensive.

Unlike the more well-equipped fortified star systems located further to the rear, the star system where Josh was about to fight the battle of his life did not receive a lot of luxuries.

The RF was entirely absent.

The RA only stationed a handful of aging warships as well as a far-too-small contingent of first-class multipurpose mechs.

The bulk of human resistance in this star system relied on the cheap but cost-effective second-class mechs and the bulky but relatively low-quality defensive platforms.

This ensured that when the star system eventually fell, red humanity would not suffer too many losses!

It was a pity that almost every mech pilot who volunteered for this exceedingly dangerous duty would not be able to make it out and leverage their abundant combat experience in other battles.

However, people found it morally unacceptable to station younger and more vigorous soldiers in this doomed place. They were the future of red humanity and deserved to live a lot longer.

As mech after mech started to launch from the hangar bays of many different space stations, the orbit of the planet quickly became a lot busier.

The mechs all grouped up with their respective units, but made sure not to enter into any tight formations.

The machines also hovered close to nearby space stations and defensive platforms in case they needed to shelter behind the only forms of cover in this space environment.

All of the mech pilots waited for the alien fleets to approach the fortified planet.

It shouldn't take too long. The alien vessels all relied on their warp drives to rapidly cross through realspace.

Soon enough, the ships slowed down and maintained their distance just outside of the effective ranges of most weapon systems.

"They're here." Franklin said as his rifleman mech flew in the vicinity of Josh Ketter's Fey Fianna. "The enemy carriers are not wasting time in deploying their phasefighters. Look at how many of them are launching into space."

Thousands of them appeared within a minute. More and more phasefighters steadily flew out of the converted capital carriers with a remarkably high degree of coordination.

Most of the native aliens never took small craft seriously, but the astonishing performance of humans forced them to reconsider.

Many of the orvens in the cockpits of the phasefighters only received a year of training or less.

Mech pilots such as Josh and Franklin looked down on these aliens for that reason.

There was no way the skills of those alien phasefighter pilots could rival that of the worst professionally trained human mech pilot!

While there were certain alien races that adapted a lot better to fighter combat than others, the orvens did not demonstrate any notable affinity to them. The biggest difference was that their larger bodies made them tougher but also a little clumsier. Their learning speeds were not notably higher than that of humans.

The alien developers of all of these phasefighters took these limitations into account. All of the craft released during this early stage of the Red War were dumbed down in order to reduce their complexity as much as possible.

Clever applications of automations reduced a lot of the manual control requirements and enabled the low-caste orven fighter pilots to control their machines as if they were playing an immersive virtual reality game.

Perhaps the extensive automation might make the phasefighters more rigid, less precise and slower to respond, but it didn't matter because they could afford to make mistakes!

The aliens had access to so much phasewater that they were able to equip all phasefighters with transphasic energy shields.

A part of the phasefighters that deployed from the alien carriers even showed signs of enjoying the protection of more modern azure energy shields!

Fortunately, their quantity remained limited to the most elite fighter units.

Just as the humans did not invest extravagant resources in this star system, the orvens had done their homework and sent out fleets that could do the job without making any excessive commitments.

As the number of icons denoting phasefighters continued to multiply in the local plot, the full weight of having to square off against so many enemy small craft began to dawn upon all of the mech pilots.

Josh began to wonder whether he would be able to survive long enough to trigger a breakthrough!

"DON'T WORRY, JOSH. MY FEY AND I WILL WATCH YOUR BACK. YOU JUST DO YOUR THING."

"Thank you, partner."

The Fey Fianna was his first living mech, and boy it was an experience. Josh already found it creepy enough that the mech showed signs of life at the start.

He jerked in his piloting seat the first time the Fey Fianna grew clever enough to speak like a human!

Fortunately, everyone who knew about living mechs reassured Josh that this was completely normal behavior for a certain mech company's products.

"We can't take too many attacks." Josh spoke to his machine. "You're just the Standard Edition of your line. If you were the Elite Edition, we could have resisted a lot more attacks. Those phasefighters are all armed with transphasic energy weapon systems. Even if there's only a drop of phasewater in their cannons, their repeated attacks can shred through our defenses."

"THEN WE MAKE SURE TO STAY MOBILE AND RUIN THEIR AIM AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. WITH ALL OF THE ECM, JAMMING AND OTHER INTERFERENCE ON THE BATTLEFIELD, THE AMATEUR ALIEN PILOTS WILL HAVE TO RESORT TO MANUAL AIMING TO LAND THEIR SHOTS."

Josh was confident he could evade the attacks of a typical alien phasefighter, but he could not make the same guarantee when there were 5 or 10 of them attacking his machine at the same time!

"The orvens are done with deploying all of their fighter craft." Franklin mentioned. "Our intelligence was right. The orven carriers have no intention of rotating their craft. The enemy wants to break open our defenses in a massive assault, thereby ending our resistance within a single day."

Josh sneered. "Then let's make sure these aliens will break their teeth when they attempt to gnaw on our hard bones."

Minutes went by as many orven phasefighters and warships began to close the distance.

The orbital space fortresses interrupted the relative peace. Their warship-grade gun batteries fired their hyper energy beams straight at the distant enemy warships!

The well-protected orven warships all began to struggle as their transphasic segmented multi-layer energy shields quickly got drained.

Though the targeted vessels ultimately managed to get away with their hulls unscathed, they lost so many segmented energy shields that their coverage had become severely inadequate!

The enemy warships retaliated with their own energy weapon barrage. Hundreds of thick warship-grade energy beams collided against the titan shield of a single orbital space station.



The orven spacers responded quickly by having the partially depleted warships fall back and hide behind the hulls of other large vessels.

The enemy warships retaliated with their own energy weapon barrage. Hundreds of thick warship-grade energy beams collided against the titan shield of a single orbital space station.

"It's holding!"

The exchange of fire grew more intense.

The orbital defenses with clear firing lines began to pummel the approaching enemy warships.

The orven vessels struck back with their own powerful transphasic cannons.

Josh found it strange that both sides flung so much firepower at each other, yet failed to inflict any material damage up to this point.

Transphasic energy shields were simply too strong!

The azure energy shields were even stronger due to making use of hyper technology!

Just as Josh and many other mech pilots assumed that they would remain spectators for a while, a mutation occurred when a very bright and powerful source of light flashed across the battlefield and struck the beleaguered space fortress!

"What was that?!"

"These energy readings are insane!"

"Which enemy ship fired this attack?!"

The initial confusion quickly made way for dread as the humans observed what just happened to one of their space fortresses.

"The titan shield... has been breached..."

"The enemy's super attack has breached the fortress walls and disabled multiple power generators and other essential systems. Many sections are losing power as we speak. Fortress Antadin is partially crippled!"

"The orvens have secretly brought a capital ship armed with a spinal energy cannon! Our initial analysis on the tech and materials of this vessel indicates that she is a fairly economical vessel that the orvens have hastily constructed to serve a single purpose. She happens to do her job fairly well, and therefore poses a massive threat against our orbital defenses. Spinal cannons love targeting stationary targets the most!"

"Change of plans!" One of the commanding officers spoke over a public channel. "Turtling up is not an option anymore. We must take the fight to the enemy and eliminate the siege ship as soon as possible. Our orbital defenses can last long against the firepower of the enemy vessel's spinal cannon."

New orders quickly arrived. Most of the mech pilots had to leave the cover of the orbital defense network and cross through open space.

Most mech units did not receive orders to destroy the siege ship. Their job was to escort and remove any obstacles that could hinder the advance of the powerful first-class multipurpose mechs of the RA!

As powerful as these machines may be, even the mech pilots were reluctant to send a single squad in the middle of all of the enemy phasefighters and anti-mech warships!

"Advance."

Tens of thousands of mechs flew forward. Although many of the less mobile machines remained behind in order to guard the orbital defenses against ambushes, it was remarkable to see how many human machines left their reassuring confines and made themselves vulnerable by flying through open space!

The mech unit that Josh belonged to happened to fly closer to the first-class multipurpose mechs.

Josh took a brief moment to enjoy the reassuring sight of these powerful machines, but he also felt uncertain how many mechs would get destroyed by moving so close to the enemy fleets so soon.

The siege ship is firing again!

Another blinding flash occurred as an extremely powerful transphasic energy beam struck another orbital fortress, shattering its titan shield and dealing crippling damage to its internal systems!

"Damn, how do the aliens know where to aim?! That energy beam accurately eliminated three power generators at once!"

"Do you really have to ask? The cosmopolitans must have stolen and passed on the blueprints to the Red Cabal."

"Those damn cosmo's!"

More assets began to open fire. The smaller but much more numerous defensive platforms all fired their energy or kinetic armaments at the approaching enemy warships.

In turn, the orven vessels returned fire with their own primary and secondary gun batteries.

The energy shields protecting all of these assets began to deplete at varying rates. Some of the smaller and weaker alien warships already began to suffer serious damage as they failed to take shelter behind friendly vessels in time.

However, the human orbital defenses were being reduced at a rapid pace. The enemy warships did not need to spend too much effort on aiming in order to land all of their shots on their targets.

Debris fields began to emerge as the large combatants from both sides continually pummeled each other without any finesse.

Josh tried his best to ignore all of this activity. He knew he had to take action very soon as a huge amount of alien phasefighters had split away from the alien fleet and attempted to intercept the approaching human mechs!

"I am opening fire!"

Franklin's rifleman mech proceeded to fire one positron beam after another. The searing energy attacks struck several different alien phasefighters, yet only lightly reduced their transphasic energy shield integrity.

Without concentrated fire, it would take too much time and effort for a single rifleman mech to eliminate just one of the alien small craft!

"This is just my luck! These orven phasefighters are even tougher than I expected!" Franklin complained. "Josh, I am counting on you to soften them up. Don't let them bully us with their obnoxious energy defenses."

"I am on it, Franklin!"

Unlike many other Fey Fiannas, the one piloted by Josh flew forward along with many other melee mechs.

This was because his drone mech was uncharacteristically equipped with a full melee loadout!

Chapter 6184 The Raffle Mech

Josh truly won the Fey Fianna in a prize raffle.

Before he signed up for this suicidal defense mission, he worked for one of the many mercenary organizations that had emigrated to the Red Ocean.

The pay was good, and he was able to sponsor his daughter's education and augmentations with his income, but it did not leave him with enough capital to afford his own mech.

In truth, most mech pilots did not develop a great yearning to buy their own mech. It was nice if they had one, but owning one came with a lot of additional costs and responsibilities.

Although experienced mech pilots of Josh Ketter's skill level earned a lot better than average, this income was far from being able to purchase a decent mech, especially one that was fresh from the factory!

Even if Josh had an inheritance or something, the economic burden of owning his own mech did not end at that point.

Every mech needed to be certified on a regular basis. They needed regular maintenance by mech technicians who knew what they were doing. Repairs could also get exceedingly expensive if the machine ever suffered any serious harm.

An entire infrastructure had to be formed around an independent mech. While there were many services available on developed planets and space stations that allowed independent mech pilots to forgo the need of building up an entire crew, the cost of relying on third parties often exceeded the profit that could be earned from solo mercenary contracts!

In fact, the best way for mercenaries to take advantage of owning a personal mech was to negotiate a deal with an existing mercenary outfit.

All of that was beyond Josh Ketter. As a mech pilot who graduated from the mech academy and served as an ordinary soldier in various mech organizations, he did not learn how to set up an independent business, manage his own crew or maintain a positive balance sheet.

He never even set out to buy his own mech. What would he do with it anyway?

That was why he became completely dumbfounded when he heard when he won an actual mech in a raffle.

The raffle was part of a promotion from a mech magazine that he subscribed to for a long time.

The virtual publication regularly held these raffles, and it was quite easy for readers to sign up. They merely had to check a few boxes before pressing the confirm button.

Josh had been reading this magazine for over 15 years. He signed up for every raffle with the attitude of not missing any opportunity, but he never won any prizes during these years.

He did not even receive a plushy for his efforts!

After realizing that these sweepstakes were no different from the lotteries where the chances of winning anything were infinitely close to zero, Josh no longer held any expectation for them anymore.

He did not stop signing up for the raffles that appeared on the projected pages from time to time, but he became so dismissive of them that the act of checking the boxes and pressing the confirm button became a subconscious instinct.

[CONGRATULATIONS MR KETTER! YOU HAVE WON THE GRAND PRIZE OF THE RAFFLE INCLUDED IN ISSUE #6136! PLEASE CONFIRM YOUR SHIPPING ADDRESS AND OTHER CONDITIONS SO THAT WE MAY DELIVER YOUR VERY OWN FEY FIANNA, COURTESY OF THE LIVING MECH CORPORATION!]

When he received the announcement one day, Josh still could not believe that he had won the raffle, and managed to obtain the greatest prize worth 3 MTA credits!

It truly did not sink in until the mech actually got delivered to a warehouse close to his home at the time!

He even thought about selling the Fey Fianna as he had always been accustomed to using company mechs. The money he could earn from selling a second-hand but completely unused mech could easily fund his daughter's tuition and other expenses for many years!

Yet from the moment he visited the warehouse in person and took a close look at his new possession, he instantly discarded his plans to get rid of the machine.

"So this is a living mech."

LMC mechs had become well-known for making unforgettable first impressions. They outright manipulated the minds of anyone who went close to them, and somehow the Red Association still permitted the so-called living mechs to do so despite the potential for abuse.

In any case, once Josh started to try out the Fey Fianna for himself, he couldn't help but fall in love with the popular drone mech.

"No wonder all of those mech pilots became fans of this model. This mech is so easy to pilot!"

The Fey Fianna at the start had not yet grown smart enough to speak to Josh, but the living machine could already convey its feelings and emotions through the man-machine connection.

Josh changed his plans. He decided to stick with this machine.

If he obtained this fantastic mech a few years ago, he probably would have tried to make it work by signing a contract with a mercenary outfit.

However, times had changed, and Josh was not a young mech pilot anymore.

He fought against alien raiding fleets enough times to comprehend that red humanity had not yet fought against the real war machine of the native alien civilizations.

When the dreaded offensive finally erupted, human civilization would suffer a huge amount of damage that would cause a lot of collapses and breakdowns!

Even if red humanity managed to block the assault, the damage to human society would be so great that the lives of the people at the bottom of the pyramid was about to become a lot worse!

This was why Josh Ketter decided to sign his life away by volunteering for this exceedingly dangerous mission.

He wanted to fight to keep his daughter safe. Already, his decision allowed his girl to transfer to a much safer and more developed colony in the rear of human space.

Being able to provide his mech saved the defenders a bit of effort and also allowed him to negotiate additional compensation.

What Josh found important was that his Fey Fianna was better than most of the second-class mechs stationed in this doomed star system.

Perhaps it didn't matter too much as the native aliens would eventually kill all human mech pilots regardless of the quality of their mechs, Josh still wanted to go down swinging if possible.

There was only one big problem with utilizing the Fey Fianna as his combat mech.

Josh specialized in melee combat.

He was not a particularly talented or skillful mech cadet back during his academy days. His advisors told him that he needed to choose his specialization early if he wanted to keep up with his training.

This was why he only completed the bare minimum of ranged combat courses before he happily focused his efforts on becoming a qualified knight mech and spearman mech pilot.

Josh never lacked for opportunities to pilot melee mechs since then. He steadily developed and polished his fighting skills, and also became competent in piloting swordsman mechs.

He never held any desire to improve his marksmanship. A number of his company mechs had occasionally been equipped with ranged secondary weapons, but he never made use of them in his 30-year career.

This left him in an awkward position as the Fey Fianna was heavily slanted towards ranged combat!

The most effective offensive fey were all mounted with ranged weapons. Josh was not able to land his shots when wielding an ordinary rifle. He had even less of a chance of hitting anything when trying to aim with his fey!

It seemed like the Fey Fianna was profoundly unsuitable to a melee mech specialist like Josh.

Though he thought about exchanging his Fey Fianna for a good melee mech, the problem was that the infamously slow LMC had yet to add a modern second-class spaceborn melee mech model to its product catalog!



There were plenty of rumors that claimed that the LMC was working on it, but it had yet to release a good melee mech model that conformed to the standards of the Hyper Generation.

The thought of swapping the Fey Fianna for a melee mech produced by another mech company never entered his mind.

Once Josh experienced the comfort and pleasure of piloting a living mech, he refused to go back to steering those lifeless lumps of metal!

If he was about to fight one last battle before he perished, he wanted to enjoy the experience to the fullest!

Fortunately, the mech technicians working in the orbital space fortress offered Josh a convenient solution.

"We can modify it into a melee mech configuration." The chief technician gruffly told Josh. "We normally have to wait for a mech designer to come and work out the modifications for us to implement, but you're in luck. The Standard Edition of the Fey Fianna is such a popular mech model that plenty of mech designers have already developed many different variants and modification kits. We can obtain one of the off-the-shelf schematics and begin the modification work right away."

Josh was no stranger to aftermarket modifications to mechs, but he gazed skeptically at his relatively skinny Fey Fianna.

Without the fey mounted on the back, the mech did not look like it possessed the physical power and structural strength to be able to hack at enemies at point-blank range!

The chief technician grimaced. "We are short on personnel here for obvious reasons. We don't have the time or manpower to spare for a complete overhaul. We should look at the catalog for one of the less radical modification kits. We won't be able to turn your Fey Fianna into a real melee mech, but once we are done, it should get close enough that the limitations are not too crippling. You can even rely on the fey to compensate for most of the shortcomings."

"It looks like the Fey Fianna needs a complete redesign in order to become a good melee mech."

The chief technician grimaced. "We are short on personnel here for obvious reasons. We don't have the time or manpower to spare for a complete overhaul. We should look at the catalog for one of the less radical modification kits. We won't be able to turn your Fey Fianna into a real melee mech, but once we are done, it should get close enough that the limitations are not too crippling. You can even rely on the fey to compensate for most of the shortcomings."

Josh Ketter became impressed by this plan. "How much will it cost?"

"Nothing. We are short on personnel, and our budget is not endless, but we still have enough spare materials on hand. We'll cover the expenses. This will be an interesting distraction for us. If we are about to die soon, then I at least want to work on at least one of the LMC's famous living mechs."

The two proceeded to sit down behind a desk terminal and browse through an extensive product catalog.

Josh eventually settled for a spear-wielding variant.

The modification kit was fairly small and did not require a lot of work to apply to the Fey Fianna.

Much of the modification work went into the arms and the upper shoulders. The arms needed to become a lot thicker and stronger.

The limbs lost the precision and fine control that enabled them to land accurate shots with a rifle as a consequence.

In exchange, the heavier arms were able to maintain a much more solid grip on a two-handed spear and thrust it forward with decent power!

"This won't be a full spearman mech." The chief technician warned the pilot and owner of the modified Fey Fianna. "The limitations of the arms and torso structures make it so that your mech is only truly good at stabbing. It is very slow at swinging a polearm in wide sweeping horizontal or vertical motions. The mech cannot respond fast enough to block any incoming swings of other melee weapons."

"I can live with that." Josh said. "The native aliens don't make use of anything resembling melee mechs. A simple stab is enough for me to kill any alien fighter craft within my reach."

"You're right. Let me warn you that this modification kit has only barely turned your Fey Fianna into a spearman mech. Do not mistake it for a lancer mech. High impact charges are not recommended unless you want to damage the arms and lose your only weapon."

"Noted."

"Now let us finalize your selection of fey."

#### Chapter 6185 Mass Mechs vs Mass Phasefighters

As tens of thousands of mechs were about to come into contact with an even greater quantity of alien phasefighters, the space in between already became filled with energy beams, projectiles and missiles!

"Watch out for the missiles fired by the phasefighters. Each of their warheads are transphasic, so they are powerful enough to cripple most of our mechs if they manage to score direct hits!"

"Rifleman mechs, intercept the missiles!"

Every phasefighter mounted at least a pair of transphasic missiles under their wings or fuselage. This increased their threat by a huge margin so long as they had yet to launch their payloads!

The initial salvo of missiles launched by the enemy phasefighters crossed the distance and attempted to nail down any mech they could lock onto. Rifleman mechs managed to shoot down many of them with each passing second, but the slender cross sections and evasive movements made it challenging to intercept the missiles.

However, the mech pilots proved their mettle and succeeded in blowing up the majority of missiles.

The few that managed to get through overwhelmingly went on to blow apart energy shields and blast through multiple layers of armor plating. Only a small proportion of heavily damaged mechs had to retire from the battlefield.

The damage was small, but this was just a probing attack!

The only question on everyone's minds was whether the orven phasefighters chose to save their transphasic missiles for the ensuing dogfight or planned to unload them right away.

"The phasefighters are holding onto their missiles!"

"Damn!"

Even if many of the mech pilots had not fought against the newfangled alien phasefighters in reality, they already spent plenty of time tangling against them in virtual training settings.

The performance of the virtual phasefighters might not be a total match to the actual alien craft, but the principles should still be the same.

It was terrifying to encounter a huge missile swarm right at the start. If the mech force did not possess enough missile interception capabilities, then the human machines would almost certainly suffer a heavy blow.

The abrupt losses inflicted by this thunderous missile strike could even set up a chain reaction that caused the damaged mech force to suffer continuous setbacks until it lost entirely!

However, many mech pilots preferred to get it over with. As long as the phasefighters emptied their missile reserves at once, the fighter craft no longer became as threatening as before. Pilots such as Josh did not have to watch his back all of the time for fear of getting waylaid by a missile launched during inopportune moments.

Seeing that the orven small craft still clung to most of their missiles, Josh grew more nervous but also more excited. His blood pumped faster as he tried to make his Fey Fianna navigate through the energy beams whenever the enemy craft occasionally aimed in its direction.

"We can take it, at least for now." He judged. "I will leave the management of the fey and their hyper energy shields to you, partner."

"I KNOW WHAT TO DO. WE PRACTICED THIS."

Josh Ketter felt a little guilty for not possessing the multitasking skills to properly pilot a drone mech.

The Fey Fiannas kind of made that requirement optional, but it was well-known that drone mech specialists could get much more use out of these machines.

This was also why he deliberately chose a fey configuration that required as little manual control as possible.

Since his mech had been modified to fight with a spear, he saw no need to pair it up with any of the ranged weapon fey.

Josh eventually settled for a balanced but boring selection of 2 water energy shield fey and 2 space suppressor fey, thereby augmenting his base mech with additional defense and utility.

The shield fey added a lot of fault tolerance to his mech, allowing him to last a lot longer so long as he and living mech properly juggled the multiple active energy shields.

The space suppressor fey worked well in weakening nearby transphasic energy shields. They had practically become mandatory for any melee mech expected to fight against the native aliens.

Josh was counting on his pair of suppressor fey to quickly eliminate the enemy phasefighters. Without the transphasic qualities to their tech, they were not as scary as they sounded.

The only issue was getting close enough for the two fey to do their job and for his mech to attack with its spear.

The Fey Fianna was not built for high mobility.

That honor went to the light mechs that flew ahead and to the sides of the main mass of mechs.

"Our light mechs are beginning to tussle with the enemy phasefighters!"

The leading orven craft suddenly came under a lot of pressure as thousands of light skirmishers assaulted them without any reserve.

The aggressive mech pilots relied on the impressive mobility of their light machines to close in and catch up to the phasefighters that possessed no effective means to fight at point-blank range.

Every phasefighter that became haunted by a light skirmisher immediately stopped what they were doing and tried their best to shake off the mechs that sought to tear them to shreds!

The initial contact made it difficult for a lot of phasefighters to avoid contact. Hundreds of them ended up getting swarmed by at least two light skirmishers that rapidly chipped away at their transphasic energy shields!

The lighter orven phasefighters appeared to save on costs by placing much less emphasis on material defenses. Their fuselages were light and slender, granting them superior mobility at the cost of becoming incredibly vulnerable if they lost their transphasic energy shields!

In order to make sure they would last, the orven developers had made sure to equip the craft with fairly strong transphasic energy shield generators, but there was only so much they could do with a limited budget and phasewater allowance!

The space suppressors equipped by light skirmishers were very small and weak, but two of them working in concert was usually enough to remove the transphasic factor from the enemy fighter craft.

The sight of all of the light skirmishers working together to eliminate the phasefighters was beautiful.

The paired machines coordinated their movements and always made sure to box in their targets.

When four different knives struck the weakened transphasic energy shields on a repeated basis, the poor alien shield generator usually reached their limits in just half-a-dozen seconds even though they were supposed to last at least three to five times longer at their phasewater level!

As long as the fighters lost their fancy shields, their exposed frames became incredibly vulnerable!

Dozens of fighter craft got crushed or cut into several pieces with ease.

Once the predatory light skirmishers finished off their prey, they did not delay and move on to eliminate other phasefighters!

"Woohoo!"

"Kill em, skirmishers!"

"Don't let the cowardly phasefighters fly away!"

Josh became impressed by the sight of these mechs at work. He never had the reflexes or guts to specialize in light mechs, so he always held a greater degree of respect towards these daredevils.

Despite piloting cheaper and more breakable machines, the mech pilots maneuvered around the battlefield without betraying any fear.

Perhaps the mech pilots were all secretly scared out of their wits, but their strong discipline and sense of duty kept them clear-headed enough to do their jobs without any interruption.

"Kill! Kill as many orven fighters as you can!"

"Kill two of them and you have proved you are not a waste of space. Kill three of them and you'll break even with the orvens. Kill four or more of them if you want to earn a profit!"

The calculus of war did not quite work that way, but the light skirmisher pilots did not care. They just wanted to take down as many alien fighter craft as possible before their mechs eventually met their end, which was an inevitable outcome.

Although the light skirmishers were able to take down the orven phasefighters with ease, they were just as vulnerable against the craft they were hunting!

The orvens knew how to exploit the fragility of human light mechs.

The native aliens may not have made use of small craft on a large scale for much of their recent history, but they still retained much of the tactics and combat doctrines in their historical archives.

The orven fighter pilots did not panic but instead maneuvered around in accordance with their training.

Many phasefighters began to circle around in chaotic patterns. While the frequent turning allowed the pursuing light mechs to close the distance faster, when many phasefighters weaved into each other at the same time, it became possible for the craft to shoot down the pursuing mechs!

Lots of energy beams began to strike the light skirmishers from different angles. The phasefighters did not bother to shoot down the mechs on their tail, but instead took advantage of any moment an enemy machine briefly entered their crosshairs!

Most of the orven pilots were rather clumsy and formulaic when employing these basic weaving tactics, but it didn't matter as their numbers advantage allowed them to fire a lot of shots at the light skirmishers in a short interval of time!

Both sides began to suffer a lot of casualties. The light skirmishers continued to pair up and shred any alien phasefighter they managed to get close to. The orven fighter craft utilized their superior numbers and their rapid-fire energy cannons to shred the relatively fragile light skirmishers with just as much ease!

"There's too many of them! Our light mechs can't hold out long if they are left by themselves!"

Fortunately, it did not take too long for the main wave of mechs to crash into the swarms of orven phasefighters!

The collision between human mechs and alien phasefighters caused an entire section of the battlefield to turn into an indiscriminate cloud of moving metal pieces.



Mechs and phasefighters weaved into each other, making it difficult for human orbital defenses and alien warships to intervene in this chaotic melee.

Tens of thousands of small craft on each side tangled against each other without trying to impose any greater sense of order.

This was not a surprise. The orven fighter pilots were too inexperienced and poorly trained. The human mech pilots were restrained by their numbers disadvantage and their fear towards the new anti-mech warships.

It was impossible to adopt any greater formations or establish teamwork on a wider scale.

The commanding officers of both sides could not even force their subordinates to retreat as the combatants on both sides had become utterly devoted to eliminating each other to the very end!

Josh had lost almost all of his awareness of the greater battlefield once he truly entered the fight.

As a member of one of the elite units, it was not his job to hunt down the most fragile orven phasefighters.

Instead, Josh set his sights on the heavier, bulkier and most importantly tougher phasefighters!

The heavy phasefighters intimidated a lot of mechs due to their vastly superior firepower and defenses. While their mobility was not as great as their lighter counterparts, the more massive craft were able to rely on their more powerful arms and higher phasewater content to shred one mech after another.

Not just the light skirmishers, but also the thicker medium mechs faltered quickly when under attack by a heavy phasefighter!

"No more!"

Josh's Fey Fianna intercepted a heavy phasefighter that had just crippled a swordsman mech and thrust out its spear!

The mech pilot made sure to limit the interception speed to make sure the contact did not result in anything breaking, but the Fey Fianna still shook as it suffered a rattling collision!

Josh quickly shook it off and renewed his attack on the enemy phasefighter. The enemy craft was losing its shield integrity quickly as the two space suppressor fey did their jobs and blocked most transphasic effects!

Even so, the Fey Fianna was too clumsy and simplistic in its attack moves to wear out the energy defenses of the alien craft quickly enough.

The 'elite' orven fighter pilot quickly started to bend and corkscrew around in order to give other available phasefighters the opportunity to take potshots at the enemy drone mech.

Josh's mech indeed began to receive more attention from enemies, but its two hyper energy shield fey ensured that the machine remained physically unharmed!

"If you think this can deter me from pursuing you further, then you are sorely mistaken, alien!"

Chapter 6186 Josh & Franklin

The battlefield turned into an entire mess.

Orbital fortresses continued to get breached by the siege weapon brought forth by the invading aliens.

Countless engineers and technicians worked hard to control the damage and allow the alloy bulwarks to last a little longer.

The longer these fortresses remained operational, the more enemy fire they attracted. The fortresses were also able to employ their own turreted gun batteries to retaliate against the distant enemy warships.

Alas, the volunteers who had all chosen to stay behind in this doomed star system could not do much to undo the catastrophic damage inflicted by the invading enemies.

There were too many enemy warships!

Even if more of them adopted an anti-mech weapon configuration, they still possessed enough primary armaments to wear down the structure of the exposed space fortresses.

Meanwhile, the large capital ship that bore a mighty spinal cannon accumulated a lot of energy before launching an extremely penetrating transphasic energy beam at the next fortress!

"That's the sixth space fortress that this siege vessel has broken open! We are losing our strongest defensive assets far too soon! Why haven't we eliminated this ship yet?! She should be broken up into billions of pieces at this time."

"We can't, sir! Our teleportation strikes are being hindered by the alien versions of interdiction fields. Our ship-killer torpedoes are always intercepted before they reach their target. As for our more direct energy and kinetic attacks, the orvens have placed multiple capital ships around their siege vessel to intercept our direct fire."

"What of the mechs we sent out?!"

"Our second-class mechs are being entangled by at least twice their number of enemy phasefighters. Our first-class mechs are being hindered by ten times the number of elite orven phasefighters of a model that we have never encountered before. Our observations and analysis indicate that they are expressly designed to counter first-class mechs."

"Give me the data on those elite phasefighters! Are they individually on par with our first-class multipurpose mechs?"

"No, sir. They are only a fraction as powerful and expensive. However, the gap in performance is not so crushing anymore. The aliens are able to field many more elite phasefighters and rely on their superior numbers to destroy or at least stall our first-class mechs."

The first-class multipurpose mechs that were supposed to hinder or destroy the alien siege vessel could not proceed any further.

So many elite phasefighters swarmed them from every direction that the outnumbered RA mechs would probably get mowed down in quick succession if they forced their way through.

Despite their excellent defenses and the use of shield link technology, the orven pilots were not deterred by the superior mechs.

They all knew that as long as they landed enough attacks onto any mech, they would steadily be able to deplete the excellent protection that kept the first-class machines safe up to this point.

The first-class mech pilots were all smart and perceptive enough to understand they could not remain active on the battlefield for long if they tried to push towards their objective.

They had no choice but to alter their trajectories and move as unpredictably as possible in order to avoid getting struck too many times.

Their collective azure energy shields could resist a lot of attacks, but everything had a limit!

Even then, the first-class multipurpose mechs truly found it unbearable to deal with so many elite phasefighters at once.

Their defenses and mobility were not that impressive, but the aliens had massively increased the phasewater content of their energy cannons, allowing the fighter craft to inflict slight but real harm on the famous first-class mechs of the Red Association!

If that wasn't bad enough, the elite phasefighters were also equipped with expensive but threatening transphasic missiles.

Any first-class mech that showed the slightest sign of faltering instantly became targeted by at least 5 transphasic missiles.

If they impacted their target and detonated at the same time, the resulting explosions were powerful and violent enough to overcome the upper limits of the mech's shield link module, thereby causing the machine to become exposed and a lot more vulnerable!

The superior armor systems of the first-class multipurpose mech should have given it a chance to disengage and retreat to safety, but many of the surrounding phasefighters behaved as if they smelled blood in the water.

Over fifty elite phasefighters instantly prioritized the vulnerable mech and fired as many transphasic energy beams at the poor mech as possible.

Unless the mech possessed a special defensive module that still remained working, there was no way a first-class mech could withstand the combined firepower of so many potent elite phasefighters for long!

"Damn!"

"These elite orven phasefighters don't have that many alien design characteristics. It is too human. The cosmopolitans must have designed this model for the orven race!"

A human design was ultimately responsible for helping the orven kill first-class multipurpose mechs in a much more cost-effective manner than before!

It was not as if the orvens were unable to eliminate first-class multipurpose mechs. They just relied on a lot of huge and technologically advanced warships in order to crush the much smaller mechs.

As long as the advanced alien vessels directed enough massed firepower in their direction, even first-class mechs could be mowed down en masse!

This was similar yet also different. It still took too many phasefighters to defeat a single first-class multipurpose mech, but the disparity between the two was a lot less lopsided than before!

All of this was of hardly any relevance to Josh Ketter at the moment.

The melee mech pilot did not have the attention to spare on what was happening further away from his mech.

Now that his Fey Fianna joined the fray in earnest, his machine immediately came under pressure by getting targeted by over a dozen phasefighters as they circled and weaved around.

The good news was that the phasefighters only made opportunistic attacks as the Fey Fianna whenever it was convenient.

The bad news was that there were so many enemy craft that the hyper energy shields were getting drained at a rapid rate.

"THERE ARE TOO MANY!"

"I know! We need to catch up to one of the phasefighters. The orven fighter pilots are at least reluctant to commit friendly fire."

It was not too difficult for his living mech to catch up to a heavy phasefighter, especially when the orven pilot did not initially pay too much attention to the Fey Fianna.

By the time that Josh's mech came close enough, it was already too late for the heavy phasefighter to shake off the threat!

The Fey Fianna thrust out its spear with both hands multiple times, causing the transphasic energy shield to flare.

At the same time, the two space suppressor fey stacked their effects and caused the enemy fighter craft to lose most of the benefit of phasewater technology!

Not just the transphasic energy shield, but also the transphasic energy cannons lost a lot of their impressive performance amplification.

To a melee mech pilot like Josh Ketter, the offensive value of the two space suppressor fey exceeded that of any armed fey.

That did not mean that Josh rejected additional assistance.

"Franklin!"

"On it! Do you know how difficult it is to avoid all of the attacks launched in my mech's direction?!"

Further away, Franklin's rifleman mech evaded another barrage of energy beams before aiming its weapon directly at Josh's target.

Bright and hot positron beams struck the weakened transphasic energy shield, causing it to deteriorate at an even faster pace!

If the rifleman mech attacked the heavy phasefighter by itself, it wouldn't be able to inflict nearly as much damage.

Only when a melee mech like Josh's Fey Fianna brought its short-ranged space suppressors to the enemy was it possible for a non-transphasic ranged mech to strike so hard!

The two mechs were pretty decent if they fought by themselves, but the two became much deadlier if they fought together!

As the compromised energy shield finally collapsed, the heavy phasefighter tried its best to distance itself from the Fey Fianna, but it was too late!

The thicker frame and outer plating did little to stop the Fey Fianna's spear from punching through and destroying the powerful engines that kept the craft mobile.

The penetrating spear strike must have hit something important, because secondary explosions soon blew the heavy phasefighter apart!

"ANOTHER ONE DOWN. WE ARE STARTING TO EARN A PROFIT."

"It's not enough." Josh scowled. "You missed Franklin's share. We still need to eliminate more!"

He checked the condition of the hyper energy shields. Despite rotating them to give the other shields time to recover, their overall conditions had deteriorated to a dangerous extent.

The constant attacks hitting his Fey Fianna's hyper energy shields worsened his mood and made him feel as if he was getting short on time.

There was no reprieve on this battlefield.

"More!"

His Fey Fianna flew towards another heavy phasefighter that was putting a lot of pressure on a friendly swordsman mech.

The pilots of the two mechs did not even need to communicate in order to work in conjunction with each other.

The swordsman mech altered its trajectory and curved around to make it more difficult for the heavy phasefighter to avoid the incoming Fey Fianna.

The orven pilot did not even realize that his craft was getting led into a trap.

This was because his phasefighter already managed to inflict serious damage onto the swordsman mech. The fighter craft only needed to put a bit more effort to finish off the machine entirely.

When the phasefighter finally alerted the orven pilot to the danger, the alien knew he would get in trouble unless he decided to disengage as well.

The orven grew furious. He wanted to add another kill to his name. Instead of turning around to avoid getting within spear-striking distance of the incoming machine, the alien pilot instead made use of the missile lock onto the swordsman mech and launched the remaining transphasic missile that he had left.

"NO!"

The transphasic missile flew out at rapid speed and only had to traverse a relatively short distance before blasting apart the damaged and vulnerable swordsman mech!

A hefty explosion spread lots of debris in each direction!



Even if the mech pilot of the swordsman mech activated the eject command, the cockpit would not have survived!

"Franklin!"

"On it, Josh!"

If the distance between the phasefighter and its target was a lot larger, then Franklin might have been able to shoot the warhead down.

Alas, the interval was too short for the rifleman mech to intervene.

Josh and Franklin could only take revenge by ganging up on the offending heavy phasefighter with the same measures they utilized before.

Though the phasefighter went down easily, its destruction hardly gave any consolation to the two mech pilots.

Similar tragedies were happening everywhere around them. So many mechs and mech pilots perished with each passing minute that there was little that the two could do to turn the tide.

Just as the duo sought to eliminate another heavy phasefighter, they suddenly received priority orders from a mech colonel.

[RA FIRST-CLASS MULTIPURPOSE MECHS ARE UNABLE TO COMPLETE THEIR SOLE OBJECTIVE. EVERY ELITE MECH UNIT MUST CEASE TO FIGHT AGAINST THE LESSER PHASEFIGHTERS AND FOCUS ON HELPING THE RA MECHS ELIMINATE THE ELITE PHASEFIGHTERS.]

Josh's expression became grim.

If the elite mech units were not able to suppress the alien heavy phasefighters, then a lot more second-class mechs would get eliminated as a consequence!

However, Josh did not question his orders. He knew that the purpose of the RA mechs was far more important than any other consideration.

The mechs piloted by Josh, Franklin and other elite mech pilots all tried to disengage from the big fight, with varying degrees of success.

The elite mechs that were able to get away with assistance of other mech units soon proceeded to fly towards the center where a much more intensive fight took place!

"These phasefighters are too strong!"

Chapter 6187 Red Humanity Under Siege

As the Red Tide Offensive swept across human space, everyone's lives became affected one way or another.

Aside from the completely isolated secret bases and such, every human learned that the Red Cabal had unleashed a tide of over a thousand fleets.

The zones at the border between human and alien space turned into meat grinders as the simultaneous assaults exerted a massive amount of pressure onto the three colonial alliances.

The Terran Alliance, the Rubarthan Pact and the Red Ocean Union all came under siege at once.

The good news was that the invading aliens did not concentrate the bulk of their forces at any single front in order to achieve a faster breakthrough.

Their strategy of spreading out their fleet assets as much as possible successfully minimized the impact of the god pilots stationed at the border at this time.

In one fortified star system located in the middle of the Rubarthan Alliance, the Rubarthan defenses began to endure a powerful beating from a mighty alien armada belonging to the juregs.

The jureg race was one of the 13 major alien races of the Red Ocean!

Red humanity had yet to encounter the juregs on a wider scale until today. The formal meeting between the two races was a misfortune to the defenders, because the attacking race was well-known for its cruelty and brutality!

The juregs were aquatic crustacean-like aliens that preferred to colonize planets with deep and extensive oceans. The average jureg was five times larger than a human and weighed a lot more due to their thick exoskeletons.

One of the more remarkable traits was that their shells were able to integrate phasewater fairly easily!

The juregs relied on this trait to increase the rate of phase lords emerging among their population, thereby causing the race to become strong and feared.

If not for their low rationality and their lower than average intelligence, the juregs could have become a lot more dominant in the Red Ocean!

The juregs bred fairly quickly, but it was due to this racial trait that the aquatic aliens engaged in brutal competition starting from birth.

The childhood mortality rate of the juregs was horrendously high, as only 1 in 500 juveniles make it to adulthood on average!

While this allowed the juregs to keep their population levels under control, it also caused their society to become strongly biased towards hyper aggression, bullying, rule breaking and other unsavory behavior.

This predictably caused them to get along poorly with many of the other major alien races of the Red Ocean!

The only notable exception was their relations with the phase whale race. The juregs fanatically worshiped the phase whales as the descendants of the Elder Gods!

The juregs were convinced that their common aquatic origins and the ease in which their race was able to produce phase lords definitely proved that they were related to the phase whales somehow!

Even though the phase whales themselves never acknowledged this crazy theory, it did not stop the so-called descendants of the Elder Gods from bringing the juregs to heel.

After all, who didn't want a strong civilization made up of fearless warrior aliens at their beck and call?

Although it was difficult to keep the infamously unruly juregs in line, the Red Cabal still found it worthwhile to hold their leash and direct their aggression against different targets in order to maintain their high ground.

Nowadays, the juregs had answered the call to arms and moved to the other side of the Red Ocean in order to slay as many humans as possible!

The bloodthirsty aquatic aliens sent much of their assault fleets towards the border zones of the Rubarthan Pact.

One of the most important human star systems that the Red Cabal wanted to topple was the Duvallan System located in the small but crucial Monroe Upper Zone.

Orbital fortifications manned by Rubarthans unleashed a lot of firepower towards the formidable armada that consisted entirely of massive capital warships.

The juregs preferred to build their homeships big!

The huge capacity of their water-filled vessels offered lots of room for hull plating and functional models.

Not only were they extremely well-protected by many strong transphasic energy shield generators, their exteriors offered lots of room for powerful kinetic gun batteries and missile launchers.

The jureg race overwhelmingly preferred to make use of short to medium-ranged transphasic kinetic cannons, as they remained effective underwater. Energy weapons tended to perform poorly in aquatic environments.

In order to compensate for the shorter ranges of their cannons, the jureg warships also tended to carry a lot of missile and torpedo launchers.

Right now, the orbital ring built and fortified by the Rubarthans were doing their best to intercept the large amount of transphasic missiles and torpedoes launched by the jureg fleet!

The Rubarthan mechs, defensive platforms, orbital fortresses and starships all tried to wipe out the missiles with intercepting fire.

Precise laser cannons and more destructive counter-missiles sought to blow up as many of the incoming warheads as possible, but their efforts only made a partial difference.

There were too many missiles!

The much larger and more destructive torpedoes also resisted a lot of damage before they could finally be stopped!

The Rubarthan defenders of the critical Duvallan System all received a considerable shock as the missiles struck and exploded!

Many fortifications overloaded their azure shield generators and employed additional high-tech defensive measures to mitigate the damage. However, the juregs who received a lot of intelligence about the Rubarthans and other first-class human forces had made sure to compensate for that by allocating additional missiles onto specific targets!

Dozens of defensive platforms and half-a-dozen orbital space fortresses soon turned into debris fields as the transphasic explosions shattered their structures and killed every Rubarthan serviceman who hadn't managed to evacuate in time.

The remaining human defenders lost confidence after witnessing the destruction wrought by the invading jureg warships.

"We need backup!"

"Send out our reserves!"

"Where are our ace pilots?!"

"Our Saints are being suppressed by the jureg phase lords!"

Although the jureg fleet no longer launched a super-salvo of expensive transphasic missiles, their formidable kinetic cannons had already begun to open fire.

Although the weapons were relatively low-tech, the damage they could inflict was no joke as long as their calibers were large enough.

As many Rubarthan fortifications began to wither under the titanic barrage of transphasic kinetic projectiles, the fall of the main planet of the Duvallan System would not take long to come to fruition!

Just as the eager and bloodthirsty juregs drove their massive and devastating warships closer, the Rubarthan soldiers all received a priority notification that uplifted their moods!

A single heavy artillery shell launched from the other side of the planet!

Strangely enough, the flaming orange comet precisely curved around the globe and rapidly advanced towards the side where the jureg armada sought to demolish half of the orbital defense ring at once!

Even though the shell did not appear to be too big, it glowed bright enough to light up the dark side of the planet and traversed across space at a much higher velocity than more mundane projectiles!

Strangely enough, the flaming orange comet precisely curved around the globe and rapidly advanced towards the side where the jureg armada sought to demolish half of the orbital defense ring at once!

Though the flaming orange artillery shell generated alarmingly powerful energy emissions, none of the Rubarthan systems saw any reason to trigger any alarms.

This was because the exceptionally powerful artillery shell bypassed all of the Rubarthan assets and flew straight in the direction of the jureg warships!

Before the extremely powerful explosive projectile reached its destination, it abruptly split up into 10 smaller but still devastating cluster munitions that spread evenly across the different jureg fleet elements.

Ten simultaneous explosions erupted at once, causing many sensor systems to become temporarily blinded!

As the cluster munitions silently did their work, the once-proud jureg armada had become a thing of the past.

Not a lot of jureg warships actually managed to get destroyed as the aquatic aliens made sure to keep their huge vessels far apart from each other.

However, the split shells accurately managed to annihilate the largest and most destructive capital warships that were responsible for exerting the greatest degree of pressure towards the Rubarthan defenses!

With the elimination of these jureg flagships and siege vessels, the alien offensive in this star system immediately became a lot less threatening.

Even if the juregs wanted to persist in their assault, they might not have many warships left!

There was only one Rubarthan hero that could wreak so much devastation.

It was impossible for a mere ace mech, even one piloted by a peak ace pilot, to break the back of the powerful jureg armada so easily

Every Rubarthan began to feel as if they possessed the power to destroy the galaxy as soon as they came under the effect of a God Kingdom.

The Ragnarok emerged from behind the planet!

The powerful god mech looked larger and heavier than many other god mechs, but its speed was not slow in the slightest!

"Haha! The Destroyer of Worlds has come!"

"Your doom is at hand, aliens!"

"We're eating crab meat tonight!"

As the Ragnarok appeared high above the north pole of the globe, dozens of cannons emerged across its ominous and fiery surface.

"DISINTEGRATE."

As the god pilot's oppressive meaning rang through the minds of every human and jureg on the battlefield, the multitude of artillery cannons began to fire several salvos of artillery shells at many different targets at a time!

Explosion after explosion engulfed the warships, the support vessels, the converted carrier vessels and more!

For all of their vaunted segmented multi-layer transphasic energy shields, the might of a god pilot that could warp reality to make her attacks more destructive proved too much for these technological solutions!

The only extraordinary champions that had the potential to mitigate the damage were the jureg phase lords.

The giant-sized crustacean aliens disengaged from the ace mechs they had been dueling against.

Strangely enough, the Rubarthan ace pilots did not bother to chase after their enemies.

"Poor aliens."



"They are already dead and gone from the moment the Destroyer of Worlds entered this star system."

From the perspective of the powerful Saints, there was no point in fighting anymore as every single jureg invader had already been marked for death!

There was no challenge anymore, so it was pointless for the Saints to do any needless work!

As the multitude of resonance-empowered artillery shells shattered through the defenses of so many alien warships and broke apart their hulls, the Ragnarok soon directed its hostility towards the phase lords!

A larger cannon extended from the front of the god mech and began to glow much brighter than all of the other barrels!

"SHATTER."

The large cannon fired a single projectile that was surrounded by a giant flaming cat-like illusion!

"MIEW!"

With Emma riding along the shell, there was no way for the phase lords to escape death!

The jureg 'gods' attempted to split up in the faint hope that maybe one of them could escape this forsaken kill zone alive, but before the glowing artillery shell came close enough to one of the panicking aliens, the warhead exploded in the middle of empty space!

Three alien mental cries erupted from three juregen phase lords as three enormous energy lances penetrated their transphasic shells and impaled their massive bodies up to their giant brains!

It turned out that the strange artillery shell did not explode like other warheads, but instead concentrated all of their destructive power into three different directions, thereby forcing all three alien phase lords to endure a third of the titanic destructive potential of the explosive projectile!

Amplified and controlled by Emma, the enormous fiery lances not only punched through many essential organs, but also destroyed a lot of arteries and other life-sustaining organs!

The jureg phase lords rapidly weakened and began to die without exception.

None of them could mobilize their spatial abilities or regenerate their fatally wounded organs.

The Destroyer of Worlds was too powerful!

Not only that, but the surgical strike towards the phase lords also preserved a lot of phasewater and other important organs, thereby making sure that the Rubarthans could salvage plenty of valuable biotissue from these corpses.

The god pilot could be quite restrained when needed!

"Destroyer of Worlds! Destroyer of Worlds! Destroyer of Worlds!"

Pretty much every Rubarthan in the star system felt grateful towards their god pilot! They literally worshiped her as their god and savior!

As the god pilot silently accepted the faith of all of the Rubarthans she had managed to save, her Ragnarok minutely grew a little darker and gloomier.

The god mech had begun to absorb faith as well. Yet instead of opening itself up to the positive feedback of fellow humans, the machine employed special means to absorb the negative faith and resentment of the juregs that died at the hand of its artillery cannons.

The harvesting of alien lives fueled the Ragnarok's growth!

Chapter 6188 Terran Struggles

What happened in the Duvallan System was no exception. The Destroyer of Worlds had already wiped out another invading alien force in a nearby star system.

Unfortunately, the god pilot did not see much reason to be happy. The blow she dealt to this jureg assault force was unquestionably heavy, but it was just a drop in the ocean due to all of the other alien invasions taking place at the same time.

If she had a choice, then Divine Irene Mox would have wanted to blast all of the alien intruders at the same time, but her Ragnarok did not have the power to strike at targets many light-years away.

The only way to slow down the alien offensive and prevent the border of the Rubarthan Pact from collapsing was to put every fire out one by one!

The Destroyer of Worlds could not afford to waste any time.

Although the jureg fleet still retained a lot of damaged and undamaged warships, the invaders no longer possessed an advantage anymore. The Rubarthan defenders should be more than capable of mopping up the confused and demoralized alien survivors.

The Ragnarok engaged its powerful and sophisticated minidrive and traveled to another star system under siege.

The Rubarthan defenders that remained behind in the Duvallen System continually expressed their gratitude towards the god pilot as she left.

"Godspeed."

"May you slay as many aliens as possible, Your Holiness."

Multiple more god pilots made appearances in the other border regions.

Among the 13 major alien races, the nunser race preferred to field lots of cylinder-shaped homeships. Their armed vessels were not particularly technologically advanced or brilliantly designed.

Few of them bothered to put up much of a show. They only did the bare minimum to inspire hope and courage among the defending humans before leaving to halt other ongoing assaults.

Somewhere in the beleaguered Caesarion Upper Zone, the powerful orbital fortifications and first-class multipurpose mechs hailing from the Nayald Ancient Clan struggled to hold back the multitude of nunser warships.

Among the 13 major alien races, the nunser race preferred to field lots of cylinder-shaped homeships. Their armed vessels were not particularly technologically advanced or brilliantly designed.

They functioned like workhorses that the nunsers were able to mass produce in large numbers by relying on their strong industry.

The nunser vessels were a bit tougher on average, though their firepower fell a bit behind. The herbivorous aliens did not care too much about this downside as they simply fielded more of their thick and reliable vessels if they needed more firepower.

This was what the Terran defenders had to face in this star system. The quantity of nunser homeships was great enough to crush the Nayald Ancient Clan's fortified star system in less than a week, but that was not the extent of their power.

The nunsers made a clear effort to keep up with the times, as evidenced by their carrier vessels that disgorged thousands and thousands of phasefighters!

Due to the larger size of nunser individuals, the cockpits and the rest of the frames of the 'small craft' had to be larger in scale in order to keep everything in proportion. The nunser phasefighters were therefore tougher and more threatening at the cost of reduced acceleration and maneuverability.

Unlike the phasefighters assigned to fleets invading the middle and lower zones of red humanity, the models utilized by the fleets entering the Caesarion Upper Zone were clearly a lot more powerful in many ways!

There was little point in deploying anything weaker as they would only serve as fodder for the first-class multipurpose mechs.

Even if the nunser phasefighters were far from being able to match the Terran mechs, it was already enough if the alien small craft could keep the human machines occupied.

Terran mechs were considerably more effective at closer ranges in general, so the nunsers clearly sought to keep them away from the alien homeships.

As the initial exchange of fire already began to take a toll on the defenses painstakingly built by the Nayald Ancient Clan, the grandiose assault of the nuser invaders suddenly paused for an inexplicable reason.

Many sensors managed to catch a very brief but bright needle of light threading through a lot of alien warships.

Soon, those warships began to suffer many internal explosions and malfunctions as it turned out that a huge hole had been drilled through their sides!

From one end of the hull to the other, a tenth of every nuser warship received such crippling damage that many of them lost a part if not all of their fighting capabilities!

What was strange was that not even their vaunted segmented multi-layer transphasic energy shields protected them from whatever struck the affected hulls at once!

The crippling surprise attacks completely disrupted the rhythm of the nunsers. Their forward advance slowed down while their phasefighters hastily moved back to protect their homeships from whatever dastardly human weapon managed to take them by surprise.

Unlike the nunsers, the Terran defenders already figured out what happened. Many of them were no stranger to this phenomenon.

In an instant, another flash of light struck the nuser warships!

An entire line of them got struck before promptly getting crippled due to the gaping holes in their hulls!

This attack repeated several times after a short delay until the invading nunsers lost control over two-thirds of their homeships!

Many hulls lost propulsion or power. The more unlucky ones got blown apart as whatever managed to breach their hulls also detonated their explosive munitions!

By the time the nunsers managed to take stock of what had been done to their precious vessels, they all grew horrified at how much losses they suffered in so little time!

The nuser vessels did not solely function as warships. They were their true homes, relying on their ability to land and take off from the surface of different planets to remain in a familiar environment at all times.

To see so many nuser homeships fall was as devastating as witnessing the genocide of every resident on a settled planet to the humans!

The nunsers took the catastrophic losses so hard that all thoughts about breaking open this fortified star system had disappeared from their alien minds.

Meanwhile, the defenders working for the Nayald Ancient Clan all cheered the intervention of their sole god pilot!

"Light of Sol! Light of Sol! Light of Sol!"

Typically, the Terran god pilot made an effort to appear before the Terrans and leave an unforgettable impression behind.

However, the Red Tide Offensive struck the Terran Alliance so hard that the god pilot never properly showed up from beginning to end.

The Radiant had already utilized its blazing speed to depart from this star system so that he could bail out another Terran star system.

The god mech relied on the latest cutting-edge technologies to push its traversal speed to greater heights.

The pressure on the Terran god pilot was far greater than his Rubarthan counterparts because he was the only True God that could serve as a backstop to the faltering defensive front of the Terran Alliance.

"I MUST GO FASTER. MY SPEED IS NOT ENOUGH. MY SPEED IS NEVER ENOUGH."

Fortunately, the Terrans did not have to bear the burden of defending the Caesarion Upper Zone and other zones of the Terran Alliance by themselves.

The Red Two temporarily put down their unofficial rivalry against the first-rate colonial superstate and sent reinforcements to lighten the burden.

In another star system located in the shaky Urikas Upper Zone, a multi-racial fleet comprised of puelmer as well as z zamayel warships utilized their eclectic tech to cover for their weaknesses.

The technologically advanced puelmer warships might not be as large as the vessels of other races, but they had come the closest to reaching parity with modern human warships!

What surprised the defending Terrans was that the aggressive ball-like aliens successfully managed to adapt one of the Web Mistress' most iconic innovations!

"Those puelmer hulls are emitting distinct emissions that we have only detected from mechers and fleeter warships so far. Wait, if these readings are correct, then the puelmer heavy cruisers have all managed to connect their energy shields to each other. The aliens stole the Red Two's shield link technology!"

This revelation came as a shock as the mechers and the fleeters had always been careful about keeping the core scientific principles of shield link technology as confidential as possible.

For the greedy and shameless puelmers to not only obtain the valuable technological schematics of shield link modules, but successfully adapt them to their own alien warships so quickly was incredibly alarming!

"The puelmer warships are much harder to defeat than before!"

"The puelmers are still hitting us as hard as we are used to from their armed vessels. Their primary energy gun batteries have become even more accurate and powerful than before!"

"They are also as fast and agile as ever. Their mobility has not decreased in the slightest."

As the puelmers assaulted the Terran defenses from afar, the zzamayels charged forward and began to cause a lot of distress due to their abnormal tech!

As a slime-based race, the extremely weird zzamayels never managed to get along with the other races. They were just too different in thought, appearance, culture and goals.

Their tech base was both conventional and biological in nature. The zzamayal saw no need to distinguish between the two and created all kinds of horrifying and unique biomechanical warships for themselves.

The zzamayal fleets that assaulted this star system consisted of fleshy vessels with clear mechanical additions.

While the zzamayal ships possessed the usual armaments, they actually possessed several more tricky attack measures.

"Our space fortress has become infected!"

"How?!"

"The zzamayal ships launched biological matter towards our orbital base where it exploded on impact and spread countless spores in the environment.

"What are the effects?!"

"The spores have no effect on our personnel, but they are beginning to eat away at the softer and more vulnerable metals of our space station."

"Remove the spores! Decontaminate the compartments affected by the spores."

"There are too many spores spread throughout the structure of this space station. The spores are not difficult to remove, but they propagate too quickly!"



"Then do your best. What of the other problem?"

"The z zamayel warships are organic enough to be able to employ methods of attack that we never envisioned for our starships.

One z zamayal capital ship boldly charged towards a Terran warship that had partially lost her thrusters.

While the human vessel attempted to limb back to safety, the z zamayal battleship surged forth before opening up her organic maw.

The trapper vessel applied more and more force until the Terran hull deformed!

The alien vessel then proceeded to bite the rear half of the fleeing Terran warship!

The trapper vessel applied more and more force until the Terran hull deformed!

Many more hungry z zamayel biomechanical warships advanced towards the Terran defenses. The alien vessels gave off the impression that they were more interested in devouring all of the Terran hardware than winning this battle!

It didn't matter as one automatically led to the other outcome.

As the Terran defenders grew shakier at the thought of turning into food to these artificial monstrosities.

Many strikes assailed the z zamayal warships, but few managed to do serious damage.

The z zamayal warships turned out to be quite sturdy and resilient against damage after losing their transphasic energy shields.

They were able withstand a lot more damage than the warships of other races. The biological internal systems of these vessels were often at least just as tough as the exterior hull plating!

This represented more bad news to the Terran soldiers. The strange alien warships took a disproportionate amount of damage to eliminate.

Just as the defenders thought that the joint puelmer-zzamayal armada would grind down and topple the Terran defenses, a seventh of the most forward zzamayal biomechanical ships rapidly began to lose temperature!

Although the loss of heat did not happen quickly, the slime aliens frantically sought to reverse the decline in temperature, to no avail!

Eventually, the affected zzamayal warships absurdly started to freeze.

The freezing effect was so strong that the chill even reached the innermost compartments of the alien vessels!

"This frost!"

"There is only one asset that can freeze so many warships at once."

"Look! It's the Reign of Frost! A dreadnought has arrived!"

Although dreadnoughts were not able to crush the invading alien fleets as easily as the much flashier god mechs, the Red Fleet's trump cards were not to be trifled with, especially if they did not encounter any ancient phase whales.

Chapter 6189 A More Effective Counterattack

Not every god pilot was available to defend the border regions.

Crucial star systems such as Bridgehead One also needed strong protectors to guard against sneak attacks and prevent any human rebels from plunging the rear of human space into chaos.

The intervention of dreadnoughts such as the Reign of Frost urgently relieved the pressure and allowed the defending star systems to hold out a little longer.

Even if an even larger second wave of alien assault fleets were on the way to overrun the human fortifications that managed to defend their positions for the time being, any progress was better than nothing!

As millions of humans and aliens perished across the border zones of human space, more dreadnoughts intervened in their own ways.

In one star system, another multi-racial fleet of advanced puelmer and orven warships abruptly began to malfunction on a large scale!

Their sensor systems became blinded while the targeting systems of the gun batteries aimed the weapons at their own warships!

The multitude of phasefighters that briefly gave the opposing human mechs a lot of grief all began to glitch out or lose power for whatever reason!

The mechs that opposed the phasefighters instantly recognized the opportunity and began to focus all of their attacks against the defenseless alien craft and wipe them all out with much greater ease than before!

Although only a part of the enemy forces suffered a severe degradation in functionality, this was already enough to turn the tide!

If not for the fact that the puelmers reacted quickly and utilized their formidable intellect to hastily patch the most obvious vulnerabilities to their hardware, more of the alien vessels would have succumbed to this mass cyberattack!

"How come the alien ships and phasefighters malfunctioned all of a sudden?"

"Isn't the answer obvious? Only one ship can do all of this. The Throne of Lies has arrived!"

The dreadnought never bothered to make an appearance, but her presence was most certainly felt.

Without firing any of her armaments, the Throne of Lies utilized her exceptionally powerful ECM and hacking systems to continually pummel the virtual security defenses of the enemy vessels.

Although the puelmers strangely managed to shield their technologically advanced heavy cruisers against most subsequent cyberattacks, the orvens were not as fortunate!

There were much less orvens serving aboard the vessels that possessed expertise in this field. Their proficiencies also weren't as exceptional as that of the puelmers, so their fleet and phasefighters were steadily beginning to suffer one mishap after another.

Hundreds of phasefighters spontaneously exploded after their transphasic missiles detonated while remaining attached to their frames!

Several orven warships began to lose control over their propulsion systems, causing them to fly away from the rest of their fleets and subsequently getting targeted by the vengeful human mechs.

Other orven warships began to spin around their axis while shutting down a part of their inertial dampeners.

This caused every orven crew member regardless of their caste to get flung into the bulkheads as if they were laundry in a rapidly rotating tumbler!

Due to the excessive rotational speeds, most orvens only had a short moment to scream before their bodies collided against solid metal surfaces!

The blood and chunks of furred flesh stained the interior of many compartments!

Eventually, the unceasing cyberattacks ceased. The stealthed dreadnought responsible for terrorizing the invading alien fleet had already slipped away without any announcement.

Although a lot of partially functional enemy phasefighters and warships remained in the field, the puelmers and the orvens had become utterly broken.

"Kill them before they regain their balance!"

"Destroy as many of them as possible! The more we kill today, the less we have to fight against the next day!"

"Kill the aliens!"

The power of dreadnoughts clearly exceeded the level that more ordinary alien fleets could cope with. This was a surprise as the massive capital ships did not display as much combat power during Operation Jazz!

Of course, anyone who took a closer look at the dreadnoughts would notice that their hulls had changed considerably.

The Red Fleet continually invested in new technological and material upgrades. The fleeters spared no resources in order to apply the latest advances in both phasewater technology and hyper technology to their precious flagships.

Even if they lacked the heaven-defying upgrade that the Dominion of Man had received in the recent past, dreadnoughts such as the Throne of Lies had become much more confident in dealing with the enemy armadas than before!

Elsewhere, the antithesis of the Throne of Lies was leading the defending warships and mechs in a massive counterattack against the invading alien forces.

The Grail of Eternity utilized her extremely powerful support link technology to form brilliant golden energy links with dozens of warships and tens of thousands of mechs.

Despite providing additional boosts of power to a humongous amount of human assets, the Grail of Eternity exhibited no strain at all as she led the charge and utilized her powerful defenses to weather the initial enemy strikes.

"Charge forward! Let us kick the aliens out of this star system!"

As the aliens tried to destroy the smaller human warships, the enemies found to their dismay that the Grail of Eternity was so good at providing remote support that it was practically impossible to harm any linked vessel!

The aliens needed to bring in an ancient phase whale or a lot more warships in order to break apart the defensive network of the human dreadnought!

Elsewhere, the Guns of Armageddon dealt with the enemy more directly. She did not bother to coordinate with the local human defense forces, but boldly approached the hostile alien fleets and shattered them to pieces with an unrelenting barrage of fiery hyper energy beams!

All in all, the dreadnoughts of the Red Fleet performed so well during the start of the alien offensive that many people began to regard them in a much better light.

"I always heard that dreadnoughts suck in comparison to god mechs. I don't see that much of a difference. The RF's dreadnoughts might not be able to kill the invading aliens as fast, but they are just as invincible in doing so. It's clear that the fleeters have done their best to close the power gap by installing a lot of new technologies. If the god pilots aren't careful enough, maybe the dreadnoughts will overtake them one day!"

If the goal of the fleeters was to gain more prestige and have their dreadnoughts get taken seriously again, then they certainly succeeded!

The RA and RF working in tandem to slow down the overwhelming alien offensive certainly played a crucial role in propping up the 5 defensive bands, but it was ultimately not enough!

To the top human leaders who had access to the complete intelligence collected by many human scouts and spies, they all knew that the initial wave of attacks was just the setup.

It was the second and third wave of alien assault fleets that threatened to collapse the border regions and completely break open the interior of human-occupied space!

This was why it became more and more important to stall the initial advance by any means necessary.

Red humanity desperately needed to reduce the enormous gap in numbers!

Fortunately, there were certain individuals that had thought hard on how they could make this happen.

The Evolution Witch had a plan.

She had many plans, but one of them was especially relevant to the situation!

The leader of the Transhumanist Faction and the chief councilor of the Interim Leadership Council did not appear on the battlefield as a leader of institutions.

She showed up in her guise as one of the strongest mech pilots in the Red Ocean!

Even though she was younger than the other god pilots, she believed she could do better in reversing the tide than her other god-like peers!

She had been working on this plan months before the start of this alien offensive. Though she was burdened by many commitments, she made sure to prepare a special solution for these exact problems!

A grinning organic god mech brazenly approached a fleet of joint z zamayal and arche warships.

The biomechanical warships as well as the stealthed archships instantly ceased their assault and tried their best to disengage as fast as possible.

The native aliens all recognized the powerful human god mechs!

Unlike the other god mechs that had utilized their powerful God Kingdoms to mask their arrival, the Geneforger made no effort to hide its very strong and obvious emissions!

While the native aliens had most definitely made the correct response when faced with such a ridiculously powerful human adversary, the entire reason why the Evolution Witch did not bother to hide her traces was because running was futile!

The Geneforger might not be able to match the Radiant in pure speed, but the former's continual evolutions and assimilations had made her a lot faster than many other god mechs!

Once the god mech arrived in the middle of the fleeing and scattering alien fleets, the god-like biomech instantly took action and began to spread a huge amount of bacteria across her huge God Kingdom!

These bacteria appeared directly inside the hulls of every enemy warship within range. As for the vessels that were located further away, the Evolution Witch did not intend to let any of them escape her reach.

The Geneforger grew out numerous different organic cannons and began to fire flesh balls that delivered concentrated doses of resonance-empowered bacteria at the fleeting ships!

Soon enough, every alien vessel became infected by bacteria personally concocted by the god pilot!

"CEASE FIRE. DO NOT ATTACK THE ZZAMAYEL AND ARCHE WARSHIPS. THEY ARE MINE NOW."

Many people initially became confused when they heard the Evolution Witch's instruction, but they soon understood what she meant as the phasefighters and warships changed before their eyes!

Organic growths erupted from the hulls of the alien vessels. The zzamayal biomechanical warships mutated to the point where they became wrapped by eerie looking veins.

The arche warships all dropped out of stealth as their metallic exteriors became covered by a lesser degree of veins and tumors!

As for the phasefighters that were originally deployed to fight against human mechs, the Evolution Witch clearly did not see any value in preserving them, as they all shut down and became inert without exception!

"What... what happened?"

"The alien fighter craft have not suffered much damage on the surface. One of our teams is breaking open their cockpits. Their pilots... their pilots are gone! No, the pilots have melted into liquid organic puddles!"



Eventually, the alien vessels of both races had completed their dark transformations.

A lot of people felt chilled when they saw the enemy warships regain their activity.

They moved in coordination with each other and formed up into geometrically perfect formations!

What was important was that the warships no longer faced their bows towards the planet that they originally sought to attack.

Instead, they pointed in another direction!

Many people guessed that the Evolution Witch managed to subvert the zzamayal and arche crew members by rewiring their genes and brain chemistry somehow!

Many people couldn't help but shudder. They were lucky that the Evolution Witch was on red humanity's side!

The Geneforger glowed as its God Kingdom issued a directive to its subverted minions.

"CONVERGE WITH THE FLEETS OF OTHER RACES ASIDE FROM HUMANITY AND YOUR OWN TWO RACES. AMBUSH AND ATTACK THE ALIEN FLEETS WITHOUT RESTRAINT. DESTROY AS MANY OF THEIR WARSHIPS BEFORE YOU PERISH! SHOW THEM THE FATE OF THOSE WHO DARE TO CHALLENGE THE HUMAN RACE."

The brainwashed alien officers and crew members exhibited no resistance at all as they completely ignored their former enemies and steered their mutated alien warships to another star system that was under siege!

No one dared to say anything. No one had the guts to question whether the Evolution Witch's subversion would hold. A surprisingly small amount of people were brave enough to cheer.

This was because the Evolution Witch was too scary!

It was not for nothing that the Human Biodisaster was her alternate title!

## Chapter 6190 The Sacrifices of Ordinary People

The Red Tide Offensive struck human society hard. The imposition of martial law in the border regions and more restrictive legislation in other human-occupied regions changed the fabric of human society forever.

An oppressive air began to loom above people's heads. The time for leisure and relaxation had passed. Even the most secure star systems could not completely escape the aftermath of the alien offensive.

Only the periodic intervention of numerous god mechs and dreadnoughts served as a bright spot during the mass alien incursion.

No matter which star system they appeared in, the powerful machines displayed their absolute dominance over their alien foes and easily stopped every invasion in its tracks.

People needed hope. They invested their hope and expectations in the best of what red humanity had to offer.

Heroes rose up as well. Numerous ace mechs and other exceptional combatants performed above and beyond to hold back the unrelenting aliens and save the lives of as many humans as possible.

In this era of gods and heroes, the potential of the human race began to explode.

"Father..."

A certain teenage girl sat on her bed in her dormitory.

Aandie Ketter was enrolled in a boarding school located in the safe and prosperous Selan Middle Zone.

As a zone that fell within the sphere of influence of the Vulit Central Star Node, much of the planets had been colonized by old money originating from the Milky Way.

Ever since the Great Severing occurred, so many attempted to emigrate to the colonies in this middle zone that the colonial states couldn't handle the excessive intake!

The conditions required to settle in a good location in the Selan Middle Zone skyrocketed. Aandie's father would have never been able to get her to enroll in a good school under normal circumstances. Even the status of a linefighter only managed to get him so far. Without enough money, nothing could be done!

The girl knew that her father feared for her life if she was forced to remain in one of the more vulnerable regions such as the Krakatoa or the Torald Middle Zones.

This was why the father made the extreme decision to volunteer for a suicide mission.

The tangible and intangible rewards for serving as a noble defender of a fortified star system in the 1st defensive band was the greatest!

Allowing Aandie to become a Warchild was already enough to pave her road in transphasic alloys. Together with the pensions and additional compensation, she would have to be a fool or a spoiled idiot if she was unable to complete an elite education and work for an excellent employer!

Aandie was not a fool, and she certainly did not think of herself as spoiled. She recalled the argument she had with her father on the eve of his departure to the front.

"Why must you leave?! Why do you want to kill yourself so badly?! Can't you stay and be my father for many years more? Don't go! Just tell them you are sick or something!"

"It is already too late, sweetheart." Josh Ketter told his daughter. "I have already signed the contract with the Red Association. It is impossible to breach this agreement. From the moment I accepted this duty, my life is not my own anymore. The RA doesn't joke around."

Aandie looked aggrieved as she hugged her father. Tears spilled from her eyes as she did not want to let go. The thought that this may be the last time she would get to talk and hug her only remaining relative in the Red Ocean broke her heart!

Despite the girl's repeated pleas, the father remained unmoved.

The mech pilot kissed her daughter's head and held her tighter. "Look, even if I can nullify the contract, I won't do so. The rewards are too great. You have never entered the battlefield and fought against the native aliens. These are enemies who cannot be reasoned with. They hate us so much that they resorted to the most extreme measure of teleporting their dwarf galaxy 50 million light-years away from the Milky Way. Do you think the aliens will slack off and leave us alone after investing so much effort? There are so many more of them than us. Once they truly get serious, red humanity will be pushed to the brink. Many colonies shall fall. Only by securing a place in the rear will I be assured that you will remain safe."

Though Aandie did not want to accept it, she was smart enough to understand that her father's logic was likely sound.

From his perspective, if he did not do anything exceptional enough, both he and his daughter would perish.

By trying to maximize the value of his life by signing up for a very lucrative suicide mission, Josh Ketter essentially managed to get a lot of benefits 'for free' without paying any additional price!

As long as he was able to trade his availability as a soldier to secure a much better future for his daughter, at least one of them would be able to thrive in this new and dangerous age.

"Father..."

Aandie Ketter could feel her father's heartfelt words and emotions. No possible argument could sway him from this course of action. She had nothing more to say anymore.

"You must think that I am a terrible father for leaving you so soon." Josh said as he continually patted his daughter's back. "It was my fault for believing in all of the promises and relocating to the Red Ocean. I don't want our family to end up this way, but now that it has come to this, I am powerless to fix my mistakes. Both of us have lived in the new frontier long enough that you can hardly make anything out of yourself if you are short on money or connections. Average people like us can never rise high enough to protect our lives and secure our futures. The entire point of letting you become a Warchild is to change your own fate. As long as your status is high enough, you will not lack opportunities."

"That's the spirit." Josh smiled in satisfaction. "As long as you become a Warchild, you will be able to move to a much more developed planet and enroll in a much better school. You won't have to worry about the expensive tuition and the teachers will never dare to neglect you in order to avoid dishonoring my sacrifice. You will also gain access to better augmentations, which are crucial to getting ahead. I truly cannot wait to provide you with all of these benefits. You can only remain young for so long. Once you are a decade older, you won't have as many chances to turn your life around anymore. It would have been better if you were even younger, but then I wouldn't have been able to spend so many precious years with you. I love you, Aandie. This is why I must do this. The future belongs to the younger generation."

Tears kept welling in the daughter's eyes. "I... I won't waste the opportunities gained from your sacrifice. I promise that. I will do my best to complete my studies and earn the highest grades I can. If I can't become a mech designer, I can still become an engineer. There can never be too many engineers and technical personnel in our society."

"That's the spirit." Josh smiled in satisfaction. "As long as you become a Warchild, you will be able to move to a much more developed planet and enroll in a much better school. You won't have to worry about the expensive tuition and the teachers will never dare to neglect you in order to avoid dishonoring my sacrifice. You will also gain access to better augmentations, which are crucial to getting ahead. I truly cannot wait to provide you with all of these benefits. You can only remain young for so long. Once you are a decade older, you won't have as many chances to turn your life around anymore. It would have been better if you were even younger, but then I wouldn't have been able to spend so many precious years with you. I love you, Aandie. This is why I must do this. The future belongs to the younger generation."

His father had to leave shortly afterwards, causing Aandie to be haunted by many regrets.

Why did her father have to sacrifice his life? Why couldn't other mech pilots take his place? There were so many more mech pilots that could fight against the aliens during the offensive.

However, these were just the childish complaints of a teenage girl who had never seen the full face of the new frontier.

Aandie was already 14 years old. She had witnessed how extensively human society was stratified to a huge degree.

First-class, second-class or third-class.

Affluent or poor.

Family descendant or ordinary civilian.

It was virtually impossible for those at the lower end of the pyramid to rise high enough to gain actual control over their lives.

The daughter did not wish for this to be the case. If human society became fairer and granted more opportunities for people such as herself, then her father would never take the initiative to sign up for this suicide mission!

The girl gripped her fist, but soon let go. There was no point in raging at the unfairness of human society. She was not a politician and did not aspire to become one. Right now, she only wanted to live up to her father's greatest expectations.

Aandie could not focus on her homework this time. She was so worried for her father that she activated a projection and switched to one of the many live feeds that displayed the ongoing fighting.

The Red Two made no attempts to hide the victories and well as the losses of the Red War.

Any failures must clearly be shown to the public in order to emphasize the serious nature of this conflict. The fighting forces must also learn from each other's mistakes and improve their operations as quickly as possible.

Right now, the battle in the star system where her father had been stationed at in the past few months was not going well for the human side.

The orven assault fleets brought a lot of phasefighters and warships. Their sole siege vessel steadily eliminated the orbital space fortresses that served as the crucial anchors to the human defense network.

The amount of mechs and phasefighters circling around each other boggled Aandie's mind. She could not distinguish anything special from all of the tangled small craft.

More likely than not, her father's Fey Fianna must be there somewhere, but the live feed did not provide enough resolution and supplementary information for her to track that new machine.

"I hope you will protect my father long enough for him to enjoy a satisfying fight."

She had heard many good stories about the products of the Living Mech Corporation. Many of her fellow students at school dreamt of working for this rapidly rising firm.

This was because they could not only work in one of the most promising new mech companies in the Red Ocean, but also join a powerful clan that was already starting to break into first-class society!

If possible, Aandie wanted to apply to the Larkinson Clan as well once she graduated from her studies. The clan was responsible for releasing a more powerful mech than her father had access to. This caused her family to form a special connection to the Larkinsons.

"Is it possible?"

Aandie did not have much hope unless she enrolled in a much better school and earned much higher grades. Many people like herself harbored the same aspiration. The Living Mech Corporation was not short of talented personnel.

If Aandie remained as she was today, then she never thought that she any chance of getting employed by the LMC.

If she became a Warchild, then the story might be different. Even if she ended up falling short of meeting the strict standards of the Larkinson Clan, she could apply to work in any renowned mech company or institution.

A whole new future would open up for her soon. She only had to wait until the aliens defeated the human defenders of this distant star system. At that time, the Red Association should send a notification to her address that confirmed her elevation to a Warchild.

"Father..."

The naive part of herself wanted her father to come back alive. She wanted a god pilot to swoop in and save the day by annihilating all of the orven attackers.

However, Aandie had already checked out the map on the galactic net that tracked the sightings of every god mech and dreadnought.

None of these powerful assets were close to the star system where his father fought the last battle of his life.

"There are too few saviors..."