

Mech Touch 6881

Chapter 6881 Invasion Machine Concept

Both Ves and Gloriana grew astonished by what their son wanted to develop.

Not every boy who dreams of becoming a mech designer wanted to be able to bring out a machine that could eat entire planets!

Marvaine impishly grinned as he witnessed the reactions from his parents.

"Did you just make a joke? Oh, you naughty rascal!"

The little boy giggled as Ves playfully leaned down and tickled his son.

"I am serious, papa! I did not joke around, hihhi! I am completely serious! My ambition is not a fantasy! I can totally turn it into a reality!"

After Ves was done with tickling and cuddling his son, he finally gave Marvaine enough room to explain his strange idea.

"Designing a juggernaut is the first step." The boy spoke as he recovered from the tickling session. His attempts to appear serious caused him to look so cute! "The real change comes after turning the juggernaut into more than just a dangerous weapon of war. Everyone who sees a gigantic version of a mech will always assume that it is a powerful killing machine, but that will not apply to my juggernauts!"

That sounded interesting.

Though Ves and Gloriana both had opinions about their son's ideas, they were too curious to shoot him down. Besides, they wanted to encourage Marvaine's imagination. This was a precious quality that greatly benefited mech designers. They were proud that their son had already begun to leverage his vision towards the field of mech design.

"It sounds like you are trying to attach additional roles to your juggernauts." Ves calmly remarked. "That is normally discouraged due to cost and efficiency considerations. What is the value proposition of your products? What is so good about them that customers are willing to buy your unique take on juggernauts? Don't forget that they cost a huge amount of money, and not that many people can afford to spend them on machines that possess dubious value."

His son did not look discouraged. "I will make them all see that my juggernauts are worth it, papa. You are all used to treating mechs as part of a bigger system. A mech must not only have a mech pilot, but also a base or mothership to operate on. If it wants to move to another planet or star system, it needs to board a starship that can take it to its destination. If it gets damaged, it can only be repaired by a crew of mech technicians. What is even more stupid is that mechs are only good for combat. They are not that good at building stuff and can only rely on others to do that. What I want to make gets rid of all of that. The juggernaut will be able to do everything I have mentioned by itself!"

Gloriana raised her eyebrows. "What you are suggesting is... a bold idea, but the more functions you add to a mech, the more expensive and impractical it becomes. There are good reasons why different jobs are divided into different crews or machines. This makes it much easier to juggle different responsibilities. Everyone and everything has their own duties, and it is simple to know if a job is done well enough. If there are any problems, it can easily be addressed due to this clear division and specialization. Letting a single juggernaut fulfill every job negates all of those advantages. You are introducing a massive amount of complexity for unclear value. You need more reasons to justify your unique outlook on juggernauts."

Marvaine frowned in a cute way.

Ves reached over and tousled the boy's brown hair. "What is your dream? What is your juggernaut so be? You say you want to design more than just a war machine. Describe it. Don't just list out its functions. You need to tie it together into a cohesive vision, a story that neatly encapsulates the ideal you are trying to fulfill. That is what your mother and I want to hear. If you can make your juggernaut sound good enough in your story, then you may just be able to convince customers to purchase your expensive products in the future."

Marketing was just as important as technology in the mech industry. There were far too many mech designers in the sector that sought to overtake the competition and carve out their own places in the mech market.

If Marvaine wanted to become successful and earn his place among the ranks of truly successful mech designers, then he needed to focus his imagination and improve his salesmanship.

There was little point in designing a mech that ultimately possessed too little appeal to get sold.

"A few months ago, you told me about the World Tree Seed that we obtained from the Devos Ancient Clan." The kid spoke. "Do you remember?"

Ves nodded. "We do."

Although his children were still awfully young, Ves and Gloriana regularly kept them informed so long as they had proven their ability to keep secrets.

They wanted their children to grow up with a strong sense of responsibility and understanding of the true state of the Larkinson Clan and society as a whole. Their excellent schooling had already given them a good grasp of the context, so it was not pointless to keep them informed despite the fact that they had yet to reach their tenth birthdays.

This was one of the many factors that caused his children to mature a lot faster than their peers.

Besides, the transfer of a second-generation World Tree Seed was not a particularly sensitive secret.

The Larkinson Clan had grown strong, prestigious and trusted enough to justify the ownership of a 'weapon of mass destruction'.

Such a development would have been unimaginable during the Age of Mechs. The start of the Age of Dawn had led to a lot of changes. A private organization getting its hands on a weapon of mass destruction was not that big of a deal in the greater scheme of things.

A transfer as big as this could not be hidden from all of the major players. The only troublesome consequence was that the native aliens might find out about the World Tree Seed, thereby making it more difficult to catch them by surprise.

From the moment Marvaine brought up this minor biological wonder, Ves and Gloriana already began to connect the dots.

"Are you seriously thinking about merging the capabilities of a World Tree Seed into a juggernaut?" The mother asked.

"Why not? It will be totally awesome!" Marvaine exclaimed! "A World Tree Seed is not that big for a superweapon that can terraform an entire planet. It can do its job completely by itself if it has to. Why not combine it with a juggernaut and let a single pilot control the entire thing? If we mount a superdrive onto the combination, it can travel to other star systems all by itself! You can send this superjuggernaut to any planet and have it terraform the entire globe. It is especially good at conquering enemy planets. Instead of attacking their strongholds head-on, it can avoid enemy defenses and land on an undefended piece of territory. Once it activates its World Tree Seed functions, it can completely destroy the surface of a planet along with everything the aliens have built!"

What an aggressive vision!

Both Ves and Gloriana grew shocked by the ambitious idea!

This suggested use of a juggernaut was radically different from how everyone else used juggernauts in the past!

Back in the time when the major powers cautiously experimented with juggernauts, they always treated them as the centerpieces of greater mech forces.

"You are suggesting the use of juggernauts as a solitary self-contained system." Gloriana seriously analyzed. "By dispatching them by themselves, these terraforming juggernauts are not being dragged down by any weaker elements. This makes them surprisingly agile and easier to deploy into enemy space. As long as they can avoid particularly strong enemy forces and highly fortified planets, they can withstand the attacks of weaker defenders long enough to land on a planet and plant its roots into the planet. From the moment the juggernaut is able to tap into the resources of an entire globe, it has become invincible. Nothing can stop it from rupturing cities and growing

organic constructs that can defeat the opposing phasefighters and eventually warships in the star system."

This was scarier than a World Tree Seed!

A World Tree Seed may be devastating when planted, but it was clearly a superweapon that needed to be deployed from a strong fleet.

A juggernaut that merged the functions of a World Tree Seed did not have to rely on external support. It had enough fighting capabilities to fend off weaker attackers and could potentially overwhelm many enemies once it took root on a resource-rich planet.

The mech pilot had to be truly special in order to control such a strategic weapon. He not only had to be proficient in combat, but also master enough of the sciences relevant to geology, terraforming, construction, biotechnology and so on in order to direct the operation of the juggernaut.

Aside from that, the juggernaut also had to be completely biological in nature in order to replicate all of the major functions of a World Tree Seed.

It may be possible to realize this concept with a mechanical or cybernetic juggernaut, but it was best to keep it as simple as possible.

A fully organic juggernaut could encapsulate all of the essential functions of a juggernaut and a World Tree Seed without relying on awful kludges.

Ves spontaneously raised his finger while projecting a simplified design suite. He used his fingers to rapidly create a very loose sketch of Marvaine's astonishing juggernaut concept.

He sketched out a juggernaut that was much taller and more massive than the Otalon Sprius.

While the sketch did not demand any exact measurements, Gloriana could already imagine that it was at least 600 meters long.

The juggernaut was fully organic. Ves proposed to make it out of TE Wood, the special brand of hyper wood that was impregnated with phasewater.

The material choice was not too important. Any organic wood material would do as long as the juggernaut possessed the capabilities to regenerate and produce it by itself.

The juggernaut was armed with enough weapons to function as a warship. It also possessed enough flight and FTL travel capabilities to maneuver independently in space.

Its legs were specifically designed to punch through soil and spread its roots underground.

As Ves rapidly began to flesh out the sketch of this unusual concept, he began to refine it by adding other elements.

For example, he attached optional storage modules across the juggernaut frame that was meant to contain rare and incredibly useful exotics and hypers.

The biojuggernaut should be able to grow powerful devices at the start by drawing upon this starting pool of quality materials.

This would reduce the window of time where the planted juggernaut made itself vulnerable to counterattacks.

Another feature was the addition of passenger or crew compartments. The biojuggernaut did not necessarily need to carry additional personnel, but it would be incredibly useful if it had additional human specialists on hand that could help with directing the terraforming and production processes.

Normal-sized mechs could not afford to carry too many passengers. Doing so would cause them to compromise their performance and add disproportionately heavy burdens to their mission profiles.

The story was different for a biojuggernaut that measured at least 600 meters in length! It had enough internal and external space available to comfortably carry dozens if not a hundred soldiers and specialists!

They could not only help with managing the World Tree Seed functions of the biojuggernaut, but they could also help with controlling its various combat systems. They may also take control of any wooden mechs or warships produced by extracting the resources from a terraformed planet!

In short, the biojuggernaut originally envisioned by Marvaine had the potential to become the most potent self-contained invasion machine ever conceived by humans!

Chapter 6882 Kid at Heart

A little boy squealed and enthusiastically clapped his hands as he sat on his mother's lap.

"That's it! That's the juggernaut that I want to make! It looks so cool!"

Perhaps the sketch made by Ves did not exactly match Marvaine's vision, but it conveyed his idea so good that the differences didn't matter to the boy.

Ves had to admit that the notion of an FTL travel-capable biojuggernaut with the power to conquer entire planets — or wipe out all signs of life and civilizations on their surfaces — appealed to him in a savage manner.

This was far more power than any mech outside a god mech could ever hope to wield.

This was a complete reimagining of what mechs should be. The biojuggernaut had moved from a powerful tactical weapon into a powerful if ludicrously expensive strategic weapon.

In an ideal situation, Ves could see how the biojuggernaut could work. It was best if it could be employed against enemies that possessed vast territories, but lacked the armed forces to defend the entire stretch..

As long as the native aliens had expended much of their warships and no longer had enough left to defend all of their star systems, these biojuggernauts could easily take advantage of the gaps in the defenses and cripple large swathes of planets that were part of the enemy infrastructure.

However, as powerful as this biological terror may be, the difficulty of realizing it was too great.

"Marvaine." Ves spoke, causing his son to interrupt his little celebration. "Your idea is bold and imaginative. I like that. You are one of the few people who is brave enough to push the boundaries of what mechs are supposed to be. Far too many people insist on a narrow definition of mechs and outright refuse to open their eyes to what can be done with technology. You should try your best to hold on to this quality of yours. You will go far if you leverage your imagination in your career as a mech designer."

Marvaine beamed as Ves showered him with gentle praise.

"However, there are good reasons why not a single mech designer has made a serious attempt at realizing your vision." The father continued. "Money does not grow on trees. Our clan may be wealthy compared to many others, but we do not have the resources and infrastructure to tackle such an ambitious project. Juggernauts are enormous and require a disproportionate amount of manpower, resources and time to develop. Biojuggernauts impose even greater demands. Trying to merge organic monstrosity with a World Tree Seed raises the requirements so much that few groups have the resources and facilities that are necessary to develop such a work."

His son was not stupid. From the moment Ves pointed out the cost issue, the boy finally recognized the problem.

"Your father is right, my boy." Gloriana said. "A mech concept that is powerful but prohibitively expensive and difficult to make is not a viable product. It is a wish fulfillment fantasy. World Tree Seeds are weapons of mass destruction that cannot be produced through conventional means. Trying to grow them is costly and difficult. Attempting to combine them with biojuggernauts introduces so much complexity that our clan simply cannot realize this vision of yours. As a Mekanos designer, you should understand that more complicated Mekanos are more difficult to build. The same applies to real mechs."

Marvaine grew glum when his mother criticized his idea. "I thought it would be okay since our clan has already grown so much. Won't it be bigger a few decades from now?"

His mother shook her head. "You should learn how to walk before you learn how to run. A concept as ambitious as yours is what mech designers only dare to tackle when

they are already Master Mech Designers or Star Designers. Until you have reached that point, it is better if you confine your ambitions to more modest targets. It is already extravagant enough for you to invest your time in developing ordinary juggernauts. Your father and I are still willing to support you if you want to specialize in juggernaut design, but we cannot guarantee it. Our society needs to remain strong and our clan must have a solid foothold in it to support your ambitious and costly endeavor."

As much as Gloriana liked to spend her time on designing quasi-first-class or first-class mechs, even she started off with designing more modest products.

Every mech designer needed to know the limits first.

It was not a good idea to give a mech designer an unlimited budget and access to every luxurious facility imaginable.

The mech designer needed to earn the right to tackle greater projects.

Marvaine looked glum. "So if I want to design juggernauts, I have to design the more basic ones first?"

"Not if I have anything to say about it." Ves responded. "You need to learn how to design mechs before you tackle their bigger cousins. Becoming proficient in mech design will teach you to be more frugal in using up the capacity of a machine. Only when you have become accustomed to treating every spare capacity with respect will you be ready to design a juggernaut. You should start off at a relatively modest size before gradually working your way up. Designing a juggernaut that is half a kilometer tall is too big of a design project for you to tackle right at the start."

This should be the proper trajectory to becoming proficient in juggernaut design. If Marvaine skipped out on mech design and worked on juggernauts directly, then he would miss out on way too many necessary lessons related to good design.

Juggernauts were large and massive. They could tolerate a lot more mistakes and shortcomings than smaller and flimsier mechs. They were bad choices to start with as a mech designer would learn plenty of bad habits while working on these giant machines.

Ves and Gloriana continued to cuddle with their son while gently guiding his thoughts and ambitions.

Much of their original plans for their children went into flux as red humanity continued to undergo a lot of upheaval.

The parents deeply hoped that a semblance of human civilization would still be able to survive the alien aggression. It would be much harder for Marvaine to become a qualified mech designer when the mech community had collapsed.

After Marvaine grew tired, his father and mother put him to bed.

Their minds remained fixated on the extravagant juggernaut concept proposed by their son.

"You are still thinking about it." Gloriana stated as she stared at her husband.

Both of them had retired to a living room on the upper floor. The windows granted them a good view of Diandi Base and the surrounding plains and forest beneath the night sky.

As Ves looked up in the stars lighting up the night, he wondered which ones were currently under siege by the native aliens.

With each passing night, a handful of stars may have fallen into enemy hands. The alien invaders would soon move on and threaten other stars.

A future might come to pass where almost every single star in the night sky had either been razed into ruin or completely come under the possession of the native alien races.

Ves obviously did not want such a future to come to pass. He needed to work hard in order to help red humanity survive the current crisis, but he was not sure whether regular measures could make enough of a difference.

That was why he had turned his attention to more unusual ideas.

"While Marvaine is rather silly for thinking that he can fully realize his terraforming biojuggernaut concept by himself, it is not as difficult to transform a World Tree Seed into such a machine. The resources are already in place and the hardest part is already over. We just need to find a way to turn it into a functional biojuggernaut without losing all of its original capabilities."

"..."

"What is it, Gloriana?"

"Are you serious? Are you truly thinking about converting a weapon of mass destruction into a pilotable biomachine?"

Ves smiled back. "It may sound a little dubious when you mention it like that, but it is not as crazy as it sounds. The Larkinson Biotech Institute has been struggling in their attempts to figure out the second-generation World Tree Seed that is in our possession. The biotech researchers are still too far away from trying to convert it into a more sustainable seed that doesn't degrade with every use. If we can't achieve our goal through conventional means, then maybe we will have better luck when resorting to unconventional means."

His wife thought for a moment. She soon deduced what Ves had in mind.

"You want to convert the World Tree Seed into a living 'mech'." She guessed. "You want to do this because a sentient World Tree Seed has unparalleled control over its incredibly complicated internal structure. A living seed not only has the power to understand its own condition, but it also has the ego that is needed to defy its original programming and change itself to prioritize self-preservation. If you can truly convert it into a functional biojuggernaut, then it will be able to enjoy all of the advantages of being a World Tree Seed while also possessing the ability to grow and evolve."

Ves grinned. "All of that sounds great, right? Why not try to convert it into a living biojuggernaut? If we have this wonder weapon in our possession, we can conquer any hostile star system! Better yet, we can convert the resources of a planet that was previously occupied by enemy aliens to produce enough forces to launch attacks to all neighboring star systems!"

"...You are just as silly and childish as our son, do you know that? Marvaine clearly inherited his madness from you. Have you forgotten about the speeches we made about the impractical nature of his idea? You are making the exact same mistake! At least our son can excuse his shortcomings due to his young and tender age. You are not allowed to resort to the same excuse!"

Ves crossed his arms. "I am not being unrealistic, honey. I understand your skepticism, but you need to follow the same advice that you have given our son. What is real and possible is much wider than you think. Even if we don't have a thorough understanding of the World Tree Seed, I still think it is within our means to convert it into a biojuggernaut of sorts. Everything will work out so long as I can complete the crucial transformation into a living biomachine. At worst, we can rely on external assistance to complete this transformation."

He could still offer plenty of concessions to the Devos Ancient Clan. He could also approach the Streon Ancient Clan for assistance.

The Red Association should also be willing to assist. He still had a few precious favors in reserve that allowed him to make 'minor' requests to Star Designers. Even if none of them specialized in biotechnology, they should still know enough to provide valuable help in converting a World Tree Seed into a biojuggernaut.

However, Ves would not be able to claim credit for such an accomplishment. He wanted to turn this wonder weapon into his own creation, but doing so required him to complete the most essential technological breakthroughs by himself.

A part of him felt that he needed this. Depending on outside help was okay, but if he wanted to reap the greatest benefits, he had to treat this like a personal passion project. Only by doing this properly would he be able to reap the greatest rewards.

Seeing how Ves still remained serious about this idea, his wife let out an exasperated breath.

"...You truly are a kid at heart."

"I view that as a compliment rather than an insult."

"That is the exact opposite of what I want."

Chapter 6883 Fully Superdimensional

As much as Ves wanted to resume his engagement into the ambitious transformation of the World Tree Seed, it was not realistic for him to tackle it right away.

He did not have enough time to spare on a project as big as this. He was finally beginning to pick up steam in the Arboreal Project.

The advent of the first true mass production version of an Elemental Carmine mech held great significance to Ves.

His design philosophy would definitely make a lot of strides if he successfully completed this project according to his vision.

He also held a lot of interest in collaborating with Gloriana on a pair of fine machines.

The Riot Mark III Project and the Promethea Mark II Project both demanded a great amount of commitment.

He cared a lot about the living mechs based on these upgrade projects, so it was best not to divert his attention to a new passion project.

Aside from that, he also had to spend his time on other obligations such as helping the Saint Commander organize the Premier Fleet and fulfill his duties as the chief council of the Upper Council of the Red Collective.

He also needed to be prepared to divert much of his time to respond to any unanticipated emergencies.

War had a habit of surprising many people and upending a lot of plans. Ves was not stupid enough to assume that everything would proceed as he anticipated.

With all of this in mind, it was simply the wrong period of time to follow up on Marvaine's idea.

Ves let out a regretful sigh before reluctantly chose to set this matter aside. He would not forget about it, but it was best if he waited for a more opportune window of time to attempt a transformation of the second-generation World Tree Seed.

Fortunately, a new development took place that completely diverted his attention from the fantasy of creating a biological wonder weapon.

A fast courier vessel finally delivered the First Sword Mark III and her famous ace pilot to New Constantinople VIII.

The arrival of this powerful pairing generated a notable amount of buzz among high society.

It was not a secret that Swordmaster Ketis had successfully designed and fabricated the first full superdimensional mech of the Larkinson Clan.

The Mech Supremacist Faction proudly announced this fact through their own channels. It had always prided itself on developing the strongest mechs, and its involvement in the making of the First Sword Mark III was undeniably essential.

While the contributions of Ketis to the First Sword Mark III Project could not be denied, much of the high technology that amplified the ace mech's strengths originated from a selection of the best and most cutting-edge design applications of the Red Association.

Therefore, it was not wrong to label the First Sword Mark III as a signature work of both the Larkinson Clan and the Red Association.

Now, the First Sword Mark III was finally at Ves' disposal.

He had been looking forward to this moment for a long time.

A large greeting party had formed up around the landing zone where the courier vessel was scheduled to arrive.

Ves, his wife and their children all stood together while surrounded by their Apocalypse Warden bodyguards.

Not that there was much point to the added protection. The first Larkinson superdimensional ace mech possessed so much power that it could probably chop up the entirety of Diandi Base without expending any effort!

Even if the Saint Commander piloted the Minerva Mark II and prepared the defenses as much as possible, she still wouldn't be able to make a difference!

Ves believed it was completely beyond any single junior ace pilot to threaten the First Sword Mark III.

Perhaps certain senior ace pilots might be able to rely on their reality-defying abilities to escape or even fight back against the ace swordsman mech, but they faced an uphill battle if they wanted to resist the Decapitator's edge or penetrate the First Sword's insanely resilient armor plating.

The base performance of armor-grade and weapon-grade superdimensional armor was already formidable. Adding true resonance amplification on top of that increased their performance to ridiculous heights!

Even a relatively fresh junior ace pilot such as Saint Dise could easily turn her superdimensional machine into an impregnable and inviolable machine when fighting against her peers!

The advantages she gained was so unfair that almost every mech pilot in the Red Ocean must feel envious beyond all regard that she possessed such a close and intimate relationship with the swordmaster who earned the blessing of the Heavensword.

Even before the First Sword Mark III emerged from the courier vessel's compact cargo bay, the surrounding Larkinsons and allies could already feel the razor-sharp presence of the superdimensional ace mech.

Each of them momentarily felt as if the blade of an infinitely sharp sword was pressed against their necks.

This was a vague and illusionary sensation, but it was one that evoked such a fatal threat that nobody could remain calm.

Fortunately, none of the gathered people consisted of enemies against Dise, Ketis or the Larkinson Clan.

Even if a spy successfully managed to infiltrate Diandi Base, Saint Commander Casella and the Minerva Mark II would have been able to root them out a long time ago with the help of their Command Field.

Everyone present was friendly, so Saint Dise's domain quickly lost its lethality.

While it still retained an uncomfortable degree of sharpness, Dise at least turned its edge away from everyone's necks, thereby making them feel less threatened.

Fortunately, many of the gathered people already knew what to expect. They did not really take it in strides that Saint Dise literally possessed the power to cut off their heads all at once if she so chose.

Ves smiled wryly as he reflexively rubbed his neck.

A human phase lord like himself wouldn't go down so easily, especially since he was carrying a super-class personal shield generator.

Yet even he wouldn't stand a chance if the First Sword Mark III moved beyond utilizing her Saint Kingdom and attempted to cut off his head directly with one of her many physical blades.

"Look! The First Sword has emerged!"

"Wow."

"So many blades."

Everyone quickly forgot about how easily the ace mech could have snuffed out their lives and soon began to admire the amazing craftsmanship of the legendary swordmaster and her Mech Supremacist collaborators.

Sleek.

The first word that came to mind when the First Sword emerged was sleek. Despite the insane engineering put into the machine, the ace swordsman mech maintained a somewhat slender and compact profile.

This not only minimized the use of armor-grade superdimensional matter, but also kept the machine light and maneuverable.

The shiny and reflective gunmetal gray surface conveyed a strong impression of inviolability, yet also remained thin enough to maintain a sleek impression.

It would have been so easy for Ketis to make the design choice to turn the First Sword Mark III into a brawler rather than a dancer. The switch would have allowed Saint Dise to fight a lot more aggressively and make a lot of mistakes without suffering any serious consequences.

However, Ketis instead chose to stick to her original vision for the First Sword. The application of armor-grade superdimensional alloy remained fairly thin and frugal. Even if it offered the ace mech excellent protection, the buffer was not as great as it could have been.

This meant that the ace swordsman mech still had to remain sharp and on her toes. She needed to fight with caution and always resort to evasion rather than resistance whenever possible.

If any attack managed to strike the frame of the First Sword Mark III, then the powerhouse had already failed.

That combination of sleekness and insanely good armor presented a package of pseudo-invincibility.

Few people could ever imagine the First Sword Mark III getting damaged. They all knew that Saint Dise was the second-best evasion artist after Saint Tusa.

While no one could beat the Dark Zephyr Mark III in terms of mobility and maneuverability, Ketis and her design team clearly sought to make the First Sword Mark III a respectable second best!

This was not the ace swordsman mech's greatest strength.

Instead, the Decapitator won that distinction.

Although the First Sword Mark III was accompanied by over 33 additional swords, only her original one exuded the greatest amount of lethality.

The Decapitator held in the ace mech's hands was long, hard and sharp to a nearly impossible degree.

Just trying to examine it was enough to give people a headache! Their eyes felt as if they were about to split apart if they concentrated too closely at the masterwork mech greatsword!

The Decapitator had clearly been reforged into a full weapon-grade superdimensional weapon.

It was one of the first of its kind, but Ketis and the mechers had certainly outdone themselves.

The Decapitator still retained much of the contours and shape of the original mech greatsword, but it had also received countless improvements and optimizations.

The blade had certainly become much shinier. The alloys that made up the exterior of the lengthy weapon happened to be even shinier and more reflective than the exterior of the ace mech.

Ves already knew that the Decapitator incorporated an updated superdimensional resonating alloy especially designed by the Resonance Smith.

Even if it had been a slight effort on the part of the Star Designer, it was still significant for him to upgrade one of his existing products for a privately-owned superdimensional ace mech!

This new superdimensional resonating alloy was one of the reasons why few people could concentrate their attention onto the Decapitator without feeling as if they were pressing themselves against its razor-sharp blade.

"How wonderful." Gloriana spoke as she obsessed over the weapon. "The Decapitator has become a weapon that rivals or even exceeds the tier 3 Destroyer spear in terms of lethality. They both have their own strong points, but I cannot help but feel that the greatsword has gained a definite edge over the competition."

Ves nodded his head. "I feel the same way. Superdimensional alloy plays on a completely different level. The only shortcoming is that it lacks the activity of Destroyer particles."

There were certain traits about Destroyer weapons that gave them an advantage over superdimensional weapons, but as far as killing power was concerned, the latter scored better.

Properly made superdimensional weapons posed no threat against their own wielders. Outside of clumsy accidents, there was no way the weapons would attempt to backlash against their own wielders.

That alone placed superdimensional weapons above Destroyer weapons.

The weapons that had become part of a new trend were also much better optimized to fight against the main opposition of the human race.

Practically every alien warship and phase leader relied heavily on transphasic defenses to resist a huge amount of attacks.

A high-grade superdimensional weapon could cut straight through most azure energy shields and spatial barriers as if they were made out of paper!

No transphasic armor or phasewater-infused flesh could offer any resistance against the impossible sharpness of a weapon like the Decapitator.

In contrast, Destroyer weapons still had to overload the capacities of energy barriers by relying on the damaging effects of Destroyer particles.

Even if these highly concentrated particles could make short work of most defenses, the delays were still significant enough to slow down wielders like the Dark Zephyr Mark III.

Yet as much as the Decapitator captivated the imagination of many spectators, most of the gathered people ultimately ended up admiring the blades that hovered behind the Dark Zephyr Mark III.

The courier vessel had to be a little larger than usual in order to transport all of the accompanying sword fey.

Now, these living blades proudly emerged from the cramped cargo bay and spread behind the First Sword Mark III in a fan shape.

It was as if the ace mech had become a metal peacock!

33 superdimensional sword fey resonated with the ace pilot, causing them to glow and convey a collective sense of power that reminded many Larkinsons of battle formations.

"Wow."

Many people became speechless. They had no way to articulate how they felt about the First Sword Mark III's conversion into a drone mech.

Chapter 6884 Too Sharp

After the First Sword Mark III appeared in front of the members of the Premier Branch for the first time, the machine soon disappeared from their views as she entered one of the underground hangar bays.

Interest in the new ace mech remained high.

The First Sword Mark III completely overshadowed the Minerva Mark II.

It couldn't be helped. Both were exquisite first-class ace mechs, but one of them was clearly on a higher level in terms of material composition and performance.

While the Minerva Mark II clearly held an advantage in synergy with other armed forces and could easily wipe out large swathes of enemy cannon fodder, the First Sword Mark III was undeniably unparalleled in single combat power!

The Decapitator alone was responsible for elevating the ace swordsman mech's lethality to the stars, but even without this exceptional weapon, the living machine still had access to 33 hull-grade superdimensional sword fey!

The First Sword would never run out of blades to cut her opponents into pieces!

Ketis had taken a considerable risk when she chose to branch out the First Sword into a drone mech, but Ves knew without a shadow of a doubt that the conversion had been successful.

The way the sword fey responded to Saint Dise and how closely the First Sword was tied to her numerous subordinate spirits was frankly beautiful.

The process of partially splitting them off and breathing life into them was painful and tedious.

Ketis was unable to perform this process herself. It had been necessary for Ves to briefly descend into the Everchanger and perform this delicate and dangerous process repeatedly.

It was one of the most challenging processes that Ves pulled off. It was easy to create a 'companion spirit' for the First Sword, but to do so 33 times in a row was an unprecedented feat!

The living mech had been strengthened far beyond most third order living mechs, but even she was not able to bear the burden of having her soul split so many times!

Even if the subordinate spirits only comprised a fraction of her formidable spiritual foundation, the damage inflicted by this painful process was extensive.

If the First Sword was not a living mech that had repeatedly been baptized by the willpower and breakthrough energies of an ace pilot, its personality and sense of self would have shattered due to the repeated splitting!

The living mech still bore the invisible scars of the procedure. The only consolation was that the willpower baptism that she received from getting piloted by her battle partner significantly accelerated her recovery. She would eventually become whole again, though it may take a few months or even years.

As far as Ves and most people were concerned, it was all worth it. The sacrifice was great, but the outcome was magnificent.

From the initial introduction of the First Sword Mark III, nobody could keep their eyes off the new and splendid sword fey.

They all looked like mech swords that just happened to possess the ability to move by themselves.

Each of them were not only governed by advanced flight and control systems, but the subordinate spirits that inhabited handmade spurs each granted them the spark of life.

It was not obvious to most people, but those who piloting living mechs could see it clear as day.

Every sword fey possessed its own mind and personality. Each of them were like young children that were curious about their newfound lives.

The First Sword was not strict on them outside of a combat environment. She gave her 'children' a small amount of leeway to move as they wanted.

Of course, she was not stupid enough to extend the leash too much. Newborn spirits or not, the sword fey were still deadly superdimensional weapons that could easily cut through walls and human bodies alike!

Soon after the arrival of Saint Dise and the First Sword Mark III, Ves and the others immediately wanted to test their performance.

This was a big deal. Everyone wanted to know the power of the new ace mech that was designed in a very different way from the Minerva Mark II.

In order to prevent any unfortunate accidents from occurring, the testing session directly took place in space.

The Bluejay Fleet and elements of the Premier Fleet both moved to the same section of the asteroid belt as before.

The Devosans had made sure to drive away any human presence from the entire space area that did not belong. They also dispatched a small contingent of forces which also happened to include the Wind of Destruction and his powerful Black Lord.

The First Sword Mark III had already gone through a series of tests shortly after her upgrade, so Ves and Gloriana did not bother to repeat the basic movement tests.

They instead started off with the most direct attack power tests.

"Let us start with examining the offensive power of your sword fey." Gloriana transmitted to the cockpit of the ace mech. "We shall try to test the cutting power of one of your regular fey onto different defenses without the amplification of your true resonance. Once we have established a baseline, we will bring your Saint Kingdom into the mix."

In order to test the performance of a sword fey without the amplification of true resonance, the First Sword had to withdraw the subordinate spirit from the spur before sending it well outside of the Saint Kingdom.

This caused the sword fey to turn back into its most original form, which was just an empty husk. This was its most vulnerable state. Enemies could potentially steal or

even damage the superdimensional blade given that it was primarily made out of hull-grade superdimensional matter.

In order to account for potential losses, Ketis already promised to forge additional sword fey.

The use of mid-grade superdimensional matter was a deliberate design choice and caused the physical forms of the sword fey to become disposable. Saint Dise did not have to be too cautious about their use because she would soon have plenty of replacement units within reach.

"Please commence the first cutting test." Ketis instructed.

They did not bother to test the sharpness of the sword fey onto light and thin materials.

The Larkinsons instead decided to put up a target bot that was primarily shaped as a block of archemetal.

Gloriana had especially fabricated this target bot out of the spare materials used to make the Minerva!

Although they were originally reserved for future repairs, Gloriana couldn't help herself. She was ready to sacrifice the precious high-grade exotics and hypers if that was what it took to find out how well a superdimensional weapon could damage the Minerva Mark II.

"Please commence."

The sword fey gently swung its blade through the archemetal target dummy.

The good news was that the blade did not cut through the archemetal like a hot knife through butter.

The bad news was that it only took a moderate amount of force and effort to slice the dummy in half.

"..."

"That is pretty good performance for a weapon made out of mid-grade superdimensional alloy." Ves commented. "Don't forget that Ketis specializes in enhancing the sharpness of the weapons she makes. Her specialization synergizes extremely well with a material that is naturally conducive to penetrating solid matter."

They continued to test the sword fey's performance against different targets.

Solid plating, modular plating and so on all got cut in half under various different circumstances.

The performance of the 'disposable' sword fey was insane. Its superdimensional characteristics were so formidable that its performance already exceeded the previous iteration of the Decapitator!

That was a masterwork mech sword that Ketis had carefully developed years ago for peak performance!

Now, just one of the 34 blades in the First Sword's possession could easily surpass it in terms of sharpness and lethality!

None of the armor could stand a chance against the superdimensional blade. They all got cut in half with disturbing ease. The amplification from the true resonance of a junior ace pilot was already enough to cut through the hardest alloys that the Larkinson Clan had in possession!

"Casella, we need your help. Please empower the target dummies with your true resonance."

"I will try my best."

The performance of the resonance-empowered sword fey finally went back to more reasonable levels when attempting to cut apart Enfeoffed battle bots.

The Viscount-level fake mechs were all made out of materials that wouldn't look out of place in a first-class multipurpose mech, yet the sword fey still managed to cut it from top to bottom after applying a moderate amount of force.

This was a predicted outcome. In a contest between Casella and Dise, the latter would always lose.

The former's inability to concentrate her true resonance was a big weakness when fighting against strong enemies such as other ace mechs.

If the performance of a mere 'expendable' superdimensional sword fey was already so exaggerated, then the cutting power of the Decapitator was in an entirely different league.

Made out of alloys that included a high proportion of weapon-grade superdimensional matter, the Decapitator was able to cut through all forms of energy shields and matter alike.

Not even capital ship-grade azure energy shields could resist the Decapitator for long. No matter whether they came in single layers or multiple layers, the mech greatsword cut through all of them as if they were made out of foam.

Adding true resonance of the mix became overkill. Even meters thick transphasic hyper alloy plating became as loose as air in front of the unnaturally sharp superdimensional edge!

What was even more exaggerated was that the Decapitator incorporated a literal cutting-edge ace mech-grade resonating material that could amplify its lethality even further!

"Megablade." The ace pilot's unnaturally empowered voice announced over the communication channel. "Clear the way and do not approach."

When the First Sword Mark III lifted up her greatsword, the entire surface of the Decapitator began to glow in metallic silver.

This glowing shape soon began to grow and expand until it reached a length that was easily at least an order of magnitude longer and thicker than the original blade!

When Saint Dise tried to increase the size of this 'Megablade', she clearly struggled to do so. It appeared her resonance strength could only increase the reach of her Decapitator by so much.

"Cut."

The First Sword chopped down the enormous Megablade onto not one, but two asteroids that happened to be floating in close proximity to each other.

The Megablade cut cleanly through their structure. Even if the asteroids were much softer than any form of structural armor plating, seeing these two large objects getting cut apart as if they had been separated from each other on a molecular level was unnatural.

"..."

"...Only gods can replicate this feat." Gloriana uttered with amazement in her eyes.

The Minerva Mark II was capable of performing plenty of game changing miracles, but the First Sword Mark III's simple but incredibly domineering demonstration of lethality was on a different league!

The mech greatsword began to glow in silver again, but instead of spreading out to form the largest possible energy blade, the resonance-empowered energies instead tried to concentrate inside the physical blade itself.

Due to the superdimensional properties of this weapon, it was able to hold energy far in excess of any non-superdimensional weapon of the same proportions!

Saint Dise concentrated so much willpower and true resonance into enhancing the strength and sharpness of her Decapitator that it looked as if it gained the power to decapitate True Gods!

The insanity of what was taking place in the field became so much that the Decapitator even began to cause unintentional harm on a conceptual level!

"Ahh! My eyes!"

"Don't look at it directly!"

"Abort the test! Initiate emergency shutdown on all sensor systems! Whatever you do, don't look at the First Sword Mark III!"

Chapter 6885 Sharp Observations

The testing session had to be aborted before they had a chance to try out the fun stuff.

It couldn't be helped. The First Sword Mark III's activation of the Decapitation Mode resonating ability proved too much for the observers.

How could Ves know that enhancing the sharpness of the Decapitator to a height never seen before could actually cut people just by looking at the unnaturally sharpened blade?

Ves did not hesitate to pull the plug. From the moment the new ace swordsman mech posed a threat to Larkinsons and other friendlies, it became irresponsible to continue with the testing session.

An hour had passed since then. Everyone who became adversely affected by the unexpected attack had all undergone medical examinations. The First Sword Mark III had also returned to the Tarrasque. The Larkinsons subjected the machine to a thorough examination in order to make sure that she had not become tainted by foreign influences.

Ves proceeded to call a meeting in order to discuss the findings that people had gathered from the earlier phenomena.

"Alright." He said. "We need information. We are dealing with a mech that is made out of materials that we have never used before. Their qualities are exceptional, but we don't know much about what superdimensional matter can actually do. It is therefore vital that we pull back the curtain and figure it out as best as possible. Gloriana, you first."

The woman looked serious as she presented her own findings.

"The clansmen that have become adversely affected by the First Sword Mark III have not sustained severe injuries. At most, their eyes received different levels of strain. Their psychological torment is greater than their physical torment. Most of them will recover after a good night's sleep. Curiously enough, the people who have received the greatest amount of hurt and distress appear to be those whose attainments in systematic cultivation are weaker relative to others. Those with stronger minds and spirits have been able to withstand the sight much better."

That caused the small gathering to look relieved.

"That is good to hear." Ves smiled. "Could the damage have been greater to those who are vulnerable to the sight of the Decapitator's unnatural sharpness?"

"Perhaps." His wife shrugged. "I cannot say. I imagine that the pain inflicted from staring too closely at the Decapitator under those circumstances would have deterred most people from continuing to stare."

The situation was not as bad as people feared.

"Have you thought of any countermeasures to prevent this remote blinding effect from occurring in the future?"

His wife nodded. "We have already conducted a few quick trials with the First Sword Mark III in private. Direct observation with one's own eyeballs remains dangerous, but observation through optical sensors can easily be proofed against this blinding effect by implementing a purpose-built filter that deliberately lowers the resolution of the Decapitator when it is highly concentrated with true resonance."

The simplistic solution prompted Ves to raise his eyebrow.

"That's it? Just making the sword look blurry on the projected footage is enough to make it safe to watch?"

"Yes. Do not ask me why this is so. I cannot give you an explanation that fits within our existing theoretical frameworks. I can only tell you that the filter works for those who are weakest in mind and spirit."

The Larkinsons would just have to settle for this solution, then. It would certainly be a nasty surprise against enemies who were unprepared to encounter this kind of issue, but the problem was that it would also affect friendly human forces that had not been warned about it in advance.

Oh well.

The best the Larkinsons could do was to transmit warnings to other groups of humans as early as possible. If they kept watching the First Sword Mark III without activating any filters, then that was their fault. The clan had already done its due diligence by that time.

"Dise." Ves turned towards the ace pilot who remained quiet and contemplative since the start of the meeting. "Was this the first time you activated this Decapitation Mode?"

The ace pilot whose Saint Kingdom still made them feel as if they were swimming in a pool filled with razors shook her head.

"No. I activated it before, but only in front of Ketis and the Master Mech Designers she collaborated with. It was a private showing that did not include anyone weak. My mastery and familiarity with my upgraded mech and sword was also not as great as now. I am able to resonate much better with SuperSunder Metal than before."

That tentatively proved that the cause of the blinding effect was activating the Decapitation Mode resonating ability at a high enough intensity.

She had essentially made her superdimensional weapon so sharp that it broke a physical boundary and started to cut at people through a metaphysical channel.

Ves could only scratch his head if he wanted to explain how resonating with a superdimensional sword generated such an exaggerated response.

He decided to set this little mystery aside. It was not necessary for the Larkinsons to get to the bottom of this. Implementing the filter should be enough. Almost no one observed space battles with their naked eyes. They would hardly be able to see anything if they tried to spectate a battle taking place across hundreds or thousands of kilometers in the observatory chamber of a starship.

The solution devised by Gloriana should be safe enough. Perhaps the only instance where people truly needed to take special precautions was if the First Sword Mark III ended up in a dueling arena in front of live spectators.

It was impossible for such a scenario to take place. Ace mechs were far too destructive. No mech arena could contain their destructive might. Their Saint Kingdoms alone could already penetrate most barriers.

The meeting resumed.

Now that they addressed the most acute issue, they spoke about other matters.

"I don't see any further point in testing the First Sword Mark III's performance against energy shields or physical obstacles. Her swords will just cut through them no matter what. The only difference is how much force the mech has to exert to push the superdimensional blade through." Ves stated.

Everyone else nodded. The earlier tests had provided more than conclusive results. The First Sword Mark III completely broke the boundaries of what people thought was possible for a junior ace mech.

"Superdimensional tech breaks the balance." Gloriana couldn't help but remark. "As long as there is enough mid to high-grade superdimensional matter, applying it to a mech on a large scale artificially raises its performance at least an entire level as far as I am concerned. A superdimensional standard mech can rival an expert mech in offensive and defensive performance. A superdimensional expert mech can threaten a junior ace mech. A superdimensional junior ace mech already possesses comparable lethality to a senior ace mech. As for a superdimensional senior ace mech..."

Her voice faltered at that point.

Everyone knew why she did not dare to finish her last sentence.

It was too ridiculous to claim without any empirical proof that a superdimensional senior ace mech could actually rival a god mech in any way.

Nobody dared to make any careless claims in this regard. They could not afford to challenge the primacy of god mechs and end up getting it wrong.

Fortunately, no one had any interest in pressing the matter. God mechs were way beyond their purview.

As the meeting continued, Ves eventually turned towards the only guest in the chamber.

"Master Devos." He addressed the Terran Master Mech Designer. "Would you like to share any insights on the First Sword Mark III's performance up to this point?"

The older woman smiled. "Your ace swordsman mech is a strong machine, so much so that her very existence is forcing everyone to reevaluate the strength of your clan. The addition of a junior ace mech does not change the equation all that much. What does change our evaluation is the fact that your superdimensional junior ace mech presents a serious threat against some — but not all — senior ace mechs."

That did not sound too surprising. Ves already thought this would be the case.

"What does your resident ace pilot think about our latest ace mech?"

"He is... I would not say apprehensive, but certainly more vigilant towards the threat posed by your First Sword." Master Laila Rebecca Devos responded in a serious tone. "The exceptional lethality of this machine at close range necessitates changes to his tactical approach towards a duel. Mind you, the Wind of Destruction still remains confident he can gain the upper hand in a fight with no restrictions. He only believes that he will face an uphill battle if his Dark Lord is forced to engage the First Sword Mark III at close range."

The Black Lord happened to be a fairly suboptimal matchup against the First Sword Mark III.

The former was a multipurpose ace mech that nonetheless placed a lot of emphasis on swordsmanship.

The latter's superdimensional armaments enabled her to punch far above her weight at close range.

This would force the Wind of Destruction to restrain himself from letting his ego dictate his actions. He needed to fight smart and make use of his ace multipurpose mech's ranged armaments as much as possible.

It was not an approach that the Terran ace pilot would be comfortable with, but if he valued the mission over his pride, then he should do what was necessary.

"Is the Wind of Destruction still interested in sparring against Saint Dise?" Ves inquired.

The Master Mech Designer smiled. "He should. It will take more than a superdimensional junior ace mech to deprive him of his courage. He considers this spar as a necessary challenge. Superdimensional tech will gradually become more prevalent among high-ranking mechs, so it is better if he is able to gain experience with fighting against them sooner rather than later. It is also good practice for fighting against phase lords armed with Saint Piercer arms."

That fell within Ves' expectations. The Wind of Destruction was over 260 years old. While he was not considered talented enough to be regarded as a god pilot candidate, his hard work over so many years still turned him into an extremely solid senior ace pilot. He would never cower from this challenge.

"Dise?"

The ace pilot's willpower and fighting intent quietly surged from the moment they talked about the Wind of Destruction.

She may be new and underdeveloped as a Saint, but she did not fear a confrontation against a well-established senior ace pilot.

Saint Dise could not deny that her willpower and personal strengths were far inferior to that of her older Terran counterpart, but she had complete faith in the power of Ketis' latest masterwork!

The First Sword was one of the first full high-grade superdimensional mechs to exist!

The ace pilot took a lot of pride in that. She also felt she assumed the obligation to represent the might and prestige of superdimensional mechs against any challengers.

Just as the Wind of Destruction could not allow himself to step back against a revolutionary new ace mech, Saint Dise could not afford to admit defeat to her senior before a fight had even begun!

"Let's schedule the sparring session for tomorrow if there are no objections." Ves proposed. "We should make additional preparations to ensure that the two highly lethal ace mechs cannot threaten any lives or expensive assets. We should also expand the list of conditions to include additional restrictions for the purpose of avoiding any unfortunate accidents. Both ace pilots must hold back to an extent. We cannot afford to let them pummel each other into pieces during a time of war."

"Agreed." Master Laila Devos simply replied.

The purpose of the upcoming practice duel was to gather more relevant information on the performance of a superdimensional ace mech.

The other goal of this high-level sparring session was to allow both ace pilots to accrue valuable combat experience.

Chapter 6886 Superdimensional Musings

Everyone looked forward to observing the upcoming sparring session between Saint Dise Larkinson and Saint Alessandro Devos, otherwise known as the Wind of Destruction.

The matchup between them should be interesting to say the least.

The disparity between ace pilots was obvious. No one could dispute that Saint Dise was younger, weaker and less experienced.

However, most people considered the First Sword Mark III to be a superior machine relative to the Black Lord.

That did not necessarily mean the Black Lord was weak. The Devos Ancient Clan was still one of the ruling powers of the Terran Alliance. It had persisted for thousands of years and accumulated a lot of wealth and power. It mastered many of the high technologies that made the Terrans competitive against the other major powers.

The Black Lord encapsulated a small proportion of the best tech and materials accessible to the Devosans. Master Laila Devos most definitely leveraged her specialization to stuff a lot of nifty tech inside its robust and intimidating mech frame.

Even without any hint of superdimensional tech, the Black Lord deserved the same amount of respect as any other senior ace mech.

Therefore, few people believed that Saint Dise could win this highly anticipated bout. The real competition was how long she could last and how well she was able to hold up against her adversary's onslaught.

Even if defeat was a foregone conclusion, the First Sword Mark III could still earn a lot of respect by showcasing how well her superdimensional tech fared against a superior opponent.

The next day couldn't arrive soon enough.

The Larkinson Clan and the Devos Ancient Clan carefully prepared the selected sparring grounds in space to maximize safety and information gathering.

Many different groups wanted to know how the first full superdimensional mech fared against a formidable opponent.

Everyone had a vague idea of how much superdimensional tech could change the game, but not precisely to what extent.

It would take far more battles than this sparring session for everyone to gain a clearer understanding of how much of a difference superdimensional tech could make.

However, this upcoming bout should give everyone crucial information that could dictate their policies going forward.

This was especially important in a period where very few full superdimensional mechs had emerged thus far. Each data point was precious.

The performance of the First Sword Mark III may largely influence how hard the other major powers were willing to pay for mid to high-grade superdimensional matter!

It was in the Larkinson Clan's best interest for Saint Dise to give her best possible performance on this day. The stronger a superdimensional ace mech turned out to be, the greater the demand for superdimensional matter!

Ketis' portals into the Blue Dimension would gain greater importance. The major powers would also be willing to pay more to obtain superdimensional matter.

The Larkinsons needed to make sure to convince others that none of them could afford to fall behind in the superdimensional race.

An hour before the start of the highly anticipated sparring session, many third parties had already dispatched their own observers.

It was futile to keep this sparring session confidential. The battle could only take place in space, and anyone with a long-ranged sensor system could pick up the emissions from the coming clash.

The enemies of red humanity would find out about the First Sword Mark III's true prowess sooner or later.

Since that was the case, the Larkinson Clan might as well turn this bout into a spectacle.

This was the right time for the Larkinson Clan to step up its position in society and strengthen its reputation among the masses.

Controlling sole access to the Blue Dimension thus far granted the Larkinsons so much honor and prestige that they were already beginning to rival one of the weaker Terran ancient clans on these terms.

Ves had already taken his place behind a workstation in one of the control compartments of the Tarrasque.

He spoke with Master Devos over a tight beam communication channel on a number of logistical issues.

"Our latest trade agreement with your ancient clan should have already granted you a generous batch of superdimensional matter." Ves mentioned. "How long will it take before you convert the Black Lord into a partial or full superdimensional mech?"

"It will take time." Master Laila Devos said. "Our urgency is not too great at the moment. We can afford to take our time and make more effective use of our stockpile of superdimensional matter. I am not reluctant to admit that our R&D into superdimensional tech is not as strong as that of the Mech Supremacist Faction. I also prefer to develop more advanced and effective applications of superdimensional matter. The mechers have clearly chosen to settle for basic and relatively reliable means of processing superdimensional matter into stable mech components. We believe that our Black Lord can tolerate greater risks."

"I see. If an accident threatens to occur, the Wind of Destruction can leverage his formidable willpower to suppress any uncontrolled reactions."

"That is correct, Ves. This is actually one of the strategies we employ to raise the performance of senior ace mechs over that of weaker machines. As long as the willpower of an ace pilot is strong enough, we have greater room to experiment and push the envelope. Even if we make mistakes, the strong corrective power of a Saint Kingdom can forcibly prevent any accidents from occurring. I do have to note that this only applies to active components. The ace mech must still remain stable and inert when it is not being piloted."

That made sense. The absence of an ace pilot in the cockpit deprived the ace mech from leveraging the Saint Kingdom to rewrite reality so that an accident would not occur.

"You haven't exactly answered the question yet, Master."

"I cannot give you a timeline. That is sensitive information. The Wind of Destruction is strong enough for the time being. As long as the Agamemnon Upper Zone is able to hold for up to half a year, then I am confident that we can upgrade the Black Lord into a truly fearsome superdimensional ace mech. Our strategic outlook will be completely different if the native aliens have managed to breach our border systems. We will have to settle for more rudimentary design applications while we hastily prepare our ace mech for combat against enemy phase whales."

The Devosans intended to take their time if they could help it. They would not ignore the need to defend their territories when attacked by alien invasion fleets, but so long as the enemy was not too aggressive, the Devosans were more than content to invest in quality design applications.

This was typical for Terran ancient clans. They did not earn the designation of 'ancient' for nothing. They prided themselves over taking rational and relatively cautious decisions that best served their long-term survival.

After Ves ended his call with Master Laila Devos, he continued to think about the ramifications of the slow proliferation of superdimensional tech.

He saw real hope in relying on the power of superdimensional matter. Even if it could only affect battles on a small scale, strengthening the most powerful champions of red humanity may not necessarily turn the tide of the ongoing war, but they reduced the probability that their race and civilization would go extinct.

That did not exactly sound like an ideal outcome, but it was better than total annihilation.

As Ves thought about the power of superdimensional tech, he couldn't help but think back on one of the potential upgrade tracks that he could have chosen upon welcoming the Mech Designer System Version 4.0.

[Upgrade Track #3: Superdimensional Transformation. This upgrade track will expand the Dimension Observatory. The new facilities will allow you to spend Ascension Points to initiate a transformation into an increasingly more powerful or versatile superdimensional entity. The augmentations that you can choose to apply to yourself can be based on the characteristics of exotic dimensions. These may grant you dimensional powers such as the ability to multiply your mental processing by expanding your brains into many more dimensions, or the ability to enter a dimension inaccessible to others where you can build a private refuge. This may allow you to transform into a native of that dimension, allowing you to natively enter, survive and persistently exist in it. Over time, you can choose to continually strengthen your relation to a small amount of exotic dimensions in order to cultivate strong dimensional powers. You can also choose to increase your relation with many different dimensions, allowing you to freely enter any of them and be able to make better use of their advantages.]

Ves previously lacked the context to fully understand and appreciate all of the upgrade tracks, but especially this last one.

If Ves or Ketis had opened up a dimension breach that led to the 365th dimension sooner, they would have been introduced to the wonders of superdimensional matter before completing the latest System upgrade.

That could have made a huge difference. Or not. Ves was not quite sure.

When given a choice between Five Element Mastery, Demoncasting and Superdimensional Transformation, Ves might have picked the latter if he knew as much as he did in the present.

Five Element Mastery remained a solid and relevant choice, but it largely accelerated what he was destined to master.

Demoncasting was a wildcard that introduced a radically different way of empowering his works that was normally out of his reach.

Superdimensional Transformation massively increased his advantages in the field of superdimensional tech.

It would have turned him into a specialist in a field that became highly relevant to the war effort!

Still... despite how well Ves would be able to get along with superdimensional matter if he chose the last upgrade track, he had a feeling that his choice would ultimately remain the same.

Ves craved novelty. He wanted his works to be unique. Whereas most high-tier galactic citizens were already thinking about incorporating superdimensional tech in their most important mechs, starships and gear, he wanted to raise the standards of what was possible through unconventional angles.

While he recognized that there was still a chance that he might go for the more reliable option of Superdimensional Transformation, it still did not fit with his inclinations.

He ultimately believed that superdimensional technology would eventually lose its novelty and become as commoditized as phasewater technology and hyper technology.

Demoncasting was much more exotic and difficult to replicate by others. Ves felt confident that he could retain his monopoly on this exclusive form of enhancement for a much longer period of time.

In fact, now that he thought about it, the latest developments only vindicated his choice.

It turned out that relying on the Dimension Breach Creation upgrade track alone was already enough to unlock superdimensional technology to red humanity.

Since that was the case, Demoncasting granted Ves another trump card that could help him maintain an edge over the competition. It also helped that it fell within his original area of expertise.

Superdimensional technology on the other hand was predominantly new and unfamiliar to Ves.

He could apply a part of the insights of phasewater technology on this new tech base, but that was where the story ended.

It was not wise to bite off more than he could chew. As an ambitious mech designer, it was necessary for him to keep up with the overall developments in this new scientific discipline.

Yet he did not think it was all that much helpful or useful to commit too much time and energy into mastering it. Specialists in materials science such as Tristan Wesseling were much more suited to learn and develop their own specializations in the broad new field of superdimensional tech.

"Ugh, when will Tristan become available?"

He felt a little bad about it, but he secretly hoped that the Colonial Federation of Davute would get smashed into pieces by the invading aliens.

Ves inwardly shook his head. This was not a constructive train of thought!

The Davutans did not deserve his ill wishes.

He also needed to stop pining after Tristan and look for alternatives. There should be more underappreciated gems available in the mech industry that could become proficient in manipulating superdimensional matter.

Chapter 6887 Superdimensional Edge

After a short delay, the ace mechs finally deployed into space.

The Black Lord emerged first.

Just as Master Laila Rebecca Devos claimed, her ancient clan was not in a hurry to use up its stash of superdimensional matter.

The ace multipurpose mech still possessed its existing configuration which was roughly half a year old.

The Devosans had taken good care in updating the design of their senior ace mech to ensure that it would never become outdated.

Technical speaking, the availability of superdimensional matter and the slow proliferation of superdimensional technology already made the Black Lord outdated.

That did not mean it was obsolete.

Superdimensional adversaries were so rare at the moment that it was premature to declare non-superdimensional mechs outdated.

So long as the Black Lord did not face an enemy equipped with superdimensional tech, it should not be a problem for it to survive. The Wind of Destruction was a senior ace pilot who possessed a wealth of experience and centuries worth of diligent and unceasing training.

Unfortunately, the growth of his resonance strength had slowed to a crawl after becoming an ace pilot.

Nobody understood why, but the ace pilot of the Devos Ancient Clan failed to demonstrate as much talent, splendor and greatness as his more successful peers.

This caused latecomers such as General Axelar Streon to overtake him and reach the limit of their rank.

While everyone guessed that the Wind of Destruction may be suffering from a malady that prevented him from achieving greater progress, nobody was stupid enough to voice their thoughts out loud, especially inside Devosan space.

People considered such topics to be taboo. Only a small group of people possessed the qualifications to speak openly about the ace pilot's issues.

"They say that the Wind of Destruction lost a duel against another rival in the past. When he became an ace pilot, he wanted to have a rematch in order to wash away his shame, only to find out that his opponent already died." Alexa Streon gossiped.

Ves rolled his eyes. "I doubt that story is true. Ace pilots shouldn't be stupid enough to base their entire lives on proving their superiority over a single rival. I am much more

supportive of the theory that he has been asked to take part in a dangerous operation, but refused because he balked at the risks. His cowardice therefore proceeded to become a stain that has forever tainted his willpower."

Alexa almost looked scandalized! "Terran saints are not cowards!"

"I am not accusing him of being a coward. I am just guessing that Saint Alessandro Devos has made a misstep in his past, and has not been able to move past this psychological flaw. This is not a condemnation of all Terran saints. Your grandfather is doing much better than the Wind of Destruction, so his courage is not in doubt."

General Axelar Streon had bravely led the mech corps of the Streon Ancient Clan against the native aliens many times.

Even if his ancient clan was still gathering forces for an upcoming deep strike expedition that may never come, he did not shirk his own responsibilities and continued to fight at the frontlines in order to fulfill his responsibilities to the Terran Alliance and red humanity as a whole.

His Ouroboros played an indispensable role in holding back the native aliens. The Terran Alliance only enjoyed the dedicated protection of a single god pilot.

As fast as the Light of Sol may be, he could never match the deterrence and the destructive potential of the Spacelock and the Destroyer of Worlds at the Rubarthans.

Combat also accelerated the previously stalled development of the nearly ancient 'living' mech.

According to Alexa, his grandfather frequently praised how the Ouroboros had truly come to life after Ves had corrected a work that he previously considered an afterthought during one of his trippy Mastery experiences.

The young Journeyman made another guess. "I have been wondering whether converting Black Lord to a living ace mech or designing a completely new living ace mech from scratch will help the Wind of Destruction break past the reason behind his stalled growth. The effect may be better if we integrate the Carmine System in his new machine. The spiritual foundation of a pristine and flawless living mech may be able to remedy the flaws of his own soul and willpower."

Ves scratched his head in thought. "Living mechs aren't panaceas, Alexa. They may be able to help high-ranking mech pilots overcome certain mental problems, but in many cases their willpower can only be healed by themselves. A living mech can play an assisting role at most. They still need to sort out their courage, their convictions and their faith in themselves. If the Wind of Destruction can solve his problem by piloting a living mech or a Carmine mech, the Devos Ancient Clan would have commissioned a successor of the Black Lord by this time."

The fact that the Devosans did not do so implied that the Wind of Destruction suffered from a more complex problem that could not easily be remedied by pairing him up with a mech that could talk back to its own pilot.

"What about a superdimensional ace mech, sir?" Alexa softly said. "Could his problem be solved if he is equipped with a much stronger ace mech that may give him the strength to kill an ancient phase whale?"

"Perhaps." He shrugged in response. "I think that regardless of the problems that hold ace pilots back, they can always redeem themselves on the battlefield by completing a deed that is worthy of legend. Of course, this is easier said than done. The gap between their combat capabilities and the deed they must complete has often proven to be far too wide. Superdimensional tech may just be the solution they need to close that crucial gap."

Alexa nodded. "My grandfather has already expressed great interest in a superdimensional upgrade. Like the Wind of Destruction, he is not in a hurry to upgrade his Ouroboros. High-grade superdimensional matter is hard to come by, and the Streon Ancient Clan does not have an existing agreement with the Larkinson Clan. Still, this allows him to monitor other superdimensional mechs and buy more time for R&D to refine their applications of superdimensional technology. Similar to phasewater technology and hyper technology, the later applications will always be more powerful and sophisticated. I predict that superdimensional tech will reach a whole new level after just two years of development."

That may sound like an exaggerated claim, but Ves could easily believe her words may come true.

Ves actually felt a little sorry for the First Sword Mark III for this reason. Her superdimensional conversion definitely turned her into a domineering killing machine, but that was only when compared to non-superdimensional mechs.

Later on, new advancements in superdimensional tech would cause newer mechs to perform much better while using up the same amount of high-grade superdimensional matter.

That would be the time where the First Sword Mark III would fall behind, forcing Saint Dise to struggle a lot more in order to produce the same results as ace pilots that received more advanced superdimensional mechs.

That was fine. At least Saint Dise obtained a powerful first-mover advantage. Two years was a lot of time.

The Swordmaiden saint should be able to complete a lot of hunts and grow by leaps and bounds by relying on her head start.

Besides, it was not impossible for Ketis and her mecher collaborators to develop a minor update to the First Sword Mark III. They were not bound by the same limitations as the Design Department.

As long as Ketis and at least one of her mecher collaborators were willing to set aside their other priorities, they could easily design a minor update to the First Sword Mark III that incorporated the latest advancements in superdimensional technology.

All of this meant that Saint Dise probably did not have to wait for a decade for her battle partner to receive a technological refresh.

"5 minutes left." Alexa announced.

The highly anticipated duel was about to commence very soon.

Ves decided to check on Saint Dise. He activated a feed that gave him a glimpse of the interior of the cockpit.

If the pilot wanted to, he or she could block this feed for privacy reasons, but Dise did not activate it at the moment.

She had nothing to hide. The ace pilot had already suited up in a much more powerful version of her old piloting suit.

Although her latest suit did not incorporate any superdimensional matter, it still offered a great amount of protection against kinetic shocks and thermal energies.

The suit was largely designed as a last-ditch effort to save the pilot in the event of a cockpit breach.

Ves hoped that Dise would never have to test the power of her piloting suit, but he was realistic enough to understand that reality might not oblige.

As Ves mused about the protection offered by the relatively thin piloting suit, the ace pilot pointedly raised her helmeted head towards the sensor that transmitted the visual feed.

"What is it, Ves?"

"Just checking. Are you ready for this bout?"

"I have been looking forward to testing my mettle against an adversary that will not collapse at the first blow." Saint Dise responded with notable calm. "The Wind of Destruction is an excellent sparring partner. His swordsmanship is different from what I am accustomed to, but that makes it even better. I am curious whether his famous tier 2 Destroyer sword can withstand the sharpness of my Decapitator. I fear that the answer may be negative. None of us can afford to break this precious weapon."

That was one of the notable problems with this practice bout. That was one of the biggest reasons why the Devos Ancient Clan insisted that the Larkinson Clan abide by a formal contract. It explicitly listed out restrictions and attached heavy penalties to any violations.

Fortunately, Saint Dise always prized control, so Ves was not too worried that she would go out of control and inadvertently break one of the terms of the agreement.

"Destroyer particles have mysterious properties." Ves explained. "Their effects become increasingly more magical and destructive as their concentration rises. I have

a high suspicion that the Sirocco wielded by the Black Lord can inflict minor to moderate damage onto the armor plating of your ace mech. As for your Decapitator, it is at risk of getting chipped. Don't worry too much. We should have the facilities to repair most forms of minor damage, but it will get a little more troublesome if the damage cuts deeper."

"Don't forget that the aliens are our real enemies." Ves said. "This sparring session may be able to teach you how to fight against other ace pilots, but your First Sword Mark III is primarily designed to fight against phase leaders and other notable alien opposition. The rules for fighting against phase lords and phase whales are different. There is no way to give you good practice for fighting against them, so you should focus on developing and polishing skills that may be handy when we commence our war campaign."

13:23

"I shall endeavor not to give the Wind of Destruction too many opportunities to land his Destroyer sword against my machine. That said, I still need to know how well my mech can fare against one of the most powerful Destroyer weapons in the Red Ocean. It is better if we find out now when the stakes are low."

She made a good point. Ves knew that Destroyer technology was a lot more special than other forms of high technology. Its performance against superdimensional technology was therefore another crucial data point.

"Don't forget that the aliens are our real enemies." Ves said. "This sparring session may be able to teach you how to fight against other ace pilots, but your First Sword Mark III is primarily designed to fight against phase leaders and other notable alien opposition. The rules for fighting against phase lords and phase whales are different. There is no way to give you good practice for fighting against them, so you should focus on developing and polishing skills that may be handy when we commence our war campaign."

Saint Dise nodded. "I know. I have not forgotten about our priorities. I have been trying to leverage the use of the sword fey in this, but I have only just begun to explore the potential of sword formations."

Chapter 6888 Collision Between Destroyer and Superdimensional Blades

The countdown finally ended.

The two ace mechs deployed in space exactly according to schedule.

Both of them emerged out of different motherships that were located far apart from each other.

This meant that the two ace mechs still had to fly towards each other in order to start fighting properly.

Neither Dise nor Alessandro wanted to waste any time. They directly commanded their ace mechs to advance at the highest possible speed.

The first comparison had begun.

Many observers carefully paid attention to the straight-line acceleration of the two machines.

This was one of the most crucial parameters of a mech. It dictated how fast a machine could move and how easily it could change its course and evade powerful attacks. It also determined how long it would take for the mech to reach a distant destination.

After half a minute of observation, it quickly became clear which ace mech held an advantage in terms of acceleration.

The contest appeared to be remarkably closer than most people expected.

"I recognize those electric wings! Those are generated by one of Master Lucien Kerckhoff's Electro-Reactant Flight Systems!"

The so-called electric wings that unfolded behind the First Sword Mark III generated enormous thrust power through unclear means.

Although the science behind it was convoluted and difficult to understand, the results could not be denied.

The unfolding of those massive electric wings granted the superdimensional ace mech a massive boost in acceleration so long as they remained active!

However, the mech insiders who were familiar with Master Kerckhoff's works also understood their weaknesses.

"Electro-reactant flight systems of this grade are not common due to their excessive energy consumption."

"The superdimensional ace mech does not appear to possess exceptionally high energy reserves. The reason why it still works is because the superdimensional ace mech does not carry any other weapons."

"Is it worth it to sacrifice long-ranged firepower for mobility?"

"That is a personal choice rather than a design choice. Saint Dise Larkinson is clearly a hardcore sword nut. Rejection of firearms has become a point of principle for her. It is better for her to have a powerful flight system at her disposal. She will need it to put her enemies in range of her amazingly sharp greatsword."

As fast as the First Sword Mark III may be, the Black Lord appeared to be faster, though the difference was not that obvious.

"The Black Lord's flight system is not as special. It is merely a high-end transphasic hyper flight system that is tuned for maneuverability and high-speed brawling. Its base acceleration rate is slower, but it is also more efficient and less hungry than an electro-reactant flight system. The reason why the ace multipurpose mech is faster is because the Wind of Destruction's Saint Kingdom is much stronger."

The difference between a fresh junior ace pilot and a highly experienced senior ace pilot was enormous.

Their resonance strengths were far apart.

According to the resonance meter, the resonance strength of the First Sword hovered at around 128 lavers, which was quite respectable for an ace pilot that had just received a good ace mech.

The resonance strength coming from the Black Lord measured at 1269 laveres!

The actual power of the latter's Saint Kingdom was not simply 10 times stronger than the former's Saint Kingdom.

The real gap was much wider due to the non-linearity of the lavere scale!

This was why junior ace pilots normally had no chance of defeating senior ace pilots.

Even though Saint Dise arguably piloted a much more superior ace mech, the majority of observers still considered the enormous gap in willpower to be critical. They could not conceive of an outcome where the Wind of Destruction would lose against an opponent that was several times younger!

In short, as far as mobility was concerned, the Black Lord's flight system was inferior, but the ace mech was still able to move faster due to its greater resonance empowerment!

As the two ace mechs rapidly entered within engagement range, the only ace mech out of the two that was armed with ranged weapons did not bother to open fire.

Instead, the Black Lord radiated a sense of eagerness and already unsheathed its famous Sirocco from its specially made scabbard!

From the moment tier 2 Destroyer sword unveiled its special wavy blade pattern, the concentrated Destroyer particles exhibited a lot of excitement.

Anyone observing the Sirocco would feel as if they had become plunged on a planet that was on the cusp of annihilation!

It took a great amount of willpower from the Wind of Destruction to keep the bloodlust of the Sirocco contained and in control.

Despite the formidable resonance strength of the veteran ace pilot, the Wind of Destruction could never take his primary weapon lightly. Tier 2 Destroyer weapons always demanded respect.

"It appears the Wind of Destruction wants to start off with a sword fight right away. This is not the most tactically sound choice he can make, but it is best for information gathering purposes."

"If I was in his place, I would not easily agree to give up my range advantage."

"That is why you are not a saint."

While the two ace mechs converged with each other in record time, they did not directly collide and lock blades for fear of losing control. The mechs instead began to circle around each other at high speeds.

Their Saint Kingdoms came into contact with each other!

Just as expected, Saint Dise unquestionably gave ground. The Saint Kingdom belonging to the Wind of Destruction not only possessed a larger diameter, but also happened to be much more solid and unyielding.

Saint Dise's domain field appeared far more loose and easy to push back. It literally gained a concave shape as it was unable to offer much resistance against the much stronger willpower of the veteran Terran ace pilot.

It was only after they bled off their relative speeds against each other that they finally closed the remaining distance and locked blades against each other!

Neither side had chosen to channel a large amount of true resonance in each other's blades for their opening strikes.

The Sirocco appeared to scream and recoil when the Decapitator came close!

Despite its much stronger resonance empowerment and its highly concentrated Destroyer particles, when the superdimensional edge came close, the Sirocco failed to resist the Decapitator!

From the moment the precious tier 2 Destroyer sword received a small but noticeable incision, the Wind of Destruction reacted extremely quickly and withdrew his own blade!

This was a clear sign of defeat, but nobody thought that the Terran ace pilot had shamed himself.

The disparity in equipment proved to be too great!

Many Terrans wished that the Sirocco would have been able to offer greater resistance when coming into contact with the Superdimensional Decapitator, but the insane properties of the latter cruelly dashed their hopes.

"If not even a tier 2 Destroyer weapon can withstand a sharp superdimensional weapon, then it has become obligatory to equip all of our ace mechs with superdimensional tech."

This was bad news for many groups as their ability to get their hands on superdimensional matter was not great.

The supply of superdimensional matter was far too small!

Unless red humanity managed to develop another portal to the Blue Dimension or found a way to artificially produce superdimensional matter, it became inevitable for most powers to miss out on this new and powerful trend!

After the initial contact between their blades, the two ace mechs no longer locked blades directly anymore.

That did not mean that they had given up the sword duel.

First Sword Mark III briefly backed off and sheathed her Decapitator behind her back. She then proceeded to extend one of her hands and gripped one of her 33 sword fey.

The sword fey had not intervened at all so far. They merely floated behind the First Sword Mark III like an oversized halo but did not make any aggressive moves.

Compared to the Decapitator, a sword fey was distinctly smaller. Ketis had purposefully sized them so that her ace mech could comfortably wield the extra blade in one hand.

Saint Dise decided to wield it with two hands. After concentrating her willpower, a fairly weak energy blade extended from the sword fey that closely matched the proportions of the Decapitator.

When the two ace mechs finally resumed their bout, the Black Lord no longer had to fight as cautiously as before.

The energy blade only inherited a fraction of the superdimensional properties of the physical sword fey!

Although its cutting power was still fairly better than usual, the Sirocco was still able to bear the pressure.

The two ace mechs solely stuck to attacking each other with their chosen blades. They maneuvered around each other and surged forward to launch their strikes at a high frequency.

Not everyone was able to track the two fast-moving machines as they constantly tried to overwhelm their adversaries!

The First Sword Mark III quickly fell at a disadvantage. Saint Dise specialized in swordsmanship, but so did the Wind of Destruction!

Even if the latter's dedication to swordsmanship was not as total, his skills and combat experience were unquestionably superior!

The Black Lord's much more powerful Saint Kingdom also bestowed the machine with many advantages.

The ace multipurpose mech was able to control the surrounding space and reduce the amount of E energy that the First Sword was able to draw upon.

The Wind of Destruction's much stronger willpower constantly pressed down upon Saint Dise, causing the latter to constantly feel confined and unable to exert her full strength.

Occasionally, both machines swung their blades and unleashed sword energy attacks.

This was where their Saint Kingdoms made the greatest difference. The Black Lord struck with greater force and momentum. Its pilot also understood its strengths and weaknesses extremely well and exerted perfect control.

Saint Dise on the other hand was still familiarizing herself with the First Sword's new capabilities. Her domain field was weaker and could not exert as much strength in return. The energy blade extending from the sword fey was also not very threatening.

"The Black Lord has gained the upper hand."

"That is only because the First Sword gave up its strongest weapon."

"Are you suggesting that the Wind of Destruction will give up his Destroyer sword for a superdimensional sword? That is impossible! He specializes in wielding Destroyer weapons! It is in his very title!"

"I am not suggesting that. Have you ever thought about whether it is possible to combine Destroyer technology with superdimensional technology?"

"That..."

The mere notion of it was enough to shock the Terrans!

The implications were enormous if they could pull it off! Destroyer weapons might be able to reach a whole new limit with the help of superdimensional matter!

"This is one of the reasons why the Devosans are not in a hurry to convert the Black Lord into a superdimensional ace mech. Their best researchers and mech designers are working hard to develop Destroyer weapons that are predominantly made out of superdimensional matter. Our working theory is that doing so will massively expand the amount of Destroyer particles the new weapons can hold. Think about how much more powerful the Sirocco can become if it can accommodate 10 times as many Destroyer particles!"

"That... will cause the Black Lord's sword to exceed a tier 1 Destroyer weapon in destructive power alone!"

The potential synergies between Destroyer technology and superdimensional technology were massive!

However, there was one huge flaw to this development.

"Wait. We no longer have any means of producing Destroyer particles. The only ways for a Superdimensional Sirocco to hold more Destroyer particles are to import them from the Milky Way Galaxy or cannibalize them from lower tier Destroyer weapons."

"Yes, that is a significant problem for the Terrans. I am glad that I do not have to solve this supply issue."

Chapter 6889 Endurance Contest

Many people initially feared that Destroyer weapons would get sunsetted due to the Sirocco's obvious disadvantage against the Decapitator.

However, rumors quickly spread about the Terran effort to develop Destroyer weapons based on superdimensional alloys.

So long as the latter could be made resistant to the damaging effects of Destroyer particles, the newly developed blades could completely break the current limits of Destroyer technology!

After the initial few exchanges between the two ace mechs, the powerful machines quickly entered into a stable rhythm.

Neither side employed any other weapons than the blades that they currently held in their hands. They also did not try to perform any big moves that could break the balance.

The electro-reactant wings of the First Sword gave the ace mech a powerful mobility boost.

Saint Dise utilized its capabilities so extensively that she was unable to control the trajectory of her battle partner.

However, the longer she fought like this, the more she improved her control over the movements of her machine.

Ace pilots learned quickly, and Dise fully showcased her ability to rapidly become more proficient with the movement characteristics of her powerful ace mech.

Of course, there was only so much she could accomplish in a short amount of time. Her improvement of her control over the First Sword's mobility quickly fell off and reached a plateau.

From this point onwards, Dise could only refine her control over many repeated practice sessions and combat deployments.

This meant that the maneuvers of the First Sword were just a tad bit slower and looser than the opposition.

The Wind of Destruction was too good. He had been an ace pilot much longer than Dise's entire lifespan. There was no way to make up for this gap in skill and experience in a short amount of time.

In fact, from the beginning of this dance, the Terran ace pilot purposefully suppressed the mobility of his Black Lord in order to give his opponent plenty of opportunities to showcase her combat prowess.

It was only after Saint Dise rapidly improved her own control that the Wind of Destruction held back less and less.

At this time, the Black Lord still maintained the upper hand. The suppression of its Saint Kingdom remained too great. It pressed back the First Sword's own domain field and limited the ace swordsman mech's options.

Although the consequences of this Saint Kingdom suppression was not too obvious while the two machines continued to hack their blades into each other, they became a lot more obvious when the next phase of the sparring session commenced.

"The First Sword and the Black Lord have backed away from each other!"

"They are circling around and beginning to fight against each other from a small distance!"

The First Sword released the sword fey from its hands and allowed it to rejoin its brethren.

The living mech then proceeded to wield the Decapitator again. The ace mech immediately began to resonate with the masterwork mech greatsword.

One of the many changes to the weapon was the integration of a newly developed ace mech-grade resonating material called SuperSunder Metal.

It was actually based on Sunder Metal that was originally developed by the Resonance Smith.

The Star Designer had revisited this product and successfully combined it with high-grade superdimensional matter in order to generate SuperSunder Metal.

Sunder Metal was already noted for being able to loosen the molecules that held matter together. Combining it with superdimensional tech had massively strengthened this separation effect, but much of it only applied to the physical blade.

This was why the Sirocco did not stand a chance when coming into contact with the sharp edge of the Decapitator!

However, it was not a secret that sword energy attacks only inherited a fraction of Sunder Metal's properties.

Ves and others assumed that the same rule would apply to SuperSunder Metal as well.

Now, many observers wanted to know how extensively the First Sword Mark III was able to channel the offensive properties of superdimensional matter from a distance.

The First Sword began by concentrating energy into her Decapitator before snapping off a quick swing.

A glowing arc of silvery sword energy rapidly launched towards the Black Lord.

The Wind of Destruction purposely did not try to inhibit the incoming attack, though it was hard for him to suppress his instincts.

From the moment the sword energy attack entered his Saint Kingdom, it immediately weakened.

By the time it finally struck the exterior of the Black Lord, the sword energy attack had already lost much of its resonance empowerment.

The Black Lord had especially deactivated its azure energy shield in order to feel out the attack.

In the end, the sword energy attack only left the most minute cut behind.

"Damage is minimal but real!"

This was a significant outcome. Even though the Black Lord did not incur any significant damage, the First Mark III had only launched a sloppy attack. This was far from her full strength!

Of course, the Black Lord hardly did its best to defend against this attack. Its Saint Kingdom could have exerted much greater suppression and its azure energy shield may have been able to block it entirely.

More importantly than that, the Black Lord could have evaded the attack with ease!

Now that both sides gained a basic idea on how much the superdimensional ace mech could threaten the Black Lord at this distance, both combatants began to fight more seriously against each other.

The Wind of Destruction finally commanded his Black Lord to unleash his iconic 'wind' attacks.

Destruction energy coursed through the larger and more encompassing energy waves unleashed by the swings of his Sirocco.

The First Sword tried her best to evade these sword energy attacks, but the Wind of Destruction did not earn this title for nothing. His destructive wind energy attacks were much more dispersed and covered much wider areas!

Saint Alessandro Devos was also highly experienced when it came to fighting against other ace mechs. He was often able to read his opponent's evasion patterns. He used that to launch a sequence of destructive wind waves that boxed in the First Sword and prevented her from avoiding every attack!

The First Sword had no choice but to get battered by the wind energy attacks at nearly full strength.

Her Saint Kingdom was not only weaker, but also suppressed, which meant that the ace swordsman mech had very little opportunity to weaken the wind energy attacks before they struck the First Sword!

Just like the Black Lord, the First Sword kept her azure energy shield generator in reserve. Her brand-new SEDA System or Superdimensional Energized Vibrometal Armor System easily resisted the destructive energies as if they were simple breezes.

Yet the First Sword easily withstood the damage of the Wind of Destruction's most iconic attacks. Her armor-grade superdimensional alloy plating tanked every resonance-empowered attack with confidence, so much so that the energized vibrometal components designed by Master Lilian Recins appeared completely redundant in this case!

This put the Black Lord in an awkward position. The ace multipurpose mech often relied on these mid-range destructive wind energy attacks to wipe out large swathes of cannon fodder or steadily wear down the defenses of tougher and more durable adversaries.

The First Sword's SEDA System resisted these wind energy attacks so well that the Wind of Destruction would probably get exhausted long before the First Sword incurred any serious damage!

The Wind of Destruction did not give up. It was at this point that he finally showed why his Black Lord was categorized as a multipurpose mechs.

A whole host of integrated weapons came online. Their small but potent muzzles all aimed in the direction of the First Sword and began to open fire!

A mix of laser beams, positron beams, plasma bolts, gauss rounds struck the First Sword with unerring accuracy!

Amazingly enough, the resonance-empowered attacks all struck the First Sword without inflicting any obvious damage!

The Wind of Destruction did not become deterred by the continued lack of progress and repeatedly bombarded the First Sword with attack after attack.

Destructive winds interspersed with more conventional attacks continued to assault the First Sword.

The superdimensional ace mech did not remain passive. The First Sword not only swung back with increasingly more powerful sword energy attacks, but also employed her sword fey for the first time!

All 33 sword fey assumed a wedge formation before surging forward.

Their formation appeared to possess mysterious properties that caused the sword fey to glow brighter and appear more cohesive and united.

Chief among them was the Prime Sword Fey. As an Ultimate Module, this Prime Sword Fey was larger and boasted golden accents.

The Prime Sword Fey acted as the tip of the sword formation and also contained Respa, Dise's companion spirit.

This companion spirit connection caused the Prime Sword Fey to become subjected to significantly stronger true resonance than the other sword fey.

This caused the entire sword formation to exude enough of threat to force the Black Lord into responding!

The Wind of Destruction clearly did not want to collide head-on against this sword formation and moved his ace mech out of the way.

The sword fey were quite flexible, so they easily changed their course and continued to pursue the Black Lord!

However, the ace multipurpose mech proved to be significantly faster. Its Saint Kingdom not only exerted a suppressive effect on the sword fey, but also sped up its own maneuvers.

Saint Dise could not properly counter this move because her resonance strength was too weak.

The First Sword responded to this continued evasion by moving closer without ceasing to launch sword energy attacks with the Decapitator.

The sword fey also began to split up. They no longer moved in one big formation, but instead moved in groups of 3, thereby enabling 11 small formations to surround the Black Lord!

As much as the ace multipurpose mechs tried to evade them, the sword fey were still able to use their numbers advantage to strike the Black Lord from time to time.

This time, the Wind of Destruction did not remain arrogant and utilized the full strength of his Saint Kingdom as well as an azure energy shield to repel the sword fey attacks.

These measures proved less effective than the Terran ace pilot hoped!

What caused the sword fey to inflict fairly minimal surface damage was their lack of strength and momentum.

The Saint Kingdom suppression was a big deal and largely deprived the sword fey of their metaphysical punch.

Their maneuverability came at the cost of hard power. If the sword fey did not take the time to build up speed and momentum, their sharp superdimensional blades were not able to punch too deep into the Black Lord's armor plating.

However, the sword fey were still able to deepen the cuts so long as they struck the same places on a repeated basis.

This pattern continued for several minutes. Sword energy attacks, sword fey attacks and conventional ranged attacks continued to miss or hit their respective targets.

Both ace mechs expended large amounts of energies in order to maintain their high offensive rhythms.

Although it did not appear that either side was making any progress, observers such as Ves soon picked up a number of important clues.

"This is turning into an attrition battle." He deduced. "The Wind of Destruction has accurately deduced that the First Sword Mark III possesses limited energy reserves. Exhausting them will force the living ace mech to retreat despite the fact that her superdimensional armor system will likely remain nearly spotless at the end.

Meanwhile, Saint Dise's operation of her sword fey is clumsy and unrefined, but she is steadily learning how to make better use of them. She is already giving some of her sword fey formations additional space to circle around and build up momentum to land stronger hits."

So long as the battle between the two ace mechs remained constant, it would unfold like an endurance contest.

Could Saint Dise improve her utilization of the First Sword's formidable capabilities fast enough to avoid running out of energy?

Nobody could say for sure!

Not even Ves felt confident enough to make a prediction!

Chapter 6890 Saint Kingdom Suppression

As powerful as the First Sword Mark III had become, she was not a perfect ace mech.

Endurance was one of her greatest weaknesses. When she fought at full power, her energy reserves would not be able to sustain her output for a long time.

If Ketis had chosen to design the First Sword according to the Pure Version, then the ace mech would have benefited from Master Hijalt Mosslover's exclusive High-Density Energy Cells.

That would have significantly expanded the First Sword's energy reserves and enabled her to sustain herself for a much longer period of time.

Alas, Ketis opted to go for the Sword Fey Version instead, which meant that the First Sword had to forgo individual power in order to support the operation 33 sword fey.

Saint Dise was suffering from the consequences of this important choice.

If she continued to pilot a simple ace swordsman mech, then she would have remained confident in keeping the electro-reactant flight system active at full power.

However, the current configuration of the First Sword did not possess the energy buffer that she needed for her to sustain the current slugging match.

The Black Lord was much better positioned to fight at this range.

The Sirocco may have proven itself to be heavily disadvantaged when colliding directly against the Decapitator, but it turned out that it was a weapon that specialized in releasing destructive energy winds!

Combined with the firepower of the integrated ranged weapons, the First Sword Mark III's armor system continually sustained hits with very little chance of evasion.

Even if the individual attacks did not appear to be inflicting any noticeable damage onto the First Sword Mark III, that was only because the armor system was being energized as well as affected by true resonance.

Neither of these effects were permanent.

The armor-grade superdimensional alloy plating no longer functioned at their best if the ace mech exhausted her power reserves and the ace pilot wore out her willpower.

After that, the superdimensional armor system would definitely become a lot more vulnerable to sustained attacks. The ace mech could not afford to sustain too much damage because superdimensional matter was far too precious to squander in a fight with low stakes.

The Wind of Destruction clearly managed to deduce all of this. He quickly managed to deduce his win condition in a bout against a superdimensional ace mech that initially appeared to be impervious against all of his attacks!

Saint Dise gained a lot of respect for the elder ace pilot during this fight.

The Wind of Destruction had been mentoring and guiding her from the beginning of this sparring session.

Although the Larkinsons and the Devosans had already formulated a detailed plan on how the fight should unfold, there were still a lot of gaps that the Terran ace pilot thoughtfully filled with helpful lessons.

Of course, the Wind of Destruction did not verbalize any of his lessons.

Instead, he taught Dise through the attacks and the maneuvers of his ace multipurpose mech.

He may have come from a different swordsmanship tradition than Dise, but the two shared enough in common to be able to communicate with their respective swords.

The Wind of Destruction was not a gentle teacher.

As much as he wanted to teach the younger and less experienced ace pilot how to fight as a saint, he still held the obligation to uphold the reputation of the Devos Ancient Clan and the Terran Alliance.

This was why his Black Lord always exerted a high degree of pressure. The First Sword Mark III did not receive any reprieve and constantly had to endure one attack after another without interruption.

The iconic destructive winds unleashed by the swings of the Sirocco were much more horrendous than they looked.

Most people who viewed footage of these iconic sweeping attacks might assume that they were too wide and dispersed to inflict much if any damage against strong defenses.

This was not necessarily true.

The Black Lord's offensive posture was multifaceted.

The Terran ace mech's Saint Kingdom was strong and all-encompassing enough that the destructive wind energy attacks received more amplification the longer they remained in flight.

Dise suffered a heavy disadvantage in this regard as her willpower was so much weaker that her Saint Kingdom was unable to assert any control past the exterior of her ace mech.

The Wind of Destruction was therefore not only able to increase the threat of his destructive wind energy attacks, but he was also able to use his willpower to warp the surrounding space and make it less friendly for his adversary!

The First Sword Mark III's superdimensional armor may be tough enough to protect against many direct attacks, but it was not as infallible when confronting more esoteric effects.

For example, the Black Lord's Saint Kingdom somehow distorted the surrounding space, making it more dangerous and less predictable.

It was hard for Dise to describe the hindrances that her willpower tried and failed to overcome.

She struggled to raise her control over the First Sword Mark III, but failed to surpass a certain limit because the laws of physics themselves appeared to be breaking down within her adversary's Saint Kingdom!

Up did not always mean up. A heavy object could suddenly turn as light as a feather. Momentum might not be conserved anymore.

Although the First Sword was able to resist the worst of it, her lack of control over the immediate environment still caused the ace mech to suffer small but frequent glitches.

More importantly than that, her inability to spread her Saint Kingdom also weakened her sword fey.

This was one of the reasons why they performed so lackluster so far. Even though they all maintained enough connections to Dise and the First Sword to retain at least a modicum of resonance empowerment, they clearly needed more support when deployed against an opposing ace mech.

Ever since the First Sword Mark III turned into a drone mech, her sword fey became an important component of her combat power.

The problem was that Dise was still new to them. The sword fey were numerous and difficult to leverage beyond a basic level.

She understood the theory behind them. She had studied old legacy texts that the Red Collective managed to recover. Many of them described the use of sword formations that mysteriously tied floating swords together and enabled them to strike with far more power than they should.

Like many Larkinsons, Dise was already familiar with battle formations, but trying to translate that into her sword formation was easier said than done.

The sword fey were different from mechs. Dise found it necessary to multitask way beyond what she was accustomed to. If she was a drone mech specialist, then this would have been familiar ground.

Unfortunately, she was still too new at this. She had spent a bit of time on learning how to operate multiple spurs at once, but while she managed to learn the basics, she was still lacking in experience.

This prevented her from pulling off the few sword formations that she had managed to puzzle out ever since she received the First Sword Mark III.

She felt as if she was wasting the potential of her sword fey. None of the formations she employed so far were sophisticated and powerful enough to give her an advantage in this bout.

The Black Lord proved to be too fast and solid. The sword fey lacked the speed and power to seriously threaten the Terran ace mech at their current usage level.

Dise clearly needed to spend a lot more time on individual practice in order to learn and master more powerful sword formations.

It was far too unrealistic for her to spontaneously become a lot more effective at employing the sword fey!

It took time and effort to figure out effective sword formations and train in them until he was able to seamlessly command her sword fey to pull them off with minimal delay.

When it became abundantly clear that Dise was unable to increase the threat level of the sword fey in the short term, the fight eventually took another turn.

Neither Saint Dise nor the Wind of Destruction saw any further point in prolonging this phase.

The two powerful ace mechs briefly interrupted their attacks and went still for a short period of time.

At this point, the two ace mechs remained effectively undamaged, but had expended a considerable amount of energy.

The First Sword Mark III was clearly worse off in this regard as the ace mech was lacking in energy reserves.

The Black Lord on the other hand still remained solid and filled with energy.

The next phase of the practice fight was supposed to remove all but the most essential restrictions.

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If the previous rounds of fighting partially served to examine how well the First Sword Mark III performed in specific situations, the next one should serve as a much more accurate indicator of the superdimensional ace mech's effective performance on the battlefield.

The First Sword no longer sent her sword fey forward anymore. Saint Dise instead recalled them back to her ace mech and summoned the Prime Sword Fey forward until she slotted it onto the Decapitator's tip.

This effectively increased the Decapitator's reach, though it also made the weapon a little more unwieldy.

The First Sword Mark III did not show any discomfort, however. The superdimensional sword fey attached to the ace mech floated behind the back of the machine. Dise clearly did not intend to rely on them. She clearly did not think she was proficient enough to make effective use of them at this point.

Instead, Dise decided to fall back on familiar territory. Already, her extended Decapitator glowed brighter as she resonated more deeply with her most familiar weapon.

On the other side, the Wind of Destruction was ready to get more serious as well. The signs of it were not obvious, but Dise could clearly feel the shift in mentality.

After a brief pause, both sides finally went into action!

The First Sword Mark III's electro-reactant wings immediately glowed brighter and more vigorous as she charged straight towards the Black Lord!

Dise had chosen to place Respa into the flight system of her battle partner, allowing her to resonate with it stronger and amplify its performance considerably more than usual!

This unexpected advantage provided the First Sword with a crucial mobility boost, thereby making it harder for the Black Lord to maintain its distance!

The Wind of Destruction wisely chose to maintain as much distance as possible. His Black Lord had already begun to pelt the First Sword with unerringly accurate ranged attacks.

However, it was the Black Lord's Saint Kingdom along with the constant destructive wind energy attacks that successfully impaired the First Sword's advance.

The brand new superdimensional ace mech did not appear to be immune to these effects. Although the First Sword Mark III was still too strong to get stopped in space, her forward momentum still grew a little weaker due to the constant interference from the Black Lord.

For a time, both ace mechs maintained a constant from each other.

The Black Lord's inherently high mobility combined with its constant debilitating resonance-empowered attacks proved effective at keeping the First Sword Mark III at bay!

Dise did not like this at all. She grew so frustrated with the constant attacks and being surrounded by her opponent's Saint Kingdom that she eventually decided to breach the obstructions!

Her Decapitator glowed brighter as the ace mech suddenly thrust it forward!

"One Sword Breaks Ten-Thousand Laws!"

Much to the surprise of many observers, the First Sword Mark III moved faster as her extended Decapitator literally pierced through the destructive wind energy waves as well as her adversary's Saint Kingdom!

None of them could hold fast against the conceptual breaking power of the resonance-empowered and metal-enhanced mech greatsword!

The First Sword Mark III's inexorable advance gained so much momentum that the Wind of Destruction saw fit to activate one of his trump cards.

A small section slid open before launching a salvo of small but extremely potent resonance-empowered missiles!

Although the First Sword Mark III quickly recovered and flew forward again, it would take another costly effort to get her to break past the obstacles in front.