

The Mech 4761

Chapter 4761 Warbeast Mania

With the sudden arrival and outbreak of hundreds of violent and powerful beasts, the defenses set up in the Government District were slow to come online.

Part of it was because too little time had passed for the colonial government to complete the defensive arrangements.

Structural energy shields, turrets and physical walls were in short supply. The ones that did exist only held out for a short amount of time before the larger transphasic warbeasts broke through them by force, which was exactly what they were designed to do by their creators!

"Damnit, who created these beasts! Why are they so powerful and how much phasewater did those scientists pump into their bodies?!"

The defenses broke too easily, showing that the quality and the cost of the largest artificial creatures were exceedingly high!

"The scientists over at the Olena Volkova School of Genetics and Exobiology were crazy!" A more well-informed Davutan spoke out regardless of the consequences. "They promised to cultivate warbeasts that were powerful enough to compete against expert mech so long as their funding and phasewater allowances were high enough."

"What were those nutjobs thinking!? Granting the power equivalent to an expert mech to a bunch of feral beasts is the dumbest idea I have ever heard. To think that there are biotechs who were delusional enough to turn this into an actual research goal! How much phasewater has been wasted on this self-defeating venture!?"

"The original premise of this research project had a lot of promise at the start. Expert pilots are still difficult to recruit, and the rate in which they appear from the ranks is too slow to keep up with the projected loss rate. If we can deploy violent beasts in place of expert mechs at the cost of putting in more phasewater, then this could have worked out well for us. Don't you see how strong they are right now?!"

"They're fighting the wrong side! This is the problem with rearing warbeasts. Their control can always be subverted or hijacked by those that have managed to learn how they follow instructions. This is why human mechs are much better. Unlike bots or simple beasts, humans like you and I are much harder to subvert!"

Even as the people who were aware of what went on in the OVS figured out where the creatures originally came from, they could not provide that much useful information to the defense forces.

For one, many of the powerful warbeasts were mainly developed by Professor Murmillian Granse. The award-winning beast designer worked on another level compared to his colleagues and mastered way more advanced theories related to developing warbeasts than any other specialists in Davute!

Even though the majority of the unleashed monsters were actually failed or unfinished experimental products, that did not stop them from using their heavy bodies to charge through annoying energy

shields or use their unnaturally sharp transphasic biometal claws and teeth to rip into the armor of any nearby mechs.

The vast majority of mechs present in the field consisted of standard mechs. It was impossible for them to be clad with transphasic armor plating.

As such, once the dangerous warbeasts fell upon their formations, the savage creatures easily tore through the thick layers of armor that should have resisted such attacks with much greater effectiveness if phasewater didn't enter into consideration!

"Ahhh! Help me! I don't want to die!"

"Why are you running away?! We'll all die if we don't fight back!"

"Why doesn't my mech have a flight system?! I am never going to pilot another landbound mech if I manage to make it out alive!"

"Screw this, I am out of here!"

Space knights equipped with thick alloy tower shields proved to be unable to hold back the aggressive warbeasts for long.

Enormous tears against their surfaces showed how useless it was to employ any layer of conventional armor against the might of these elite transphasic warbeasts.

"ROOOOOOOOAAAAA!"

A scaled tiger-like creature ripped a thick tower shield asunder with its claws before cleanly biting off a third of the torso of a R&R mech.

The impressive maw of the scaled tiger proved to be too much for the poor commercial mechs.

The large numbers proved to be a hindrance rather than a boon as the mechs physically collided against each other as they attempted to retreat or maneuver in a different direction.

The lack of cohesion showed that the mech pilots were largely unaccustomed to operating as a single unit outside of the parade formations that they trained for. The officers tried to rally the men together, but the sheer chaos along with other factors made it impossible for them to organize an effective defense!

Other parade mech groups fared just as bad for similar reasons. The mech pilots employed by purely commercial organizations never signed up for this and had never made any mental preparations to fight on this day.

Aside from that, the onerous restrictions on weapons set by the authorities deprived a lot of mechs from the ability to use their most powerful and effective armaments!

"My mech isn't carrying any ammunition for its gauss cannons!"

"My laser rifle is still locked!"

"What use is a sword when it can't even cut through this super beast's transphasic scales? They're way too hard!"

Although the weaker and less extravagant beast fell easily enough after getting attacked enough times, the ones that managed to survive the initial onslaught proved to be far more formidable than any of the mech pilots ever envisioned.

Even if they outnumbered these exceptional warbeasts by 100 to 1, the latter still managed to rampage with impunity as their transphasic attack and defense capabilities allowed them to fight as if they were wolves among sheep!

The rapidly spreading panic along with the continuous fall of mechs caused the attacks directed against these beasts to lose their effectiveness.

What was worse were the mech pilots who completely lost their nerve and ejected from their cockpit even though a beast was not even close to attacking them. Though they weren't obliged to defend the city against murderous monstrosities, they nonetheless incurred a permanent stain on their honor by fleeing before their mechs had exhausted all of their options!

"You... you dishonorable curs! Do you have no shame?! To think I treated you as my brothers. You have thrown away your chances of breaking through!"

"At least I get to live past this day!"

In the back of their minds, they knew that this incredibly cowardly act had essentially disqualified them from ever advancing to the rank of expert pilot or higher for the remainder of their careers, but at this time they couldn't care less about attaining greater power.

Their lives mattered the most to them and there was no willingness for any of them to sacrifice their lives for a bunch of strangers in Davute!

The fall of so many mechs along with the decreasing battle intent of the surrounding mech pilots encouraged the bloodthirsty warbeasts to attack even more!

While the mechs on land were getting shredded in rapid succession, the dark gray mechs that were capable of taking flight had already done so. Just as they thought they were safe, they came under attack by a different set of warbeasts!

There was no way that Professor Murmullian Granse had overlooked the existence of aerial mechs. The brilliant beast designer developed two different categories of warbeasts to cope against threats from afar.

"Ahhh! Those beasts are shooting lasers from their transphasic biocannons! The armor of my mech doesn't stand a chance! I'm ejecting!"

"Damn, this beast has wings! No wait, it even has an organic jet engine built onto its back! It's moving faster than my mech!"

The flight-capable warbeasts easily cut the aerial mechs to pieces. Without sufficient coordination or firepower, the machines that had taken flight essentially turned into target dummies that could easily be wiped out by the warbeasts that had especially been engineered to spread chaos and ruination behind enemy lines!

"Stand back, citizens! The cavalry has arrived!"

The military mech units assigned to guard Kotor City had already started to take action as soon as the threats emerged.

While they needed time to navigate to the streets where the beasts were let loose, once they came close enough they attempted to destroy the warbeasts with overwhelming firepower.

"All of the civilians in the vicinity have evacuated by now. We are cleared to open fire!"

"FIRE!"

A combination of laser beams and gauss projectiles slammed against the rampaging warbeasts!

Some of them managed to crack their scales and make them bleed, but the more formidable creatures managed to resist the attacks for a time!

"RROOOUUUUUAAAAA!"

The aggressive creatures instantly reoriented themselves to the greater threats. They began to counterattack in a variety of different ways, from spraying corrosive acids to flying over to where they were floating!

"Shoot them down!"

"We can't, sir! They are too tough!"

"Block them with our defensive mechs!"

"They can't! Their shields and armor are getting shredded with too much ease. Our mechs aren't equipped with transphasic gear."

"Spread out if that is the case. Make the beasts work for their kills! Call in backup from our expert mechs or ace mechs right away! We cannot hold these beasts for long!"

"Headquarters says they are busy! The nearest one is due to arrive in 25 seconds."

"25 seconds is too long! We will lose half of our machines at this rate!"

The military mech pilots tried to hold out as long as possible. Though they kept their fingers right on top of the eject button, they did not press it unless the warbeasts were truly close to felling their machines.

Each second they bought saved more lives!

"Johnson! Bring your Pacifier and do your job!"

"On it, sir!"

Reinforcements from an unexpected group had arrived after a few more seconds had passed. Though the military mech pilots were glad to receive additional help, many of them became disappointed when they saw that the new arrivals hailed from the Planetary Guard of all possibilities.

"What are you doing here? This is no ordinary out of control mech! These are transphasic warbeasts! Your slime won't avail you much."

"We can at least try, and don't worry. We have another trick up our sleeve!"

The mech pilots of the Planetary Guard might not be as skilled as their military counterparts, but they possessed a much greater sense of duty towards protecting the citizens of the state.

As such, they bravely flew forward and used their array of nonlethal armaments to disable the flying warbeasts.

"Zap em!" A Planetary Guard captain commanded.

One of the winged creatures briefly faltered when three paralyzing lightning bolts struck its body!

"EEEEEEEEEE!"

Though the creature ultimately did not incur any significant damage, it did slow the aggressive beast long enough for another batch of law enforcement mechs to come close and activate their fluid projectors.

Enormous streams of slime engulfed the body of the winged beast. Though the creature violently tried to shake off the gunk, its ability to fly significantly dropped.

"Johnson! Bring your Pacifier and do your job!"

"On it, sir!"

One of the most unique law enforcement mechs to have come out as of late boldly approached the entangled beast and engulfed it with an aura that exuded pure tranquility!

Though the Planetary Guard mech pilots did not expect this glow to do all that much to calm down the beast, they became pleasantly surprised when the creature lost a lot of vigor and crashed onto the street.

Though the beast still contained a lot of rage and desire to kill the humans around it, the mystical glow of the Pacifier mech continued to subdue its ferocity, thereby suppressing it to the point where the other law enforcement mechs could continually pile up so much rapidly hardening slime onto its body until it became completely encased!

Even though the flying warbeast possessed deadly transphasic claws and teeth, there was no way for the creature to employ them effectively when it had lost a lot of leverage due to being glued straight onto the surface of the street.

"Good work, Johnson! Let us proceed and tame these other feral beasts!"

"Gotta catch 'em all!"

Chapter 4762 Phasewater Difference

The mech units that answered to the colonial government reacted considerably better towards the current crisis.

Unlike the parade mechs that were mostly piloted by mercenaries or ordinary company employees, the military mechs acted more decisively and more brilliantly.

Even if the machines did not fare too well against the most powerful transphasic warbeasts, their bravery and their dedication to their duty demonstrated the quality of Davute's finest soldiers!

One of the unanticipated surprises of this sudden outbreak was the outsized role played by the humble Pacifier mechs.

The law enforcement mech model had become a popular staple for many Planetary Guard organizations in and outside of Davute. It had even become an increasingly more common product among mercenary outfits who found many lucrative uses for it aside from policing a settlement!

One of the known uses for the Pacifier was subduing wild beasts.

For example, hunting groups that received a contract to capture valuable exobeast specimens on an alien planet used to experience a lot of difficulties in completing their assignments.

Large and strong exobeasts were so ferocious that they could easily break through nets or resist a lot of paralyzing attacks!

If a hunt went poorly, then the hunting group might incur a lot of damage to its mechs, thereby wiping out all of the profits that could be made.

However, the presence of a single Pacifier could completely change the game!

Against many different exobeasts, the calming influence of the Pacifier's glow often worked to reduce the hostility and degree of resistance against any adversary.

Although willpower, instinct, mental resistance and many other factors determined how extensively the exobeasts became affected by the glow of the Pacifier, in most cases it played a useful enough role to make it worthwhile to take along!

Right now, these Pacifiers were showing their worth in various ways. Weaker exobeasts with more subservient attitudes became so cowed that they slowed down, causing them to become easy pickings for mechs.

The larger, more formidable and more aggressive beasts did not relent so easily, but their drive to attack and slaughter any nearby humans or mechs became noticeably more subdued.

Not only that, but the Pacifiers also played a massive role in stopping the spread of panic among the packed crowds of the people that had jammed into the Government District!

Too many people were running mindlessly on the streets or flying haphazardly in the air. Either way, they often got in the way of the mechs that had been tasked with stopping the warbeasts from continuing on their rampage.

"Get out of the way, you fool!"

"You are in the line of fire! I will open fire if you don't move out this instant!"

"Don't shoot! Everything is being recorded. Our superiors will have our heads if we deliberately fire on innocent civilians!"

It was only when the calming glows of the Pacifiers reduced the sense of panic and fear that the mindless civilians regained their wits. They obediently followed instructions and headed straight towards the entrances of underground shelters.

However, the Pacifiers only played a limited role due to their limited numbers. There were Planetary Guard units stationed all across Kotor City. The Pacifier mechs assigned to them would never be able to make it to the Government District in time!

Of the units that managed to respond more effectively against the unleashed warbeast than most, none could match the prowess of the expert mechs and ace mechs stationed in and around the Government District!

"Defend the innocent!" General Ark Larkinson roared as he led his barebones command to eliminate any nearby beasts in the vicinity.

He issued a rapid series of commands that caused the subordinates assigned to his mech unit to move in a coordinated fashion.

He had already learned that standard mechs were not effective against the most powerful warbeasts, so he instructed them to wipe out the weaker beasts first before focusing on distracting and luring the stronger creatures away from any nearby concentrations of civilians.

At the same time, he exerted all of the strength and power of a high-tier expert pilot and directly challenged the most threatening creatures!

"Come at me, you lizard!"

His Travon Exine flew forward while firing its integrated laser guns at the monster that massed more than a heavy mech!

Unfortunately for the defending side, the resonance-empowered laser beam salvo failed to inflict serious enough harm against the massive creature.

Its transphasic scales resisted the Travon Exine's might with great efficiency!

Though Ark did not give up and instructed his high-tier expert mech to fire its ranged armaments repeatedly against the same wounds it created earlier, the scales resisted the incoming energy attacks way too effectively for his liking.

This wasn't working!

"Phasewater is too ridiculous!" The Larkinson expert pilot grunted in frustration.

Although Ark could foresee that his expert hybrid mech's ranged attacks would eventually be able to burn off the creature's resilient scales, it would have taken far too much time to finish the job.

In the meantime, a lot of other powerful warbeasts would be left unopposed!

His heart burned with the strong desire to protect and safeguard the citizens of the state that he had recently pledged to serve.

It had always been his nature as a professional soldier to protect the innocent!

As such, his Travon Exine retrieved a spear from its back and initiated a short-ranged charge that built a lot of momentum in a short amount of time!

"BREAK!"

"RHUAAAAAAAAAAAA!"

The overgrown lizard roared in pain as the sudden charge of the high-tier expert mech succeeded in overcoming the enhanced resistance of the lizard's scales!

It helped that General Ark deliberately drove his resonance-empowered spear through the scales that had already been scorched by earlier intensive attacks.

Before the lizard could launch a devastating counterattack that was sure to damage the integrity of the expert hybrid mech's resonance shield, the Travon Exine quickly pulled out its spear and leaped to the side.

"Our new general did it! I knew the Larkinsons were strong!"

The warbeast had incurred a penetrating wound!

Alien blood slowly spilled out of the hole, and though the creature's specialized biology quickly tried to plug the gap, it was undeniable that the beast had become a lot more vulnerable to attacks than before!

"Ranged mechs, focus fire on the weak point of this warbeast." General Ark quickly commanded the nearby military mechs regardless of whether they fell under his command. "The scales of this feral beast may be impervious to your attacks, but the same cannot be said for his inner flesh!"

After the surrounding mech units suffered a lot at the hands of these abnormally tough and deadly warbeasts, a lot of mech pilots built up an intense hatred and animosity towards these man-eating monstrosities.

Many of them felt helpless about the fact that their regular mechs lacked the punching power to inflict true harm on these purpose-built warbeasts!

Now that an expert mech's spear charge successfully opened a wound, the military ranged mechs all concentrated their fire on the wound, which inflicted a lot of additional pain on the creature!

"It's working! Look at how much blood we are spilling!"

"The beast is turning around. Make sure to surround it on multiple sides!"

"It is hunching over and using its forepaw to cover its open wound. We can't hurt it anymore!"

"BREAK!"

General Ark had already anticipated that the warbeast would hunker down, so he had moved his Travon Exine away and circled around.

This allowed the expert hybrid mech to charge forward and sink its spear through the thicker transphasic scales covering its back with great power!

"There's a second wound now! There is no way the beast can defend against all of our attacks!"

The Larkinson expert pilot no longer bothered to entangle with the large lizard anymore. The creature possessed way too mass for his expert mech to kill with ease. It was better to let the regular troops finish the job and give them a greater sense of accomplishment in the process.

Ark went on to target another warbeast that possessed flight capabilities.

Although the flight-capable ones tended to be a little smaller and a lot lighter than the ones stuck on land, they were also a lot faster and harder to pin down as a result!

The Travon Exine opened fire with its integrated laser gun suite. Twelve resonance-empowered beams struck the creature's thinner wing membrane with unerring accuracy, burning several holes through the transphasic leathery surface!

"SQUAAAK!"

The wings were much less resilient than the scales of the previous creature, but destroying them did not cause the flying warbeast to lose altitude.

The developer of this bioengineered product seemed to have taken this possibility into account a long time ago! As such, the flying beast still managed to retain its flight capability by relying on a biological jet engine in combination with other organic lifting mechanisms.

The attack angered the creature and caused it to fly straight towards the Travon Exine at an accelerated rate by forming a quick warp bubble around its body!

General Ark widened his eyes and just managed to lift up its spear and sword to meet the incoming creature!

Bang!

"SHREEEEEE!"

The warbeast cried out in pain as its skull had almost been punctured by the Travon Exine's spear!

However, the creature also managed to inflict a lot of damage onto the Travon Exine's resonance shield!

The transphasic charge attack caused the expert mech to lose a lot buffer. Its resonance shield may still be holding on, but it lost the ability to resist a second attack of this magnitude!

General Ark Larkinson could have never imagined that a single warbeast could inflict so much He needed much more time to fill up the ranks of his mech division and train them into a cohesive whole.

damage onto his high-tier expert mech.

He grew more and more disappointed with his machine. Though the Travon Exine had served him well back when he served for the various warlords of the Garlen Empire, the lack of phasewater tech was hampering his efforts more and more.

If the colonists had begun to augment their warbeasts with phasewater, then their mechs would certainly be worse in this regard!

"Ves needs to design my new expert mech sooner rather than later." He concluded.

It would be devastating if the war between the colonial states started early as a result of this incident. Ark was not ready at all and his command wasn't even properly up and running as of yet. He needed much more time to fill up the ranks of his mech division and train them into a cohesive whole.

As Ark commanded his expert hybrid mech to turn around and fire another salvo of laser beams at the flying warbeast, he became a little more determined to upgrade from his current machine when he saw that the strike had only caused surface damage at best.

The expert pilot readied to meet another charge. If the warbeast was just as fast as before, then it would be extremely difficult to prevent his expert mech from incurring damage again.

Yet just before the enemy creature could pull off its fearsome charge, a bright resonance-empowered positron beam accurately nailed the warbeast in the head, causing it to get killed in an instant!

"ARK!" An incoming transmission sounded in the cockpit. "GOOD JOB, BUT LET ME DO THE REST!"

A much more powerful and radiant red machine had appeared over the distance!

The sight of the impressive caped masterwork ace hybrid mech inspired a lot of hope and optimism among the people that were struggling to fight or run away from the hardier warbeast.

Unlike other mechs, Patriarch Reginald Cross and his ace mech possessed more than enough power to punch through the resilient transphasic defenses of the berserk warbeasts with a single attack!

Its ARCEUS System did what the laser gun hardpoints of the Travon Exine could never accomplish and accurately strike down more than half-a-dozen beasts within line of sight with each and every discharge!

Once the Mars quickly cleared the most threatening warbeasts with contemptuous ease, the ace hybrid mech flew away in order to clear other section of the large and expansive Government District.

Though a part of General Ark felt empty after being robbed of his responsibility, a greater part of him was grateful for the intervention.

"I can wield this strength too one day..."

He just needed to pilot the right mech.

Chapter 4763 Overseeing the Battlefield

Of the many parade mech groups that had been forced to confront these warbeasts due to their proximity to the hostile creatures upon their appearance, a part of them rise to the occasion while many others disappointed the new colonial state for many different reasons.

"Just run!"

"I'm not paid to fight against these ridiculous monsters!"

"Davute is an awful place!"

For example, one street that was previously engulfed in pink had become remarkably less colorful.

The mech pilots hired by Sileena Dynamics only fought against the warbeasts for a short amount of time before they realized how outmatched they were. Their pink and feminine commercial mechs might look good on a broadcast, but their relatively fragile frames presented an even poorer defense against the out-of-control beasts than other machines!

The only consistent advantages that these pink-coated machines possessed was that they were faster and nimbler across all mech archetypes.

This enabled the mechs to evade many of the simplistic and telegraphed attacks of many beasts as long as their mech pilots reacted quickly enough.

Unfortunately, none of the mech pilots possessed the training, nerve and willingness to do their duty.

Their company mech pilots weren't particularly awful, but their lack of preparation along with the adverse circumstances caused them to quickly lose heart, especially when many of their colleagues got killed as their mechs got caught by the beasts!

The rout did not happen due to anyone's deliberate actions. The more off-balanced mech pilots simply chose to cut and run by whatever means possible, showing no regard for the teammates they left behind!

"You bastard!"

"He's got the right idea!"

The flight of the first pink mechs quickly started a cascade as the ones that initially remained behind did not want to be left with the burden that others had avoided!

It was at this point that the advantages of the Sileena mechs played a more useful role to the mech pilots for once.

Their superior traversal speeds allowed them to outpace many mechs!

Even if they weren't fast enough, they at least managed to outrace the mechs produced by many other companies, ensuring that others would fall before it was the turn of the pink machines!

"What are you doing?! You led them right to us, you cowards!"

"You'll pay for this, Sileena!"

A lot of complaints flew around as not just the parade mechs fielded by Sileena Dynamics but many other machines made the situation worse by acting in a completely chaotic fashion.

This increased the burden on the mech units that had largely chosen to make their stand and protect the people in the Government District from the ravages of the rampaging beasts.

"Is this what Davute's finest troops amount to? Our colonial state is doomed!"

"Not all of the mech pilots are cowards! Look over there! Those machines are still making a stand!"

Whereas the extremely numerous but incredibly weak commercial mechs of R&R and Sileena Dynamics disappointed everyone who witnessed their abysmal performance, the mechs fielded by Renewal Tech & Design fared considerably better.

For one, their mech pilots did not panic and run around like headless chickens. They showed considerably more professionalism to the point where it became obvious that they had been working together with each other for a long time.

The RT&D machines formed up and coordinated their actions with much less confusion and delay than the other parade groups. The mech pilots obeyed the instructions of their superior officers without fuss and the company headquarters also transmitted the unlock codes that restricted the functionality of the dangerous ranged weapons in a timely manner.

As the initial waves of weaker exobeasts and warbeasts charged towards the RT&D mechs, many of them were either gunned down by concentrated firepower or lost much of their momentum when

they collided against the overlapping energy shields projected by multiple melee mechs standing in close formation.

"Ghuuuuuuu!"

"Rwooooo!"

"The creatures are pissed! Hit them hard before they can regroup!"

Though the standard mechs of RT&D lost their energy shields at a rapid rate, they nonetheless acquitted themselves well and managed to eliminate the mob of cannon fodder creatures before they did much damage.

Unfortunately, that did not leave them with much power to fend off the most threatening transphasic warbeasts.

These experimental creatures had already torn up a lot of other mechs and easily managed to rip through the conventional energy shields that protected the softer mechs of this new mech company.

It was only now that the downside of piloting energy shield mechs became clear!

"Ahh!"

"Eject faster! Without our shields, the rest of our mech won't last long!"

When the warbeasts tore through a bunch of energy shields with disturbing ease and raked their unnaturally sharp claws through the thin armor plating of the RT&D mechs, the exteriors of the latter parted as if they were made of paper!

In over half of the cases, the cockpits of the mechs in question didn't even have time to eject in time!

Although the surviving mech pilots made sure to keep their hands on the eject button or levers at all time, it ultimately became clear that without equipping transphasic energy shields, the products of RT&D became just as vulnerable to transphasic attacks as their armor-based counterparts.

Nevertheless, the well-trained mech pilots in the service of Renewal Tech & Design tried to hold out as best they could.

"We need backup! We are losing our mechs at a rapid rate."

The RT&D mechs suddenly received a direct transmission on a new communication channel.

"Fear not, brave soldiers. We have heard your pleas. Be ready for a long-ranged precision strike."

"What?! From where?! This is no place to initiate an artillery bombardment!"

"Who said anything about artillery?"

Before the Renewal mech pilots could ask for more, a thin but bright energy beam launched from a distance and curved over the roofs of the government structures until it struck the neck of a resilient warbeast!

The creature's exultant warcry turned into a bloody gurgle as a thin hole had been sliced through its arteries and a part of its windpipe!

Though the creature's resilient regeneration power quickly tried to stem the bleeding, the surrounding RT&D mechs weren't sitting still.

"Attack the neck while the beast is still incapacitated!"

Many different ranged attacks worsened the injuries on the neck, causing the warbeast to choke and bleed to the point where it could no longer resist the melee mechs that quickly delivered the finishing blows!

The expert mech that was responsible for firing the curving energy beam was not done. It fired three more slicing energy beams, each of which possessed enough penetration power to slice through the transphasic hide or scales of the warbeasts that fell victim to these strikes.

Even if the magnitude of the damage was not all that great, just the fact that they were able to create a hole in the defenses of the beasts was enough for the surrounding RT&D mechs to exploit the openings and finish the job.

"Who are you?" The mech captain in the employ of RT&D asked. "You saved our back with those impressive precision strikes."

"We hail from the Larkinson Clan." The authoritative female voice responded. "We appreciate your gratitude, but you can repay us by doing what you can to secure your sector and bring order to the surrounding streets."

"What about the other sectors, ma'am?"

"They are already being handled by us and other reinforcements. It is more important for your unit to hold your positions and hinder any warbeasts from crossing into other streets. Do you understand?"

"Yes, ma'am!"

Legion Commander Casella Ingvar became satisfied with what she heard and saw. She knew she could count on the troops of RT&D to take their latest assignment seriously.

A part of her expansive mind continued to monitor the situation based on the expansive information fed to her expert command mech.

This allowed Casella to take in the circumstances in the other sectors and feed precise targeting data to the Amaranto that was hovering a short distance away from the Minerva.

The expert rifleman mech piloted by Venerable Stark was making good use of the Instrument of Vengeance that had recently fallen out of favor.

Though the older rifle could not match the destructive might of the Instrument of Doom, it was much more controllable, especially when Stark activated the resonance ability associated with the luminar crystal weapon.

Each time the Amaranto opened fire, it always managed to strike the creatures that were ordinarily hiding behind the walls of nearby structures by bending its beams by up to 45 degrees during their passage!

"Good work, Stark. You are saving a lot of lives with your excellent precision."

"The ones responsible for unleashing these beasts must pay." Venerable Stark spoke between gritted teeth.

"I promise you that our Black Cats will get to the bottom of this after this is over."

Commander Casella Ingvar had already noticed that Venerable Stark had grown a lot more volatile since this incident started.

Having learned the guest pilot's history a long time ago, Casella became concerned whether Venerable Stark would be able to maintain control over herself.

The command-oriented expert pilot could not afford to babysit Davia Stark, though. She was already trying to coordinate and keep track of many different developments. Her brain was heating up as she put her multitasking capability to the test.

Though Titania helped put her in a better state to track so many different elements, the burden on Casella and her masterwork expert command mech was not light.

Even as she sought to do the jobs of many officers and analysts at once, she also had to expend her concentration on Commandeering dozens of nearby Larkinson mechs!

"Nullifiers, eliminate the flying warbeasts in sector A5."

"Roger that!"

The elite Nullifier mechs that were exclusive to the Battle Criers flew towards the periphery of the Government Districts and managed to gain line of sight to a quartet of flying creatures that were faster and more resilient than normal!

The biological warping capabilities of the four beasts made it difficult to land any attacks on the nimble and maneuverable monsters. Their transphasic hides were also thick and layered to the point where they could prevent themselves from getting seriously injured as long as they moved quickly enough to prevent concentrated attacks from falling onto the same sections of flesh.

The Nullifier mechs did not care for that. The twelve mechs armed with rare but considerably powerful Godkiller heavy luminal crystal rifles started to take aim at once.

Even though the individual Battle Crier mech pilots were already quite skilled by themselves, they gained an extra boost from allowing Casella Ingvar to Commandeer them and their mechs!

This instantly turned the already powerful rifleman mechs into quasi-expert rifleman mechs!

After the mechs and mech pilots received wisps of Casella's transcendent strength, the Nullifier mechs all adjusted their aim with much better precision and opened fire at the right timing!

Two of the beasts got struck with six resonance-empowered transphasic positron beams at once!

Even though the destructive attacks only carried a meager amount of true resonance compared to the attacks launched by the Amaranto, the positron beams vaporized through the hides of the impudent warbeasts and burned so many holes through their bodies that they died as they fell!

"How did you do that, Larkinsons?!"

It only took a couple more seconds for the Nullifiers to charge another powerful salvo of positron beams that quickly shot down the remaining two flying warbeasts!

"S-So strong!"

"Why aren't these machs for sale!?"

There were two reasons why the Nullifiers managed to cut through the strong exterior defenses of the powerful warbeasts with relative ease.

The first reason was because they received a considerable offensive boost from Commander Casella's resonance ability.

The second reason was because the Nullifier mechs were all armed with transphasic luminar crystal weapons.

Even if those rifles only integrated 5 grams of phasewater each, that granted them just enough transphasic capabilities to neutralize a portion of the transphasic defenses of their targets.

These two factors in isolation might not necessarily allow the Nullifiers to shoot down the resilient warbeasts with ease, but when they were active at the same time, they produced a wonderful synergy that allowed the end results to vastly exceed the sum of their parts!

Chapter 4764 Early Test

"Yorvick." President Yenames Clive addressed his cousin and trusted protector. "Why are you not moving to defeat the terrible monsters unleashed on my subjects? They are being harmed in large quantities. It is the duty of our colonial state's most powerful protector to take action when its people and planet are being severely threatened."

"I am sorry Yenames. I am afraid I cannot do that." Yorvick steadily replied over the communication channel.

"...Why not?" Yenames simply asked.

The Indormeon remained still as its formidable Saint Kingdom continued to envelop a part of the Grand Stage.

The defensive ace pilot had chosen to condense his protective and defensive Saint Kingdom so that it provided stronger and more concentrated protection to Yenames Clive alone.

Despite the arrival of a whole company of mechs in addition to hundreds of individual infantry soldiers, The mighty ace knight mech did not budge from its position directly in front of Yenames Clive.

This was the best position for the Indormeon to use its considerable bulk and its solid tower shield to block any long-ranged strikes from afar.

However, many people including the president of the colonial state himself thought that the Indormeon could do a lot more for everyone if it went out and quelled the crisis!

"YORICK!" Yenames Clive roared as he grew frustrated at his lack of control! "As the commander-in-chief, I compel you to go out and crush the rogue warbeasts as soon as possible!"

"You have yet to formally proclaim the founding of the colonial state and formalized your appointment as its president." Yorick replied.

"You are still a servant of the colony of Davute!"

"That is true, but the leader of Davute does not hold as many rights and power. Give up, Yenames. I do not intend to move from your side for the remainder of the day. My greater duty is to protect your life. The Davute Project depends on your continued wellbeing as it will collapse if our enemies manage to assassinate you on this crucial day. I cannot overlook the slightest chance of an assassination."

The president violently gestured with his arms, causing the multiple layers of ceremonial robes on his body to flutter!

"Then allow me to evacuate to the Skyline Palace or an underground stronghold! The sooner I am brought to safety, the better!"

"My mission still remains active even if you are brought to a less exposed and more secure location." Saint Yorick emotionlessly replied. "The plotters of this vile attack have already shown they can circumvent our sophisticated security measures and teleport hostiles in areas where they shouldn't have been able to penetrate. Who can say it will not happen again? Aside from that, you are a symbol of Davute. You must show your courage and commitment to the people by standing bravely while you watch the mech troops of Davute rise to the occasion."

As a member of the Clive Consortium that had been on a leadership track for most of his life, Yenames Clive knew exactly what Yorick was referring to. It was a more profitable choice for him to remain in place and witness his people struggling and suffering to survive against the rampage of wild beasts that should have never been let loose.

However, his empathy and attachment for his subjects made it difficult for him to stomach this cold-blooded choice. He especially found it to be an incredible waste to keep the Indormeon anchored to his position.

"A Saint must step forward and fight! You should at least shoot down the warbeasts that are in the line of sight of your ace mech's ranged weapons. I know that the mech designers have added a handful of ranged options to your Indormeon!"

The ace knight mech showed no indication that it was about to employ its modest but powerful complement of ranged weapons.

"Using them is unnecessary and counterproductive." Saint Yorick replied. "The engineered warbeasts will most certainly direct their aggression towards my ace mech, which not only distracts me from anticipating assassination attempts against your life, but also puts our immediate area at risk. Other ace mechs are already taking the lead in cleansing the Government District of the filth that is trying to stain the streets with blood. The Shotgun Shogun, the Koi Riser and the Mars are more than adequate enough to defeat even the strongest rogue creatures. The Government District shall be made secure in two minutes at most."

"That is too long of a delay! The warbeasts can tear through mechs and crowds of Davutans in a matter of seconds!"

"Believe in your citizens, Yenames." Yorvick calmly replied. "You did not ask for this test, but you can make use of it to see which mech companies and mech forces are worth courting. Be glad that Karlach is testing us before the proper war has commenced. It is much more costly for our colonial state to make misjudgments when we have already invested heavily in the wrong groups. Look at how the parade mechs of the Larkinson Clan are faring. Both their standard mechs and expert

mechs are performing more than admirably. Their Everchanger is worth as much as four expert mechs during a violent attack such as this due to its glow abilities alone!"

When President Yenames Clive accessed the feeds that displayed the current activities of the Larkinson mechs, he immediately understood why they earned the appreciation of his powerful cousin.

Not a single parade mech of the Larkinson Clan turned out to be a waste!

The Minerva kept track of the surrounding and coordinated the movements of both Larkinson mechs and any cooperating mech units from other organizations.

It also empowered the standard mechs of the Larkinson Clan within range with a hint of true resonance, allowing mechs such as the Nullifiers to more easily tear through the transphasic exterior defenses of the tougher and more resilient warbeasts!

The Amaranto perfectly sniped the different warbeasts with great power and accuracy. Although its firing rate was a little slow, each blow was guaranteed to kill or cripple any expensive monster that could give most non-transphasic expert mechs a run for their money!

Even the melee mechs were doing their part. A part of the Rigid Walls and the Bright Warriors Mark II's had moved to Block L where the VIPs of the Larkinson Clan resided and utilized their formidable defensive equipment to completely shield the seating block from any damage.

The other Rigid Walls and defensive Bright Warriors had moved to shield the surrounding civilians from the errant attacks of surviving beasts.

The Second Swords performed considerably better than expected!

The four quasi-first-class mechs utilized their new first-class armor plating and hastily forged greatswords to hunt down individual warbeasts without relying on any assistance!

"This is just like old times!" Commander Sendra Larkinson crowed. "These upgraded Second Swords might not run as smoothly as our old machines, but with this much raw power at our disposal, it is inexcusable for us to leave this battlefield empty-handed. Now let us earn a trophy!"

That was exactly what the other three veteran Swordmaiden mech pilots wanted to hear!

Whereas most melee mech pilots in the field wanted to distance themselves from the killer warbeasts whose claws and teeth could tear straight through many layers of armor plating as if they were made out of butter, the Swordmaidens eagerly challenged them as if they knew no fear!

"Hack this lizard apart!"

A strange six-legged creature had been breathing fire into the entrance of an underground shelter!

The blast doors and energy shields that should have blocked the flames from penetrating deeper completely failed as the transphasic fire blasts tore through the barriers with concentrated power.

Over a hundred civilians had just entered the tunnel complex and failed to move far enough from the entrance to escape the danger!

Though the four Swordmaiden mechs failed to move in quickly enough to prevent so many civilians from getting burned, they could at least hinder the fire-breathing warbeast from ruining the tunnel complex even further!

"Careful with the flames!" Commander Sendra warned even though her fellow sisters did not really need the reminder. "If this beast is weak, go for the neck. If it is tougher, then focus on disabling the limbs!"

The Second Swords automatically split up and approached the six-legged fire lizard from multiple directions.

As the formidable swordsman mechs struck with quick and cautious slashes, the Swordmaiden mech pilots found out that the weapons weren't easily capable of penetrating through the scales.

This was no surprise as the alloys of the crudely made greatswords originally consisted of alien warship hull plating. The metal may be a lot tougher than the second-class greatswords that the Second Swords wielded before, but they did not particularly excel at cutting through tough materials, even if they were mildly transphasic!

As the lizard roared in irritation more than anything, it attempted to scorch the nearest Second Sword.

"ROOOAAAAA!"

Yet when the flames surged in the mech's direction, the Second Sword had already sidestepped away.

"Hah, your aim is poor!"

"Watch out, sister! This creature turns a lot faster than it looks!"

The Swordmaidens thought that the creature's turning rate was poor due to possessing an abundance of thick limbs, but the bioengineered creature had a few tricks up its sleeve!

The sides of the scaled lizard's body flashed with propelling fire, allowing the warbeast to double its turning rate!

"Damn, this beast has boosters on its sides!"

"Aim your swords at these cavities! They shouldn't be covered by any scales."

"We're too late! My sword just bounced off the scales that dropped back into place!"

The Second Swords continued to circle and poke at the warbeast. Its transphasic scales were so effective that the swordsman mechs only dented the scales with every normal attack they unleashed.

It took heavy and committed strikes in order to break or peel away a number of those powerful scales!

Although the Swordmaidens managed to damage a few scales after half a minute of dancing around, Commander Sendra quickly grew impatient.

"Get this lumbering beast to breathe fire once again. Once one of us is forced to evade, we can take advantage of the creature's exposed bioboosters to circumvent its scales."

"Good idea!"

A Second Sword deliberately acted as bait by slowing down its movement while lingering in the forward arc of the threatening creature.

This provoked the warbeast into taking a deep breath before breathing out an expanding cone of flame!

The Second Sword in question had already circled to the side, but the lizard predictably utilized its bioboosters to keep up with the movements of its annoying prey.

"Strike!"

The other three Second Swords had already started to rush forward. Before the creature finished turning around, three extremely hardy swords stabbed their tips right through the exposed biobooster organs!

The swords sunk deep as the bioboosters could not resist physical attacks as well as heat damage!

The lizard roared in pain as the three greatswords had cut deep enough to cut through a lot of flesh and organs!

Yet before the Second Swords could retract their blades, the warbeast abruptly heated up at an astounding rate!

"It's going to release a lot of flames!"

The three nearby swordsman mechs barely managed to let go of their weapons and moved back as far away as possible while holding their arms in front of their chests. The mechs protected their cockpits to the best possible extent!

BOOOOOM!

The expensive warbeast roared as every cavity in its body released all of the flames that the creature could generate in an instant!

The entire street and surroundings became scorched in an instant!

The three nearby Second Swords hadn't been able to escape the edge of this firestorm!

"Sisters!"

However, as the immediate surroundings turned into a molten crater due to the powerful blast of flames, the three Second Swords ultimately managed to limp out while exhibiting only partial damage to their exteriors.

Their thin but impressive layer of first-class bulk alloy armor plating offered just enough protection for the Larkinson mechs to protect their internals!

Though the swords poked into the creature's body had already molten to an extent, the vengeful Swordmaidens did not care and quickly moved in to reclaim their weapons and butcher the exhausted fire lizard!

"More!"

The Swordmaiden mech pilots did not let the state of their mechs and greatswords deter them from continuing the fight. They wordlessly collected themselves before venturing out to challenge a second formidable warbeast with their blunt and half-molten blades!

Chapter 4765 The Subduer

Though the four Swordmaiden mechs managed to prove that a small group of standard mechs could fell the ferocious warbeasts through a combination of skill and excellent materials, they were too small in number to make much of a difference.

The presence of multiple active ace mechs in the Government District ensured that the warbeasts were doomed to perish before they could perpetrate their rampage much further.

However, just a few minutes of unbridled savagery was already enough to kill tens of thousands of additional civilians as well tear through hundreds of mechs!

No matter whether it was the former or the latter, the judicious slaughter perpetrated by the warbeasts that should have been fighting on the same side as their prey reflected badly on Davute!

Every defending mech or mech unit that did their utmost to hinder the rogue beasts turned into a hero as far as the government was concerned!

They not only saved a lot of lives at great personal risk, but also showcased the bravery and competence of the colonial state's armed forces!

Even if the mechs of the Larkinson Clan did not actually belong to the Davute Branch, many viewers watching the unfolding disaster by remote became a lot more appreciative of these machines.

Each Larkinson mech had their merits, but out of all of the standard mechs and expert mechs that threw themselves in the fight or made themselves useful, one machine in particular attracted the most attention!

The Everchanger looked like an unlikely candidate. Though the impressive green-coated masterwork expert mech possessed a fantastic appearance, the hero mech did not possess any noticeably higher combat power.

The living expert mech's Vitalus rifle was not as deadly as the Instrument of Vengeance.

The Heartsword was not as large or lethal as the Decapitator of the First Sword.

Though Ves had recently added the Scarlet Ember to the Everchanger's loadout choices, the authorities prohibited the Larkinson Clan from bringing the extremely powerful plasma sword to the parade.

As such, the mech's offensive powers were not that impressive compared to other expert mechs. This was especially the case when the clan had yet to upgrade the Everchanger with substantial transphasic upgrades to his offensive and defensive systems.

The Everchanger did not attract so much awe and admiration for his ability to take down the rogue warbeasts with great efficiency.

The Amaranto already had that covered.

What the expert hero mech did instead was to make the most of his endowments. When Venerable Joshua observed all of the death and destruction around his position, he wanted to do nothing more than to stop all of the killing!

His heart yearned for peace. "Lufa! Lend me your aid and provide sanctuary to the people that yearn for it! Let us give them a reprieve against the monsters!"

As the Everchanger changed his current active design spirit from the Golden Cat to Lufa, the warm and inviting aura of the Larkinson expert mech gained a distinctly calmer and purer character.

This was not enough, though. The range of the Everchanger's glow wasn't even extensive enough to reach the ground!

This was why Venerable Joshua leveraged his extraordinary willpower and resonated with the Iridescent Mercury that was integrated deep inside the Everchanger's frame.

This mysterious resonating exotic usually did not play much of a role in other expert mechs, but combined with the properties of a living machine, the Iridescent Mercury somehow amplified the range of the Everchanger's current glow by at least two orders of magnitude!

This vastly increased the volume of space that came under the effect of the Everchanger's tranquil glow!

The Everchanger's glow stretched for several kilometers, and while the strength of the glow effect weakened at the furthest edges, every human and alien became affected to a degree!

It was as if a superpowered version of the Pacifier had taken root in the Government District.

Though not all of the areas of the large and extensive district had fallen under the sway of the Everchanger's amplified glow, over 70 percent of the areas in chaos immediately experienced a downturn in the fighting as the warbeasts lost a lot of fervor all of a sudden!

"Rhhhuuuuughh..."

"Wwaaaahhhgh..."

"Reeeeee..."

The bioprogramming of the rogue warbeasts clearly sought to stoke their aggression as much as possible, but the forced peace imposed by Lufa clearly caused the creatures to slow down in their attacks!

That wasn't the extent of the difference that the Everchanger made.

As Lufa's glow fell onto the panicking mech pilots and civilians who were still stuck on the streets, the people in question calmed down just enough for them to regain their wits!

Their fears hadn't disappeared, but they no longer ran around without direction. The tranquility imposed by Lufa cleared their heads just enough for them to act more rationally.

The civilians sought the nearest underground shelters instead of trying to leave the Government District first.

The fleeing mech pilots slowed down and either formed up with their nearby comrades again or avoided getting in the way of other friendly units.

In short, by taking up a central position in the southern section of the Government District where the crowds had been the densest, the amount of lives that the Everchanger saved was easily on par with that of an ace mech such as the Shotgun Shogun!

Venerable Joshua and the Everchanger weren't satisfied yet. They both knew they could do more to end the killing a little earlier.

"IT IS TIME TO TEST YOUR DUAL MARKSMANSHIP SKILLS AGAIN, JOSHUA." The Everchanger's rumbling voice sounded in his own cockpit.

"I have always kept my skills in shape." Joshua replied.

He proved that by controlling the Everchanger to aim his Vitalus rifle in a specific direction.

Though the Everchanger was not able to target as many warbeasts at the altitude he was maintaining, it was still sufficient for the expert hero mech to snipe at the flying warbeasts that rose high enough to make them vulnerable to ranged attacks.

Joshua resonated with the Vitalus rifle and fired a slicer beam that cut a shallow hole through the winged beast's leathery wings.

"SHHHIIIEEEE!"

The creature faltered for a second, but by the time it recovered, the Everchanger fired its weapon yet again.

The creature got struck again and again, interrupting its previous attacks as it became too preoccupied with stabilizing its flight.

Unfortunately, the Vitalus most penetrating attacks had yet to inflict any truly lethal or crippling damage. The weapon had yet to undergo a more significant overhaul.

Joshua already expected this outcome. This was why he commanded his Everchanger to aim a second weapon at the warbeast in his sights!

The Everchanger opened fire with a pistol that exuded the breath of death. The gun made for a strong contrast when it was held in the arms of a mech that exuded a lot of vitality, but somehow the two managed to get along!

This was reflected in the energy beam fired by the Gray Lotus. The beam that contained a decent amount of death energy was wrapped with life-attributed true resonance.

This not only allowed the beam to slightly adjust its trajectory so that it struck the flying warbeast on its more damaged section of hide, but also caused the death energy to persist longer and punch deeper into the monster's flesh.

"Shiiiiiee!"

The creature suffered noticeably more from this strike!

The affected pieces of flesh started to necrotize at an alarming rate.

Not only that the expanding death energies also affected the creature's feral spirit, causing it to be drained. The result was that the creature fought even less ferociously than before!

"Shhhiiiiieee!"

The warbeast completely forgot about chasing after the nearby mechs and shifted towards the Everchanger!

This just made it easier for Venerable Joshua and his battle partner to strike the approaching creature with repeated attacks against its exposed front!

Though the head and skull of the warbeast was surprisingly resilient, the repeated resonance-empowered attacks from both the Vitalus and the Gray Lotus resulted in a quick resolution.

The warbeast became so exhausted in its flight that it turned into a sitting duck against other other nearby mechs that had no qualms about taking advantage of the weakness of one of these reviled monsters!

Again and again the Everchanger shot both of his guns at the same flying warbeasts.

The Vitalus rifle focused on breaching the transphasic defenses of the resilient creatures while the Gray Lotus sapped the same targets of their fighting spirit.

Combined with the amplified tranquility glow affecting a lot of streets in the Government District, the Everchanger continued to weaken one warbeast after another, causing them to become so debilitated that many more people in the vicinity were finally able to flee to safety!

Venerable Joshua hated what had happened today, but a part of him couldn't help but feel a lot more relieved about the nature of his opponents today.

"NOT EVERY ENEMY DESERVES REDEMPTION. SHOW NO MERCY TO THESE MURDEROUS CREATURES."

"You don't need to remind me, Everchanger!"

This time, he wasn't fighting against rational and sentient humans or aliens.

The creatures let loose in the Government District had no redeeming factors. They were monsters born for slaughter and clearly possessed no desire to live a peaceful life.

No matter how intelligent they may be, the fact that they were already stained with the blood of dozens, hundreds if not thousands of civilians did not allow for Joshua to show any mercy to these cruel but tragic creatures!

As Venerable Joshua continued to leverage Lufa's glow, he found himself getting more in tune with the Angel of Tranquility.

The restlessness in his heart faded as he allowed himself to get affected by Lufa's calming presence.

Even expert pilots sought peace at times. While Joshua did not delude himself into thinking that he could take shelter in the bliss of ignorance in repeated battles, it was nice for him to detach himself from the dark and depressing thoughts in his mind.

He had little doubt that this was a premeditated attack. He may not be a scientist or biotech researcher, but he knew that beasts like these did not randomly get loose on the streets, let alone hunt down humans with such relentless aggression!

As the secret grandmaster of the Anima Order, the Everchanger was able to analyze the context of this incident from the perspective of a leader.

The conclusions it drew were not exactly pleasant to hear.

"These people..." Joshua trailed off as he continued to concentrate on firing the guns at the few warbeasts that the Everchanger could target from the air. "How much do the citizens of a state have to pay for the ambitions of the ruling class?"

"COMPLAINTS DO NOT CHANGE ANYTHING, JOSHUA. IT TAKES ACTION TO INDUCE TRUE CHANGE."

"I know, but..."

"WE HAVE SPOKEN ABOUT THIS BEFORE. YOUR TIME IS BETTER SPENT ON THE ACTIONS THAT YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW. YOUR ROLE IS NOT OVER ONCE THE BATTLE ENDS. KEEP PROVIDING SANCTUARY TO THE SADDENED AND BEREAVED. THERE WILL BE A LOT OF FAMILIES WHO HAVE LOST THEIR LOST ONES BY THE TIME THIS BATTLE HAS FINALLY COME TO AN END."

The collective actions of the mechs stationed in the Government District and surroundings finally caused the incident to come to an end.

Fewer and fewer warbeasts remained in good health. The standard mechs that lasted this long either learned how to contain these powerful creatures or managed to fell most of the ones in range.

The expert mechs and ace mechs had managed to do a lot of work. Whether it was the Amaranto or the Shotgun Shogun, the powerful pilots of each of these powerful machines exerted their utmost to save as many lives as possible!

The only exception was the Indormeon which continued to guard a president who possessed the unenviable job of trying to salvage a benefit out of this horrendous tragedy.

Saint Yorvick acted more as an observer than anything else during this incident. So far, much of what he witnessed matched his expectations.

Only a few groups of mechs and pilots managed to exceed his initial projections.

"There are pockets of hope in the midst of disappointment." The ace pilot commented.

Chapter 4766 Disappeared

Just as Yenames Clive finished consulting with his speechwriters who hastily drafted together a speech that amplified the themes of his earlier words, another alert soon pulled him out of his deliberations.

"What is the matter, Yorick!"

"Our guests... a third of the VIPs that we have invited have been abducted under our noses."

"Are you jesting?!"

Yenames Clive quickly called up the relevant feeds. Of the 24 surviving seating blocks that remained intact, 8 of them that happened to retreat towards the south or west direction had lost all of their occupants!

Both the invited guests as well as the guards had disappeared from all of the sensors!

"Where did they go?! Who took them away?!"

"Our men are still searching for answers, but the evidence so far suggests that they have been teleported to an unknown location with the use of exotic alien technology."

When President Yenames Clive rewatched the log recordings, he couldn't figure out how the individuals disappeared so easily. It was as if they simultaneously entered a doorway that led into darkness!

The reason why it became possible for a third party to disappear so many VIPs at once was because the spatial interdiction field generators still hadn't been brought back online.

"Secure the remaining VIPs! And restore the interdiction fields!"

"Our engineers are working on it. The team working on the power supply report that they are able to reactivate a generator in less than a single minute."

"That is already far too late!"

If the unleashing of rogue and maddened warbeasts into the Government District could still be salvaged, then the disappearance of over a third of the most influential and strategically important elites of Davute was a catastrophe!

This latest turn of events not only drained President Yenames Clive of all hope, but also caused his strongest bodyguard to get shocked into silence.

Saint Yorvick actually experienced much greater turmoil than he should have! All of the plans he had considered alongside a small group of informed individuals never mentioned anything about making so many crucial figures disappear at once!

It was one thing to kill off the occupants of just 3 out of the 26 seating blocks. The fact that one of them inadvertently got saved by the Shotgun Shogun's favorable positioning did not materially affect the consequences of this event.

The story was different if a lot more people than that disappeared at once!

The plan to shake Davute awake and unite all of its citizens against Karlach never accounted for that many losses!

If the sudden displacement of thousands of executives, mech designers and senior military officers could not be resolved in a short amount of time, then all hell would break loose!

The government authorities weren't the only ones who had noticed the strange and unannounced disappearance of so many important VIPs.

Several mechs hailing from various family organizations and mercenary outfits flew towards the center plaza.

Now that the last of the rampaging warbeasts had just been subdued, it was no longer necessary for the mechs to remain on guard, at least according to these organizations.

They were much more concerned with the disappearance of their leaders!

"Where are they, president?!"

"You failed to protect our elders, Davute!"

"Why has your ace knight mech been doing nothing all of this time?! Your Saint could have stopped the attackers from kidnapping our leaders!"

The mechs brazenly broadcasted the furious complaints and recriminations from the representatives of the groups that suffered enormously from the disappearances.

The amount of mechs that joined the crowd rose quickly as the news spread like wildfire.

Even in the midst of all of the deaths and tragedies that took place in the crown jewel of the new colonial state, the various groups were solely concerned about their own losses!

"We deserve an answer, president!"

"Why aren't your Saints trying to track down our missing relatives already?!"

"DO SOMETHING!"

As the voices grew louder, the government officials had to act exceedingly carefully.

Saint Yorvick Clive could have shut all of these blathering mouths up at once by pressing onto them with his Saint Kingdom.

The powerful ace pilot did not do so, though. He knew quite well that a softer and more delicate touch was needed.

President Yenames Clive was not in a hurry to address the crowd either. He instead consulted with Reina Kernsk and his team in a frantic effort to gather more information and prepare a more satisfying response to the important stakeholders of the Davute Project.

In the meantime, the mechs hailing from one of the most notable and best-performing groups had arrived.

A lot of people settled down as the Larkinson mechs appeared. From the Nullifiers to its various masterwork expert mechs, the clan had definitely exhibited the strength that allowed it to defeat numerous alien warships and other alien monstrosities during its expeditions!

The people but especially the mech pilots that immigrated to the Red Ocean developed a much greater respect towards superior combat strength than in the past.

As far as combat power went, the parade mechs that the Larkinson Clan had brought to the Government District today vastly outperformed that of many other groups!

As such, the various parties who did not wish to hold back their tongues against the government authorities readily gave way to the Larkinsons!

It was not just because the complainers felt that the Larkinsons had done much more to protect them all than all of the government forces put together.

The real reason why they fell silent and allowed the Larkinsons to take the initiative was because these brave fighters also fell victim to the latest turn of events!

Ves Larkinson, the patriarch of the Larkinson Clan, was missing!

Also missing was his wife, his children, the chief ministers, the lower ministers, General Verle along with a fair number of members of the Larkinson Assembly!

If not for the fact that Director Calabast Arnland of the Black Cats had wisely chosen to return to the Blinding Banshee that was orbiting in space, pretty much the entire upper echelon of the clan would have been emptied in its entirety!

It was partially because of Calabast's urging that the Larkinsons sought to obtain answers from the Davutans.

The Amaranto was still maintaining overwatch while the Everchanger utilized his flexible glows as crowd control.

This left the Minerva as the only expert mech that dared to approach the Indormeon.

The two mechs were far apart from each other.

The Minerva possessed a relatively smaller and more compact frame. The Indormeon was literally built like a tank as it was quite clearly designed to withstand a lot of punishment.

The former possessed an exquisite frame and her imperious personality was clear even to audiences that knew nothing about living mechs. There was a slight dissonance between the expert command mech and her expert pilot, but rather than being treated as a flaw, the Larkinsons leveraged these differences as a source of strength!

The latter was a much closer reflection of its ace pilot. As a Saint, Yorvick continually baptized the Indormeon with his exceedingly strong willpower, which literally caused the ace knight mech to reshape itself into a form that better complemented its user!

If the differences between the mechs couldn't get even more pronounced, the Mars soon blasted to the air above the central plaza as if it belonged in this gathering!

"Commander Casella, I heard what happened." Reginald spoke in a voice that betrayed his lingering excitement of entering into real combat again. "I regret that I missed what happened to Ves and the Larkinsons who were with him. I was pretty sure I would have been able to intercept any enemies that sought to attack their block, but I was mistaken."

Though Patriarch Reginald Cross did not deliberately tried to impose his will upon others, he was much worse at this than Saint Yorvick Clive.

Dozens of mechs flew backwards in order to get out of the range of Reginald's domineering Saint Kingdom.

Only strong-willed individuals such as Commander Casella and President Yenames Clive could maintain their full clarity while in close proximity to an active Mars.

"We require your assistance." Commander Casella eventually issued the Larkinson Clan's demand towards Davute. "Our missing clansmen must be accounted for. Your armed forces assumed responsibility for the safety of all of them, to the exclusion of other mech troops including ours. We would have been able to bring much more than three expert mechs and 24 standard mechs if we had the chance to do so. Whether that would have made a difference or not, we cast blame for everything that happened today on your feet."

President Yenames Clive maintained an impassive face as he made a show of patiently accepting the Larkinson Clan's grievances.

"You are correct to express frustration at our security arrangements. We can promise you that we will strictly examine and improve our security protocols to prevent a repeat of this tragedy. I can assure you that our best scientists and analysts are studying the data logs for any clues where your people and relatives have been taken. Every technology leaves a trace. Whether they are deceased or not, we will not stop until we find the answers to what has happened."

Yenames knew better than to blame Karlach right away for everything that had happened today. He tried to keep his response as humble as a leader in his position could allow.

He expected that the Larkinsons would express more dissatisfaction in his insufficient response.

Instead, the voice of Commander Casella Ingvar remained a lot calmer than he and everyone else expected!

"We appreciate all of the support you can offer. The sooner you can create a portal or unlock a gate, the better. Perhaps it is better if you enlist the aid of the Mech Trade Association."

Everyone became stumped by what they heard.

"Commander Ingvar, do you have additional information that can clarify what has taken place?"

"We do not have all of the answers." The pilot of the Minerva responded. "We can tell you that Patriarch Ves and the other people assigned to Block L have been moved to a parallel space of sorts. Our patriarch and our own analysts currently suspect that all of the missing people have been forcibly shifted into an old pocket space that is anchored to this planet. It is not the first time our clan has encountered the work of a phase whale."

The revelation of the Larkinson Clan shocked the crowd once again!

"Is our upper management still alive?" The pilot of a mech representing Freewell Medical Services asked.

"Yes." Casella spoke. "For now at least."

"Where did you get that information, ma'am?!"

"We still maintain limited contact with our patriarch and the missing clansmen."

"How do you maintain contact with individuals who have been moved to a different space that is out of phase with our main reality?" President Yenames Clive asked with a frown. "It should be impossible to maintain contact unless there is an active and connected quantum communication node or similar on the other side of the connection, but that should not be the case."

The Minerva shifted a little. "We have our own means. The method of communication is similar to that of the Buzzy Bee model that our mech company has put on sale for a while. The signals that we transmit and receive travel through a metaphysical channel for a lack of a better description. Ordinary barriers such as crossing dimensions are not as much of a hindrance as you think."

The Golden Cat bound the Larkinsons together no matter where they could be found.

While those who found themselves in extremely remote and anomalous spaces were harder to maintain contact with, Goldie always knew whether a Larkinson was dead or alive!

The fact that the ancestral spirit readily reported that Ves and all of the others were still alive. The welcome news had given the other clansmen a lot of relief!

That didn't mean the other side was safe. An unknown party deliberately went out of its way to grab Ves and many other VIPs!

"Can you provide us with a live feed through this connection?" President Yenames Clive asked as he and many other officials developed a much greater interest in examining the performance of the Buzzy Bee model all of a sudden.

"That is... not possible. The method of communication is still new and rudimentary. It is not yet possible to exchange signals at a high enough bandwidth. It should be sufficient to exchange simple messages and the like."

Yenames smiled. "We can work with that. The information that you have provided up to this point already provides us with a great amount of assistance. Let us work together and see whether we can reopen this pocket space."

They exchanged contacts and data for the next half-minute.

In the meantime, Calabast came up with another question that Commander Casella voiced.

"By the way, sir, did you or your government know about the presence of a murky phase whale enclave in this star system?"

"No." President Yenames Clive straightforwardly admitted as if he himself couldn't believe that such a major space had escaped everyone's notice. "We did not know about it. What you have revealed earlier comes as a surprise to us as well."

Chapter 4767 Delayed Assistance

Over a thousand VIPs and other people had disappeared!

The rampaging beasts that had managed to teleport into the Government District did not slaughter them. That pretty much became clear in an instant.

Aside from the two colorful wormdragon beasts that managed to destroy two seating blocks at the beginning, no other creature managed to lay a hand on the honored guests that Davute had invited to witness the founding ceremony.

The Shotgun Shogun constantly remained in the vicinity of the surviving seating blocks during the initial minutes of the incident.

Once the Shotgun Shogun and the arriving guard mech units stationed in the vicinity cleared the Government District of any immediate threats, the former lingered in the neighborhood while the latter constantly shadowed the 24 seating blocks.

On top of that, additional mechs hailing from the various groups arrived to increase the security of the VIPS. The Larkinson Clan for example dispatched numerous defensive mechs and utilized their own physical shields as well as remote shields to better protect Block L against incidental attacks or deliberate assassination strikes!

None of the warbeasts came close to threatening the seating blocks again.

Even as he guarded the president of the new colonial state, Saint Yorvick Clive constantly monitored the condition of the 24 blocks that managed to remain aloft. He had not detected any overt or covert attempts to harm the VIPs that received protection from many different angles.

Unfortunately, all of the mechs, expert mechs and ace mechs in the field failed to hinder an unknown party from doing what everyone considered impossible!

"It turns out that the sabotage of the spatial interdiction field generators had deeper implications than we assumed." Commander Casella Ingvar thought. "It is quite clear that the culprits responsible for the initial attacks are distinct from the perpetrators of the kidnapping. Any group that has taken control of a parallel space on this planet could have done more with this advantage."

The people that had gathered here had many unanswered questions. The analysts working in the background came up with many different theories, especially about the identity and the purpose of the kidnappers.

"Whatever the case, it is clear that the group responsible for taking away so many of our VIPs did so with deliberate intent." President Yenames Clive said with a dark expression on his face. "The perpetrators not only understand our state and our people well enough, but also possess the technology to precisely take away the individuals of many different seating blocks."

"The tech or method used to kidnap our patriarch and others is not completely perfect." The legion commander of the Larkinson Clan spoke. "According to what we know, the abductors not only took all of the VIPs on the targeted seating blocks, but also their families, the heavily armed and armored bodyguards, the security guards employed by the state and even the pets that were allowed inside!"

This revealed a lot about the technological capabilities of the kidnappers. It was unlikely that whoever targeted the VIPs wanted to kidnap all of the armed guards as well, though it looked as if the targeting system they utilized was not that precise.

President Yenames Clive turned towards the Minerva that was floating in front of the grand stage.

Despite staying in the presence of several impressive ace mechs such as the Indormeon and the Mars, the Minerva's charm as an expert command mech still allowed her to hold her own and represent the Larkinson Clan with pride!

No matter what happened today, the leader of Davute increased his resolve to maintain a productive relationship with the Larkinson Clan. This pioneering group more than anything had showed that it had adapted far better to the Red Ocean than any other organization based in Davute.

"You claim to be in contact with your missing leaders, correct?"

"That is correct." Commander Casella replied. "We can feed you a limited amount of information, but only in exchange for several concessions."

"Speak." Yenames said.

It may not be entirely proper for a commander of a private organization to address the highest leader of Davute in such a direct fashion, but this was hardly an unusual circumstance to begin with. The last thing that the president wanted to do was alienate the Larkinson Clan and all of the other groups that had suffered from the failures of the colonial state.

Aside from that, Davute truly needed the data that only the Larkinsons could provide.

Despite equipping a small proportion of the missing security troops with advanced back-mounted communication systems, none of the transceivers on this side picked up any signals from the suspected pocket space where they supposedly resided!

It was as if a solid dimensional wall cut off all forms of contact between the two sides!

This was why Yenames Clive and his guards patiently allowed Commander Casella to issue her demands.

"First, we need your forces to take immediate and concrete actions to secure the site where our clan leaders had gone missing and study a means to independently open a portal to the phase whale enclave."

"We already intended to do so without your prompting, commander. It is in all of our best interest to rescue the missing individuals alive. We have even contracted the MTA to send a science team to examine possible means to forcibly open a portal to this pocket space. I have been informed that the mechers have the means to do so, but that more advanced equipment is required to locate and determine the right coordinates."

The Minerva shifted a bit. "What does that mean, president?"

Yenames Clive's expression turned heavy. "The mechers do not have the right equipment to locate the right coordinates and open a portal to this possible pocket space on hand. We must wait until one of their larger exploration vessels arrive and deploy the necessary hardware. The local branch headquarters of the MTA has just sent a notification to my office that it may take half a day for the crucial ship to arrive."

"Half a day?!" Another mech pilot hailing from one of the affected groups blurted out. "That is too long! Who knows what will happen inside this alien space. The longer they stay in enemy hands, the lower the likelihood that they remain alive and well. We need to pull them out right away!"

More representatives spoke out. The absence of so many leaders and critical high-ranking personnel was not only a disaster for Davute, but could also prove fatal to the affected companies and organizations!

The Larkinson Clan alone would become a shadow of its former self without its head designer and all of its other Journeyman Mech Designers. If there was a way of getting them back to the main material dimensions faster, then it should definitely be considered!

"Commander Ingvar, are the circumstances surrounding your missing men dire enough to demand immediate rescue?"

"Why do you ask, sir?"

"The expense of calling in an MTA vessel on an emergency basis is... exorbitant. It will take away much of the reserves that we have built up in anticipation of our escalating war with Karlach. It is better for all of us if we do not sacrifice more than we already have, but if it is absolutely necessary to expedite a rescue attempt, then our state is willing to bear this cost."

The MTA merits, phasewater and other strategic resources that the colony of Davute stockpiled so far were indeed essential to the war effort, but much of it would lose their value if the colonial state collapsed beforehand!

This was why President Yenames Clive did not hesitate too much into offering this dramatic gesture. By paying a huge sum to quickly rescue the missing VIPs, Davute could still salvage its severely damaged relationships with its disgruntled stakeholders!

By exaggerating the amount of losses that his colonial state would incur, he might even be able to better enough people's impression of himself and Davute.

Of course, Yenames Clive also bet that it might not be necessary to actually take the most drastic course of action.

Given the information provided by Commander Casella Ingvar, it did not sound as if the missing Larkinsons were in a dire state.

The expert pilot of the Minerva soon confirmed those suspicions.

"Immediate rescue is not required for the time being." She announced. "While our missing clansmen are not in contact with all of the people that have been taken from the other seating blocks, it appears that the party responsible for taking them into the pocket space is more concerned with keeping them alive for the time being."

been built many ages ago, so it is unlikely that the current controllers of the pocket space are able to exert a high degree of control over the cells and their occupants."

A lot of listeners grew relieved after hearing this. There was always a chance to remedy the situation as long as the missing individuals could still be rescued.

"Can you give us more information, commander?"

"Our clansmen on the other side are still in the process of gathering information. For now, it appears that they have been randomly transported into cells that hold twenty to fifty people at a time. They have been grouped in these cells based on proximity. No one has come and tried to subdue our trapped men, but the cells are made of extremely tough and hard transphasic materials. Ordinary weapons are unable to damage the thick cell walls. None of our armed guards are able to make any progress in breaking out of the cells they are in. The cells are relatively barren and appear to have been built many ages ago, so it is unlikely that the current controllers of the pocket space are able to exert a high degree of control over the cells and their occupants."

The legion commander provided other information that gave the concerned parties a better understanding of the condition of their missing leaders.

Though not all of the news sounded reassuring to them, the Larkinson Clan at least had reason to feel more confident.

This was not the first time the Larkinson Clan entered a pocket space that the phase whales created a long time ago. Though the conditions of a phase whale enclave varied considerably depending on its controllers, the suggestion that its current occupants did not truly master it represented another piece of good news.

The group of mechs that represented many different concerned and disgruntled parties eventually backed off, though they never went away.

President Yenames Clive needed to manage a lot of affairs and also had to placate the citizens of his entire state.

The Larkinson mechs all retreated as well and converged on the coordinates where their patriarch and the other important Larkinson had disappeared.

By this time, the Larkinson Clan had dispatched a lot of additional mechs and personnel.

Though the Larkinsons gave enough space to the scientists and other experts that were currently studying the fabric of space in the Government District, they were itching to break into the pocket space and beat up whoever plotted against their clan!

As Commander Casella continued to issue orders and keep the clansmen busy, the Travon Exine cautiously approached.

"Commander..." General Ark Larkinson struggled to speak up. "I have failed to protect my nephew. I have failed to protect the rest of the clansmen who have gone missing."

"...You know as well as I do that apologies and regrets cannot reverse the current situation." The Sentinel Commander replied.

"That is correct. I did not come here to beg for your forgiveness. I came here to see whether Ves and our fellow Larkinsons can still be pulled out of whatever hole they fell into. What can I do to help?"

"You can help by using your new rank and contacts within the military to grant our clan more access to this site. You can help by lobbying the government to prioritize the rescue of our clansmen first. You can help by adopting a tougher stance towards the state so that President Clive and his administration feels obliged to pay us greater compensation for the damages that we have suffered."

"..." Ark grew speechless for a time.

Chapter 4768 Thick Cell

"Okay, something has gone horribly wrong at the last minute."

"You think?!" Gloriana screeched in panic and anger. "We are not supposed to be caught in the middle of a warzone, let alone a cold and barren cell! Why didn't you protect us better, Ves?! It is already bad enough that a third party has taken the senior leadership of our clan away from our seating block. It is worse when my children and I have been taken as well! We were never meant to be exposed to the dangers that you so often embrace over the course of your expeditions!"

"Hey!" Ves paused in examining the details of the ceiling of the cell and turned his armored form around to face his half-panicked wife. "This is not on me! I distinctly recall that I voiced my concerns about bringing you and my children to a high-profile event that is just begging to get attacked by the enemies of Davute. Instead of sharing my concerns about the colonial government's ability to protect us from external threats, you cared more about networking and looking pretty in front of the recorders! At least I went out of my way to buy a first-class transphasic shield generator for each of our kids!"

"YOU! It is your responsibility to protect us, but you have abjectly failed as a father! Our children are our future. You should have put more thought in protecting them and the rest of us from involuntary displacement! Due to your negligence, we may all die if we cannot find a way out of this cage. If anything befalls our daughters and our son, I will never forgive you, Ves!"

Ves wanted to throw his hands up. What was Gloriana expecting from him?! It seemed that each time anything went wrong, his wife automatically cast all of the blame on him regardless of whether he was at fault or not. It was especially galling to deal with her complaints when he had already gone above and beyond what he should do. Even he did not expect that the state had dropped the ball so much that its engineers still hadn't managed to restore the devices responsible for blocking forced teleportation attempts!

"I will definitely invest in personal anti-teleportation equipment when I get out of this place." He promised. "I made sure to equip the Spirit of Bentheim with sufficient countermeasures against this kind of stuff, but who knew it would happen in the period where I have chosen to spend my time on a planet again."

He truly found this to be a frustrating sequence of events. All of his precautions this far hadn't been enough as the enemy struck when he was depending on the protection of a state!

His deep-seethed paranoia and lack of trust in the reliability of a state actor had taken another nosedive. It seemed that no state had the ability to make good on its promises and actually prevent hostile groups from pulling off their nefarious schemes!

"IT'S TOO LATE, VES! YOU HAVE BEEN NEGLIGENT IN YOUR DUTIES AGAIN! IF YOU ACTUALLY SPENT YOUR WINDFALL OF MTA MERITS ON MORE USEFUL PURCHASES INSTEAD OF TRYING TO TURN THE SPIRIT OF BENTHEIM INTO A PSEUDO-FORTRESS, WE WOULDN'T BE STUCK HERE WHERE ANY AWFUL BEAST COULD RAVAGE US WITH IMPUNITY!"

"Hey, we are not without protection! We still have our cats, you know!"

"Meow!"

"Miaow miaow!"

While Ves and Gloriana had been arguing against each other, the two cats had instantly become more guarded and protective. They hovered around Aurelia, Andraste and Marvaine and made sure that nothing could approach the kids without their notice.

At this moment, it had become clear that they had moved to a completely different location than before!

Although the gravity was still the same as back in the Government District, the air mixture became substantially different. The temperature was hotter and there were mildly toxic gasses in the air that would slowly poison any human physique that did not possess adaptability augmentations.

Everyone's smart clothing automatically formed an insulating layer around their bodies in order to prevent this from happening. The thin and transparent helmets that had wrapped around everyone's heads filtered the oxygen in the air and ensured that none of them would have to worry about their breathable air reserves.

Even so, this was still a frightening ordeal to many people. Some of the civilians among the crowd already started to shake as they began to fantasize about all kinds of awful outcomes.

Ves and Gloriana's children remained a lot calmer than their peers. Whether it was because they wanted to make their parents proud or whether they did not possess a clear understanding of the danger they had become exposed to, all three kids tried their best to put up a brave face!

Aurelia even decided that she should step up. She moved closer to the gathering of other children, some of whom looked ready to cry!

"Assemble, junior Larkinsons!"

When only a couple of children responded to the call, Andraste walked up and smacked a few of the ones that were waffling. "What are you waiting for?! Your my big sis demands your obedience! Let us form up and move out of the way of the grown-ups so they can bring us back to our homes!"

More and more Larkinsons started to regain their bearings and sought to find a solution to their current predicament.

It was a pity that Ves and Gloriana had become embroiled in one of their lover's quarrels again.

Just as the couple were beginning to get more heated in their argument, General Verle decided that he couldn't take it any longer. He firmly strode forward and interspersed himself between the clan patriarch and his wife!

"Let us not get distracted by recriminations and talk on how we could have prevented our displacement." The middle-aged man spoke. "We are in a crisis right now. The last thing we should do is waste our time on unproductive activity. If we want to survive and make it out, we need to maintain our focus and concentrate on what we can do. Let us begin with . Who is stuck here with us and what are we capable of? How many of us are combat capable and who among us need to be protected? Let us make that clear before we proceed."

He had a good point. Though Gloriana clearly wasn't in the right mindset to focus on the matter at hand, even she understood that it would be counterproductive to implicate them all with her actions. She crossed her arms and huffed before she decided to head over to the children and see how they fared.

"Oh, did you do all of this, Aurelia? You're so brilliant! You are a much better leader than your father. Commanding our children is your first step to galactic domination!"

While Gloriana spent her time praising her eldest daughter, General Verle quickly counted and assessed the combat effectiveness of the people gathered in their current cell.

"Alright Ves, I have good news and bad news for you. Which one do you want to hear first?"

"Give me the good news. We all need a bit of optimism in this dreary place." Ves replied as his armored form waved across their cramped surroundings.

"The good news is that there are only Larkinsons among us. Back when we were taken from Block L, we had moved closely to each other. The leaders of the other groups assigned to the same seating block have either been moved to another cell or have been lucky enough to get passed over."

"That doesn't really sound like good news, Verle."

The man wearing a military dress uniform shrugged. "The bad news is that our guards haven't been brought along. They guarded our perimeter and fell just outside the range where they would have

been assigned to our cells. We would have been in a much better position if your elite honor guards were by our side."

"Nitaa and the rest of my guard detail are fine." Ves answered. "I can sense they are located in a different part of this complex. Our clansmen are spread across multiple cells in an expansive space. They remain unharmed for now, but I am not comfortable with letting them stew in their cells. Who knows what our captors will do now that they have completed this step."

Not just General Verle, but many other Larkinsons turned to their patriarch in astonishment.

"How do you know that, sir?!" Cormaunt Hempkamp asked. The mech designer had been tapping at his comm for a while now but failed to receive any signals. "We are locked in an environment with strong signal suppression. These thick stone walls are not only transphasic, but they are also highly effective at blocking our sensor and communication systems!"

Ves grinned behind his helmet. Instead of telling them his answer, he concentrated his mind and poked the Golden Cat.

Nyaaaaa!

The cell briefly warmed up as Goldie briefly pulsed her glow through her connection with Ves!

Just like the Everchanger, Ves also possessed the capability of channeling his design spirits, though it cost a lot of energy to sustain the connection.

The effect was enough. Goldie's descent had brought the nexus of the Larkinson Network closer to the clansmen in the cell. Each of them could briefly feel all the bonds that led to the ancestral spirit!

Through this brief exposure, the more perceptive individuals among them could sense multiple different clusters of threads extending in different directions. There were modest clusters that led to several different horizontal directions, suggesting that there were dozens of other clansmen.

Then there was a group of threads that were so tightly packed together that it resembled an intangible laser beam!

The direction of this laser beam was quite strange. When Ves and other Larkinsons tried to determine the direction, they couldn't straightforwardly describe its orientation in any of the six conventional directions.

Instead, it seemed to follow a completely nonsensical direction that could not be properly described unless they could perceive at least 11 different dimensions!

A few people already started to experience headaches as they tried to make sense of a phenomena that ordinary humans were never meant to comprehend, so Goldie quickly retracted her power.

"Thanks to Goldie, I know where we are. If our judgment is correct, we may have fallen into another pocket space!"

That most certainly surprised a lot of Larkinsons!

They quickly accepted the conclusion once Ves explained the various clues he gathered. The Larkinsons soon theorized that Davute always had a pocket space the colonists had never discovered!

"These stupid phase whales and their habit of creating pocket spaces on different planets." Ketis grumbled as her hands twitched for a sword to hold. "I cannot believe that the founders of Davute neglected to investigate whether their impressive port system hosted phase whales in the past."

"Wait a moment." Dulo Voiken said. "If this pocket space was made by a phase whale, do we know if there are any dormant ones in our new location?"

This was a valid concern!

The Larkinsons already encountered two different variations of phase whales in two of their past expeditions. This was a remarkably high frequency. Ves wouldn't be surprised if he ended up in the clutches of another phase whale this time!

"Let me check." Ves murmured and concentrated his mind so that he could connect to a different design spirit.

His body exuded a significantly more alien vibe as the Phase King briefly descended into his mind!

Ves stared in every direction even as his recently-modified Unending Regelia seemed to sing as it faintly began to resonate with the spiritual fish-whale king!

He was grateful that getting displaced to a pocket space did not cut off his connections to his design spirits. They could play an extremely useful role in the right circumstances.

As Ves allowed the Phase King to examine the facility around him as thoroughly as possible, he secretly hoped that the fish-whale sovereign might possess a special connection to it. The design spirit might even be able to gain access rights due to his familiarity with phase whales!

That wasn't the case, unfortunately, but the Phase King did manage to gather a lot of information that others would be hard-pressed to discover!

Chapter 4769 Absurd Resilience

The Phase King's presence soon receded from Ves' mind.

"I can make two more observations." The clan leader stated. "First, there are no phase whales or phase lords in our general area. That doesn't rule out the possibility that either of them may be hiding far away or in an isolated chamber, but for now we are not in danger of meeting any of them for the time being. Secondly, we are in some sort of large stone structure that is replete with thick transphasic construction. This place is built like a fortress that is probably strong enough to resist everything a phase whale can throw at it. If we don't have a way of accessing the controls of this facility, we won't be able to get out even if we employ overwhelming power!"

Unlike many other people, Ves was not defenseless. However, he estimated that he would probably need an ace mech or a warship if he wanted to breach all of the walls of this ridiculous alien facility!

"Why did the aliens build such an absurd fortress?"

That was what everyone wanted to know. This was a pocket space. Getting in was already a problem in itself. Anyone who possessed the capability to open a portal and get inside would definitely be able to breach all of the thick and resilient walls!

Surprisingly, Gloriana offered the most plausible explanation.

"What if this facility was not built to keep strangers out, but to keep phase lords and other powerful individuals within its walls?"

Ves looked around once again and found that her theory matched his observation.

"This... is a prison!"

A prison!

If the Larkinsons previously developed the hope that their impressive patriarch might be able to lead them back to Kotor City, this announcement dashed a lot of their hopes!

There were plenty of mech designers among the clansmen who were stuck in this cell. Ketis, Sara Voiken and the others had examined the walls, the ceiling and the floor to determine whether there was any way to breach them with the limited means they had available.

"Let me borrow your multiscanner, Ves." Gloriana demanded.

Ves detached the Vulcaneye from where it was attached to his Unending Regalia and handed it over to his wife.

She fiddled with the advanced device's settings before she started to scan the nearby walls. The other mech designers soon gathered as well because the Vulcaneye collected much more detailed scientific data than a comm, an ocular implant or any other device they had on hand!

They soon learned a lot more details such as the fact that the cell was built at least hundreds of thousands of years ago and that it hardly saw any use. The cell walls were built so solidly that they decayed at an extremely glacial pace.

"According to the mild signs that we have detected, it will probably take a few million years before the structural integrity of this wall becomes weak enough for us to be able to use physical force to create a passage."

That was way too long! Their bodies would have long since turned into dust after such a long time!

As the mech designers continued to puzzle over the data collected by the Vulcaneye, the others also tried to make themselves useful.

For example, General Verle quickly took stock of their combat capabilities.

Unfortunately, for all of the Larkinson Clan's martial prowess, the people stuck in this cell were far removed from any mech!

All of the powerful mechs that made the clan so famous were stuck in normal space. Even if a mech somehow got pulled into this cell, the available volume was so limited that everyone's bodies would get crushed against the walls if a mech was forged to get inside!

This was one of the worst circumstances that Ves could find himself in. The Larkinson Clan's powerbase was predominantly based on its mechs.

What was even worse was that they not only lacked access to mechs, but also suffered from an enormous shortage of combat gear!

As a paranoid and distrustful mech designer, Ves carried the most hardware out of everyone else. Where people such as his wife and the ministers of the clan only thought about wearing their best

dress outfits to the founding ceremony, he had always focused on how much protection his own uniform offered!

He felt grateful for sticking to his habit of allowing his honor guards to bring the folded version of his personal suit of combat armor everywhere. He could never know when he might need the protection, so keeping it as close as possible was a surefire way to always be able to depend on its features when he desperately needed to feel more capable!

He knocked his fist against the newly installed chest plate of his armored suit.

He recently overhauled it so that he could replace the Unending alloy outer plating with first-class transphasic alloy. This had made his combat armor so tough that he was confident he could even block all forms of second-class small-arms fire!

His honor guards also enjoyed a similar degree of protection. In fact, they should be able to withstand more attacks due to their larger and thicker combat armor.

"It's strange that Nitaa and my other guards have been sent away while I remained with you guys." He puzzled. "Maybe there is a lag to the alien targeting system that was responsible for pulling us into the cells of this complex."

"It is an indication that the people responsible for sending us here have not mastered all of the controls of this ancient facility." General Verle theorized. "That is good news for us. It means that we have a greater chance of subverting their attempts to control and imprison us. Whatever their motives may be, we cannot allow them to proceed to the next step of their plan."

Nobody disagreed with that, but getting out was hard when they had precious little means available to them. The dress uniforms of all of the others were never designed to take a hit, and while a lot of senior officials of the clan wore shield generators these days, this would only delay the inevitable if they lacked a means to strike back!

As people tried to figure out how they could break out of this cell, Ves did not forget about the only competent secret agent among their group.

"Lucky!"

"Meow...?"

"Why haven't you sneaked out of this cell yet? It's nice of you to stay by Andraste's side, but I really need you to go and do what you are best at. Go phase through the walls and find a switch or something that can get us out of this cell!"

"Meow meow!"

"What do you mean you can't?"

The gem cat demonstrated what he meant by attempting to phase through the floor.

It turned out that the transphasic material blocked Lucky from getting past even if he had turned completely intangible this time!

"What!?" Ves along with several other people familiar with Lucky grew astonished. "You can't phase through? That's ridiculous!"

The theory that this prison was built to contain phase lords grew stronger in his mind. There was no way that the native aliens would go through so much effort to hold regular prisoners!

"Have you tried eating through the floor or walls, perhaps?"

"MEOW MEOW MEOW!"

A gem cat ate metal! Stone was hardly a desirable component to his diet. Besides, Lucky had already tried and failed to chomp a tunnel through the transphasic stone material.

Ves had seen Lucky's improbably strong and sharp teeth bite through Unending alloy with ease, and he knew that his cat had devoured an entire CFA shuttle in the past.

Yet as Lucky's teeth collided against the wall of the cell, Lucky gained nothing out of it aside from giving himself a toothache!

"Meow!"

"Damnit! How tough is this cell?!"

There was nothing Lucky could do for the time being, so Ves turned to other possibilities.

"Do you carry any blades in your armor, Ves?" Ketis asked as she stepped forward. "I know it can hold many knives."

Ves shook his head. "I left them at the Royal Mansion because the security guards wouldn't like it if I carried more than half-a-dozen knives with me. It is the same reason why you left your Bloodsinger at home as well."

The Swordmaiden mech designer looked dour after hearing that pointed reminder. "You were right, Ves. I let myself go and brought not just myself, but my son Kirian in danger as well. I am grateful that I left my little Mayra behind with the Swordmaidens back in the Cat Nest."

Kirian was currently among the kids that Aurelia had rallied towards her. She already possessed a lot of prestige among the youngest generation of the Larkinson Clan.

"I'm sorry." Ves apologized. Maybe he should have ignored Calabast's advance and informed more people so that less innocents got caught in this disaster. "I should have anticipated that an enemy would take advantage of our lack of defense against getting teleported."

"It's not your fault, Ves. We all made the same mistake. This seems to be a premeditated operation. Our clan shouldn't be the only victim of this scheme. There are people out there that have gained control over this alien facility and deliberately utilized their control over it to target the most important bigshots of Davute on the one day where we have all gathered together."

When put it that way, it became even more obvious that adversarial parties would want to do their utmost to strike at the VIPS during the founding ceremony!

"The authorities should have been the ones to anticipate and make sufficient preparations against these eventualities." Ves grumbled before he shifted the topic. "Let's get back to business. You were asking if I can provide you with a blade, right?"

Ketis nodded as if she was a drug addict that was looking straight at a stash! "You have a lot of metal on your person at the moment. Does it come with a minifab?"

"I made sure to bring my minifab module as well." Ves replied with a piece of good news.

"However, much of my combat armor is too tough. The minifab's tools aren't strong enough to put a dent on my Unending Regalia's new exterior layer. The only way you can use it to make a blade is if you start to disassemble more essential parts, and I would like to avoid doing that if possible. I have a feeling it is better for me if I keep my combat armor as solid as possible."

The female Journeyman and Swordmaster let out a disappointed sigh.

"Alright, then. Let me jury rig my own weapon."

Ketis removed her footwear from her feet and removed the heels and soles to reveal a number of thin metal parts.

She quickly assembled them together and used a spare piece of leather to wrap the grip of what looked like a stiletto.

"It's not much, but it will do. Sharpie!"

A miniature version of Ketis appeared and dove into the improvised weapon. The thin dagger soon exuded a lot of sharpness and extraordinary willpower.

Ketis looked a lot better now that she had an actual blade in her hands.

"Now I am complete again."

The eager swordmaster eagerly took action by resonating with her stiletto and driving its sharp and empowered tip into the cell wall.

Nothing happened!

The stiletto failed to inflict more than the tiniest of marks!

"If that doesn't work, then how about this?"

She resonated with her little weapon again, causing it to gain an ominous dark corona.

When she cautiously tried to swing it against the cell wall, she finally managed to produce a result by digging a thin and shallow line through the stone material!

"You succeeded!"

This was the first time that anyone among them managed to inflict damage onto their cell!

However, Ketis did not look satisfied at the result. "I wouldn't be so quick to celebrate if I were you. I already spent over 10 percent of what I have in order to draw a thin scratch. That brings us no closer to breaching this wall. I will have to exhaust myself for many days straight if I want to reach the other side!"

Everyone who heard her grew disappointed again.

Chapter 4770 Phase Wall

Ketis pulled off a nice trick by hiding the components of a blade in the bottom of her footwear, but the material density and hardness of the stone material that surrounded the group of captive Larkinsons was unreasonable!

It became more and more probable that this facility had truly been built to contain extraordinarily powerful individuals.

The Red Ocean Dwarf Galaxy's native alien races all sought to attain godhood by integrating as much phasewater into their bloodstreams as possible. This was extremely difficult and could kill any organism without exceptional measures and a lot of risk-taking.

Nonetheless, anyone who succeeded in this wild attempt would gain power far beyond the limits of their race!

If the path to godhood was defined by transcending one's racial limitations, then the act of injecting phasewater into an organic body definitely met the definition!

Having met a genuine phase lord in the form of the Trampler of Stars, Ves found it extremely impressive that a nunsen warlord was able to fight against an ace mech like the Mars to a standstill.

Patriarch Reginald Cross had pushed himself far beyond what any ordinary human could bear, and he was also a rare talent in the mech piloting profession who had received personal tutelage from his deceased father, who also used to be an ace pilot!

By combining his prodigious willpower with an extremely expensive and powerful masterwork ace mech, Reginald and the Mars produced insane synergies, allowing this fantastic combination to challenge many threatening warships by themselves!

Back in the old galaxy, it would have been ludicrous to think that a single human could challenge such a powerful mech.

Though Ves knew better now that he had witnessed the might of the upper echelon of the Five Scrolls Compact, that did not take away the fact that it was improbable for any organism to be able to match the power of a fully functional ace mech.

The phase lords of the Red Ocean managed to do so! Ves understood the power of these native self-proclaimed gods a lot better than anyone else because he had inadvertently started to evolve in this direction as well!

Ves and more notably Veronica had both been infused with different concentrations of phasewater.

Though Ves barely benefited from this change due to replacing just 0.01 percent of his blood with phasewater, it still gave him a taste of what he could become if he chose to continue to evolve as a phase lord!

Veronica boasted a much more impressive 7.1 percent concentration of phasewater in her cybernetic body. It was a pity that his cyborg cat was hiding in the middle of Block M at this time.

Not only had the people assigned to Block M been spared from getting kidnapped, Ves seriously doubted whether the controller of this pocket space facility possessed the means to break through his transcendent cyborg cat's formidable anti-detection capabilities!

In fact, he should be grateful that his living divine artifact remained in normal space. Veronica provided him with a strong guarantee that he would be able to claw himself back to life if his main body failed to make it out of this ancient pocket space alive.

He would rather have Veronica in the same space, though. If she managed to utilize her material mimicking abilities to circumvent the security measures of these alien facilities and escape her cell, then she would have been able to roam the other areas and find a way to free the other captives!

The absence of his most powerful cat to date limited a lot of his options, but that did not mean he had reached a dead end.

He still had plenty of cards up his sleeve. The most valuable of them all was entering System Space.

Having accumulated a lot of Ascension Points due to completing one Mission after another, he could do anything from buying a ready-made weapon from the Divine Bazaar, to purchasing a powerful metal and proceeding to forge it into a serviceable greatsword to give Ketis a much more effective means of hacking through walls.

He was reluctant to resort to the Mech Designer System right away. Those Ascension Points were hard to come by and he would rather save them up for a powerful Enlightenment Fruit that could open fantastic new possibilities for his mech designs.

This was why he was trying to think of more economical solutions to get out of this cell.

He turned towards his gem cat, whose teeth still ached after he tried and failed to bite through the stone floor.

"Miaow miaow miaow."

"Meow... meow..."

Clixie tried her best to console Lucky by licking his metallic face.

It appeared that Ves could not expect any help from the gem cat for the time being. The ancient alien cells were so well constructed that they even countered the properties of Lucky's phasing and material chomping abilities!

Ves became more and more intrigued at the nature of the materials that made up the cells. He refused to believe it was cut out of a rocky mountain. The walls had to be manufactured.

He even thought about how he could claim this powerful material for himself!

If he could break this entire facility down and move all of the blocks of stone to his clan, then he could utilize it to build the most impenetrable fortress in Davute.

Better yet, he might even be able to use it to build a mech or a starship that was practically impenetrable against both phase lords and phase whales!

"Let's not get ahead of myself." He whispered to himself.

There was no way he could realize any of these dreams if he and his relatives still remained stuck in the same place!

In order to get back on track, he inspected his own gear. Aside from equipping himself with the Unending Regalia with all of the auxiliary features that came with it, he also carried a few of the tools he regularly kept on his person.

The mech designers stuck in the same cell were already making good use of his Vulcaneye multiscanner, which was probably the most useful piece of auxiliary gear in his possession.

Aside from that, he carried the Hammer of Brilliance, the Hammer of Melody, a signal jammer, his comm, an emergency one-use teleporter, a pouch of Lucky's gems and several other knick knacks not worth mentioning.

Each of these tools could play a useful role in the right circumstances, but none of them possessed the power to get him and his people out of this confining space!

For example, Ves was pretty sure that this entire facility inhibited teleportation unless it was done by its controllers. Forcibly making use of his teleporter would either waste this expensive gadget or produce a fatal outcome that would certainly be ugly!

"Wait a minute."

Lucky and Clixie weren't the only cats at his disposal.

They also had their companion spirits!

"Blinky. It's time for you to shine again."

Mrow?

The purple Star Cat emerged from his forehead. His intangible furry body looked pleasantly plump and the light trails coursing through his body were bright and streamlined.

Blinky had returned to his best state, which was good news to Ves as his companion spirit was not only able to manipulate spiritual energy, but also the much more materially potent Worclaw energy!

"What is that, patriarch?"

"Wow, it's Blinky! He's so cool!"

Though Ves took a risk by exposing his companion spirit to the party responsible for kidnapping him and a lot of people, he was pretty sure that no outsiders were monitoring him at the moment.

Lucky had already sniffed the surroundings for any alien monitoring systems, but the cell was completely solid aside from featuring miniscule air vents.

Ves' instincts also did not warn him that he was being stared at. Sure, it may be unreliable to base his actions on an unexplainable hunch, but he was feeling pretty confident that there were no direct methods to monitor what went on inside this cell.

After all, any electronic components represented possible weak points that extremely powerful and resourceful phase lords could exploit.

Ves did not bother to waste his time on introducing and explaining Blinky to the clansmen who weren't initiated to his secrets.

His clansmen knew better than to disturb him with annoying questions. If he did not want to explain a phenomenon, then nobody would be able to get an answer out of his mouth.

He ignored everyone else and approached a wall that was adjacent to a corridor.

Though the wall was completely smooth, he imagined that there had to be an entry mechanism built into it somewhere. He refused to believe that it was a completely solid barrier and that the only way to get in and out was through the use of portals. That sounded way too extravagant even for the phase whales!

When Blinky approached the wall, Ves half-expected the damn transphasic stone surface to repel the spirit from sinking inside.

That did not happen, much to his relief!

Ves watched on with gratitude as Blinky seamlessly moved through the incredibly tough and frustrating wall as if the companion spirit wasn't even real!

That was not actually the case, but to the cell structure it may as well be true.

Blinky's intangibility might look similar to that of Lucky and Veronica's phasing ability, but they were two completely different phenomena that just looked superficially similar!

In the case of the former, a spiritual entity mainly resided in the spiritual realm. If any spirit showed up in the material realm, then it mostly represented a shadow or a reflection more than anything else.

Only through special measures such as coming up with an invention as whacky as the Geist System had he recently been able to allow spiritual entities to affect the material realm in more substantial ways.

In any case, Blinky's continued penetration of the meters-thick transphasic wall showed that the ancient facility clearly had not been built to guard against spiritual shenanigans!

"Hehehe." Ves chuckled behind his helmet. "Now we are talking."

He was desperately in need of intelligence now. With Blinky being able to travel through the transphasic stone structure without getting hindered, his incarnation should finally be able to provide him with a solid glimpse of any internal mechanisms as well as what lay outside of this cell!

Ketis soon walked next to him. "Is it working?"

Ves nodded. "Blinky is able to go through unhindered, though I cannot rule out the possibility that this facility has countermeasures against spiritual entities. If you want, you can help by exploring another direction with Sharpie. She should be able to phase through this stone material as well."

"You're right. I should have thought about that earlier. I think I will explore what lies below."

When Ketis started to imitate Ves by sending Sharpie out of her stiletto and dispatching her extraordinary companion spirit straight through the floor, others noticed what they were doing.

"Can I help, papa?" Little Marvaine asked.

Gloriana quickly stepped closer to the boy and patted his head lest he get any ideas. "Let the adults take care of this, Marvaine. It is too dangerous for you to send your immature companion spirits out at this point. Wait until you are older, alright?"

"But mama..." Marvaine whined.

After she made sure that the children did not do anything foolish, Gloriana decided to join the effort by sending out her red companion spirit.

Alexandria dove through the ceiling but did not go straight upwards.

Instead, the Queen Cat followed the miniscule air vent channels in the hopes of finding a mechanism or control room that could manipulate their cell.

For a moment, everyone fell silent as they waited for the three mech designers to report their findings.

"This is odd." Ketis furrowed her brows. "There are no electronic systems or anything comparable to it throughout the floor."

"Perhaps the aliens responsible for constructing this facility built it to last." Gloriana speculated.

"The use of so much simple but solid defensive construction suggests that the builders may have intended to keep its prisoners captive over a span of time that is unimaginably long to us. I would not be surprised if this cell is meant to contain its occupants over centuries or millennia as opposed to months or years."

Ves was inclined towards this conclusion as well. The most telling clue was the lack of fragile and less reliable electronic systems. Aside from the phase whales and certain other races, the rest of the natives of the Red Ocean definitely made use of conventional technology to a degree!

For such systems to be absent around this cell suggested that it may truly be built to isolate the native version of 'gods'!

He slowly smirked behind his helmet.

"It's a good thing that I am not a god. I am just a mech designer."