

Wow 881

Chapter 881 Mecha Quick Repair_2

It's just...

"I already said I planned to fix the other one first. Whether this one can be repaired is still uncertain. Damaging this mecha, which nobody is bothering with, doesn't seem like the smartest move to hinder their progress, does it?"

"But the critical parts of the other one are already being handled by other technicians. Maybe he considered it inappropriate to act in front of them?"

With these thoughts in mind, Catherine quietly moved to the side of the other mecha.

However, what happened next was completely unexpected... The man whom she assumed was here to sabotage the mecha swiftly climbed onto the rack, opened the rear panel, jumped back down to the ground, and began looking around as if searching for something.

"What is he doing?"

"And why does this seem oddly familiar?"

Her captivating, fox-like eyes zeroed in on that striking and resolute face. Ultimately, it was his unusual military attire that stirred her memory of a scene she'd witnessed not long ago—

The poor soul mistaken for her by some idle wanderers, ending up surrounded and attacked.

"It's him?"

Catherine's eyes narrowed slightly.

She distinctly recalled how this man had remained unaffected by her area-wide Spiritual Energy attack. His abilities... were likely not to be underestimated.

If he had taken part in the recent Dagger Society ambush against her, without the help of that Star Alliance agent, she might have found it even harder to get away.

So, it was unlikely he belonged to the Peak Alliance.

In other words, he likely wasn't here to sabotage the mecha.

Of course, there was still the small chance that he'd overheard the divisive plans and was acting impulsively to disrupt her mission.

So she couldn't fully trust him yet.

With that thought, Catherine decided to approach him proactively.

"Need something?"

Bai E had already noticed her watching him. It was hard to miss someone breaking away from the crowd to tinker with a mecha; he stood out like a sore thumb.

Just because no one cared didn't mean no one was paying attention.

But given his complete lack of understanding of alien mecha technology, Bai E wasn't confident in the impact he could make during repairs. He figured he'd start by examining this neglected mecha to see if there were fundamental differences between its design and planetary mechas, then determine if his existing skills could be applied to the situation.

Luckily, once he opened the rear panel and examined the complex wiring and electrical components inside, he felt a sense of familiarity.

Unfortunately, after sitting idle for so long, while the engine might still be functional, the auxiliary starter battery was likely drained.

Without an external power source, his skills wouldn't be much help.

At that moment, he heard a familiar cold and alluring voice. Bai E glanced at her briefly.

"Catherine—she must be Catherine. That box on her back—is that what the Peak Alliance wanted?"

His gaze momentarily lingered on the black rectangular box strapped to her back before sweeping the area again. "I'm looking for a power source."

"A power source?" Catherine frowned slightly. "They already tried earlier. The mecha's self-diagnostic system is broken; powering it on won't solve anything."

"I want to see for myself." Bai E offered her a reassuring smile, signaling that he meant no harm.

Observing his calm yet genial expression, Catherine flexed her fingers slightly, then turned to locate the power plug the Star Alliance agent had connected earlier. "Here. This one."

"Thanks." Bai E grabbed the heavy power cable and climbed back up onto the rack.

Catherine stood at the base of the mecha silently, simply tilting her head upward to watch the strange man's actions.

"What exactly is he trying to do?"

Though she couldn't figure him out, strangely enough... there was something undeniably convincing about his demeanor.

Who was this man?

"Bzzz!"

As the thought crossed her mind, the mecha emitted a violent shudder, as if it might fall apart at any second. Metal parts clanged and rattled under the sudden vibration caused by the power connection.

At the same time, a faint but distorted alarm blared weakly from the mecha's speakers—likely due to how long it had been idle.

The alarm rang twice but then succumbed to a shrill frequency before letting out a sustained wail and ultimately falling silent.

"Fssh~"

A puff of black smoke leaked out from a crevice in the mecha's back.

The sudden activation startled the technicians working diligently on the other mecha.

Realizing what had happened, the technicians erupted into curses, "Who the hell!?"

"Crazy bastard!"

"Why would anyone power it up now? Trying to get us killed?"

"And the other one..."

"The other one's even stupider! Haven't we agreed to fix this one together first?"

Standing atop the high rack, Bai E knew he lacked authority, and the situation couldn't be salvaged without Catherine's trust, decisiveness, and enough standing among the group.

"Shhh~" He pressed his index finger to his lips, looking down at Catherine with an imploring gaze.

Then...

"Silence!"

She ordered.

The Spiritual Energy attached to her words brought instant quiet to the scene. The technicians, recognizing her overwhelming strength, wisely shrank back into submission.

A few, while visibly disgruntled, dared not utter another word under her frost-coated glare.

"Thank you." Bai E nodded in gratitude, placing his palm firmly against the mecha's exterior and closing his eyes to focus fully.

With the commotion subsided, the remaining faint noises couldn't disrupt Bai E's immersion.

His prior knowledge... it was still useful!

This realization struck him as soon as the mecha powered up, filling him with exhilaration.

As Bai E closed his eyes, a peculiar connection between him and the mecha rapidly began to form.

His thoughts flowed along the electrical currents coursing through its systems—or rather, something beyond the currents themselves—traveling as swiftly as the power itself, sweeping over every part of the mecha.

During this process, it felt as though the mecha had gained the ability to speak.

It identified the areas needing repair, the sections irreparably damaged that needed replacement, and detailed how each flawed component could be fixed to restore normal functionality...

Even the black smoke and trembling from earlier seemed like cries for help from the decrepit machine.

By the time his mind had surveyed the entire mecha, everything came together like a clear schematic visualized in Bai E's thoughts.

When he finally reopened his eyes, his gaze pierced straight through the mecha's exterior, as though he could see into its inner workings and core structure.

After a brief assessment, it felt as though he'd become one of the original engineers who designed it—intimately familiar with every detail.

Bai E's eyes gleamed with confidence.

Alien mecha architecture differed significantly from planetary mecha systems.

However, these differences still fell within the scope of his "Rapid Mecha Repair" abilities.

This skill, imbued with hints of Spiritual Energy, was capable of achieving almost miraculous results under practical circumstances.

Bai E unplugged the power source.

Having a clear plan in mind, he started to work.

Working solo would be slow, sure, but there was no alternative, right?

Though he had earned a reprieve thanks to Catherine's intervention, if he couldn't deliver tangible results soon, it would be hard to garner anyone's trust.

At some point, the enigmatic shadow in a black trench coat had materialized beside him atop the metal rack. Her narrow, seductive eyes locked onto Bai E, her red lips parting slightly as she spoke in a cold, raspy voice, "Can you fix it?"

Bai E nodded, "I can fix it."

"Everyone will follow your lead. How long will it take?"

Bai E flashed a confident smile, "Ten minutes. Both mechas."

"Good!" Catherine gave him a deep, discerning look. "I'll inform them, but you need to show some results first."

"No problem."

Chapter 882 rogue soldiers attacking

Catherine clapped her hands, her voice infused with Spiritual Energy immediately drawing the attention of all the technicians at work.

As the technicians peeked out from various corners of the mecha, Catherine said coldly, "From now on, the on-site logistics will change. Everyone, follow the command of this person..."

"Bai E." Bai E quietly reminded from the side.

"Master Bai's command."

Instantly, a wave of astonishment spread through the crowd, "Him?"

"Just him?"

"Who is this kid? Never seen him before!"

"Maybe he's some sort of reinforcement hired by the boss. It wouldn't hurt to listen to what he has to say."

Only the Wild Wolf, hiding among the crowd doing menial tasks, stared blankly in the direction of Bai E, muttering in confusion, "Huh?"

"Didn't Big Bro say he's just here to observe? Didn't Big Bro say his skills aren't refined? Didn't Big Bro say he hasn't done repairs in ages and might not even know how anymore?"

"How did he suddenly turn into the chief technician here?"

"Big Bro, you're incredible!"

No matter what thoughts the technicians held, under Catherine's authoritative order, none dared to raise objections immediately.

Maybe this guy really has some genuine skills?

After all, jumping to conclusions too early might end up backfiring.

Not to mention, they were summoned here to work per orders, and if the host says to listen to someone, then they would comply.

So, following the initial murmurs of surprise, Bai E, under everyone's watchful gaze, lugged a thick cable toward the base of another mecha.

"Everyone, halt for a moment. Let me connect the power to conduct a diagnostic of the specific issues."

The senior Star Alliance operative standing behind the mecha leaned back and, as if not hearing clearly, asked again, "You said you want to do what?"

"Power it on?"

"Powering it on for what?"

"Diagnostics?"

"...Are you insane?" The operative looked at Bai E with sheer disbelief, speaking bluntly.

While others hesitated under Catherine's Planetary Level presence, only he dared to question things openly.

Finding someone temporary to take charge? He had no objections.

But this person in charge should at least understand the situation, right?

Powering on for self-diagnosis?

He had tried that before the others even arrived.

With the decades—perhaps centuries—of neglect, the sensors inside the mecha were utterly trashed, rendering any feedback meaningless.

In such a condition, trying to power it on would only be a complete waste of time!

Moreover, many technicians were currently working inside the mecha, and some had already dismantled certain connections. Powering it on now would not only be dangerous but also a futile endeavor—an outright foolish decision!

Bai E didn't respond, climbing swiftly to the mecha's towering back and forcefully plugging the cable into the power interface at its rear.

As the switch was activated, an electric current sufficient to awaken this primordial beast surged through its dormant frame.

The senior operative's face shifted to sheer astonishment, "You..."

"Shut up!" x2

For the first time, Bai E's tone was somewhat stern as he spoke before closing his eyes.

And accompanying his words, a commanding voice also rang out from below—the Bauhinia Republic military officer's voice.

"..."

Well done!

The senior operative, visibly irritated, folded his arms and turned his head away in a huff, yet his eyes couldn't help but dart back occasionally.

'I really want to see—what exactly is this guy capable of? To win Catherine's trust so quickly?'

Before his eyes, the reckless technician laid his hand against the iron wall of the vibrating mecha, which sparked intermittently as it powered up, and then closed his eyes.

In that exact moment, the operative sensed a mystical aura connecting this unfamiliar technician to the damaged mecha.

In his perceptive field, the two seemed to merge into one right before his eyes.

The mecha was him, and he was the mecha...

'A Machine Soul?!' The operative's mind reeled.

It was the kind of aura felt only around those who possessed a Machine Soul, individuals who could exude such energy when in communion with their machines.

But now... but now...

Hadn't this mecha been in Baron Norwitz's collection for decades? How could it have a Machine Soul?

Or is it possible the Machine Soul carries some sort of hereditary connection?

Watching the young technician's youthful demeanor, the operative frowned inwardly, pondering the implications.

Whatever the case, he began to understand why Catherine trusted this seemingly inconspicuous technician so quickly.

Regardless of how the guy managed to achieve this, once he was one with the mecha, pinpointing the critical damages within was remarkably simple.

And once the damage points were identified, repairs would naturally proceed with much greater precision—no wonder Catherine ordered everyone to heed his guidance.

This Bauhinia officer's decisions remained decisively bold as ever!

...

In Bai E's world of darkness, only flashes of electrical impulses coursed through the mecha's frame like arcs of thought.

With these mental threads flowing through the mecha, the extent of damage across its parts became instantly clear.

By the time his eyes reopened, a meticulous and sequential repair strategy was fully formed in his mind.

"First..."

"Understood!"

The mystical connection between the technician and the machine wasn't limited to the perception of Spiritual Energy users like Catherine or the senior operative. Even Baron Norwitz, who had no background in mecha repairs, could detect this "natural" compatibility between the newcomer and the machine.

It was as though the arrival of this individual had awakened the decades-slumbering relic, binding the two together almost instantly.

Chapter 883 Rogue Soldiers Attack_2

A certain sour emotion silently fermented within the heart.

But this complex feeling was instantly dispersed by the noise coming from outside—

"They're inside here!"

"Charge! Capture the rebel leader Catherine alive, and return peace to Freeport!"

"As long as we catch Catherine, the Peak Alliance's higher-ups surely won't harm innocent civilians!"

"Shameless thief Catherine! If you know your crimes have implicated our entire city, why don't you step forward obediently!"

"We in Freeport do not shelter scum like you!"

"I've heard that even some high-ranking leaders of Freeport secretly colluded with this rebel leader; once this is over, they'll face retribution as well!"

"I've always despised those fat-headed officials!"

Amidst the chaotic voices, there were undoubtedly spies from the Peak Alliance, as well as deceived ordinary citizens who had joined in.

The Peak Alliance, being a collective interest group formed by all nation-states of this Stellar District, naturally wielded absolute deterrence over smaller, scattered local forces in the region.

The mere mention of their name was a form of intimidation.

Even the shrewd individuals, knowing full well how this would end, when faced with the Psychic Energy Canopy erected by the Peak Alliance on one side and an unknown individual's solitary strength on the other, might find their internal scales tipping toward the Alliance, chasing after that sliver of possible hope.

But sadly...

If one must fight, why not hold steadfast to one's principles?

Am I... really just that easy to bully?

Catherine flashed her teeth in a cold smile, her face showing a chilling yet slightly frenzied killing intent.

To survive in this cold, survival-of-the-fittest universe, there could be no trace of mercy.

If these people had chosen the wrong path, then a price must be paid.

Catherine drew her single-edged longsword, stepping toward the warehouse door under increasing attack with a feigned calm that hid her urgent movements.

"You all keep going! I'll back her up!" The Star Alliance's spy refused to let Catherine fight alone.

Even though planetary-level fighters possessed high resistance from every angle, the opposition was still overwhelmingly numerous. Should someone in the crowd unleash taboo-level weapons or concealed strong attacks against her, even with the mecha repaired, losing Catherine—this legendary mech pilot—would leave them utterly powerless.

Besides... with this new Bai technician taking charge, someone like him, merely holding a professional repair certification, didn't seem very useful anymore.

Better he contribute more in the areas where his strengths lay to help break the siege.

"Prepare both of our mechas! Once we return, it will be time to shatter the canopy!" The spy felt the blood within his chest surge with fiery passion.

With that said, the spy pressed his legs hard against the floor, launching himself like a missile to blast through the steel ceiling above everyone's heads, slamming fiercely into the chaos outside.

"Boom!"

The earth shook violently.

"Ratatatatata!"

"Boom! Boom!"

A cacophony of gunfire and exploding grenades instantly fused into chaos.

Witnessing the mechanics briefly dazed and fearful from the commotion outside, Bai E snapped coldly, "They're using their lives to buy us time! What are you all waiting for?! Do you really think the Peak Alliance would let any witnesses walk free after this?"

Startled awake, the mechanics shouted in unison, "Yes!"

...

"They sure have a lot of people!" The spy who had just hurled himself out performed a stylish landing, only to glance up and see countless silhouettes surrounding the warehouse from every direction.

With Freeport hosting a population peak numbering in the tens of millions, even one percent of its people mobilizing meant an endless flood of figures.

This lone battle easily made one question whether they were truly on the wrong side.

"Fuck! Did they send everyone?!"

And in the midst of his shaken consciousness, his gaze swept over a certain object slowly adjusting its aim toward him. The spy was struck by sheer terror.

"What the hell!"

"Whoosh~"

A streamlined object traced a swift and elegant arc in mid-air, trailing a fierce whistle as it zeroed in on the spy's back.

"Shit! It's a tracking missile!"

The spy clenched his teeth and, with his near-sonic-speed movements, locked onto a target and executed a sharp turn. The tracking missile behind him could not maneuver such an extreme angle and crashed forcefully into a heavy container.

A plume of smoke instantly billowed upward, its explosive aftermath shaking even the spy's stance.

Just narrowly evading a tracking missile fired from a fighter jet, he hadn't even had time to catch his breath before noticing countless streams of metal storms aimed directly at him.

Noisy soldiers operating heavy-mounted machine guns on elevated positions around the warehouse collectively opened fire, the dense hail of bullets enough to make one's scalp tingle upon first glance.

"Whoosh-whoosh-whoosh-whoosh-whoosh!"

Bullets tore through steel and stone, shredding scattered goods in their wake as they chased the spy.

Despite his quick movements, the relentlessly dense gunfire struck him more times than he could count.

Each impact of metal rounds landing on his body sent waves of pain radiating through him, yet the spy dared not slow his evasive maneuvers even for a moment.

While planetary-level fighters could withstand certain energy levels or kinetic force attacks, this didn't mean they could stand still and invite an endless barrage of gunfire!

Even the toughest metal would eventually succumb to fatigue—how could a planetary-level martial artist dare to stand exposed and let countless heavy weapons rain down unchallenged?

And though these bullets might fall short of penetrating his defenses, the combined kinetic shock would still have to be absorbed fully by his body.

If pinned down by endless gunfire, those ominously hovering fighter jets surely wouldn't show him any mercy.

Space-grade combat aircraft meant for interstellar warfare had firepower no mere planetary-level fighter could endure.

'All those captured fighter jets, instead of fighting the Peak Alliance, were deployed against us first!'

The spy ducked and weaved through the metallic maelstrom, intentionally closing the gap with the chaotic enemy combatants.

Perhaps tangled up with their own, those reckless heavy-gunners might hesitate slightly in their operations.

Someone like Catherine—already locked in melee with the disorganized soldiers—clearly faced far less oppressive firepower as a result.

However, several powerful individuals radiating intense energy had gathered near Catherine's surroundings.

The hastily assembled chaotic soldiers turned out to be unexpectedly formidable.

"Damn-damn-damn-damn-damn!" Feeling each agonizing bullet hit his body, the spy's tightly clenched fists nearly shattered in fury.

'I should never have taken this mission! I could've been enjoying my vacation instead of bringing this trouble upon myself!'

'Yet, if it hadn't been me, perhaps Miss Catherine would have no one to support her?'

With that thought, a renewed determination flared within the spy's heart.

"How much longer does he need?!" The spy utilized Spiritual Energy to shout across the chaos.

"Ten minutes!" Despite being encircled by countless enemies, Catherine's voice maintained its cold yet composure-laden demeanor.

"It's been about that long since we started, hasn't it?!"

"..." Catherine said nothing in reply.

Within the chaos of bullets and grenades chasing behind him relentlessly, the spy felt time fly by so quickly.

The attackers evidently knew well the close combat prowess of the two, keeping at range as they fired.

Their own allies who approached too closely were equally shot down ruthlessly by the heavy gunners.

In moments like these, lives were expendable, brushed aside without care.

Two solitary figures, encircled by an endless tide of black shadows, seemed as helpless as a lone branch against the impending flood...

Chapter 884 Counterattack!

"Whoosh~"

The missile of death screeched through the air relentlessly, its sound striking terror into the intelligence agent already disoriented by the shockwave of an earlier explosion.

"Catherine!"

The missile wasn't targeting them, but rather the warehouse where the repair technicians were working.

That warehouse was their only chance to turn the tide!

Without the amplification power of mecha, relying solely on their physical strength was utterly futile against the Psychic Energy Canopy sealing off Freeport.

They had ventured out to stall for time, all to win precious moments for those technicians.

Unfortunately, their plan had been uncovered by a traitor among the rogue troops.

Surrounding Catherine was proving too difficult to accomplish in a short period.

But if those two antique mechas were smashed, Peak Alliance would secure an outright victory.

The rogue soldiers themselves might not understand this; they only sought to capture Catherine to complete their task. Yet the traitor knew all too well where Catherine's true vulnerability lay!

"I know!" Catherine gritted her teeth and launched herself into the air.

Defying expectations, she caught up with one of the missiles and attempted to divert or block its trajectory with her bare hands.

In the brief clash between an on-the-spot explosion and redirecting its path, the missile inched closer to its target. Forced into a corner, Catherine clenched her teeth and detonated the missile in mid-air.

"Boom!"

Amidst the plume of smoke and flame, a dark silhouette darted toward another speeding missile.

These terrifying heat-driven weapons, which ordinary human eyes could barely follow, proved unable to escape the grasp of a Planetary Level combatant.

If not for the direction of these missiles targeting something Catherine was compelled to protect, she wouldn't even have considered them a concern.

But precisely because of this predicament, the normally impeccable woman in her trench coat now appeared disheveled for the first time during battle.

Realizing this tactic of forcing her hand to protect others was even more effective than directly attacking her, all heavy-fire weapons shifted their aim. Catherine and the intelligence agent were ignored entirely.

With so many people present, even leaving them unchecked couldn't result in killing too many of the enemy in a short time.

Instead, the crucial things they fought to protect seemed on the verge of being reduced to rubble under the concentrated firepower.

"Rat-tat-tat-tat-tat!" A metallic storm pounded the walls.

Luckily, the warehouse's construction was durable enough to hold out for a time.

But the most lethal blows came from the heavy-explosive missiles fired by the aerial combat jets.

A single hit could shred the already crumbling warehouse to pieces.

"Whoosh~"

"Boom!"

"Whoosh~"

"Boom!"

Missiles streaking through the sky trailed sharp echoes before being intercepted and detonated mid-air, as the barely-visible silhouette intercepted every missile aimed at the warehouse.

'Two and a half minutes left!' Catherine silently kept track of the time in her mind.

Two and a half minutes until the time Bai Technician had mentioned—time she absolutely had to buy!

Yet human endurance has its limits. As the attacks intensified, missile after missile eventually broke through the personal defense line that Catherine had formed.

"Whoosh~"

Catherine, her blood surging violently within her body after a blast, could only watch helplessly as missile after missile, like sharks sensing blood in the water, streaked directly toward the location where technicians were repairing mecha.

In their eyes, the missile trajectories in mid-air were crystal clear, stretching out the despair of the moment endlessly.

For the first time, Catherine's resolute, battle-hardened eyes betrayed a brief flicker of doubt and vulnerability.

'What do I do now?'

Without the mecha, what comes next?

When faced with the Psychic Energy Canopy deployed by Peak Alliance, what move could she make to attempt the impossible once again?

Could it be that Bauhinia Republic's hope of rising again was about to be buried, by her own hands?!

"Boom!"

Debris shattered!

Wrought steel flew!

Before the incoming missiles could strike the warehouse's outer walls, the very wall marked for impact crumbled in advance.

An old war veteran, unseen by sunlight for countless years, emerged once more to demonstrate the glory of days past to the world.

"Clang clang clang!"

The mecha's built-in Blast Shield effortlessly deflected the incoming missiles. Though explosions rocked its surface, the warehouse itself remained completely unharmed.

"Well done!"

"Wohoo!"

"You can always count on dwarves!"

A throng of technicians crowded behind the shattered warehouse wall, raising their tools aloft and cheering rowdily.

"Go get them, baby!" Baron Norwitz, with his green-streaked hair, stood atop the highest crane, cupping his hands and shouting at the first-generation mecha that had once again embodied the pride of humanity. "Show them what true glory looked like in our prime!"

Left arm: shield. Right arm: blade.

The design of Blade Type I was reminiscent of humanity's most ancient warriors.

Roused from its slumber, it struggled to adapt to the modern-era weaponry. Yet its hands retained only the two innate companion weapons—blade and shield.

The concept behind Mech Battle Company's first-generation mecha indeed favored melee combat. However, the lack of compatible heat weapons in the warehouse was the more urgent reason for its traditional setup.

Chapter 885 Counterattack! _2

But no matter what, the sword and shield, have accompanied humanity on its journey from the barbaric to civilization.

Even after humanity developed unmatched physical might and spiritual energy, these ancient cold weapons have always been the most brilliant star on the human stage.

The classical martial artist wielded a long knife, with sapphire-like gleaming, diamond-shaped eyes, and turned to look at the fighter jets flying in the sky, intending to continue firing.

"Buzz~"

The long knife pointed, commanding the attention of a thousand armies!

Confronted with this giant that had awakened once more, the roaring fighter jets appeared somewhat listless for the first time...

'He really did it...'

"Holy crap! Amazing!"

Surprise and astonishment arose in the hearts of both Catherine and the spy.

The strange man who said he could repair two mecha in ten minutes had completed the repairs faster than the original plan.

"The other one is also ready, start your battle." From within that ancient warrior came a steady male voice, covered by electronic sound.

Even if he had never interacted with extraterrestrial technology before, in an emergency, working on this alien armament for the first time, Bai E felt a frighteningly high compatibility with this alien mecha.

The unfamiliar mecha cockpit was entirely different from layouts of the past.

No more buttons and gear sticks, abandoning the complex operations of yesteryears.

Only a biological direct-connect operating system linked directly to the will remained.

The mecha modification plan 2.0, which he had researched together with Helen but struggled with due to a lack of corresponding materials technology, also at this moment found its rightful place.

Bai E's adaptability to this new type of mecha was astonishingly fast, whether the mecha was made for him or he was made for this mecha.

The moment the will-link was established, Bai E could sense an inexplicable "will" inexplicably connecting him tightly to the mecha.

So much so that even without anyone teaching him how to use the mecha's voice system, the moment his mind wanted to do so, he instinctively knew how to operate the mecha's external amplification function.

"Good!" Catherine nodded excitedly, her figure launching out explosively.

The spy also came excitedly to the foot of the mecha Bai E was piloting, looking up with a face full of excitement at the position of the mecha cockpit and said, "Alright, let me do it, your mission is complete."

"..."

"..."

The mecha's detection system locked onto the small figure at its feet, and an enlarged electronic display showcased the man's expectant, upturned face.

The ambiguous communication will inside the mecha seemed to be asking Bai E whether to eliminate this unsightly guy below his feet.

"Not you."

Already quickly getting into another Blade I-type mecha and starting it up, a female voice enveloped in electronic sound came out, "To break through the blockade of the Psychic Energy Canopy, you must surpass conventional overload burst."

"Besides you, I'm the strongest mech pilot here! If I can't do it, who can?!" The spy stood akimbo, full of unwillingness.

Although the gap between himself and an ace like Catherine was vast, he was also a Star Alliance-certified Level One Mech Pilot, dammit!

"Him." The Blade I-type turned its head, looking at the cockpit of the mecha beside it.

Although unable to see the pilot through the cockpit, a glance at the crowd revealed that the strange soldier in military uniform was missing, so Catherine roughly guessed who was piloting.

And at such a critical moment having such courage and executive power, who else here could it be but him?

"Him?" The spy also roughly guessed the mech pilot inside this mecha was that mysterious technician Bai, "Him... Do you know his capability?"

"I don't know." Catherine said bluntly, "But your limit can be foreseen."

Facing the Psychic Energy Canopy, only another pilot of a similar level to mine might be able to collaborate with me to break through.

With the spy joining, it seems not much different from me being alone.

In moments like these, unknown risks offer more hope for success than conservative safety!

"..." The spy, with his pride hurt, clenched his fists tightly.

Catherine didn't look at him, her eyes fixated on the direction of Bai E's mecha cockpit, "Can you do it?"

"No problem."

Bai E grinned lightly.

As the time spent communicating with the mecha lengthened, the confidence he once had in his ability to perform within the mecha gradually returned for some unknown reason.

Although that clown-like voice had said it had taken away all his powers, based on the events that had transpired since arriving in extraterrestrial society... the outcome seemed otherwise.

Can it be done?

Can't it be done?

Who knows.

Let's give it a try.

"Then follow me!"

Communicating with the mecha through his mind, the anti-gravity device instantly allowed the heavy mecha to free itself from the artificial gravity of Freeport.

"Zoom!" The mecha rapidly ascended, heading towards the designated port of Freeport.

In the vast universe, without the protection of an atmosphere, only an artificial, invisible barrier protects all the travelers on Freeport.

If not considering everyone on Freeport, directly breaching the barrier is evidently a faster approach.

But Catherine wouldn't, nor would Bai E.

The disorderly soldiers seem numerous, but ultimately they're just a small part of Freeport's innumerable population.

The Peak Alliance wants destruction, they want salvation.

That's the difference in their actions.

Through the professional port, Freeport's staff expressed their final gratitude to the two.

"Thank you both... It's our failing for not stopping them."

"The remaining fighter jets have taken off with you, awaiting your orders."

"We wish you martial fortune and prosperity."

"Zoom!"

"Zoom!"

White streams spouted, as two blue-grey veterans once more cut through the pitch-black universe, heading to the unknown distant lands.

"Breathe~ Inhale~"

In the silent cockpit, only the voice from another mecha's communication channel sounded, "Have you ever experienced space combat?"

"No." Bai E replied truthfully.

"Can you execute the Alpha Limit Overclock Attack?"

"Never heard of that term."

"Don't worry about terminology. What we need to do is launch an attack in as short a time as possible strong enough to penetrate the Psychic Energy Canopy's defense and recovery abilities, understand?"

"Understood."

"..."

After a brief silence, Catherine's voice once again echoed from the other end of the communication, "If we manage to get out, once I fulfill the mission I bear, I'll buy you a drink."

"I'm also hoping to inquire about some things from you."

"I'll share everything I know without reserve."

"Thank you."

Strong spiritual energy scanned the universe deep space ahead through the mecha, until it touched a place resembling an impregnable psychic energy cliff, Catherine leading the way knew they had reached the blockade limit of the Psychic Energy Canopy.

The invisible Psychic Energy Canopy only exudes the most lethal threat within the psychic energy realm.

Without ever considering that her companion might even lack psychic abilities, Catherine rushed up with the sword.

"The opponent is setting up the weapon system, seize the opportunity, breakthrough the defense line!"

The private voice message was cut off, and the sharp female voice instantly resonated in another public channel.

"Open fire!"

"Received, ma'am!" The fighter squad leader responded.

Thus, endless thermal weapons abruptly fired at the empty space in front of everyone.

Silent flashes bloomed in the pitch-black universe deep space.

Like bursts of blooming fireworks, illuminating every individual's view before them.

"Buzz~"

A tranquil spherical space began to undulate with ripples, as floating turrets silently emerged from behind the canopy.

"They've slowed the deployment of the Star Annihilation Cannon, opting to use the floating artillery swarm to block our breakthrough!" Catherine's voice was steady yet full of passion, "Take action!"

"Swish!"

Dazzling knife light, at a speed the mecha's scanning system struggled to capture, erupted into a terrifying flash of the blade before them!

Chapter 886 Extreme Threshold

"What an intense attack... Is this the fabled Alpha Limit Overclock Attack that only a Legendary Mechanic can unleash?"

"She truly deserves her place as one of the two strongest Legendary Mechanics in the Bauhinia Republic. Even the oldest, most basic mecha in her hands can display such terrifying power."

"Someone like her... If she hadn't been born in the Bauhinia Republic, she would have been the brightest star under this piece of the galaxy."

"But... this is probably as far as she'll go, right?"

Outside the formless Psychic Energy Canopy, inside a pitch-black starship, a group of people stared nervously at the events unfolding before their eyes.

The Psychic Energy Canopy's cloaking and disguise effects were unilateral. From within its coverage, one could not perceive any abnormalities outside.

However, the scene from their vantage point, beyond the Psychic Energy Canopy, was entirely different.

Before them, countless small fighter craft, like pieces on a strategy board, whirled rapidly around the surface of a spherical barrier, crisscrossing with calculated precision.

The spherical surface formed by these crafts created a faintly glowing, translucent light shield in pale blue. It pulsed gently, as if breathing, undulating through spatial layers.

Numerous fighter jets launched from the blockaded Freeport were attacking this spherical barrier from various angles, their strikes exploding into bursts of light—like flickering candle flames in the cosmos.

The impacts from these diverse attack points caused subtle ripples across the pale blue translucent shield. At the same time, the drones maintaining the canopy hurried to each strike zone, ready to increase power output at a moment's notice.

This adaptive response was an innate control mechanism of the Psychic Energy Canopy. It adjusted real-time power output across every position of the barrier based on spiritual energy feedback.

The entire system was perfectly self-contained, immune to any external interference, including higher-level command inputs.

No matter the scale, this was the foundation of the Psychic Energy Canopy.

The group aboard the starship could only monitor; they had no capability to interfere or exert control.

Under their observation, even the combined maximum firepower from dozens of fighter ships paled compared to that of a single blue-grey antique mecha.

The Legendary Mechanic from the Bauhinia Republic, with dazzling flashes of her blade, was unleashing slashes powerful enough to shred small spaceships as she tried to penetrate the seemingly gossamer-thin boundary of the cosmic realm.

Though those inside the barrier couldn't perceive the feedback, those outside could clearly see the pale blue translucent shield—once as thin as cicada wings—was gradually darkening in color.

More and more drones from across the spherical canopy sped toward the focal points of the assaults. The reinforced sections of the barrier coalesced into a deeper blue hue as power output increased.

A buzzing alarm signal came from the canopy's feedback system.

The canopy's breach threshold had reached 67%. If the target's attacks became even half as intense as their current level, they might actually manage to shatter the entire Psychic Energy Canopy on their own.

This would go down as a groundbreaking record in the entire history of the Psychic Energy Canopy.

But thankfully... It was just an "if."

Seeing the warning bar remain locked in the orange zone, the monitoring members of the Peak Alliance team breathed a collective sigh of relief.

"So this must be her peak performance, right?"

"Terrifying... It's a good thing we never gave her the chance to reclaim her mecha during our journey. Otherwise, I have no idea how we'd handle her."

"She has no chance. Mechas can't traverse long distances through space. If she ever hopes to return to her homeland, it's impossible for her to carry her mecha with her."

"Fortunately, we deployed the Psychic Energy Canopy right away. I initially thought the Alliance was overreacting... but now, it seems like even this canopy setup was barely enough. She almost breached it on her own. And her ally hasn't even made a move yet—can the canopy hold?"

"Ally? That intergalactic spy from the Star Alliance? What good is he?"

"Exactly! People from the Star Alliance always have an inflated sense of capability. They might seem like versatile all-arounders, but they're nothing but amateurs. On the battlefield, they might pass for elite pilots at best, but against the Psychic Energy Canopy? Useless."

"But hasn't the canopy already reached 67% of its breach threshold? If that guy's skills are even half as good as Catherine's, wouldn't our canopy be in real danger?"

"You're misunderstanding the canopy's capabilities. Against a single concentrated attack, the canopy might struggle to output enough power. But against multiple points of attack, it's not as simple as adding power outputs together. Even if that spy truly has half of Catherine's strength, the breach threshold would only climb by ten percentage points at most. Without a second mech pilot on par with Catherine, this canopy remains unbreakable!"

"Half? Saying he has half her strength is being kind. This mission... it's practically in the bag!"

"Is that so?" A young, seemingly new recruit in the group muttered softly, appearing unsure as he tried to process it all.

Before their eyes, another mecha that had seemed to be merely observing the battle now appeared to have finally realized its purpose.

Slowly, it unsheathed its combat blade and advanced toward a patch of empty space not far from Catherine's mecha.

Chapter 887 Extreme Threshold_2

A light blow was delivered, and the counterforce attack immediately transmitted back to Bai E's mecha sensors.

"No wonder..." Bai E muttered to himself.

The greater the impact, the stronger the counterforce.

No wonder those two ships crashed instantly, and no wonder Catherine's voice from not far away carried a noticeable hint of panting.

Long-range attack output has limited energy levels and frequency, while close-combat requires enduring unbelievably powerful recoil forces.

This is indeed a rather tricky target.

Having watched Catherine's maneuver, Bai E generally understood what the so-called Alpha Limit Overclock Attack was all about.

What did it resemble?

That's right! Instant Kill Hundred Heads!

The complete form of Instant Kill Hundred Heads...

After raising all his attributes to 60 points and bringing all his specializations to level 10, Bai E had long mastered the full form of Instant Kill Hundred Heads.

As simple as the name implies... Instant Kill Hundred Heads means annihilating one hundred heads in a single instant.

Legend has it that the world-ending serpent was a terrifying Demon God with one hundred heads. If attacked, even if just one head remains, it would instantly regenerate the other ninety-nine heads.

If one cannot annihilate all its hundred heads in one instant, the world would perish at its hands.

The skill known as Instant Kill Hundred Heads is the ability to simultaneously assault and destroy one hundred heads in a single moment.

To exhibit its full power, Instant Kill Hundred Heads must be used with primitive ranged cold weapons like a bow. Even if unable to showcase its maximum potency in close combat, it should suffice to face this Energy Canopy.

But Bai E did not know if his skill had been permanently sealed away after being stripped out by the clown's voice or if it could be rediscovered through intentional refinement.

However... such a skill has always been more than just technique alone; strength is equally indispensable.

Bai E's gaze flickered slightly as Catherine's voice emerged from the audio system: "I can only demonstrate it once. Did you see it clearly?"

The mecha that Catherine first used to attack hovered at Bai E's side.

The two mechas floated parallel in the dark, empty void of the universe.

Catherine's initial strike was not only meant to gauge the general strength of this Canopy but also to provide Bai E, who seemed unfamiliar with the concept, with a tangible demonstration of this idea.

The theoretical optimal solution for breaking through the Canopy is to execute the most aggressive and high-frequency attack on a single point within the shortest amount of time.

Speed, power, precision—none can be missing.

This represents the highest pinnacle of individual strength.

Only performance of this caliber can hope to overcome humanity's greatest invention in Spiritual Energy technology—the Psychic Energy Canopy.

But now, having personally attempted it, Catherine confirmed that, by relying solely on her own strength, she could not break through the Psychic Energy Canopy before her.

Only if this enigmatic Bai mechanic could demonstrate an ability on par with her own would they have a chance of helping Freeport escape its predicament!

The voice system transmitted Bai's usual indifferent reply: "I saw it clearly."

"Can we... begin now?" Catherine was unsure if Bai had full confidence, but she was out of time.

The materialized floating turrets were targeting the fighter pilots and their two mechas alike.

Even though these turrets posed limited threat to them, at such a critical juncture, splitting even 10% of their focus would drastically diminish their peak combat effectiveness.

Time was never on their side.

Moreover, Catherine did not elaborate on more details regarding the Alpha Limit Overfrequency Attack Theory.

Such an attack, even for her, could only be executed at peak performance once.

If Bai E could not keep up with her tempo, their next strike would spell their defeat.

As for granting time for Bai E to practice...

You either know it, or you don't.

What sort of battlefield practice could achieve this?

As the art of war states: Strike while the iron is hot; hesitation invites decline; repeated attempts lead to exhaustion.

Your first shot should be the pinnacle of focus and vitality.

Saying anything else is merely wasting energy with needless distractions.

"Come then." Bai E gripped his combat blade tightly.

The real-time feedback system of the mecha control mechanism induced a stronger sense of human-machine integration far beyond the mechas of the past.

The mysterious communication feeling between man and mecha grew even stronger, filling him with confidence.

"So... let's do this." Catherine exhaled lightly.

Formation, blade raised.

In the desolate, deep expanse of the cosmos, even with only two solitary mechas, at this moment, they seemed as imposing as an army of thousands.

From outside, beyond the veiling Canopy, the black spaceship faced the mechas directly. The crew aboard couldn't help but feel an immense aura of killing intent, chilling and unsettling, even through the barrier.

Some formerly confident team members now spoke with trembling voices, "Can it hold?"

"It has to!"

"Didn't we already analyze that spy as a complete amateur? There won't be any surprises."

"But this Legendary Mechanic looks... even fiercer than before!"

"Wasn't the earlier attack not her true peak performance?" A shared thought flashed silently through their minds, though none dared to voice it aloud.

Advance!

Strike!

Like a ribbon of focused blade light, the attack gleamed once again in this lonely dark abyss.

The dazzling light emitted from the Spiritual Energy explosion seared deeply, even radiating warmth that Bai E, despite his lower sensitivity to Spiritual Energy, found intimidating.

"Buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz, buzz!"

An intense symphony of sharp alarms filled the black spaceship.

The progress bar representing threshold warnings surged toward vibrant red.

It climbed rapidly until it hit 75% before starting to decline.

The ship's crew, despite not being planetary-level elites, possessed mind speeds far surpassing ordinary humans.

The subtle shift in progress and the decline trend became instantly apparent to their heightened perception, instilling a collective sense of relief that arose subconsciously in everyone's hearts.

Everyone knew that the outcome of an attack on the Psychic Energy Canopy is determined in mere instances.

You either penetrate it, or you don't.

The shortest time, the highest frequency, the fiercest assault.

If a single blow fails to reach the threshold for breakthrough, it is utterly impossible to continue delivering such ferocious attacks purely through personal ability.

The Psychic Energy Canopy does experience fatigue and has its limits.

If the two mechas inside could consistently maintain this peak-level of attack, then the current assault reaching 75% of the threshold could eventually climb to 80%, 85%, 99%... until it finally breached 100%.

But clearly, they couldn't.

Human strength has its limits!

This mission... was practically secure.

...

"Still... can't do it?" Catherine's heart sank into darkness.

Victory and defeat hinge on a mere instant.

Honestly speaking, driven by her mission's weight and a soul-deep resolve, Catherine's attack this time was undoubtedly the fiercest she had ever launched in her life.

Yet... it still failed to shatter this seemingly fragile "membrane."

Judging from the counterforce feedback, her attack should have come very close to the limits of this Energy Canopy's defenses.

But that tiny difference... was enough to render her efforts fruitless.

The seemingly formidable figure beside her evidently wasn't as strong as imagined... perhaps even weaker than that spy.

Had she misjudged?

However, even if the spy had been with her, he wouldn't have helped her overcome this final barrier.

Born in the Galaxy Third Empire, that man might never experience any desperate drive strong enough to ignite his potential, let alone any chance of sudden breakthrough.

In the end, it was still her own inadequacy...

The dwindling brightness of her blade light mirrored the sinking desolation in her heart.

...

A wave of delight spread within the black spaceship.

Due to the briefness of time, none of them had yet expressed confirmation of their final victory aloud.

Yet in those fleeting moments, just as the progress bar had unmistakably shown signs of decline...

It suddenly surged upwards again!

Chapter 888 Break!

Orange!

Orange-red!

Scarlet!

Dark red!

The changes in color only flickered frame by frame in recollections after the event.

In reality, the moment the alert bar surged again, the next reaction time revealed the performance monitor of the Psychic Energy Canopy displaying a glaring "Connection Lost" warning in bright red.

"Poof~"

The membrane punctured by a hole instantly caused a violent reaction throughout the Psychic Energy Canopy. From the perspective of the Observer inside the spaceship, the once faintly glowing blue veil expanded as if it were overinflated to its limits, shattering in an instant upon breaching the threshold.

The fragments of the blue veil briefly floated in the abyss of space before transforming into finer particles, gradually integrating into the darkness of the void until they disappeared completely.

Spiritual Energy is a force bound by its intrinsic nature.

It has never been a capability that can be imposed unilaterally.

Under the impact that exceeded its limits, the composition of the Psychic Energy Canopy—essentially those Canopy Generators flying across spherical space—all froze in place.

The feedback of spiritual energy plunged them into intense oscillations, and many of the Canopy Generators' pilots had succumbed to genuine annihilation due to excessive shock.

Perhaps some remaining Canopy Generators could be reutilized after self-repair over time, but that was clearly irrelevant to the unfolding situation.

Freed from entrapment, Catherine would never halt and allow herself to be captured. Being this close to the Bauhinia Republic's borders ensured there would be no second chance to deploy such a cage.

This legendary Mech Pilot escorting the precious cargo ultimately fought her way through countless checkpoints set by the Peak Alliance, successfully returning to her nation.

Yet, for the Peak Alliance Observer team closest to the scene aboard the spaceship, a final thought reverberated in their minds—

Was it an illusion?

Had the alert bar momentarily shown a downward trend?

Time carries entirely different implications for the strong and the ordinary.

In the span of a single second, a strong individual might glean tens of thousands of datapoints, processing thousands of thoughts; whereas an average person might only perceive hundreds or thousands of datapoints and fleetingly process dozens or hundreds of thoughts.

The efficiency of utilizing time is fundamentally disparate.

In that fleeting moment of change, they distinctly believed that the alert bar had displayed a brief dip.

It implied that Catherine, the Bauhinia Republic's Legendary Mechanic, had already reached her limit in that instant.

First effort brings vigor. A second brings exhaustion. A third brings collapse.

No one can persist against repeated setbacks.

Unless, of course, there's an immense breakthrough on-site—transforming into a devil or ascending to sainthood in the span of a moment.

Otherwise, Catherine's performance had already peaked to the utmost clarity.

Moreover, on top of all this, that Legendary Mechanic visibly paused after unleashing her ultimate strike.

Even if there was a marginal delay between the real-time visual feed and the spaceship feedback systems regarding the Canopy Generators, consciousness naturally processed events to align Catherine's movements and the alert indicator on the timeline.

At the instant of the alert bar's sharp decline, Catherine most likely had already eased back.

And yet, their supposedly secure Psychic Energy Canopy still shattered mercilessly.

Could this mean that the Mech Pilot inside the Mecha accompanying Catherine had managed to launch an attack potent enough to breach the Psychic Energy Canopy, even with Catherine scaling down her output or outright halting her strikes?

What kind of powerhouse must this be?

Someone who surpasses Catherine, the Legendary Mechanic?

But... a Legendary Mechanic represents the pinnacle tier of humanity in terms of Mech Pilots.

Alternatively, this Mech Pilot might not have broken through entirely on their own. Perhaps their assault rode the remnants of momentum left by Catherine's preceding strike.

Even so, the strength of this Mech Pilot would at least operate at an equivalent tier to Catherine's.

Assuming, of course, that everyone's observations earlier were not some collective illusion.

"The alert bar just now, it genuinely showed signs of dropping, right?"

"I saw it clearly—Catherine had already stopped her attacks!"

"Catherine absolutely hit her limit—there's no doubt about it!"

If one person's illusion might still be mistaken, then phenomena observed by everyone cannot possibly be a mirage!

If their observations were indeed accurate, the Mech Pilot from Catherine's accompanying Mecha would rank somewhere between "equal to Catherine" and "far superior to Catherine."

Determining the exact level, however, was confounded by the delay between the visual feeds and the feedback system.

Realizing this caused the Observers aboard the spaceship to feel an intense and visceral dread.

Yet here lay the problem... Does such a powerhouse exist within this Stellar District?

There are confirmed individuals roughly equivalent to Catherine's level—about six or seven throughout the Stellar District.

Chapter 889 Break!

But most of them belong to the Peak Alliance, making it absolutely impossible for them to help Catherine escape.

However, one of them does come from the same country as Catherine, making him the most likely candidate to help her.

The problem is... intelligence has been repeatedly confirmed countless times: the Legendary Mech Pilot who personally trained Catherine, the current Legendary Mech Pilot herself, is still stationed on the central planet of the Bauhinia Republic.

There's no way that he could appear somewhere beyond the borders at such a time to rescue Catherine, whose mission has been kept completely secret, even from her own homeland.

So, who could it possibly be?

"Is it that guy from the Star Alliance?"

"Impossible! Unless he's been hiding his true strength all along. That guy is only rated as a standard Level-One Mech Pilot, and his performance against the Psychic Energy Canopy wouldn't be significantly better than those fighter jets."

"But besides him, is there anyone else on Freeport who could qualify as a powerhouse?"

"Could it be the Black Pirate King?"

From within the entire Stellar District, apart from that free-roaming Pirate King of the cosmos, there isn't a single Legendary Mech Pilot unaccounted for under their surveillance.

"It can't be him! Absolutely not!" protested one member, who seemed privy to inside information.

"Then there's no one else! Could it be that Catherine suddenly leveled up on her own?"

The failure of this mission, of course, carries grave penalties.

But what's even more troublesome than mission failure is that they can't even pinpoint the reason behind it.

After all, a failed mission could still have strategies for recovery.

But if the cause remains unknown, the Peak Alliance will be incapable of devising specific counteractions for the next operation to prevent similar outcomes.

The Alliance has never been intolerant toward failure... but if one cannot learn from it, such individuals are deemed useless garbage.

If they can't provide a reasonable explanation, the consequences awaiting them back home might be far worse than mere failure!

"Who... was it?"

...

"It... broke through?"

Staring at the entirely transformed cosmic space before her and the countless small canopy-generating flying craft floating in view, Catherine's previously defeated gaze was now filled with absolute disbelief.

"How could this be... broken through?"

The feedback she received clearly indicated that her attacks had nowhere near the level required to penetrate the canopy.

Realizing this, she had even stopped trying... but the next moment, right after she ceased her efforts, this supposedly indestructible Psychic Energy Canopy was suddenly shattered completely!

Because she was at the scene facing it directly, Catherine was more certain than anyone that, at the very instant it broke, she had already pulled back.

The recoil from a peak-strike was nearly insufferable—continuing such a barrage would have required her to seriously question whether her body or her mecha's structure could withstand it.

Thus, the shattering of the Psychic Energy Canopy had practically nothing to do with her!

Was there some internal malfunction within its structure?

After all, no technological device or psionic construct is guaranteed to be completely immune to failure, especially hybrid tech like this that blends science and Spiritual Energy.

However, such a national treasure is regarded with unimaginable scrutiny—a weapon of this caliber holds monumental strategic importance for any faction that deploys it.

If it were indeed some spontaneous malfunction, the engineers responsible for its construction would probably struggle to escape thorough investigations afterward.

So, while the possibility existed, it was exceedingly small.

Setting aside this remote possibility, only one answer remained—

The mysterious Mech Pilot beside her... with his own sheer power, had single-handedly shattered this Psychic Energy Canopy, which even she found despairingly impenetrable!

What level of strength could this entail?

Beyond the Planetary Level lies the Stellar Level, of course.

But such theoretical powerhouses are only whispered of in the distant central Stellar District of the Galactic Empire; Catherine's remote district has never witnessed the grandeur of such a figure.

Could a stranger she randomly bumped into in the streets turn out to be a Stellar Level powerhouse, one of the rarest beings in the universe?

The mere thought of this possibility made Catherine want to laugh.

On an emotional level, Catherine was more inclined to believe that this man was merely a peak-tier figure among Planetary Level Mech Pilots, slightly stronger than herself.

After all, if she herself were just a bit stronger, she might have glimpsed the limits of this Psychic Energy Canopy.

Perhaps this man's ability with mechas was just slightly superior to hers, narrowly reaching the threshold to destroy the canopy.

Even among Planetary Level powerhouses, the disparity between individuals could be as vast as the difference between a human and a dog.

For example, herself versus an undercover operative in the mecha domain.

Or, herself versus this mysterious stranger beside her.

"Looks like my luck isn't bad after all."

Within a subdued tone, Catherine's voice carried an unmistakable sense of relief.

She'd chosen correctly, after all.

"Hmm?" Bai E was still caught up in the strange sensory feedback he'd just experienced.

When Catherine said she was going to act, Bai E had indeed unleashed his most powerful attack.

But initially, his strikes had proved useless—exceedingly weak, in fact.

Bai E felt this wasn't how it should be.

The sensation was there.

This so-called indestructible Psychic Energy Canopy didn't feel overwhelmingly impenetrable according to his intuition.

He was convinced he could do it.

And then he succeeded.

With one strike, he unleashed a cascade of destruction!

After Catherine had clearly ceased her efforts, Bai E instinctively followed his intuition and delivered one final slash.

As he swung his blade, visions of the canopy's disintegration seemed to flash in his mind.

It was as if he knew with certainty that this strike would achieve the desired result...

The blade's converging energies formed into one focused cut, slashing fiercely at the seemingly resilient membrane.

The membrane shattered at the slightest touch.

It felt as though there'd been no resistance at all.

Effortlessly withdrawing his blade, Bai E didn't even feel any recoil or misplaced force from the strike.

With an almost weightless motion, he had delivered the slash—and the cosmos instantly revealed its true, unfiltered visage.

A cluster of pitch-black, small spherical flying crafts hung silently before them, their curves extending outward toward the horizon, where even more similar crafts floated in the darkness of space.

Gazing at the tiny machines, Bai E's eyes were filled with curiosity.

"So this is the technological marvel responsible for composing the Psychic Energy Canopy?"

Alien technology—a realm of boundless possibilities.

If Helen could see this, she'd surely be thrilled, wouldn't she?

Upon hearing the voice of the powerful alien Mech Pilot beside him, Bai E let out a slightly wistful response, "Yes... luckily, it wasn't a larger-scale canopy."

Though unsure of his current limits, Bai E gauged that the scale of a Planetary-Level canopy—potentially hundreds of times more potent than this one—would likely exceed his capabilities for instant annihilation.

If this wasn't luck, then what else could it be?

Hearing Bai E's words, Catherine reaffirmed the thoughts brewing in her mind.

"Indeed, he admits that the strength of this canopy was close to reaching his limit."

That alone was reason enough to be grateful.

Now that they had crossed this critical juncture, smoother paths lay ahead.

"Let's go..." Catherine cast a deep glance at the pitch-black vessel hovering in the distance.

She knew well that it contained Peak Alliance's lackeys, but she had no time to tangle with them now.

You can't kill off all the lackeys—it was more important to ensure the safe return of the treasure entrusted to her, back to her homeland.

...

As the two mechas turned to leave, silence gripped the ship observing them.

After a long pause, someone finally spoke up: "Have the crew below closely monitor him and locate that Mech Pilot!"

Chapter 890 Costume Change

Watching the two blue-gray, veteran mechas gradually disappear into the dark backdrop of the cosmos.

The oppressive presence of two planetary-level legends, both likely to be mech pilots of legendary caliber, had finally retreated.

A faint sense of unwillingness began to ripple through the spaceship.

"So we're just going to watch them... leave like that?"

"What else could we do?"

"They exerted their full strength to break through the Psychic Energy Canopy; they must've suffered considerable backlash. Maybe right now... they're weakened too. Otherwise, why didn't they attack us?"

When those two mechas shattered the canopy and glanced toward the ship, everyone aboard had been on edge.

The crew member responsible for controlling the ship's propulsion system had preemptively warmed up the engines, ready to make a quick escape if pursued.

But the other side didn't give chase. Once the initial panic subsided, some started to contemplate.

An excuse for failure never sounds as sweet as the triumphant return of success, does it?

Only the man sitting in the ship's central viewport, one hand rested upon the arm of his chair, spoke calmly and firmly. His voice echoed softly within the cabin, "No need to pursue."

"Captain?"

"Boss?"

Faced with the confusion of his team, the man shook his head slightly. "The outcome will be the same."

The rise of Bauhinia was destined to remain an unattainable dream for some.

Whether shattered sooner or later makes no difference.

"Finding and confirming that helper of Catherine's is what truly matters now. If our alliance wants a foothold in the Galactic Accord, we need to consolidate every ounce of power we can muster. Who knows? Maybe one day, Miss Catherine herself might become one of our allies..."

"Understood, Captain."

"Understood, Boss."

Silence overtook the cabin.

Everyone once again turned their gaze to the hazelnut-shaped floating space city suspended in the endless vacuum—Freeport.

Though the two old mechas were no longer visible on the horizon, everyone knew exactly where they had gone.

Large mechas have limited travel speed in the vastness of space, and without enough room to equip servobrain modules, they are incapable of hyperspace travel.

Even though Freeport sat relatively close to the borders of the Bauhinia Republic, in cosmic terms, that "close" distance of a single light-year might still take forever for mechas reliant on their engines to traverse.

Only by boarding a proper interstellar ship could one cover these immensely vast distances quickly and return to Bauhinia's central star cluster without delay.

However, Freeport was now teeming with starships. With the canopy destroyed, the docks would undoubtedly become swamped as everyone scrambled to flee.

Once they accelerated into hyperspace corridors, tracking their destinations would become next to impossible. Locating or targeting Catherine and her companion pilot would prove to be incredibly difficult.

...

Back on Freeport, the two had just disembarked from their mechas when they were greeted by a chorus of jubilant cheers.

"Welcome back, our heroes!"

"You are the saviors of Freeport. On behalf of Freeport's administration, we are proud to award you both the permanent Freeport Black Gold Medals!"

"Without your courageous intervention during today's crisis, Freeport would have been utterly annihilated!"

Freeport's leadership, having observed the canopy's destruction in advance, had prepared an extravagant welcoming ceremony for their triumphant return.

Amid the celebrations, a few reluctant and belligerent individuals were shoved forward, stumbling into view.

"Those scumbags who dared disrupt the movements of you two esteemed figures have all been apprehended, as per your orders! Just one command from you, and we'll see to it that their heads hit the floor at once!"

The captured individuals glared, their eyes ablaze, at Catherine, who stood clad in a black trench coat. Their fury was uncontainable. "Traitor Catherine! You dare defy the Peak Alliance and steal treasures from our hands! You're bringing disgrace upon all of Freeport!"

"If this traitor isn't executed, Freeport will never see peace!"

"This is unjust! I refuse to accept it! You bureaucratic stooges—they've all rotted your brains!"

Amid the chaotic uproar, Catherine merely smiled as she accepted the medals ceremonially presented by Freeport's officials, countering their fervent accusations with measured responses.

"Thank you all for your support. However, the two of us still have pressing matters to attend to and cannot linger here. As for the banquet... we must regretfully decline."

Her response was brief yet resolute. Grasping Bai E's hand, she swiftly retreated into an exit corridor specially prepared by Freeport's high command.

At the end of the passage, a Star Alliance spy was already waiting.

"Holy crap, man! You two actually pulled it off?"

The spy circled around Bai E, scrutinizing him with a curious gaze.

He had long been aware of Catherine's power.

Though her performance had been astonishing, it had matched his expectations.

On the other hand, this "Technician Bai," an unfamiliar figure, had revealed an unfathomable level of strength.

For those on Freeport, while spatially close to the canopy's boundary, events that unfolded at the canopy's edge were still largely a mystery to most individuals.

The majority merely knew that the invincible Psychic Energy Canopy had been breached and that the two mech pilots who accomplished this feat must be exceedingly formidable.

But for spies with some competence and broader insight, they could discern more.

Everyone understood that in the grand feat of shattering the canopy, Catherine had undoubtedly played the leading role.