



In Metal Clad

“They tell us there is nothing to fear. They say it in the paper, they drone it on the radio, they lie about it to our faces. I have been to the European theater, toured its shattered lands. We do not even know the depth of the precipice we stand upon, because we are too afraid to look. It is only by chance miracle that the madness has deigned to stay in the labyrinthine maze of stone and storm. But it is coming. Leaking out of French ports, carried by the minds of men so arrogant as to defy belief. Assembled by a legion of monsters and ghosts at the eye of the maelstrom, their only succor the hate of the living. Traded and sold by the most avaricious souls still not claimed by Hell, and fought over by a thousand, thousand warlords. I tell you that there is only fear left, of what that wretched continent will finally birth.”

- Dr. Sirius Trell

As the second great war finally came to a close, a new age loomed over the dawning sun. One of global superpowers, and boiling hot cold war. All was paranoia. Children playing with matches as the decisions reached behind closed doors promised to be in reasoned deliberation became indistinguishable from the conclusions of madmen. In the face of threats conjured by their own imagination, millions died. When we stared into the abyss humanity now found itself, made from the flesh of yesterday's mountain of corpses and the blinding glow of tomorrow's nuclear flash, we found ourselves alone. To continue like this, to tread the only path it led to, would be utter ruin. For many, that was enough to turn back. For others, they could find no way forward, and abandoned it too.

But for a few, having stared so long, such a small perspective seemed wholly insufficient.

The first great step forward came down in Europe. The continent was broken, torn asunder by the impossible energies unleashed by the mad Dr. Absal. Such a tragedy invited examination, and such examination brought the bloodshot eyes of the world's leviathans to this newest frontier of golden opportunity. The future stalks the sheer cliffs and subterranean valleys of New Europe, its freshly excavated plateaus containing miracles and horrors alike. The frailties of the human body do not last long in such a place, and the frailties of the mind even less so. Something stronger must be had to tread that altered landscape. So it is that narrowed eyes peer out of tracked behemoths crackling with new methods of killing divined from last expeditions looted prize. The red and blue glow of plasma ionization clashes against the brilliant flashes of laser detonations, all to the drum of the thunder of shells. Such fearsome weaponry lays atop an equally dizzying array of metal bodies, sourced from wherever they may be found. Resupply is a distant memory, and for weeks at a time it is just the growl of metal beasts and the commands of their riders. In the Shattered Continent, flesh and metal become one. To do otherwise is to die.