

6845 Feathered Steelwing Bird

Ves was creating quite a distraction for the people who remained in the private workshop.

He completely disregarded the attention of others. He became completely fixated on his own experimentation.

Blinky continued to release life energy from his Blinkyverse.

As life energy was Ves and the companion spirit's primary attribute, the Blinkyverse actually contained an enormous reservoir of this energy. He had no concerns that he would run out of it anytime soon.

Now that Blinky was becoming more active, he was doing more than infusing

life into the death echo formed by Helena.

A lot of life energy spilled over and spread across the workshop. The other mech designers became slightly invigorated, while the parts they created so far absorbed a bit of life energy as well.

Of course, that did not mean that all of the tools, parts and materials would come to life all of a sudden.

Engaging the Living Workshop ability was useful when he was fabricating a brand new mech, but it was relatively pointless for upgrading existing living mechs.

The Minerva was already alive and had grown so strong after absorbing Casella Ingvar's feedback. It made no difference if the new parts were infused with a little life energy.

Perhaps only Alexa Streon possessed the

capability to further the growth of a living mech like the Minerva, but she needed to grow a lot stronger to make a difference at this level.

In any case, as Blinky continued to breathe life into the death echo, a miracle slowly unfolded before everyone's eyes.

The calamity beast seemingly came to life.

Ves had no illusions about what he was doing. What he was doing was more akin to creating a new spiritual product than reviving a dead creature.

The death echo contained no remnant of the deceased exobeast's soul. Since the original ingredient remained absent, Ves had little choice but to create a new spiritual product based off the mind-attributed E energy that the Mentalist Crystal concentrated in and

around its structure.

The resulting spiritual product just happened to conform to the 'blueprint' established by the death echo.

Helena's handiwork essentially served as a template that allowed Blinky to create a new spiritual product that closely matched the original calamity beast.

The new life form could therefore be regarded as a clone or a successor rather than a return of the original spirit.

Whatever the case, Ves did not go through this trouble to create a close copy of the calamity beast's original spirit without a good reason.

As the death echo slowly transitioned into a spirit that became increasingly more alive and intelligent, Ves made sure to keep a constant eye on the Mentalist

Crystal.

Just as he suspected, there was a strong bond between spirit and object.

The two were tied to each other. The calamity beast spirit was naturally anchored to the Mentalist Crystal, enabling it to survive so long as it remained intact and whole.

The spark of intelligence shining from the increasingly more substantial spirit's eyes showed that it was already beginning to process complex thoughts.

"Ves..." Gloriana couldn't help but voice her concerns this time. "Are you sure that what you are doing is... safe? Exobeasts are not safe. If you try to bring them to life again, they will always turn against humans."

"That is not always the case." Ves shook his

head in disagreement. "Qilanxo, the Phase King and so on are all pretty loyal to us. I think that there is a difference between a pure spiritual entity and an actual living organism. It doesn't matter if this bird thinks it can initiate a breakout attempt. Without a powerful body, it is way too vulnerable, and it should be smart enough to understand this fact."

The newborn spirit already started to look subdued. It displayed clear signs of vigilance towards Blinky and the spiritual manifestation of Helena.

The Daughter of Death smirked as she was staring at the spirit. She only needed to flex her death energy once in order to get her message across.

That did not assuage Gloriana's concerns.

"What is the purpose of all of this, Ves?"

What are you trying to accomplish?"

"I am trying to enhance the utilization of the Mentalist Crystal." Ves responded.

"Have you noticed how close the new avian spirit is tied to this hyper material? The two have reached a degree of integration that is very close to the original. You can't produce this effect by trying to bind other spirits to the Mentalist Crystal. That is like transplanting an organ that comes from a third party. There will always be a degree of incompatibility that will inhibit the power of the crystal."

His wife did not look convinced, but that was okay. Ves preferred to let his work do the talking.

After noticing that the newborn spirit had reached saturation, Blinky ceased to feed it with life energy.

The Star Cat flew closer and began to examine the spirit from multiple angles. The companion spirit's observation revealed no obvious problems and confirmed that a strong connection existed between the bird and the crystal.

Though the spirit was clearly at the mercy of others, he still retained a bit of the pride of its original. The bird tried to puff up its chest and spread its metallic feather-covered wings.

With the help of his strong mind energy, the spirit was even able to convey vestiges of its own memory to others!

Ves closed his eyes and sampled the alien impressions. He could feel flashes of pride, cunning and brutality as he became engulfed by images of flying in the air, ambushing unsuspecting exobeasts and tearing apart hunting mechs with its

exceptionally sharp beak and claws.

When the avian exobeast was still young, it had to be careful and avoid a lot of prey. It went hungry plenty of times during its youth.

Yet as it continued to grow smarter, the avian began to distinguish itself from other exobeast.

It learned how to track beasts that were powerful when awake, but vulnerable when they slept in their burrows.

It knew when to wait for other birds to leave their nests before swooping in to devour the eggs or chicks.

It also learned to avoid the small but incredibly deadly human hunting parties as they entered the hunting preserves and sought to take down challenging creatures.

Over time, the avian exobeast continued to grow in size and strength.

Powerful exobeasts that could previously snap the avian in half now turned into its prey.

One of the turning points in its evolution was gaining the ability to fire out its own reinforced feathers!

Not only that, but it was able to control the flight of its feathers so that they would return to its wings after they had cut apart another exobeast!

After gaining the ability to launch and control sharp metallic feathers, the avian exobeast's growth rate surged.

Its body increased in size at a prodigious rate. Its feathers grew harder, sharper and more numerous.

Once it finally became the apex predator

of its own habitat, it had grown bold enough to fly high in the sky, giving the beast a glimpse of many other hunting grounds!

As the mutated beast became increasingly affected by the instinct to hunt down strong prey, it suppressed this urge and tried to stay put in its familiar territory for as long as it could.

The avian beast had already figured out that it might stumble upon enemies that it could not handle.

The human and occasionally their much larger metal constructs always conveyed lethal danger.

No matter how much the avian beast had grown, this had never truly changed!

What was worse was that the bird occasionally felt watched or even

threatened by invisible observers.

These hidden observers were definitely related to these small but amazingly clever humans.

The bird began to fear for its life.

The humans intruded in its territory and hunted the lesser prey with distressing regularity.

Most of the time, they won, but there were also times where they lost.

Even so, the bird could not help but notice that the hunters never sent anyone too strong in comparison to the prey they tracked and killed.

Did this mean that there were stronger humans out there that could pose a fatal threat against itself?

This was likely the case!

The avian exobeast therefore decided to go against its instincts and stay put even if it slowed down its evolution.

It even began to hide itself by holing up in a cave. By appearing as little as possible, it hoped to escape the attention to those that could threaten its life.

Even when it evolved into a larger and more formidable calamity beast, the increasingly larger bird never threw caution to the wind.

It was a pity that the humans had never lost track of the calamity beast.

When a hunting party of mechs set off into the hunting preserve, they returned with a precious Mentalist Crystal and some of the most valuable body parts of a once mighty creature.

Ves blinked again. He consciously pushed

away the illusions of the original creature's life.

"I will call you the Feathered Steelwing Bird." He addressed the newborn spirit directly. "If you have inherited at least part of the memories of your predecessor, then you should know that you cannot defeat us. If you cooperate with me, I can assure you that you will remain alive. I am responsible for giving you life. I can easily take it away. Do you understand?"

Although the avian spirit did not know how to nod, it nonetheless conveyed its submission through its mental activity.

"You will soon become part of a greater work. Stay put and settle your new condition. I will come back to you later and integrate you into your new life."

There was no need for Ves to explain

himself any further to this spirit.

It probably wouldn't understand anything of what Ves had in mind.

"You can go now, Helena."

"Are you sure? I can continue to keep this new bird honest."

"That is not necessary. It is scared stiff in your presence. Let us give it more breathing room."

As Helena's manifestation disappeared, the workshop seemed to go back to normal.

Though Gloriana most definitely wanted answers from him, he simply waved his hand in her direction and resumed his fabrication work.

He continued to invest much of his attention to preparing all of the parts related to the Victrix.

Many of the complicated parts could only be made by Gloriana. He paid attention to her work through the design network in order to make sure her output remained compatible with his intentions.

One of the most challenging work assignments was the fabrication of parts made out of high-end materials.

Their energetic activity and other complications reduced the margin of error and increased the chance of mishaps.

Fortunately, his workload was not beyond his own skills. His wife understood his capabilities too well and made sure he was never over his head.

By the time all of the parts of the Victrix became available and ready for assembly, Ves thoroughly inspected them all before moving them to another section of the

workshop.

Unlike the main mech frame, the Victrix was a completely new addition to the Minerva concept.

Ves did not have to go through the tedious and slow process of incrementally replacing a few parts at a time.

Most of the assembly process therefore became a breeze to Ves. The difficulty of working with archetech was largely based on how the production of archemetal components required a lot of special expertise. Putting them together was like assembling a prefab structure.

The Victrix quickly began to take shape. Ves had made a few artistic improvisations to the contours and appearance of the soon-to-be-living fey. He subtly made it resemble the Feathered Steelwing Bird.

At a certain point, he carefully inserted the Mentalist Crystal inside the center where it enjoyed the most protection.

The newborn spirit was confused by what was happening, but Ves did not bother to provide much clarification.

"Soon."

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