

Parallel story is [Kain and Suu arc] [16] [Bright Red] [9662].

This story concludes this arc.

[Juron arc] [8] [Bright red] [9662]

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For Juron, waging wars had been like playing a giant chess game. He'd calculate possible routes his opponent could take and act accordingly.

At least, that's how he approached the first two invasions. As he gained actual experience in waging wars, he began to realize that it was nothing like a game of chess. Chess was bound to its rules and there were no exceptions to the rules.

Wars were different. While there were basic rules that were loosely followed, external variables meddled in. In fact, they always did and always did at the worst moment.

What was amusing was that it were always the least likely variables that kicked him in the nuts.

He smartened up in the third invasion but a very unlikely external variable kicked him, Freedom colony. But now that they were taken care of, he was truly ready to defeat Kain once for all.

He was making a passionate speech in the council chamber. He was pushing for what he repeatedly called "The final blow" to United Sol. He had the public's support although his support at the lower council had dwindled considerably. Overall, he had enough support to initiate the fourth invasion. And this was to be the last.

He had been warned that the nation's coffer was showing its bare bottom and he

accepted the warning, promising that the fourth invasion would be the last. He wasn't making an empty promise; he was confident. There was no further variables that may hinder him. Freedom colony wouldn't assist Kain. Venus wouldn't assist Kain. The Ark of United Sol wouldn't assist Kain. He had no one to turn to this time.

Juron saw the probability of his victory at 99.9%.

When he called Garrick to assembled his fleet of 14,000 ships, the public cheered for him. They nicknamed him "The hammer" of the justice. He was the only member of the council who had successfully attacked United Sol. There had been vague promises by others before but none had actually pushed on once elected. Therefore, Juron's actions had been a breath of fresh air for the common folks.

"Nothing will get in our way this time," He assured Garrick when the fleet took off and he meant it. His spies around Freedom colony ensured him that there was no suspicious movements from Lila and Co. And there was no reason to worry about them. Breaking the pact would ultimately mean the end of their existence. Their hands were tied.

After few weeks of smooth sailing, they entered Sol system. Juron ordered the fleet to stop for a day while scouts would gather intel. No abnormality was detected and spies on Uranus colony informed him that Kain was going to be defensive around the colony which was as expected. Everything was spot on and Juron grew more confident.

And when the fleet arrived at Uranus colony, Juron almost laughed. Meager 2,000 ships in a sphere formation around the colony; they didn't stand a chance this time.

"Ship signatures indicate that ships from Saturn are with them already," A crew

reported.

"Meaning no reinforcement or whatsoever this time," Garrick said to Juron who was standing next to him. "We've got this." His voice was full of confidence and rightfully so.

"We shouldn't let our guard down still," Juron responded.

"Yeah, yeah." Garrick gave out a noncommittal reply.

The battle played out exactly the way they wanted. They pushed hard from the beginning and surrounded them from all sides. With full confidence that Kain would receive no aids from anyone, they exposed their rear and chose the most offensive formation possible.

And it paid off. Unlike previous times which they had a hard time breaking them down due to having attacked them from only one side, they were taking massive damages and they were clearly in distress. They wouldn't last long.

As confident as Juron was, his previous experience taught him to expect the unexpected. Still, he was mildly surprised when he was informed that a large space vessel was detected which turned out to be a carrier of some sort.

"Hah." He chuckled as he watched Kain's mothership battle through the fleet and reached Uranus colony.

If Kain had the resources to build more ships, if he had few thousand more ships, this battle wouldn't have been as easy.

For once, he thanked the incompetent Ark back on Earth.

The large carrier must have been a secret project because even Juron was completely oblivious about it. A fact that his spies failed to catch even gossips of it was a testament to how tight-knit Kain's inner circle was.

A scan showed the ship had great abilities. However, it was just one ship.

"We can take it down, no problem," He concluded, "There is no change in tactics."

Indeed, no matter how powerful a space vessel was, it was a lone ship. Its presence hardly altered the tide of the battle.

Soon after the arrival of the carrier, however, Kain began to move his fleet with it, away from the station. It seemed to have been the main purpose of the carrier, an ability to choose a ground to fight while still maintaining a defensive position.

Regardless, the tide of the battle wasn't going to change. Kain simply did not have enough ships.

At one point, the fleet protecting the carrier began to disperse which was an indication that the end was near for the battle.

"Do not go after the cowards. Our main target is that carrier," Juron pressed others to focus on the carrier only. Despite overwhelming odds of his impending victory, he just had to make sure that he'd get it this round. The victory had slipped out of his hands too many times.

And, when Kain's carrier finally blew up after a series of violent explosions and shockwaves, the victory was anticlimatic. The battle, overall, was easy and there was no surprises.

"Too easy....," He whispered to himself just as others clinched their fists and roared victorious cries.

The whole fleet was in mood for celebration. After all, it took them 50 years to achieve this victory. Even Juron who was very strict when it came to partying on the job felt good enough to allow mild celebrations.

This was precisely why the fleet failed to notice two incoming fleets at rapid speed. Only when ships' computers made an emergency alert, they noticed.

"One large fleet right behind us, ETA 5 minutes. About 8,000 ships and they are from Freedom colony?!" A crew urgently read a sensor reading.

Another crew also made a report, "A small fleet of 600 is also en route to us. ETA 7 minutes. I think the fleet is a part of Admiral Kain's fleet."

The bridge crews murmured, wondering what was going on. Even Juron failed to come up with an explanation right away which was very unusual for him.

Then he realized that it was perhaps a trap all along. Perhaps, Kain sacrificed himself to set this grand trap for him and that he fell right for it.

"No matter. We outnumber them great. Ignore the small fleet. Turn the fleet around to confront Freedom colony fleet!"

While barking out orders, he wondered why the scouts failed to send alerts as well.

He had spies around Freedom colony and they should have sent alerts when Freedom colony decided to break the non-aggression pact.

Or perhaps more importantly... Why? Why break the pact and risk the colony? He wanted time to dive deeper into this. However, a battle was at him.

When Freedom colony fleet was within visual range, Juron opened a channel which wasn't answered.

"Well, that's rude," Garrick remarked with glee. He seemed confident enough about it since they did outnumber them considerably.

But Juron wasn't pleased. Something was going on behind scenes. No, something had been going on. What he did not like was that he was completely oblivious of it.

"Shall we open fire, Juron?" Garrick inquired to which Juron gave a nod.

"Freedom colony is as good as dead now," Juron added.

"Hah!" Garrick chuckled. "So, we go there after this."

Juron wasn't so sure but replied positively nevertheless.

Just few minutes into the battle, Juron and Garrick were informed that the small fleet led by rear admiral Suu had just joined the battle.

"Ignore them! Who cares!" Garrick exclaimed while waving away.

However, their behavior proved to be strange and Garrick was notified.

"I said ignore them! They are too insignificant to inflict any damage on us, so they might as well just sit there for all I care," was Garrick's response.

Juron did not overrule his order for the time being but decided to keep an eye on them just in case.

As minutes passed, Juron began to see what they were trying to do.

"They are heading right at us, this ship," Juron concluded and informed Garrick.

"They are heading right at us."

Garrick looked puzzled. "No way? Are you saying they've somehow figured out which one is the commandship? That's not possible."

"Someone from our side could have leaked info," Juron responded and was becoming urgent by seconds. His intuition told him that the treat was real. "We need to withdraw this ship. Command ships nearby to form a sphere formation around this ship!"

Garrick was clearly not buying Juron's urgency but followed his advice nevertheless. However, due to them being in middle of a battle, the order wasn't carried out very well and it was taking time.

By time Garrick started to realize the gravity of the situation, he panicked. Juron wished he didn't panic but Garrick was very prone to panicking and losing a grip of

situation under heavy pressure.

In other words, he wasn't a leader material. If it wasn't for his father and his inherited position, he would have never become one.

"Stop them! DON'T LET THEM GET NEAR ME!!!" He yelled with a pale face while trying to crawl back into the back of his chair. It was a pitiful sight and Juron shook his head weakly.

By time a tight sphere formation was formed around Garrick's ship, it was perhaps already too late. Juron felt this and attempted to teleport away to a distant space and then teleport back into another ship nearby. Garrick's death was "affordable" in his mind as long as a victory was secured.

However, when he initiated his teleportation, he felt something was amiss. Everyone around him had paused; It felt as if time had completely halted and the air felt very alien as if he was inside of someone else's domain.

In his knowledge, only select few would be able to pull this off against him.

"Cecil...!" Juron growled at a figure that just appeared about 10 meters ahead of him. Before he could say another word, he felt a sharp pain from his chest. Looking down, he saw a bloody hand out of his left chest, holding the still beating heart of his. His face quickly mangled in both pain and disbrief. He didn't have to look behind to know who it was.

"The... witch...!" He labored to speak the identity.

For ESPs, the connection between a brain and a heart wasn't as important as a mortal being. However, taking out an ESP's heart was a good way to reduce an ESP's immediate prowess.

With Juron's heart being taken out, he immediately had to spend a large portion of his powers to circulate his blood to keep his brain active. If he could flee, he could have a chance to make out of such a situation alive.

Alas, with Cecil and Sae, there was no chance whatsoever. Juron no longer had any powers in order to break free of the domain Cecil had placed on him.

Dashing forward swiftly, Cecil's arm jerked and Juron's head fell over. Still, a powerful ESP like him would not die by this. Therefore, Cecil grabbed his head and the head was quickly engulfed in black flame at which point the head turned into nothingness in seconds.

And Sae pulled her hand out of Juron's body. The body fell toward slowly afterwards. Throwing the dead heart away, she inquired.

"Do I owe you one?"

Cecil replied, "No."

"Fine, then, cya." Turning around at once, she waved as she vanished.

Cecil also vanished shortly after, collapsing the domain at which point a violent explosion occurred as Garrick's ship exploded.

The battle seized at once as soon as Juron's death was confirmed. This was done by Reed who broadcasted a special decree from Andromeda union lower council. The decree declared Juron a traitor and ordered the invasion to be stopped at once. With the decree being verified and valid, Andromeda fleet did not have any legs to even argue.

Meanwhile, Andromeda council made an announcement to its people that the war was officially over and that Juron was killed in action. The council also revealed that Juron had been embezzling a large amount of sum from the nation's coffer and that

his "grand agenda" was to take over United Sol with Jupiter administrator Emuel.

The reception to this announcement was okay, so to speak. While some did not buy the story, it was well-known that Juron was a very ambitious man. Therefore, the story didn't seem too far-fetched. There was skepticism but there was no way for ordinary civilians to find out the truth.

Thus, this was how "Grand agenda" came to an end.

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