

[Kain and Suu arc] [8] [Miss Jupiter] [9643]

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Uranus never had its own media channel. It was primarily due to the fact that Uranus outpost didn't have enough local population. Before Kain was placed in charge, the outpost had just about 50,000 local residents, or at least that was how it was recorded on database at least.

After Kain was promoted to be an admiral, migrants started to flock into the outpost.

A decade passed since then.

The year was 9643.

Magenta in her undies was making a casual report of the outpost status while Kain was in a bed. She was casually walking around in a bedroom while he was loosely staring at ceiling.

"It's been few years since the Ark started to charge insane tax on us but we've been doing alright, I must say."

She had a datapad in her hand, displaying long lines of data on its holopad.

Originally, his quarter was in one of zero gravity decks. However, she arranged a manor on a prime spot within the residential area where there was gravity of 0.6.

She explained, "We've been doing alright because majority of our income comes from untaxable sources."

He was stoically listening to her with pillowing his arms on the bed.

The "insane tax" which the Ark approved back on year 9641 had largely been ineffective on Uranus outpost.

There were two major factors. One was that Uranus outpost dealt with mostly Freedom colony and evaded tax since United Sol did not officially acknowledge the existence of Freedom colony, meaning whatever deals the outpost had was not acknowledged by the Ark, thus there was no tax on the dealings.

The second factor was the distance from Earth which weakened the Ark's authority. Kain enjoyed near absolute authority within the region and he literally scoffed at the tax increase and completely ignored it. More importantly, the Ark officials did not care much about Uranus outpost. The Bau continued to underestimate Kain and his domain.

"How is the outpost doing meanwhile?" He spoke from his bed.

“Getting better and better every year. Businesses are booming and station expansions are in queue.”

“And any word on Juron’s movements?”

“Spies I sent to Andromeda union say he has been having a hard time ever since his own council sort of caged him. But there are words that he is preparing for yet another invasion.”

His stoic face became gloomy and said, “Why does he want wars so bad? This is third war he is itching to start.”

She shrugged with a response, “Beats me. He is a class S ESP, you know. Class S ESPs are impossible to understand. The Crimson wizard is another fine example of that.”

“But I like the Crimson wizard. He is generally correct in his statements. He is usually not politically correct though but that’s what I like about him.”

Cecil, the Crimson wizard, was unexpectedly gaining increasing popularity within United Sol. His swift, harsh, and unorthodox decisions on political matters had massively positive effects on Venus and its economy.

In contrast, the Bau driven Ark was slow to react and was oblivious to concerns of its people.

Average citizens within United Sol had longed for a strong leadership and they wondered why Cecil resigned on year 9599 even after masterminding

suppression of admirals' coup. Rumors spread recently that it was the Bau who forced him to step down which irked a lot of people.

"Oh, well," Kain sighed weakly. "We do what we must do."

"Exactly." Magenta agreed.

Uranus outpost recently had its title upgraded to Uranus colony due to its massive increase in permanent residents. The colony exceeded 400,000 in population. Majority of migrants was from Moon. While migrant flow had slowed down, there was still steady flow of new migrants.

Such a huge increase in population saw renewed demand for local media. Originally, Uranus outpost simply imported media from Moon, Jupiter, and Saturn. With new deals made with Freedom colony, more channels became available including only-slightly restricted IMG channel which proved to be hugely popular on the colony.

But the local populace wanted their own media stations which would cater to their own interests.

Magenta paused for a bit after staring at her datapad screen. "We keep receiving requests for our own media station, Kain."

“We’ve got only 400,000. I thought I said no.”

“The local population is projected to reach half a million in next few years. They do have a valid case.”

“So, you think we should open our own media stations?”

“We should at least draft a plan.”

“I will think about it.”

And that was it for the case for the time being until ...

The date was 9643-122.

Kain was overseeing the station bridge operation casually when a crew blurted out urgently.

“A, Admiral! We... have a guest?!”

The crew seemed so shocked that he jumped out of his position and flew into ceiling.

“Woah, dude,” Kain uttered as he approached him and dragged him down to the floor. “Watch the action in zero gravity.”

“My apologies, Admiral, but we have a guest.”

“And? What’s so urgent about it?”

“She just docked in a luxury shuttle. The passenger name is an alias instead of a name. It says ‘Miss Jupiter’?!”

Kain narrowed his eyes but soon loosened up, thinking it was nothing more than a joke. “Could be just someone pulling a prank, you know.”

But it turned out NOT to be a prank because Kain could recognize her face. She was indeed Miss. Jupiter. Kain was actually one of few who knew her real name which she told directly to him during the navy course graduation on Jupiter.

Miss. Jupiter or Esthar which was her name walked toward Kain on a docking bay and naturally had her arms around Kain’s neck.

“Hello, Admiral,” She said charmingly toward him.

Kain beamed a smile and gently untied her arms while taking a step back.

“Hello, there. This is new. What brings you here?”

Esthar took the rejection well as if expected. Placing her hand on her waist, she replied, “I’ve come here to do you a favor.”

“Oh?” He was lost. “Explain?”

She was willing to work as a news anchor on Uranus.

“Don’t you work for Administrator Emuel though?”

It was a legitimate question. As far as he knew her allegiance was with Emuel the snake.

“Yes,” She answered promptly. “I am here on his order. Do you understand what I am trying to say?”

In other words, Emuel wanted an improved relationship with Kain by letting him borrow Miss. Jupiter.

After he escorted her to a luxury guest room, he immediately went back to his office where Magenta was waiting.

“I heard who came by,” She said as soon as he entered the office.

“I almost shitted my pants,” He replied jokingly.

“Miss. Jupiter, huh. Did the snake send her?”

“Her name is Esthar actually.”

“Did she tell you her name?”

Kain explained how he got to know her name from way back.

“I see. I guess I should take this as a positive sign. The snake wants you as his ally.”

He raised his voice at once. “I don’t care at all about the snake. I want nothing to do with him.” And then he explained what happened during the first war.

Magenta knew what happened during the first war although Kain's story was different from reports she read. But knowing his character and the fact that he participated in the heat of the battle, she knew his story would be far more trustworthy and accurate than reports she came across.

She sounded genuinely upset in her response. "Well, time for a new nickname then. Emuel the motherfucker."

And, at this point, Suu rushed into Kain's office.

"I heard Miss. Jupiter is here?!" She exclaimed. "What is she here for?!"

Her tone indicated that she did not like her presence which triggered Magenta's response.

"Did you partake in the first war as well?"

"I did!" She yelled and then calmed down a little. "The snake got both of us almost killed!"

Magenta crossed her arms. Although she could understand their strong opinions regarding Emuel, it was not a simple matter of just turning the offer down.

"But listen-" Before she could continue, however, Kain and Suu exclaimed at her at once in sync.

"NO!"

"Hey, just lis-"

“NO means NO!”

At this point, Magenta had to grin because it was very strange seeing Kain and Suu acting in perfect synchronization.

“You know, you two look great together,” She remarked. “Could make a great couple. Have sex or something.”

Suu’s face twitched and Kain’s face mangled.

Having halted the two, she continued, “Now, now, listen to me just for a sec.”

She explained that turning down Miss. Jupiter was risky on its own. She suggested to use her to launch Uranus colony’s own media station to boost its viewer rating.

“Then what? What’s going to happen when she leaves?” Suu inquired with mildly angry voice.

“When the show picks up, we should be able to get lots of applicants. We could find a suitable replacement. Granted, whoever would replace her won’t be as popular as she is probably but, hey, everyone knows that Miss. Jupiter belongs to Emuel.”

Then Kain scored a goal out of blue.

“What if she is wanting to betray the snake?”

Both Magenta and Suu narrowed their eyes. It was completely unexpected.

He continued, “What if she chooses to stay here?”

“You told us that she came on Emuel’s behalf,” Magenta replied.

“Yep.” Nodding along, he said, “But I don’t think she would have come here if she didn’t like the idea. I mean, have you ever seen Miss. Jupiter showing up anywhere else?”

As skeptical as it was, he had a point. Miss. Jupiter had never showed up anywhere else, so far at least.

Crossing arms, Suu spoke doubtfully, “So, you are saying she likes you.”

Visibly, he shrugged and declined to answer. But Suu pressed and repeated, “So, you are saying she likes you.”

He reluctantly answered, “Maybe.”

“Hah.” Suu let out of a snicker while looking clearly amused.

While the two were conversing, Magenta considered options and possibilities. She felt Kain did have a point. Esthar wouldn’t have come here if she didn’t like the idea. The issue was what really happened between Emuel and Esthar.

Or rather who Esthar really was.

“Do I know anything personal about Esthar?” Kain repeated a question given by Magenta. They were in a bed. He was just idling and Magenta was looking at a datapad.

He said, “I know her name. And ... I guess that’s it.”

“I did a background digging on her and all I could find out was that her birth planet was Mars.”

He shrugged. “Well, does that matter that she was born on Mars?”

“She is a civilian as far as I am concerned. Yet, there was no travel record on her. She would have needed to purchase a permit to travel to Jupiter,” Magenta explained.

“It’s painfully easy to get around the system, you know,” He pointed out which she agreed.

“True, but I smell something fishy about her. I just can’t point a finger on what.”

“You are overthinking it. Let it go.”

Crossing her arms and letting out of a long breath, she conceded and it was officially decided that a new local entertainment station would be created on Uranus colony.

The news was met with good reception from local populace who had been dying to see a local channel.

“Hello, Uranians!”

Esthar’s ever cheerful voice sounded in a large hall which was a docking bay lobby of the station. A large and dominant holographic screen stood in middle of the lobby and people were gathered around it, watching it in semi awe that actual Miss. Jupiter was on the screen in Uranus outpost.

“You may have seen me before. Yes! On Jupiter! But I am here for the time being and I am here to lift the curtain on the new era of Uranus colony!”

“Who wrote the script?” Snickering Kain inquired Magenta on station bridge. They were watching the footage. “Lift the curtain on the new era? Sounds cheesy.”

“She came up with that on her own. Actually, according to the guys at the studio, she claims that she has never used a script in shows.”

“Oh, really. Well, I guess she is good at what she does. What’s the viewer rating right now?”

“91% right now. It’s expected for the first airing.”

While Esthar’s show was actually a news program, she went beyond her duty and turned the show into everyday solo talk show, primarily due to lack of

news materials within the colony. Regardless, she was good at what she did and viewer rating stabilized at 60%.

With Esthar's news show taking off, two other independent, third party civilian, studios applied for their own channels which were duly approved on spot.

Everything seemed to be going well until one day...

Kain was looking over documents to sign in his office. Behind matte aluminum desk, he was restlessly skimming through documents on a holographic screen. He's sign it with his fingers on the screen at the end of each document if he agreed with what he read. If not, he just skipped it which would be reviewed by staffs.

At one point, he heard the door sliding and heard someone walking in. Glancing at the door, he saw Esthar casually walking in. She had apparently earned trust and was pretty much free to walk into even top security area.

"Hello, there. What's up?" He casually greeted her who was also casually walking toward him. It didn't take him long to realize that something was amiss about her. She had her hand on her back as if she was hiding something from plain sight.

Narrowing his eyes, he grew skeptical. "Hello? Esthar?" Slowly, he stood up from his chair at which point Esthar pulled a pistol at him.

"Holy crap!" Uttering, he quickly ducked, barely avoiding its laser shot by hair. The first shot triggered an alarm which meant she had little time. She aimed at Kain who was ducked behind his desk. Unable to get a clear shot, she was about to make a dash to reach Kain.

As she made a dash, Magenta entered the office and immediately caught on what was going on. The next thing Kain saw was Magenta throwing her energy blade right at Esthar's back which easily pierced through her back to abdomen, and Eshtar crashed into a wall with a force. She would make no further movements and was stuck in a wall.

Furthermore, blood didn't pour out. Instead, some sort of sticky transparent fluid was coming out.

"A fucking android...!" Kain muttered as he stood up and approached Esthar that was stuck in a heavily bent wall panel.

"You okay?" Magenta dashed toward Kain to which he replied, "Yeah, I am fine. I got almost shot through."

Kain and Magenta were closely inspecting deactivated Esthar. She check the sticky fluid and concluded that it was oil.

“Oh, man, she really was an android, huh...” He said while looking shell-shocked. “So, those gossips were true on the Net...”

“We can probably repair her, what do you want me to do, Kain?”

“Repair her? And then what?”

“We could question her.”

He crossed his arms and looked down at Esthar on the floor which Magenta brought down from the wall.

“Nah, don’t bother. I think it’s pretty damn clear that the snake wants me dead.”

“What do you want me to do with this thing then?”

“Scrap it? It’s not like I need a life-like sex-doll, speaking of which does it have a vagina?”

Looking amused and letting out of a brief chuckle, Magenta looked under its skirt, pulling down a nice sexy thong in progress.

She uttered with amusement, “Oh, hell, it does have a vagina.”

He grinned with a shrug. “I am pretty sure she was more like a sex doll for Emuel.”

“You may actually be right,” Magenta responded while fiddling with Esthar’s private part. “It’s well made. It’s almost like the real thing.”

“Quit doing that, girl. You are making me honey.”

They both chuckled.

In the end, Esthar the android was scrapped. Both Kain and Magenta agreed on a possibility of remote control, and therefore, it was the safest to scrap the whole thing.

Kain reckoned that Emuel would have more of the same android ,and it proved to be the case as Esthar continued to show up on Jupiter news.

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