A Mobile Suit Gundam Wing and Mobile Fighter G Gundam Crossover

IT'S A GUNDAM!!! *RANDOM EXPLOSION!* The cast of Gundam Wing meet our young heroes and befriend them in this tale of how those who understand, those who fight, those who doubt, and those who pass by, can claim victory against the forces of evil reborn. Mission Accepted. All systems go! Gundams… Evangelions… Launching!
It's a Gundam!

Neon Genesis Evangelion: Legacy – Gundam Invasion
A Mobile Suit Gundam Wing Crossover

Chapter 1 – It's a Gundam!
February 14, 196 A.C. – Lagrangian Point L4

The year is After Colony 196, after a fearsome battle pitting the Gundam pilots against not only the separatist group the White Fang, led by Quinze and Milliardo Peacecraft, but also the military organization known as OZ, led by Treize Khushrenada. In the final battle staged above Earth, Treize is defeated by Gundam pilot Chang Wufei, which leads to the OZ forces falling apart.

Following that is the concluding fight between Milliardo and Heero, where the two pilots and rivals finally realize they have nothing left to fight over, and that their continuing battle is meaningless. Finally the last stand of the White Fang in the space battleship Libra, with its main weapon disabled, it was set on a collision course to crash into Earth and exterminate all life on the planet. Milliardo Peacecraft, using his Gundam Epyon, scarified himself to destroy Libra's reactor, destroying most of the vessel. However a piece of it still survived as it entered Earth's atmosphere, and taking his Twin Buster Rifle, Heero Yuy, pilot of the Wing Gundam Zero destroyed the remaining piece of the ship, ending the war and saving the Earth from total annihilation.

Now in the new time of peace, the new Earth Sphere Unified Nation has maintained order for the past several months, but a new problem has emerged, an unidentified energy signature in space has been detected and four people have been dissipated by the vice foreign minister to deal with the potential threat before it becomes unstoppable.

A large Mobile Suit transport was flying through space. It held inside of it four pilots and their four Gundams on a mission to investigate a strange energy disturbance in space.

"Hey, why are those guys sending us way the hell out here?" Duo Maxwell asked his fellow pilots exasperatedly.

"Because we're the most qualified to handle strange situations, Duo." Quatre Raberba Winner replied as he piloted the large transport. "Besides, don't you enjoy doing missions?"

"Yeah, when we have something to do!" Duo exclaimed. "This is boring, we're just going somewhere cause they detected something!"

"Are you sure you're just not afraid of the unknown nature of our mission." Trowa Barton asked. "That may explain why you're being so fidgety."

"Heh, the God of Death afraid of the unknown." Heero Yuy quipped. "How ironic."

"Shut up, Heero!" Duo exclaimed. "We can't all be as reckless as you. I bet you just said 'mission accepted,' grabbed your Gundam and came here."

"Relena asked me to investigate, and I am." Heero replied. "The worst that happens is we have to battle, and we're all more than capable of combat." Heero crossed his arms and looked over at Duo. "Or have the few months you've been spending with Hilde left you soft? If so, you should have stayed behind, because you'll only be in the way."
"What!" Duo shouted. "Are you insinuating something pal?!!"

Quatre laughed. "Alright guys, just relax, there's no need to fight." Quatre said kindly. "We're getting close, so we should probably prep our Gundams for launch. We can set the ship to hold its position till we get back."

"All right then, we'll go prep our Gundams while you get us in position." Trowa said, gracefully floating though the ship towards the cargo area.

"It's always something with guy…" Duo muttered as he left the cabin.

"Quatre, do you want to prep your Gundam, or should I?" Heero asked as he got up.

"Could you please get Sandrock ready for me, Heero?" Quatre said thankfully. "It would be a big help to have all of us ready to go at once."

"Mission accepted." Heero said, floating away to the storage compartment.

Outside the ship, the four Gundams moved forward towards the singularity. Each Gundam had been cleaned up considerably following the final fight in the skies high above Earth. Heavyarms and Sandrock moved with their weapons in hand, while the Deathscythe had its bat–like wings closed. Wing Zero was moving with its main thruster pods closed, its Twin Buster Rifle in its right hand, and its pile Wing Shield in the other. Heero sat calmly in his cockpit looking at the data flowing in from the ZERO System. The lights dances over his face as the data was fed directly into his mind.

"Hey, Heero, are you picking anything up?" Quatre asked.

"Yeah, what the hell is that thing?" Duo said. "I can't see anything."

"Just because you can't see something doesn't mean it's not there." Trowa said calmly. "Heero, do you have anything?"

"ZERO has found nothing but a gravity well extending from a point in space." Heero said. "This system was meant for combat, to scientific research, that I believe is all we're going to get."

"So caution is of the utmost importance." Trowa said. "Understood."

"Should we move in?" Duo asked.

"No, we should wait until we have more information." Heero said. "Rash actions only lead to mistakes."

"Heero's right, Duo." Quatre said. "I don't think we can rush into this."

ZERO beeped at Heero as they approached the singularity. "Hold on, ZERO has detected the gravity well is expanding." Heero's eyes narrowed. "We should move." Heero threw his throttle to maximum and turned his Gundam about face to escape.

Wing Zero opened its thruster pods and attempted to move away from the area, but it was trapped, and was being slowly dragged towards the singularity. The other Gundams also opened up their thrusters to escape, but were also unable to move.

"This ain't good!" Duo shouted.
"Panicking will solve nothing," Trowa said calmly. "There must be a way out."

"Heero, does ZERO have an answer?" Quatre asked.

"No, ZERO sees no way to win this battle." Heero said. "We cannot escape this."

"So what the hell do we do?!" Duo shouted.

"We wait and see what happens." Trowa said.

"And I think what's coming is very close." Heero said. "Brace for impact."

And with a quick flash everything went dark and Heero lost consciousness.

A flash lit up the sky over a city on Earth. The Gundams tumbled out of the flash towards the ground. Heero regained consciousness to alarms blaring inside the cockpit. He pulled up on his controls and leveled out the Wing Zero just as the others were recovering from their own shock.

"Where the hell are we?!" Duo shouted. "What the hell was that?!"

"It looks like Earth..." Quatre said. "Its beauty is here... but it's not the same."

"It does not look like anywhere we've ever been on Earth before." Trowa said. "I don't see any mobile suit storage facilities anywhere."

"I am not picking up any communications from the Earth Sphere." Heero said. "And our geographical location puts us above Hakone, Japan..."

"Wait, this is Japan?" Quatre asked.

Its buildings were massive and reached to the sky. It was like no city they had ever seen. A large blast crater was located outside the city limits, and the city itself seemed more like a fortress than a city. ZERO detected the weapons systems hidden inside the surrounding hills and false buildings, and could also detect a cavern beneath the main cityscape.

"I do not know where we are, but we are on Earth." Heero said. "But this is not the Hakone I am familiar with. It is an insignificant city, not a citadel."

"Well we have a new problem." Duo said. "We've got incoming!"

ZERO focused in on the incoming targets, several aircraft that looked as though they were hovering and flying up towards the Gundams. The VTOLs had been deployed as NERV had detected the Gundams. "What are those things?"

"They look... weak." Trowa said.

"Yeah, but there's a fucking swarm of them!" Duo shouted.

"We have to either get rid of them or evade them." Quatre said. "But if they sent out those things, they must not have mobile suits."

"So we destroy them." Trowa said.

"Mission accepted." Heero said as Wing Zero moved its Buster Rifle into its left hand and opened its left shoulder pauldron, exposing a handle. Wing Zero pulled the handle out of the pauldron and a green beam sabre ignited as Wing Zero moved rapidly towards the advancing VTOLs.
October 3, 2016 – NERV HQ, Medical Wing

Asuka and Mari were being released from the hospital today. After the battle with Armisael, things had been kinda shitty. But Shinji was happy today as even though Rei was in isolation recovering from her supposed extensive injuries, Asuka and Mari were ok, and Shinji wanted to walk them home, mostly because Misato was busy at work.

Shinji walked into Asuka and Mari's room without knocking, and yelped as he opened the door. Both girls were completely naked, their hospital gowns at their feet, as they were changing to get ready to leave.

"For fuck's sake, Shinji!" Asuka shouted "Do you know how to fucking knock?!"

"What… I…" Shinji stammered.

"Are you embarrassed, princess?" Mari asked. "I mean, he's going to eventually see you naked… unless you're that much of a prude…”

"Fuck off, four eyes!" Asuka shouted. "Our relationship has nothing to do with you!"

"Well, I swear to god, if I hear you two fucking in the middle of the night and it wakes me up, I'm coming in to watch." Mari purred.

"I said to shut up!" Asuka shouted as she turned to Shinji. "I thought I told you to close your fucking eyes!"

"I… uh…" Shinji stammered as he hastily covered his eyes with his hands and blushed a deep crimson. "You're very pretty Asuka."

"Flattery to keep me quiet… fine… you're not in trouble… this time." Asuka said. "But we're gonna talk about certain boundaries later."

"Ok…” Shinji said. "I'm sorry though… I was just so excited you guys were getting out."

"Yeah, well…” Asuka said. "I'm glad you're excited to see me."

"Oh… you see the bulge in his pants too?" Mari asked.

"The what!?" Asuka asked.

"He's hard, princess. I guess the puppy wants to bury his bone somewhere…” Mari purred.

"Didn't I tell you to shut up?" Asuka asked as she pulled on her panties with a great deal of effort.

"Princess, you know I ignore at least half of what you shout at me." Mari said. "Besides… I wonder which of our fine bodies elicited that response anyway?"

Without pause, Shinji responded before Asuka could say anything. "It was Asuka. I… I really like seeing her that way… she's…. beautiful…"

Asuka stared blankly between Shinji and Mari before she gained the ability to speak again. "I… I want to call you a pervert, but what you said was sweet…” Asuka's tone however changed as she looked at Mari. "You however… stop it. Otherwise I'll kick your ass."

"Yeah, whatever." Mari said impatiently. "Now, will you hurry up and get dressed, princess, I'm
done already."

"I know." Asuka said. "Baka, you can look now. I don't mind if watch my wonderful body get
dressed."

Shinji opened his eyes and looked at Asuka sheepishly. She had panties on, but nothing else, and
Shinji went slack jawed.

"Like what you see, baka?" Asuka asked.

Shinji nodded. "You look… pretty…"

"Well, I'm glad you like the way I look." Asuka said as she pulled on a skirt. "I do have one
question… do you like my breasts?"

"Those tiny things?" Mari asked.

"Hey!" Asuka shouted.

"Mari, stop." Shinji said. "They look very perky, Asuka. I like them."

"Good." Asuka said as she pulled on a loose t–shirt. "You're such a gentleman."

"No, I'm just telling you my honest opinion." Shinji replied.

"Kiss ass." Mari muttered.

"Mari, don't make it where I have to choose between you and my girlfriend." Shinji said. "I don't
want to make that choice."

Mari stared at him. "Seriously?" Mari asked. "You'd have to choose?"

"I'd choose Asuka." Shinji said.

"Ha!" Asuka laughed.

"Et tu, puppy?" Mari asked. "Could you kindly take the knife out of my back?"

"Oh, don't be so over dramatic." Shinji said. "You're still my best friend."

"Then kiss me." Mari said as she puckered her lips.

"He will not!" Asuka shouted.

"Mari…" Shinji said. "Why are you being so difficult?"

"It's fun for me, puppy." Mari said. "Simple as that."

"It's annoying for the rest of us." Asuka muttered.

"That's why it's fun, princess." Mari said.

"Will both of you stop?" Shinji asked. "I'm tired of taking sides." Asuka and Mari looked at him.
"Don't give me that look, I never liked moderating your fights, don't act so surprised. I literally just
said I didn't want to take sides."

"Baka… I can't promise you we won't fight." Asuka said.
"Yeah, it's our... thing." Mari said.

Shinji rolled his eyes. "Well, just don't shout at each other all the time. I just don't like hearing you argue." Shinji said.

Asuka walked over and kissed Shinji lightly on the lips. "I promise I won't yell at her as much, is that better?"

"It'll have to be." Shinji said. "And don't bribe me by kissing me either, it's not fair."

"Then how will I ever get you to do what I want?" Asuka asked.

"By asking nicely." Shinji replied as he kissed her gently on lips.

"God... I'm aroused and disgusted by this..." Mari muttered.

Shinji and Asuka shook their heads. "She's hopeless." Shinji said tiredly.

"Well, we're kinda stuck with her." Asuka said. "There's no return to sender for defective products like her."

"I'm not defective, I'm unique." Mari said.

"Potato, potato." Asuka replied.

"Ok, enough." Shinji said. "Let's go see if we can see Rei."

"Oh, can we?" Mari asked.

"I though Kaji and Misato said we couldn't?" Asuka said. "Did that change?"

"No... but there isn't any reason not to try." Shinji said. "Maybe you two can yell at the nurses enough that they'll let us at least see her."

"Hmmm..." Mari said. "I like this plan."

"So, do I..." Asuka said. "Let's go do it."

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Misato was standing behind Maya in the Command Center. It was a routine day, and the mood had considerably improved since Rei's recovery. Maya had, after being ordered by Misato to sleep after three days without leaving her post, just come back to work. Hyuga and Aoba were also back at their posts, glad that everyone was ok.

"Colonel..." Maya said as she turned and looked at Misato. "Have you been able to see Rei? Is she really ok?"

"No, they said she's in isolation." Misato said. "Don't know why... she's unconscious."

"Isn't she in an LCL healing tank?" Maya asked. "Wouldn't that mean she's ok?"

"I don't know, the doctors we have seem to be afraid that these kids are all infected with Angels or some such bullshit." Kaji said.

"Has there even been a case of lingering Angelic contamination?" Hyuga asked.
"Nope, each one of them has been cleared." Misato said. "Even Toji."

"Besides, I don't think Rei will be alone for long." Kaji said. "There are three people who really want to see her, with two of those people being extremely adamant when they want something."

"Asuka and Mari." Aoba said. "I hope the doctor they shout at relents before Shinji as to hold them back from beating them senseless."

"Do you really think Asuka or Mari would attack a doctor?" Maya asked.

"If they had the surname Akagi they might." Kaji joked. "Or don't you remember her outburst with Ritsuko, I believe she threatened to beat her to a pulp. Trust me, they'll convince the doctors to see her."

"Well that's nice." Maya said.

"Yeah, maybe the kids will tell us how she's doing." Hyuga said.

"Are Asuka and Mari getting out today?" Maya asked.

"Yeah, they are." Misato said. "Shinji's picking them up now."

"Oh that's…" Maya started, but was interrupted by the consoles in front of her beeping. "Colonel, we have a problem. Some sort of energy spike just popped up in midair."

"Where?" Misato asked.

"Right above where Unit–01 was the other day." Maya reported. "Altitude approximately 15,200 meters."

"What kind of energy spike?" Misato asked.

"The kind that looks like it could be a wormhole." Maya said. "I haven't ever seen these kinds of readings, they're similar to the Sea of Dirac, but exhibit different properties, no gravity wells or anything like that."

"So why is there a wormhole?" Misato asked.

"No idea." Maya said. "Perhaps we should… contacts detected!"

"What?!" Misato shouted. "Can you identify?"

"No, ma'am." Hyuga reported. "They appear to have come out of the wormhole… they're in an uncontrolled descent. No waveform pattern has been detected."

"So they aren't Angels?" Misato said. "That's a relief."

"Yeah, but Misato, what are they?" Kaji asked.

"Good question, sir." Maya said.

"Have the MAGI plotted where these things will impact?" Misato asked.

"Yes, the tracks put each impact outside the city limits, margin of error is 1.4%" Aoba said.

"They came out of the wormhole?" Misato asked. "Do you know what they are?"
"MAGI cannot identify what they are." Aoba reported. "They're falling too… they've arrested their descent! They are holding at an altitude of 5,200 meters."

"Get me a visual!" Misato shouted.

"On screen, ma'am." Hyuga replied.

A magnified visual of four humanoid looking machines appeared on screen. One had large engine pods on its back and was equipped with a rifle and a shield, the second had what looked like a set of wings on each shoulder, with a long rod in one hand, and a shield mounted to the other arm, the third had a double barreled weapon on one hand and a folded up knife mounted to the other, and the fourth had two long blades mounted to its back, and what looked like a massive submachine gun in one hand.

"What are they…" Misato asked.

"Trouble no doubt." Kaji said. "They look like suits of armor… but enormous."

"About 17 meters enormous." Maya said. "Head to feet anyway."

"They're tiny compared to the Evangelions." Misato said.

"Yeah, but larger than what we can actually handle…" Kaji said. "At least without using an Evangelion that is."

"The EVAs are four and a half times that size," Hyuga said. "One should be able to take them out."

"Just because they're 75 meters tall doesn't mean the numerical advantage can be discounted." Kaji said. "Size is only one part of combat, or have you never heard of David and Goliath?"

"Of course, but this is different." Hyuga said. "The Eva has an A.T. Field to protect it!"

"Yeah, Unit–01 can take them on!" Aoba said proudly.

"Enough arguing!" Misato ordered. "What do the MAGI have to say?"

"The MAGI have unanimously marked each of them hostile." Hyuga reported. "Heavy weapons and armor, all of unidentifiable type."

"Let's listen to the computers then…" Misato quipped. "Level–1 battle stations, switch the city to battle configuration, issue an emergency order to get people to the shelters." Misato ordered. "Aoba, deploy the AIS and notify the JSSDF to intercept, maybe bullets will work against these machines. Hyuga, find the kids and get them up here, we need to brief them, Maya, go prep Unit–01 for launch."

"Me, ma'am?" Maya asked.

"Yes, you." Misato said. "Somehow I think that it's our only option."

"Understood." Maya said as she got up and left. She was replaced by Sumire Nagara.

"Kaji…" Misato started.

"Go get the Commander…" Kaji said. "On it."

"There is no need, Agent Kaji." Gendo said as he entered his platform with Fuyutsuki. "We heard
the alert, but it appears Colonel Katsuragi has things well in order. Is Unit–01 being prepped?"

"Yes, Commander, Maya is overseeing it" Misato replied. "Unit–01 should be ready in ten minutes."

"Excellent. Do not deploy Unit–01 until we have assessed the abilities of these machines. There's no need to waste an Evangelion sortie if we don't need to." Gendo said.

"Of course, Commander." Misato said.

"Colonel, the JSSDF picked up the unidentified objects, they were just waiting for your approval to attack. All VTOL squadrons have launched to intercept." Aoba reported. "They're moving in at high speed, two minute to contact."

"Understood." Misato said. "Hyuga?"

"The kids are down in Rei's hospital ward." Hyuga replied. "They're just looking to see that she's actually there or something."

"I'll get them." Kaji said.

"Ma'am, the lead… uh… contact." Sumire said nervously. "It's activated some sort of energy sword and is charging the VTOLs at high speed. It's… slaughtering them…"

"Kaji… hurry up and get them." Misato said. "I think Unit–01 needs to deploy sooner rather than later."

"Rather obvious, but ok." Kaji said as he left.

"Order the VTOLs to retreat, and aim the AIS at the attackers, it should be able to occupy them until Unit–01 launches."

"Yes, ma'am!" Aoba and Hyuga replied.

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After having stormed towards the isolation wards, and with a great deal of yelling and threatening, Asuka, Mari, and Shinji convinced the doctors to let them see Rei.

So now they were standing outside a containment room where Rei was floating naked in a tank of LCL. Her body was covered in bruises, cuts, and burns, which disturbed them quite a bit. She looked peaceful at least inside the cylinder, where her injuries would take at least six to eight weeks to heal.

Mari stood there silently with tears in her eyes and running down her face as she looked at the girl she loved in such a state while Shinji and Asuka held each other's hands tightly.

"She looks pretty awful…" Asuka muttered.

"I'm not even sure how she survived." Shinji said in awe.

"She's an extraordinary person…” Mari muttered. "I'm just glad she's alive."

"I know she is, Mari." Shinji said. "I just want to thank her properly… I just want her to get better."

"So do I…” Mari muttered as she wiped her tears. "Do you think she's ok?"

"What are you talking about?" Asuka asked.
"I mean… will she be… different?" Mari asked. "Stuff like this changes a person."

"I'm sure she'll be fine," Asuka said. "She's apparently tougher than any of us give her credit for. I'm sure she'll still love your eccentric ass."

"Asuka… be a bit more sensitive, will you?" Shinji asked.

"Yeah, sorry." Asuka said. "I was hoping to make her smile."

Mari leaned over and kissed Asuka on the cheek. "I appreciate the effort, princess." Mari said. "But I'm not eccentric, I'm quirky."

"I stand corrected." Asuka said. "But I'm serious… she'll be just fine."

"Do you think she'll have any scars?" Mari asked.

"Do any of us, after all the injuries we sustained?" Shinji asked. "That LCL stuff, whatever they do with it really works. I'm sure you won't even notice where the injuries used to be once she's all better."

"You're not lying to me, right?" Mari asked.

"Do you remember those wounds I got from the Tenth Angel?" Shinji asked. "It took a few days, but those bleeding holes you called…"

"Stigmata." Mari replied.

"Yeah, that, whatever that is." Shinji said. "I don't even have a scar. I'm sure Rei will be just fine if LCL could heal my shit."

"Alright." Mari said as an alarm went off. "Oh no…"

"It can't be another one, can it?" Asuka asked. "We barely got through the last one."

"Are the EVAs even ready?" Shinji asked. "It's only been a few days."

"Well from what I remember, mine's pretty much busted." Mari said.

"I don't know about mine either." Asuka said. "But I think we should go find Misato and ask her what she wants us to do."

"Yeah… that's probably for the best." Shinji said. "Come on, we should go." Shinji looked back to Rei and smiled. "We'll be back soon, Rei, don't worry."

Asuka said as Shinji tugged her arm and pulled her out of the room. "Will you be careful, baka?! My arm is not your dick!"

"Enough with the masturbation jokes already. It's getting old." Shinji said tiredly. "Come on, Mari, we have to go!"

"I know." Mari said as she paused and put her hand to the glass separating her from the room Rei was in. "I'm sorry, blueberry." Mari said sullenly. "I don't want to leave, but I can't leave those two unprotected. You know how it is, they attract trouble." Mari looked at Rei's sleeping form. "I love you, blueberry… get well soon."

Mari ran after the others who had made it a considerable distance. "Will you guys slow down?!" Mari shouted. "I'm too hurt to be running like this!"
"Tell that to him!" Asuka shouted. "He's the one pulling me!"

"Puppy, slow down!" Mari shouted. "I can't keep up!"

"No, Mari, we need to hurry!" Shinji shouted back as he turned his head to look at Mari limping down the hallway. "We need to find out what's going on!" Shinji in his haste wasn't paying attention, didn't see Kaji, and ran right into him, falling down on his ass and pulling Asuka down on top of him.

"Shinji, you idiot!" Asuka yelled as she tried to get up. "You're going to hurt me!"

"You should listen to them, Shinji." Kaji said. "Rushing around doesn't do anyone any good, especially if you get hurt in the process."

"Yeah, I'll keep that in mind." Shinji said. "Sorry, Asuka... are you hurt?"

"No... just don't do it again." Asuka said as she struggled to her feet.

Mari wandered over just as Asuka helped Shinji to his feet. "Oh... I have something for this..." Mari joked. "Asuka, we know you love Shinji, you don't have to literally fall for him..."

"The moment's gone four eyes." Asuka said.

"Worth a shot." Mari said. "So, scruffy, are you here for us?"

"Yeah, at least you guys were trying to get to the Command Center." Kaji said. "Come on, you need to be briefed."

"Who's being deployed?" Asuka asked.

"Well, when I left, no one." Kaji said. "Unit–01 was being put on standby, but Misato wants to assess the situation first... To avoid any more accidents."

"You mean the Sixteenth Angel and Rei, right?" Mari asked.

"Probably." Kaji said. "Come on, we don't need things getting worse while waste time."

"Yeah, yeah, keep your shirt on, scruffy." Mari said. "In case you forgot, some of us are actually injured."

"Sorry, but time is of the essence." Kaji said.

"Didn't you just tell me not to rush?" Shinji asked.

"I said not to hurt yourself in a rush." Kaji replied. "So watch were you're going and come on!"

Kaji and the kids got to Command Center as fast as they could. However, when they got inside, things were far more dire then they were when Kaji left.

"What happened?" Kaji asked. "Why the commotion?"

"Apparently the giant robots have some impressive weapons and armor." Misato said. "They cut through the VTOLs with energy swords, literally slaughtered them all before they could retreat."

"Seriously, lightsabers?" Shinji asked.
"Yes, really." Misato replied. "Anyway, three of them seem to have these close in weapons, while the fourth with the huge gun hasn't fired any shots."

"Conserving ammo, probably." Kaji said.

"What about the armor?" Asuka asked. "Why is it so tough?"

"It can deflect a high velocity round that doesn't even scratch an Angel." Misato said. "And that's if you can actually hit the damn things. They're too maneuverable, they just dodge most of the shit thrown at them."

"Where are they now?" Shinji asked.

"Heading towards Tokyo–3 at high speed, the AIS is keeping them busy, but it'll run out of ammo sooner rather than later." Misato said. "Shinji, get your plugsuit on, you're going out in Unit–01."

"What about us?" Mari asked. "Don't tell me you want us to sit here and watch."

"Yeah, is Unit–02 ready?" Asuka asked. "I wanna back up Shinji."

"Unit–01 is the only Evangelion being deployed." Gendo said for above them. "There is no need to use an Evangelion without an S2 Engine."

"You want him to fight four giant robots alone?" Asuka asked. "Are you crazy?"

"Shinji should be more than capable of handling them." Gendo replied coolly.

"Sorry, Shinji." Misato said. "Asuka's too inured to fight, and Mari doesn't really have an Evangelion at the moment."

"He can't out against superior numbers without backup!" Asuka insisted. "He needs backup!"

"Asuka, I'm sorry, this is the best plan." Misato said.

"Asuka, I'll be fine." Shinji said. "They're only tiny robots, right?"

"Well, they might have pilots, Shinji." Misato explained. "We're honestly not sure, we can't pick up any communications."

"So, what do you want me to do, disable them?" Shinji asked.

"If you can." Misato said. "Just be careful…"

"Shinji…" Asuka said. "Are you sure you'll be ok?"


"You did it wrong, baka." Asuka said as she kissed him gently on the lips. "We're dating, we kiss in the lips now."

"I'll try to remember that." Shinji said coyly.

"Well, maybe you should give him a different kind of kiss before he leaves." Mari suggested. "You know, a kiss with a happy ending."
"MARI!" Misato shouted.

"Really, Mari?" Shinji asked.

"Just trying to lighten the mood." Mari said.

"What the hell was she talking about, baka?" Asuka asked. Shinji leaned in and whispered in her ear, and Asuka's face contorted in rage. "The fuck is wrong with you?!"

"So many things." Mari said. "Probably as many as you, princess."

"Damn it, four eyes." Asuka said through gritted teeth. "I'm perfectly normal."

"So says you, princess." Mari reported.

"Enough." Misato said. "Shinji, get to Unit–01 immediately, Asuka, Mari, you'll stay here with us, got it?"

"Right!" Asuka said.

"Sure… I don't have anything else to do." Mari replied.

"Bye, guys." Shinji said as he rushed off.

"Hey, four eyes, do you think he'll be ok?" Asuka asked.

"Well, you're the one that jokes he's the invincible Shinji." Mari said. "What do you think, princess?"

"I have a bad feeling about this." Asuka replied.

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Wing Zero and Deathscythe were moving at high speed. They were charging the last of the VTOLs as they hurried towards the city in the distance. Heero was looking for the best moment to strike, as they were dodging weapons fire from tanks and missile batteries on the ground.

"Heero, we can't let them escape!" Duo shouted. "Come on, we gotta finish this."

"Guys, perhaps we're being a bit too hostile." Quatre said. "Maybe we should try talking to them or something."

"I believe it is too late for that." Heero said as he moved closer to one VTOL and sliced it in half with his beam sabre.

"Quatre, they shot first." Duo said. "We can't let them get away with that."

"They have also not answered any of my broadcasts asking to discuss the situation." Trowa added. "Therefore, they are enemies."

"They are no longer a problem." Heero said sternly. Wing Zero responded and raised its Twin Buster Rifle and took steady aim. Heero got a lock on tone from ZERO and pulled the trigger, sending a bright yellow beam towards the remaining there VTOLs, dissolving them in midair. "Mission complete." Heero said.

"Nice, shot Heero!" Duo said exuberantly as Deathscythe deactivated its Beam Scythe, and Sandrock stowed its Heat Shotels.
"Yes, but I believe we have another problem." Quatre said. "That defense net of weapons, they appear to be targeting us!"

"See what I mean, enemies!" Duo shouted.

"Duo, we did just wipe out their interceptors." Trowa said. "But they have not attempted to return contact with us."

"So, should we destroy the weapons?" Heero asked. "We do not know if there are civilians in this city. We cannot risk innocent lives."

"Well, considering the main cityscape has retracted into the ground, it is a safe assumption that there are civilians in the city." Trowa said.

"So we destroy the weapons on the towers, and minimize damage?" Duo asked. "That's gonna be hard considering how much fire power they have."

"We've pulled off more impossible stuff before." Quatre replied. "I'm sure we can do this safely."

"Uh–oh…" Duo said. "Looks like their launching something else."

"What is it?" Trowa asked.

"Dunno, just see a hatch in the ground opening up." Duo said.

"Perhaps they have a Gundam." Heero said. "We should be ready, perhaps those aircraft were simply a test."

"Yeah, let's go." Duo said as Deathscythe activated its Beam Scythe once more.

"Are you guys sure we should do this?" Quatre asked. "Perhaps we can still talk to them."

"We don't have any other options." Trowa replied. "We're Gundam pilots, we fight, and we survive. That is our lives."

Sandrock drew its Heat Shotels again. "Fine, but I'm not going to like this."

"You don't have to enjoy it Quatre." Heero said. "You just have to ignore the feelings to accomplish your mission."

"So that's how you do it!" Duo exclaimed.

"There is no other way to do it." Heero said. "Now get ready… ZERO is detecting an object coming up the shaft…"

Shinji was sitting patiently in his Entry Plug as Unit–01 was moved to the launch platform. Asuka came over the comm with a lot of concern in her voice, even though she was trying to sound calm, Shinji could tell she was nervous.

"Shinji… are you sure you're ok?" Asuka asked. "I don't like sitting here and doing nothing."

"Orders are orders, Asuka." Misato said.

"Whatever." Asuka quipped. "Baka, you didn't answer me, are you ok?"
"Yeah, Asuka, I'm fine." Shinji said calmly. "Don't worry, I'll be ok, Unit–01 will protect me."

"Fine, just be careful." Asuka said. "And don't be afraid to ask for help."

"That's rich coming from you princess." Mari joked.

"Enough you two." Misato said. "This channel is for combat only, not small talk!"

"Yeah, cause we follow that rule when we're in our EVAs." Asuka pointed out. "We're sitting here not helping, we should be able to at least talk to him."

"Yeah, he needs to know we're there for him in spirt." Mari said.

"Fine, but he needs to launch." Misato said.

"Misato, I have a question." Shinji asked to try and steer the conversation away from Asuka and Mari having an outburst and getting in trouble.

"What is it, Shinji?" Misato asked.

"Are those… uh… things still in the air?" Shinji asked.

"Yes, they are." Misato replied. "Why?"

"Well, how am I intercepting them?" Shinji asked. "If they're maneuverable, I need to attack them and surprise them."

"Well, yeah, but EVAs can't fly, Shinji." Misato said.

"Yeah, but they can jump." Shinji said. "Remember what I did to the Fourteenth Angel? I can launch up without being locked in place. When I get off the elevator, I'll fly into the air… I should be able to hit one of them."

"How are you going to boost that high?" Maya asked.

"Retro thrusters in the shoulder pylons." Shinji said. "I should be able to use those for some thrust, right?"

"Well, they are designed to be used in cases like this." Maya said. "It should work, Colonel."

"Are you clearing his plan?" Misato asked.

"Yeah, it sounds good." Maya replied. "Good thinking, Shinji."

"Thanks, Maya." Shinji said. "So, other than that plan, what do I use when I'm back on the ground?"

"Well, we have a Gatling Gun and Portable Positron Rifle ready for ranged combat." Misato said. "I think you can use your Prog Knives for close combat considering their size."

"Puppy, are you sure about your plan?" Mari asked.

"Yeah, it'll work." Shinji said.

"Ok…" Mari said unconvincingly. "Don't fly too hard into the danger zone."

"I already told Asuka I'd be careful." Shinji said.
"Alright, Shinji are you ready to launch?" Misato asked.

Shinji gripped the control yokes tightly and settled into his seat. "Yeah, I'm ready." Shinji replied. "S2 Engine is stable… and is selected as the power source."

"I can confirm that, Colonel." Maya said. "Readings for the S2 Engine are nominal. Sync score stable at 92.5%, synchrograph is normal… Shinji's clear for launch."

"Ok… Maya, set the elevator launch speed to maximum, Hyuga, remove the restraints from Unit-01, Aoba, check that the launch path is clear."

Shinji could feel the restraints being removed from Unit–01 and he moved Unit–01 into a slightly crotched position for launch.

"Restraints have been removed." Hyuga said.

"Launch path is clear, hostiles are right above the egress point." Aoba reported.

"Launch elevator is set to maximum launch speed, safeties removed." Maya said.

"Let's do it, Misato!" Shinji exclaimed.

"Alright… Evangelion Unit–01… LAUNCH!" Misato ordered.

Shinji felt the elevator shoot up much faster than he had ever experienced. As Unit–01 picked up speed, Shinji flipped a switch to prep the retro rockets to fire when he was ready. As Unit–01 approached the surface, Shinji was ready to launch off the pad.

Using the momentum gained from the launch, the moment the pad slammed into the surface, Unit–01 jumped with all its might and flew into the air at near supersonic speed, heading straight for the Gundams. The retro rockets in the shoulder pylons erupted with streams of blue fire, and Unit–01 flew right at Sandrock. Even though Sandrock and the other Gundams flew out of the way, it was no use.

"YAAAAHHHHHH!" Shinji screamed. "Take this!"

Unit–01 reached out its hand and grabbed Sandrock by the waist. Shinji cut the power to the retro rockets and shifted Unit–01 so that it fell towards the ground. As they were falling, Sandrock struggled against the grip, but Unit–01 held firm.

"You're not getting away from me!" Shinji shouted as the free fall continued.

Unbeknownst to Shinji, Wing Zero was aiming its Buster Rifle at Unit–01’s back and prepared to fire. The yellow beam blast hit the lower back, just below the ribcage on Unit–01, causing Shinji to lose his grip on Sandrock. Sandrock jetted away leaving Shinji alone in his free fall.

"Son of a bitch!" Shinji shouted. "That hurt!"

"That's a powerful weapon, Ma'am." Maya said. "Just as powerful as the Fifth Angel's beam. Armor has been warped and melted at the point of impact, the A.T. Field defected about three quarters of the blast."

"Wonderful…" Misato said. "And we all know how that went…"

"Badly, I'm guessing." Mari said.
"Yeah, it was..." Misato said. "Shinji, what are you doing, slow yourself down before impact!"

"I'm trying!" Shinji said. "Some of the controls aren't responding!"

"Shit, the blast fried some of the nerve connections." Maya said. "I'll reroute."

Unit–01 was falling fast towards the ground just outside Tokyo–3. Shinji was unable to do anything to slow down the Evangelion's fall, and braced himself for impact.

"I can't reroute everything in time!" Maya shouted.

"What the hell are you talking about?!" Asuka shouted. "Type faster or whatever!"

"Asuka, there's only so much we can do!" Misato said. "Shinji, brace for impact!"

"Shinji!" Asuka shouted.

"Mother... help me..." Shinji mumbled.

In response to Shinji's plea, Unit–01's A.T. Field intensified and started to turn the sky red. As Unit–01 was just above the ground, the A.T. Field impacted first, slowing Unit–01 down, causing the ground to buckle beneath the massive Evangelion, and Unit–01 landed gracefully on the ground. The Evangelion righted itself and looked up at the sky where the Gundams were circling as the sky went back to its normal color.

"Thanks, mother..." Shinji mumbled to himself.

"Shinji, are you ok?" Misato asked.

"I'm good." Shinji replied. "No damage or anything."

"What the hell were you thinking, baka?!" Asuka shouted. "You had me worried sick!"

"Sorry..." Shinji said. "I'm ok though. Misato, send up the Positron Rifle."

"One Portable Positron Rifle coming right up." Misato said. "You're just outside the city, try to keep the battle out there."

"I know that, Misato." Shinji replied. "Where am I going for my weapons?"

"Just outside the city limits, there's an armament building." Misato replied. "We'll send the Positron Rifle there."

"Copy that..." Shinji said.

"Shinji, be careful." Asuka warned. "Otherwise you're in big trouble."

"I know, Asuka." Shinji replied. "You don't have to keep reminding me."

"No... I do." Asuka retorted. "You tend to get reckless when and make stupid decisions when you're in trouble. Just get back here safely, ok?"

"I promise, I'll be careful." Shinji replied.

"Enough talking, move out!" Misato ordered.
Heero stared at the beast on the ground below them. ZERO had minimal data on what had just happened, which worried Heero, as ZERO always had an answer.

"What… in the fuck… was that?!” Duo shouted. "What is that thing?!"

"Unknown." Heero said. "There isn't enough data on this… machine. We need to be careful though, whatever it just did was something extremely powerful."

"You mean the thing were it landed without a scratch after turning the fucking sky red?!" Duo shouted. "Do you mean that?!

"I believe he does." Trowa said. "It was most impressive. I don't think any of our Gundams would have survived that impact."

"No, I'd be dead if Heero hadn't shot that thing." Quatre said nervously. "Thanks, Heero."

"Don't thank me yet." Heero replied. "It's still a threat to us, the shot didn't destroy it. Something… deflected it."

"So it's doing something a Virgo can do…" Duo said. "Except its massive and angry looking. That's just fucking great…"

"How did it deflect the shot?" Trowa asked. "I didn't see anything."

"ZERO says the beam lost strength." Heero said. "That means it has some sort of shielding system we can't detect."

"So, what do we do?" Quatre asked. "If we can't predict its abilities, how do we fight it?"

"We charge it as a group." Trowa suggested. "If we overwhelm it with our numerical superiority, we should be able to win."

"I'm good with that plan." Duo said. "But we should probably hurry up!"

"Why?" Quatre asked. "Rushing into an attack never won us any battles before, Duo."

"Because that thing is moving towards the city." Duo said. "We should probably stop it before it reaches whatever it's moving for."

“It could be retrieving weapons. ZERO picked up armament buildings just outside the city limits, it could be heading there.” Heero suggested.

"If it arms itself, we could be in trouble." Quatre said. "Duo's right, we need to attack now before it's too late."

"Then let's go!" Duo said as Deathscythe charged Unit–01.

"Duo, wait, we're supposed to attack together!" Quatre shouted.

"Forget it." Heero said. "Attack."

The other three Gundams charged Unit–01 as it moved quickly to the armament building. Deathscythe, having charged first got close and ignited its Beam Scythe and swung a heavy blow at Unit–01’s left arm, and Unit–01’s arm absorbed the blow, taking nominal damage. Unit–01 swung around and landed a right hook to the Gundam's chest, sending it flying away, with the Beam Scythe flying in a different direction.
"Damn it!" Duo shouted as Deathscythe skidded on the ground. "I'm down!"

"That's what happens when you attack recklessly." Quatre scolded.

"Fine, just get that guy!" Duo shouted. "Man this sucks... I need to find my scythe... the God of Death's gotta have a scythe."

"Stop whining." Heero said. "Just get back in the fight."

Unit–01 reached the armament building and slammed the button to open it, revealing the Portable Position Rifle. Unit–01 took aim at the three charging Gundams and fired five shots in quick succession, missing Wing Zero and Heavyarms, but landing two shots on Sandrock, causing minor systems disruptions.

"My systems... they're malfunctioning!" Quatre shouted. "Be careful of that rifle!"

"Roger." Heero replied as Wing Zero drew closer to Unit–01 with Heavyarms right behind him. "Trowa, follow my lead... aim for the joints."

"Copy that." Trowa replied.

Wing Zero and Heavyarms armed their guns and began firing, Wing Zero with its Machine Cannons, and Heavyarms with its multiple weapons. Unit–01 raised its injured arm to block the shots from. Unit–01 raised the Positron Rifle again and fired at the Gundams, missing with each shot. Wing Zero countered with close range shot of its Buster Rifle, which hit Unit–01 in the chest over its Core, warping and melting the armor around it. Unit–01 fired its Positron Rifle at the same time, hitting Wing Zero to the left of its search eye.

Inside the cockpit of Wing Zero, the ZERO system malfunctioned, as did the search eye with the massive electrical overload of the close range shot.

"I'm falling back, Trowa, don't let up." Heero said.

"I'll do my best." Trowa replied.

"I'm right behind ya, buddy!" Duo said. "The God of Death is back!"

"I'm with you, too, Trowa." Quatre said. "Sandrock, let's do this!"

Deathscythe, and Sandrock moved in at high speed, charging Unit–01 and backing up Heavyarms, who was firing volleys of missiles at Unit–01, which bounced off the A.T. Field, exploding uselessly.

"It is blocking my attacks." Trowa said.

"Hold on just a sec!" Duo shouted. "Quatre, frontal assault, I'll attack from behind!"

"Got it!" Quatre replied.

Deathscythe and Sandrock attacked from either side of Unit–01 while Heavyarms supplied heavy cover fire. Deathscythe swung at Unit–01’s back, hitting the right shoulder blade and narrowly missing the Entry Plug, and Sandrock activated its Heat Shotels and swung them at its abdomen. Both weapons impacted the armor, causing blood to spurt from the slices.

"What the fuck?!!" Duo shouted. "It's fucking bleeding!"
"Is it alive?!" Quatre shouted. "Does it have a pilot?!"

"I don't know." Trowa said. "But we should press the attack."

Wing Zero was able to reboot, bringing the ZERO system back online it shot past the other Gundams with its Buster Rifle and shield in its left hand. The left shoulder pauldron opening, and Wing Zero's beam sabre ignited as it was pulled out.

Wing Zero moved its Buster Rifle into its left hand and opened its left shoulder pauldron, exposing a handle. Wing Zero pulled the handle out of the pauldron and a green beam sabre ignited as Unit–01 opened both its shoulder pylons and pulled out its twin Prog Knives, and raising them to intercept Wing Zero's assault.

The Prog Knives and beam sabre collided, sending sparks in all directions. Wing Zero increased the thrust to its engines, trying to push through the Prog Knives, but Unit–01 braced and held its ground against the smaller Gundam. It took all of Unit–01's strength to hold back Wing Zero, and it was starting to lose its footing. Deathscythe and Sandrock charged again from behind, intent on cutting into the armor while Heavyarms continued to fire volley after volley of bullets and missiles.

Unit–01 responded by charging its A.T. Field, casting a deep red glow outward, expanding it outward quickly and sending the Gundams flying in all directions. Each Gundam hit the ground hard, creating small craters and stunning each pilot.

"What hell was that?" Duo shouted. "It blasted us on our asses!"

"I don't know..." Quatre murmured. "But I felt it resonate in my heart... a cry of sadness and pain..."

"Sometimes you don't make any sense, Quatre." Duo said.

"But I did!" Quatre said defensively. "That blast felt sad!"

"Regardless, we can't move in close like that again." Heero said. "We risk getting destroyed before we accomplish the mission."

"What an impressive attack..." Trowa said. "But I agree, ranged combat is better."

As the Gundam pilots recovered, Unit–01 broke its jaw restraints once again, and let out a sickening sound. "ROOOOOOOOOAAAAARRRRRRRRRRRRR!"

"I think we pissed it off!" Duo said.

"It is alive..." Quatre muttered. "We're attacking a creature... that's the sadness I felt..."

"Interesting." Heero said simply. "It has a lot of teeth."

"What should we do?" Trowa asked.

"Well, kill it before it kills us!" Duo shouted.

"I concur." Heero added. "We must destroy the enemy and find a way home."

"But Heero, my Sandrock and Duo's Deathscythe aren't equipped with ranged attacks." Quatre said. "We need to try and confuse it instead."

"Quatre, that is unwise." Trowa said. "We have to stay away from it."
"The God of Death doesn't run from a fight!" Duo shouted. "I kill my enemies up close and personal!"

"Duo's right, we need to get in close." Quatre said. "Heero, what does ZERO say?"

"ZERO still has no answers." Heero said. "The beast is too unpredictable."

"Then let's go kill it!" Duo said. "Quatre and I can attack from opposite sides with our blades, and keep it busy."

"Heero, I will stay behind you." Trowa said. "I will supply cover fire with my remaining ammunition to detract it."

"Sounds like a good plan to me." Quatre said.

"Then we attack." Heero said firmly.

Unit-01 stowed its Prog Knives as the Gundams impacted the ground as the red haze around it dissipated once more. Inside the Entry Plug, Shinji was in a great deal of distress. He was bleeding through his plugsuit, after having received mirrored sympathy injuries from his EVA and high sync score.

"AAHHHHHHHHH!" Shinji shouted. "I'm bleeding!"

"Shinji, you can do this!" Misato shouted. "You just have to focus!"

"I'm trying, but there's too many of them!" Shinji retorted. "They move too fast!"

"Shinji, stop complaining and attack!" Misato ordered. "We're all in danger if those machines are allowed to stay intact!"

"Hey, don't yell at him like that!" Asuka shouted at her. "He's doing his best, on his own! If you're so worried, let us back him up!"

"Asuka, no one else is being deployed!" Misato said. "Those are our orders."

"But what about, Shinji?!" Asuka asked.

"Asuka…" Shinji panted. "I'll be fine… I don't want you to get hurt…"

"You don't sound fine!" Asuka shouted. "You're hurt, so stop trying to be all tough!"

"Asuka… I've handled worse." Shinji replied. "I'm not going to hold back anymore… I'm going to kill them… I'M GOING TO KILL THEM ALL!"

"Shinji…?" Asuka asked. "What are you talking about?"

"The EVA…" Shinji said his breathing became rapid. "Just like with the Fourteenth Angel… I'LL SLAUGHTER THEM!"

"Shinji, no, don't do it!" Asuka shouted.

Unit-01 roared mightily once again as the Gundams charged for another assault.

"ROOOOAAAAAAAAARRRRRRRRRR!
"Plug depth increasing to dangerous levels!" Maya shouted. "Nearing negative values! It's the Fourteenth all over again!"

"Shinji, stop this right now!" Misato shouted.

"NO!" Shinji roared as his eyes started to turn red. "I'M NOT LETTING ANYONE ELSE GET HURT… I'M GOING TO FINISH THIS!"

Unit–01 expanded its A.T. Field once more, sending out a powerful blast that ripped the ground apart. The gushing wounds all over Unit–01’s body healed, and partially sealing Shinji’s own wounds, and as Wing Zero raised its Buster Rifle, Unit–01 charged the Gundam, Wing Zero dodged, but Heavyarms was right behind and took the brunt of Unit–01’s right hook, sending it careening into the ground. Unit–01 skidded to a stop on, ripping up the ground beneath its feet, and faced Sandrock, the next closest Gundam.

"TAKE THIS!" Shinji screamed.

Unit–01 charged Sandrock with reckless abandon. Sandrock braced itself and threw its Heat Shotels at Unit–01, both of which buried themselves in Unit–01’s shoulders. Unit–01 kept charging however, its mouth wide, and eyes blazing with fury as it grabbed Sandrock by the shoulders and slammed it to the ground. Unit–01 began to punch the defenseless Gundam until both Heavyarms and Wing Zero shot it in the back, ripping a hole right next to the Entry Plug.

"AAHHHHHHHHH!" Shinji screamed out in pain. "You're gonna pay for that!"

Unit–01 left Sandrock alone and pulled the Heat Shotels out of its shoulders, and threw them to the ground. It then charged at Heavyarms and Wing Zero. It pulled out one of its Prog Knives and threw it at Heavyarms, where it slammed into the breastplate making Heavyarms stagger backwards. Deathscythe attempted to charge from behind again, and Unit–01 turned on its heel and charged at the approaching Deathscythe raising its arms to block the Beam Scythe and body slammed the Gundam, knocking it to the ground.

Unit–01 stood still and looked at the downed Gundams getting back to their feet and looked up into the sky. "ROOOOAARRRRRRRRRRRRRR!"

"Shinji's synchrograph is unstable!" Maya shouted. "And his heart rate is through the roof! He's going to have a stroke is he's not careful!"

"Shinji, stop this, now!" Misato pleaded.

"NO… I'M NOT DONE YET!" Shinji roared. "THEY'RE STILL MOVING! EVERYONE IS STILL IN DANGER, AND I'M NOT GOING TO LET THESE THINGS HURT ANYONE BUT ME!"

"Shinji, listen to her, we don't want to lose you!" Mari shouted.

"I'M NOT LETTING ANYONE ELSE GET HURT!" Shinji said. "SAKURA… TOJI… REI… IT ENDS NOW!"

"Shinji, stop being a fucking idiot!" Asuka shouted. "I don't want to lose you, not again!"

"AND I DON'T WANT TO loose YOU EITHER!" Shinji roared. "THAT'S WHY I HAVE TO DO THIS!"

Unit–01 charged again towards Wing Zero again as its Buster Rifle took aim and fired, Unit–01
deflected the shot with its arm, melting the armor. Wing Zero fired again, this time with only half the shot deflected away, while the rest hit Unit–01 square in the chest, melting some of the pectoral armor. Unit–01 swung at Wing Zero, but Wing Zero avoided the hit again. Unit–01 countered by jumping up and brought its knee into contact with Wing Zero's torso, causing it to lose attitude control momentarily.

"FOOLED YOU!" Shinji roared.

The other Gundams charged together, Heavyarms with the Prog Knife from its chest in its hand came from behind, Deathscythe coming from the left, and Sandrock coming in from the right. As Wing Zero regained control, it charged from the front, beam sabre out, at full speed.

Shinji did his best to focus, but Unit–01 had only healed its own wounds, Shinji's were barely closed up, but with the strain of his assaults on the Gundams they were opening back up. Shinji was starting to lose blood and focus.

"I can still fight…" Shinji said as he started breathing heavily. "I can… still win."

The Gundams all attacked at the same time, ripping through armor and flesh, causing more blood to spurt from the Evangelion. The A.T. Field only blocked so much, and the weapons were still able to do enough damage.

"AAHYYYYYYYYYYY!" Shinji screamed as his eyes returned to normal. "I can still fight, and I can still win!"

Unit–01 was now surrounded and trapped, without its massive power boost. Its eyes followed suit with Shinji's and returned to their normal yellow glow. Now being assaulted on all sides by the Gundams, Unit–01 did its best to block or counter the attack, but with Shinji's older wounds, and the newer ones being opened with every strike, Shinji was in a lot of pain, and whole lot of trouble.

"AAHYYYYYYYYYYY!" Shinji cried out in pain. "I'm not going to let you beat me!"

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In the Command Center, everyone watched in utter horror as Unit–01 was assaulted on all sides by the four Gundams. Its movements were becoming slower and less coordinated, and Shinji had stop screaming after a while.

"SHINJI!" Asuka screamed. "Shinji, are you ok, answer me damn it! ANSWER ME!"

"Asuka, stop, shouting won't get him to respond!" Misato snapped.

"Bullshit, he always listens when I yell!" Asuka shouted. "Shinji you idiot, are you ok?"

"Asuka, calm down!" Mari said. "You're only going to distract him!"

"Maya, what are his vitals?" Misato asked as the battle raged on in front of them.

"Unstable."

"Maya replied. "His blood pressure is dropping, and his pulse is thready at best. There's also a considerable amount of blood in the LCL… I think he's losing a lot of blood."

"Damn it!" Misato shouted. "Aoba, keep trying contact Shinji."

"Right, ma'am." Aoba replied.

"Misato, you have to do something!" Asuka shouted. "Let me go out there."
"Or let me do it!" Mari shouted. "I'm tired of watching this, he needs help!"

"No one else is being deployed." Gendo said calmly. "Shinji always finds a way to win his battles, whatever the cost."

"His life isn't worth this!" Asuka screamed. "What the hell kind of father are you?!"

"The kind who abandons his son!" Mari added.

"Enough!" Gendo shouted back.

"Tell me it's not true!" Mari shouted. "Tell me you didn't abandon him in Atsugi after his mother died! Go on, tell me I'm a liar, Commander!"

"Mari, that's enough." Fuyutsuki said sternly as he lowered his voice to address Gendo. "Ikari, perhaps it would be best to send out Unit–02… Shinji does appear to be in distress."

"No, he has face worse." Gendo replied quietly.

"We don't need another Berserk incident, Ikari." Fuyutsuki insisted. "Asuka can help divide their forces, and give them a better chance of winning."

"Then let it be done." Gendo said begrudgingly. "But if she gets hurt and Shinji destroys something important, I will hold you responsible."

"Understood, Commander." Fuyutsuki said before returning his voice to a normal tone. "Colonel, have Unit–02 prepped to engage the enemy."

"Understood, sir." Misato replied. "Maya, go handle that, Sumire can take your place. Asuka, go get ready, you're getting your wish."

"Yes, ma'am." Maya said as she got up and left the room.

"About fucking time you guys pulled your heads out of your asses…" Asuka muttered. "Mari… you'll stay here and keep an eye on Shinji, right?"

"Of course, Asuka." Mari said. "No get out of here and go save him."

"Right." Asuka said as she left and passed Ritsuko as she entered, giving her a hateful look.

"Where is she going?" Ritsuko asked.

"She's being deployed, Ritsuko." Misato replied. "Shinji needs backup."

"How kind of you to join us, Dr. Akagi." Gendo said coldly. "The alarm went off some time ago."

"There was no Pattern Blue announced, I saw no need to rush up here." Ritsuko said.

"Yet, here you are." Fuyutsuki said. "Why show up at all?"

"Rei is now stable, so I saw fit to see why we were still at Level–1 battle stations." Ritsuko replied. "I had not realized any Evangelions had launched either."

"Well, this is what happens when you show up late." Mari said. "Being on time is key, doctor. Someone as smart as you should know that."
"I wasn't talking to you, pilot." Ritsuko said coldly.

"Yeah, and you're asking stupid questions." Mari shot back.

"Mari, leave it alone." Misato said. "She's not worth it."

"Yeah, sure." Mari said, turning her back to Ritsuko.

"Figures, you'll listen to her but not me." Ritsuko muttered.

"Fuck you!" Mari said. "Why don't you just leave and stop distracting us. You're just being a nuisance… and you could care less about Shinji living or dying." Mari looked at Sumire and Misato. "Is he any worse?"

"No, Ms. Makinami." Sumire replied. "He's still in bad shape, but it hasn't gotten any worse."

"I think you're the nuisance, Makinami." Ritsuko retorted. "You always have something to say, don't you… like a retarded dog…"

"That's enough!" Fuyutsuki shouted. "Inspector Kaji, remove the good doctor."

"Yes, sir." Kaji said as he walked over to Ritsuko and grabbed her arm. "Time to go, Ritsuko."

"Why?" Ritsuko asked. "I haven't done anything."

"I highly doubt that." Kaji said as he lowered his voice to a whisper. "I don't think the Rei in the Medical Wing is the Rei that went out in the Evangelion… which means you did do something to that poor girl…"

Ritsuko looked at him in shock. "Fine, I'll leave."

As Kaji took her outside, Mari and Misato looked at each other, shocked that Ritsuko looked so scared at what Kaji whispered. Mari walked next to Misato and talked quietly to her. "Think he threatened her?" Mari asked.

"Probably." Misato said. "With some secret info he knows… he wouldn't hit a woman, he's not like that."

"Well, I want to hit her." Mari said.

"I think you have to get in line behind Asuka." Misato joked.

"Yeah, whatever." Mari said. "You hold her, m and the princess will beat her."

"Uh, Colonel… I don't mean to interrupt." Sumire said nervously. "Maya just called, Asuka is in the Cage heading for her Entry Plug."

"Good." Misato said. "Clear a launch path for her to the surface, as close as you can get her. Hyuga, make sure the Gatling Gun is deployed to an armament building near her, along with another Positron Rifle."

"I'm on it, ma'am." Sumire said.

"Right away Colonel." Hyuga replied.

"Let's get this battle over with before it's too late." Misato said.
"You mean before Shinji dies, right?" Mari asked.

"Yes, that's what I meant, Mari." Misato replied.

"Good, cause I don't think you'd be able to stop Asuka's rampage if Shinji were to actually die. You'd have to kill her too…"

"Why don't we try and avoid that." Misato said. "Sumire, tell Maya she's clear to activate Unit–02, and tell her to double time it back up here."

"Right, ma'am." Sumire said.

They continued to watch the fight rage on, and Mari grimaced as Unit–01 did its best to defend itself from the onslaught.

"I'm not going to die!" Shinji shouted.

"Hold on, Shinji…" Mari said. "Asuka's coming to save you…"

Kaji was leading Ritsuko to her office, to avoid her getting into yet another conflict with the pilots. Ritsuko kept tugging against Kaji's grip as he led her towards her office. As they entered the elevator, she finally pulled out from his grip.

"How do you know about Rei?" Ritsuko asked angrily.

"It's my business to know these things, Ritsuko. A whole room of spare bodies? How is that even a secret in this place?" Kaji said. "You better prey Mari doesn't find out you hurt Rei… even if it was a new body. She'll kill you."

"What does that slut care about the doll?" Ritsuko asked.

"Mari is in love with Rei." Kaji said. "And you and I both know how well you handled people around you being in love before. So if you interfere with them or Shinji and Asuka in any way, I'll kill you myself."

"You wouldn't dare." Ritsuko said.

"No, I would, you're too unstable to be left alone." Kaji said as the elevator arrived at her level. "Now, I think you can find you're office on your own, I'm going back to the Command Center."

"Why?" Ritsuko asked.

"Because unlike you, my presence isn't despised." Kaji said. "And honestly, I hate being around you and you shitty attitude."

Shinji was in a great deal of pain. The usually clear LCL was muddied with a great deal of his blood, and he was having trouble thinking clearly. He had stopped responding to the comm, ignoring it as he tried his best to keep up with the four Gundams attacking him.

"I can do this…" Shinji muttered. "I'll be able to save everyone… even Rei…"

Try as he might, Shinji was trying to ignore the comm, but a different and far more annoying voice was shouting at him, someone who could be extremely annoying to prove a point.
"Shinji, stop ignoring the comm, answer me!" Mari shouted. "Come on, I know you're busy, but you need to answer me!"

"I'm fine!" Shinji replied. "But I am really busy!"

"Good, you're still conscious." Mari said happily. "Good news, Asuka is deploying."

"I don't need her help." Shinji said as he dodged another hit to be attacked from another direction. "She's safer down there."

"Bullshit, she's been shouting to go help you since you launched." Mari said. "Even if you wanted to stop her, you couldn't."

"I said I don't need her help, watch!" Shinji shouted as Unit–01 ducked a heavy attack by Deathscythe, only to be hit by Sandrock. Unit–01 then countered with its right hook slamming squarely into the Sandrock's chest, knocking the Gundam down, with its movement entirely ceasing. "See, now its three on one, Asuka can stay safe." Shinji said.

"Shinji, stop being an idiot!" Mari shouted. "You're bleeding out, she's helping you, get the fuck over it."

"But…" Shinji muttered.

"No buts." Mari said. "Just don't die before she gets there, Shinji."

"What's that supposed to mean?" Shinji asked.

"In case you didn't notice, you're bleeding out." Mari said bluntly.

"Mari!" Misato said scoldingly. "He didn't need to know!"

"Yes he does!" Mari countered. "He needs to know that if he dies before Asuka gets there, she'll hate herself even more than she already does… you got that Shinji?"

"What?" Shinji muttered.

"Don't fucking die, Shinji!" Mari said. "Fight like you've never fought before."

"I'm not going to die…" Shinji muttered. "I'm going to fight."

"Right, keep thinking that and just do it!" Mari said encouragingly.

"I'm going to win!" Unit–01’s A.T. sent out a powerful burst, giving Shinji a brief respite while he stared the three remaining Gundams down, some of Shinji's wounds started to close up, but he had still lost a lot of blood, so even with a new rush of adrenaline and a healing boost from his EVA, he still needed help, no matter how much he wanted to protect Asuka, he couldn't fight the Gundams alone.

As the Gundam pilots recovered from the most recent blowback from Unit–01, Heero looked and noticed that Sandrock wasn't moving, meaning Quatre had to be injured.

"Quatre!" Duo shouted. "Quatre, answer me!"

"Quatre, please respond." Trowa said calmly.
"I don't believe he's conscious." Heero said. "That hit landed near his cockpit."

"Damn bastards…" Duo muttered. "I'm gonna kill that beast!"

"Dup, just remember, we attack together." Heero said. "We can still overwhelm it. Trowa, how much ammo do you have?"

"Not a lot." Trowa said. "But I have this large weapon."

"Exchange it for Quatre's weapons." Heero said. "I don't think he'd mind."

"Understood." Trowa said as Heavyarms dropped the Prog Knife and picked up the Heat Shotels. "I am ready to attack again, Heero."

"Yeah, so am I." Duo said angrily. "Let's kick its freaky ass…"

"Attack." Heero said as the Gundams charged once more.

Asuka was sitting impatiently in her Entry Plug. Her hands were on the control yokes as she waited for her Evangelion to be cleared for launch.

"Misato, what's taking so long?" Asuka asked. "I don't like wasting time, there isn't a lot of it to waste!"

"Ease up, Asuka." Misato said. "We're making sure you're sync score is stable."

"It's stable, ma'am." Maya said. "It's actually more than doubled… she's holding at 32.7%, synchrograph is stable. Asuka's good to go."

"Launch path is clear, elevator in launch position." Aoba said.

"Weapons are ready to be deployed, intercept course is laid in." Hyuga said.

"Asuka, are you ready?" Misato asked.

"I was ready when you sent Shinji out alone." Asuka said tensely. "Can I just go?"

"Fine… Evangelion Unit–02… LAUNCH!" Misato ordered.

Asuka held on while she felt her Evangelion shoot up towards the surface of Tokyo–3 to assist Shinji. As the Evangelion moved towards the surface, Asuka gripped the control yokes firmly and gritted her teeth.

"Hold on, baka, I'm coming…" Asuka muttered. "Those fuckers picked the wrong person to mess with… I'm gonna teach them a lesson… not to mess with Asuka Langley Soryu or her baka Shinji…"

To Be Continued

A/N: I do not own Evangelion or any of the characters, GAINAX and the other distributors of NGE related material do. I am simply using them as a backdrop for my fanfic. I also do not own Gundam Wing, Sunrise does, as do their licensed distributors.
Sync Score Rankings!
Shinji – 92.5% (+2.5%)
Rei – 75.0% (No Change)
Mari – 36.4% (No Change)
Asuka – 32.7% (+14.6%)

So, welcome to my crossover fic. Sorry for the ruse about going on about Episode VI coming to, but I didn’t want to spoil this wonderful surprise. This fic will be 15 chapters long and have a plethora of fun crossover shit, including Shinji piloting a Gundam, cause how could that not happen. As for some of the events leading up to this fic, if you found this searching for Gundam stuff, my NGE: Legacy series has a host of stories that will back up the continuity I created, and for those of you who have read the rest of my series, this story fits in the timeline and will affect events moving forward. Also, I would like to note that this crossover will eventually be paired with a Gundam Wing fic series, albeit much shorter than my planned NGE: Legacy series.

Secondly, the size difference. The Evangelions in my story are 75 meters tall, as mentioned in the chapter, while the Gundams from Gundam Wing are about 16 or 17 meters tall. So essentially, the Gundams are fighting the equivalent of a Mobile Armor. So, with this in mind, I tried to structure the battle so it would seem like the Gundams would be at a disadvantage for their size, but really weren’t due to their power and the skill of their pilots.

Next I’d like to point out one thing. The Gundams being used are the versions from the anime, not the Endless Waltz designs. I do love the EW versions, but for this story, and my planned Gundam Wing fic, the designs stay as they were from the show out of convenience, and necessity. Plus, the literal Wing Zero Custom as an Angel was even too much of a meta reference for me to include.

As for the events of the chapter itself. This happens in the direct aftermath of Rei II dying and being brought back as Rei III. She's currently healing and won't play a big part in the story. As for everyone else, there are Gundams and new enemies to fight, but no Angels, just Mobile Suits and Gundams. Some of this fic’s storyline is based off the Gundam: Dynasty Warriors series, mainly GDW3 and GDW: Reborn. That's what gave me the idea for this fic, that and I thought it would be a fun idea.

The chapter name comes from the obvious trope in Gundam Wing (or any Gundam series) where someone shouts "It's a Gundam!" and then dies a horrible death at the hands of said Gundam.

I do hope everyone enjoys this crossover, as I really hope it will be successful, pairing the first mecha series I ever watched, Gundam Wing, with my favorite mecha series, Neon Genesis Evangelion.

As I said before, and will always say at the end of chapter, please leave comments, as I would like to try to improve the story going forward any way I can. And, hell, constructive criticism is a good thing.

つづく
Asuka emerged on the surface of Tokyo–3, Unit–02 was released from its restraints and it moved to an open armament building. It grabbed the Positron Rifle and Gatling and moved towards the battle raging just outside the city.

"Hey, Misato…" Asuka asked. "What happens if I run out of cable?"

"There's a power building nearby, you can use that." Misato said. "Why both weapons though?"

"I'm helping." Asuka said. "By shooting them until they die."

"Princess, that didn't work against the Fourteenth." Mari quipped. "I doubt spray and pray will work any better now."

"Shut up, four eyes." Asuka said. "My methods work just fine."

"Sure they do." Mari quipped.

"Enough, Mari." Misato said. "Asuka, move out."

"Yeah, yeah, I'm moving." Asuka said as Unit–02 broke into a run, heading straight for the fight. It was moving a bit slower than usual with the heavy weapons that it was carrying. An alarm went off in the Entry Plug to warn Asuka she ran out of power cable to run with. She was near the next power station and ejected her cord, and moved quickly to exchange them, allowing her to enter the fight directly.

"Alright…" Asuka said as Unit–02 raised its weapons. "Time to die, fuckers…"

However, as Asuka was taking aim, Unit–01 was still besieged by the three remaining Gundams, and had taken a great deal of damage. Asuka saw Heavyarms bury its Double Barreled Beam Gatling Gun into an open hole in Unit–01’s chest and open fire, causing several rounds to rip through Unit–01’s back.

"AAAAHHHHHH!" Shinji screamed. "MY CHEST!"

"NOOOOOOO!" Asuka screamed as Unit–02 dropped its weapons and began running at Heavyarms, with no strategy in mind, just revenge. "SHINJI!" Unit–02 raised its clenched fist and came out of nowhere, and slammed Heavyarms so hard it was sent flying into a nearby hillside, wrecking the hill and collapsing it around the now disabled Heavyarms.

"Get away from my baka Shinji, you scheisse!" Asuka screamed. "I'm the only one that gets to hurt him! Not you!"

The other two Gundams backed off and retreated a short distance away. Unit–02 stood slightly in front of Unit–01 and took up blocking it from further attacks while Unit–01 sank to one knee on the
"Shinji, are you ok?" Asuka asked. "Damn it, Shinji, answer me!"

"Shinji… you better answer her, she sounds pretty angry." Mari quipped.

"I'm… I'm ok…" Shinji muttered. "I think I am anyway."

"What do you mean you think?!" Asuka asked angrily. "What kind of stupid answer is that? It's a yes or no answer? Misato, what are his vitals?"

"I'm not sure…" Misato said. "Maya."

"Pulse is weak, blood pressure is pretty low, but stable, I'm guessing he's lost a fair amount of blood. His synchrograph is also unstable, and Unit–01 has a lot of damage to the armor and flesh. He needs to get back here for treatment."

"I'm not leaving Asuka…" Shinji said. "I… I won't let her fight alone."

"Shinji, you're in no condition to fight!" Misato shouted. "I'm ordering you back here."

"No, I'm not leaving her." Shinji replied. "I've disobeyed your orders before, Misato… and I'd do it again."

"Shinji, don't be an idiot!" Asuka said. "I've got you covered, get out of here while you have a chance. I'll be fine."

"Asuka… they're too strong." Shinji said. "Two on one would still be too much… if we both stay, we'll be better off."

"You won't, you idiot." Asuka said. "You're too hurt, and I'm not going to let you die to be a fucking hero."

"I'm not being a hero, Asuka." Shinji said. "Remember what I said about being out here alone… I don't want you to feel that loneliness."

"Then why the hell did you go out there alone?" Asuka asked.

"Yeah, puppy, that's a good question." Mari said.

"I was… I was trying to make up for letting Rei get hurt." Shinji said. "I… I don't want that to happen again. I didn't want anyone else to get hurt because of me…"

"Gottverdammt, you're an idiot." Asuka said. "How many times do we have to tell you that Rei getting hurt isn't your fault."

"Yeah, Shinji… you did your best, and she's alive." Mari said. "You have nothing to be sorry for."

"But…" Shinji started.

"Just shut up about it!" Asuka said. "It's not your fault, move on! We have more pressing matters to deal with!" Unit–02 lifted its arm and pointed at Wing Zero and Deathscythe. "Do you remember we have to deal with them, or is you guilt trip repressing that memory?"

"I… I remember." Shinji said. "Kinda hard to forget the things that have been beating the shit out of me."
"So, have you learned anything then, baka?" Asuka asked. "What can you tell me?"

"They're fast… very fast." Shinji said. "They dodge very well, and their weapons are light lightsabers or something… they cut right through the A.T. Field, but the Prog Knives can block them."

"So, how did you knock yours out?" Asuka asked.

"Luck I think… how did you knock yours out?" Shinji asked.

"Awww…" Mari said. "You two are adorable…"

"Shut up, four eyes." Asuka said. "I'm talking to my boyfriend."

"Yeah, I know…" Mari replied. "That's why it's adorable."

"Mari, enough." Misato said. "And I thought I told you to stop using the comm?"

"Miso, I don't care what you say, I'm going to talk with my friends whether you like it or not." Mari said. "You can't stop me, no matter what you do."

Asuka could hear Misato grumble. "Mari, just shut up." Misato said bluntly.

"Mari… don't get in trouble." Shinji said. "The jail cells aren't exactly comfortable."

"Fine, puppy, I'll be good." Mari said happily. "Just be careful out there."

"So, Shinji, what should we do?" Asuka asked.

"We should let them charge at us." Shinji said. "That's when they're vulnerable."

"Whatever you say, baka." Asuka said. "But I'm not a patient person."

"I'm aware of that, Asuka." Shinji replied.

"And what is that supposed to mean?" Asuka asked.

"It means he knows you're a very impatient person, princess." Mari said.

"I didn't mean anything unkind by it..." Shinji muttered. "I just... I know you hate waiting for things..."

"Fine, baka, you're forgiven." Asuka said. "Now get your EVA back on its feet and get ready to fight... you don't want to be unprepared, do you?"

Unit–01 struggled to its feet, gripping its right bicep with its left hand. "I think I'm ready."

"Glad you're still on your feet, baka." Asuka said. "I' glad we're going to fight side by side… I miss this."

"I've missed it too, Asuka." Shinji said.

Duo stood in shock staring at the newly arrived Unit–02. Its bright red armor gleamed in the sunlight, and he watched as it stood in front of the damaged Unit–01. He looked over and saw the dust cloud indicating where Heavyarms landed, and saw the motionless Sandrock lying face down in the
shallow crater its impact caused. Duo could see Wing Zero to his left, with its Buster Rifle held aloft, as it appeared Heero had no idea what to do next.

"Trowa, Quatre, respond!" Duo shouted. "Are you guys alive or whatever?!

"Duo, there is no point in wasting your breath." Heero said sternly. "They're unconscious."

"How can you possibly know that?!" Duo asked angrily. "We've taken worse!"

"Duo, the force of the punch from the red one was strong enough to destroy a hill." Heero said. "And the purple one implanted Sandrock several meters into the ground. I would even be unconscious."

"Yeah, you jump off a cliff without a parachute and survive… but that hit you couldn't handle…" Duo said shaking his head at the memory of when he rescued Heero from OZ way back when. "So… what do we do? We were barely able to keep up with the one with four of us."

"The red one is on some sort of power cable. If we can cut it, perhaps we can disable it." Heero suggested. "The purple one seems to not need external power… but we also have two targets to contend with… we should each focus on one."

"We can't each focus on only one, Heero!" Duo shouted. "We have to attack one of them together! Like we did before!"

"And how do you think that will turn out?" Heero asked. "We need to divide them, they're both at a disadvantage. One is damaged and bleeding, and the other is on external power. If we attack separately we can take advantage of that."

"So who gets what?" Duo asked.

"Does it matter?" Heero asked.

"Probably not." Duo said. "So, do you care which one you get?"

"No." Heero replied gruffly.

"Great, I got the red one, then!" Duo shouted as he gripped his controls. "That red demon is all mine!"

"Don't charge yet." Heero said. "We need to be careful… these things are still dangerous."

"Yeah, I'm aware of that!" Duo said. "I'll cut its power cord quick and then help you with the purple one!"

"Don't underestimate the enemy, Duo." Heero said. "I can't this all by myself."

"Yeah, yeah, quit your bellyaching!" Duo said. "Let's charge on three, alright?"

"Fine, don't be reckless." Heero said. "Charge."

Deathscythe charged Unit–02 at full speed, bring its Beam Scythe over its head and swinging down, only to be blocked by Unit–02's right arm, causing blood to fly everywhere. Unit–02 swung back with its left arm, catching Deathscythe by its shoulder and sending it away. Unit–02 ran at Deathscythe and tried to land a right hook, but Deathscythe dodged upwards and fired its Buster Shield at Unit–02. The shield's outer rim opened up and the opening ignited into a short beam dagger, which propelled itself
"Die, you stupid fucking thing!" Duo shouted. "Just fucking give up!"

Unit–02 jumped at Deathscythe and landed a fist in to Deathscythe's lower torso, sending the Gundam flying backwards.

"Heero, I hope you're having better luck!" Duo shouted.

"Not exactly..." Heero said.

Wing Zero and Unit–01 were engaged in a heated battle with one another. Unit–01 had one Prog Knife and was deflecting Wing Zero's beam sabre attacks and was dodging each shot from the Buster Rifle, but was starting to have trouble keeping up. They were locked in a stalemate, with neither one able to gain the upper hand.

"Duo, how is your fight going?" Heero asked. "Have you cut the cable yet?"

"Its way easier said than done, pal!" Duo shouted.

Deathscythe was doing its best to maneuver around Unit–02, however the red Evangelion was giving Duo a run for his money. Every time Deathscythe went in for an attack on the cord, Unit–02 would counter, forcing Deathscythe to fall back.

"How does something so fucking huge move so agilely?" Duo asked himself. "Back the fuck off!"

Deathscythe charged again, swinging its Beam Scythe and grazing the casing on where the power cord was secured to the Evangelion. Sparks flew out from the point of impact, and Unit–02 swung around, punching Deathscythe again and sending it reeling into the ground.

"Damn... that hurt...." Duo muttered. "Only another foot and it would have been cut...."

Deathscythe struggled back up to its feet, using its Beam Scythe to steady itself. As it got back to its feet, unit–02 charged again, landing a left hook next to the cockpit, causing sparks to fly inside the cockpit.

"Come on!" Duo shouted. "I just got this shit fixed from the last time!" Duo slammed his controls. "Oh, you're gonna pay for busting up my Gundam!" Duo grabbed his controls again and charged. "I am the God of Death!"

"Pretty whiny for a grim reaper..." Heero muttered.

"Don't you have your own fucking thing to deal with?" Duo asked.

"Doesn't mean I can't make a comment." Heero said. "Unlike you, I can multitask."

"Yeah, cause you have ZERO!" Duo shouted.

"If that's what you think..." Heero retorted.

"Damn it, Heero, shut your face!" Duo shouted. "Now, time to cut the cord!"

Deathscythe moved quickly, swinging its Beam Scythe wildly, making several deep cuts into Unit–02's armor, staining it with blood from the gashes. As it cut its way through Unit–02's forward defense, it made its way around back and sliced from where the power cord was plugged into the Evangelion's socket all the way to way down the power cable until it was severed. The Beam Scythe caused the retro rockets' fuel to ignite, blowing a hole in the back of the Evangelion.
"Ha! Fuck with me, and you get fucked!" Duo said triumphantly. He waited for Unit–02 to shut down, but it was still moving.

"Son of a bitch!" Duo shouted. "It's still fucking moving! I cut the cable… Heero, I'm in trouble over here!"

"You're not the only one," Heero said. "Perhaps it has a battery."

"Or maybe it has a reactor, and it just didn't eject the cord!" Duo shouted. "How are we gonna beat these things?!"

"Keep fighting until they can't." Heero said.

Asuka glared angrily at Deathscythe. Her back was in a great deal of pain, and alarms were sounding off in her Entry Plug relentlessly. The worst of these was a timer that had appeared inside the Entry Plug, displaying "5:00:00" and a separate message saying "INTERNAL POWER SELECTED" with the clock beginning to count down to zero.

"Motherfucker!" Asuka shouted. "You're in for it now, you little bug!"

Unit–02 charged Deathscythe, only for the Gundam to dodge upwards. Unit–02 reached up and grabbed Deathscythe's foot and slammed the Gundam into the ground.

"Yeah, how's that!" Asuka shouted. "Eat shit, asshole!"

"Asuka, are you alright?" Misato asked.

"I'm fine, back hurts a lot, but I'll live." Asuka said.

"Asuka, you're Unit–02 power socket is…" Maya muttered.

"I'm aware, Maya, thanks." Asuka said. "I felt it explode after all… and my ears are still ringing from the explosion bouncing through the LCL."

"Asuka, are you sure you're alright?" Misato asked.

"Didn't I just say that I was?" Asuka said as Deathscythe got back up and charged again. "But I'm kinda busy, so can you shut the hell up!"

"Asuka, that's not how you're to address me!" Misato shouted.

"I could care less right now, I have a clock telling me how long I can fight!" Asuka said as Unit–02 punched the charging Deathscythe, buts its Beam Scythe had still made contact, and the impact caused the Beam Scythe to gouge out a chunk of armor and flesh.

"Oh, want some more of this ass kicking, do ya?!" Asuka shouted as her arm started to bleed through her plugsuit. "I hope you like eating the shit I dish out!"

Unit–02 reached out its right arm and caused Deathscythe to doge right into the left hook from Unit–02 other hand. Deathscythe recovered from the blow and swung its Beam Scythe at Unit–02, landing a blow to the shoulder, which caused Asuka to scream out in pain.

"Gottverdammt!" Asuka shouted. "Fucking glowing thingy really fucking hurts!" Asuka slammed the control yokes to move Unit–02's arms to block the next strike from the Beam Scythe.
"Damn, this thing is strong…” Asuka muttered through gritted teeth. "How is something this small so damn strong?!"

"Well, princess, maybe it's better constructed than our Evangelions." Mari quipped.

"Blow it out your ass, four eyes!" Asuka shouted. "I'm busy!"

"Fine… be that way princess." Mari said. "Just don't go dying on me!"

Asuka swung Unit-02's arms outwards, catching Deathscythe off guard, and Asuka took the opportunity to strike, sending Deathscythe into the ground.

"Fuck you!" Asuka shouted. "Now, stay the fuck down!"

Deathscythe was still moving on the ground, trying to get back up and continue the fight.

"Oh, you gotta be fucking kidding me." Asuka said. "How are you still moving?!"

"Asuka, retreat." Misato said. "You've only got three minutes left."

"I am not leaving this battlefield." Asuka said angrily. "That would leave Shinji without anyone to split these assholes up!"

"Asuka, this isn't a discussion, this is an order." Misato said angrily.

"Princess, she's not kidding." Mari said. "If you run out of power, you'll probably die."

"I'll be fine if everyone shuts the fuck up and lets me fight this asshole." Asuka grumbled. "You're wasting what little time I have, so let me finish this!"

"Asuka, I don't think even if you finish that one off that I'll be able destroy this one on my own." Shinji said. "But I might have an idea."

"Oh, good, at least someone is thinking of something!" Asuka said sarcastically. "Hey, Misato, maybe you should give Shinji your job, he seems to be better at it."

"How about you let Shinji lay out his plan before you start giving away my job, how's that?" Misato grumbled.

"Well, she's got a point, miso… do you have any ideas?" Mari asked.

"Shut up, Mari!" Misato shouted. "Shinji, tell us your plan!"

"I will if I can get this guy to back off!" Shinji shouted. "So give me a damn minute!"

"Well, don't take too long!" Asuka said. "I've only got so much time!"

"Thanks for reminding me, Asuka." Shinji said sarcastically.

Heero was having a difficult time in Wing Zero. While Duo was cheering at having finally cut Unit-02's cable, Heero was simply trying to shoot Unit-01 and disable it.

"Impressive, even with the extensive injuries, it still has a will to fight." Heero said. "I'm not even sure I can beat you. But I will not fail my mission."
Wing Zero charged again, beam sabre in one hand, and Buster Rifle and shield in the other. Unit–01 blocked the beam sabre with its Prog Knife, and Heero decided the use the Machine Cannons to try and break Unit–01's block. The rounds bounced off the armor, but the few that hit the half open wounds caused bits of blood and flesh to pour out from the wounds. Unit–01 slammed its free hand into Wing Zero, but Heero recovered from the blow quickly and charged again, with another blocked beam sabre attack, and another barrage of bullets hitting their target with another counter by Unit–01 and recovery by Wing Zero, a hopeless stalemate.

"No matter how I attack, it blocks." Heero said. "I need to find a weakness, but I still can't find any… and neither can ZERO… it's too… unpredictable."

ZERO lit up and indicated that the Buster Rifle would be the best weapon.

"I was avoiding using that on purpose." Heero said. "Are you sure?"

ZERO lit up again in response.

"Fine… if it will win me the battle." Heero said as he brought the Buster Rifle to bear. It fired a shot right at Unit–01 that couldn't be dodged, even though Unit–01 tried. The shot caused Unit–01’s A.T. Field to flash, but the shot still penetrated and melted a hole in the abdomen, just below the rib cage. The wound didn't bleed, as it was cauterized by the intensity of the blast.

Unit–01 was stunned for a moment and then countered by charging Wing Zero with both of its hands outstretched, mouth wide, catching the Gundam by the shoulders and slamming it into the ground. Heero bounced against his restraints as he saw the Evangelion stand back up and let out a mighty roar above the fallen Gundam.

"ROOOOOAAAAARRRRRRRRRRRRRRR!"

"Hmm… it's still standing, and it's still angry.." Heero said. "This enemy is much stronger than I thought. Perhaps its size makes it more difficult to beat." Heero looked around his cockpit. "ZERO… any damage?"

ZERO flashed a diagram of Wing Zero on the screen, showing orange and red on several sections of the body and engine pods.

"So, we can still fight." Heero said. "Good…" Heero tapped the comms. "Duo, are you still there?"

"Uhhh…" Duo groaned. "What the fuck hit me."

"The giant red enemy." Heero said sarcastically. "Can you still fight?"

"Probably… system checks out ok… I've fought in worse shape, but I think that fucking thing cracked a few of my ribs with that last attack." Duo muttered. "You got a plan?"

"Get back up and keep fighting." Heero said. "We don't have any choice."

"That's a stupid plan." Duo said. "We can't do anything to stop these things. We're out of options, man…"

"We're only out of options if you give up, Duo." Heero said sternly. "So stop whining and get back up."

"Man, you're such an ass sometimes, Heero." Duo said.
"And sometimes you need a swift kick in yours." Heero retorted.

Heero gripped his controls again and eased Wing Zero up to face Unit–01. "One more time Zero… we can do this." Heero said as he slammed his controls forward.

——

"Puppy, are you ok?" Mari shouted. "Puppy!"

"Baka, answer the four eyed annoyance!" Asuka shouted.

"I'm… ok… kinda." Shinji muttered.

"Shinji, you're not." Maya said. "Your vitals are dropping, you need to get out of there now. We need to get out of there."

"Maya, I'm not leaving Asuka alone." Shinji said defiantly. "I won't do it."

"Shinji, are you sure?" Misato asked. "I don't want you staying out there."

"Yeah… I'm sure." Shinji said as he was clutching his side as he felt blood pour out from the new wound. "Shit… I don't have much time." Shinji looked at the downed Wing Zero and sighed. "Ok, how long do you have, Asuka?" Shinji asked.

"Ninety–eight seconds." Asuka said as Shinji saw Wing Zero and Deathscythe get up.

"Ok, do you remember the Seventh Angel?" Shinji asked.

"You mean the Angel we danced to?" Asuka asked.

"Yeah, that one." Shinji said. "We need to stand back to back and try to get them to charge us… then at the last second we jump and they collide."

"That is utterly simple." Asuka said. "Almost too simple."

"Well, it's better than nothing." Shinji said. "And it's so simple, they probably won't expect it."

"Shinji, that's an awful plan." Misato said.

"Is it any different than catching an Angel dropping from orbit?" Mari asked. "Give him some credit, miso, he's at least trying. Nice job, puppy."

"Thanks Mari, but can we hurry this up?" Shinji asked. "Asuka doesn't have much time left, right?"

"Don't worry, I'm moving to you now." Asuka said. "Do we need to be back to back?"

"Yeah, and just be ready to jump." Shinji said weakly. "I think we can do it."

Unit–02 moved to where Unit–01 was standing. It stood back to back with the purple Evangelion and stood at the ready. Wing Zero and Deathscythe got up and stood facing the Evangelions. They raised their beam sabre and Beam Scythe and took a ready stance.

"Forty–two seconds." Asuka said. "This better work."

"I'm hoping it will." Shinji said as his vision started to blur. "Get ready… we might able to pull this off…"
"Yeah, I see it." Asuka said. "Bring it on fuckers... I'll use these last twenty seconds to kick their fucking asses."

Wing Zero and Deathscythe charged at full speed towards the Evangelions. Their weapons were at the ready, raised above their heads, ready to strike. As they got within a few meters of the Evangelions, Shinji cried out. "NOW!"

Both Evangelions shot into the air as the Gundams were within inches of them, and without any time to react, the Gundams collided at high speed, their weapons and shields flying off in all directions, and the Gundams themselves smashing into the ground. Unit–02 landed gracefully on its feet just its power ran out, and it was left standing, slightly hunched forward. Unit–01 however, landed hard on its feet, staggering forward and then falling face first onto the ground.

"SHINJI!" Asuka shouted.

"Shinji!" Misato shouted. "Shinji, respond!"

"I'm..." Shinji muttered. "Everything hurts..."

"His blood pressure is dropping dangerously low!" Maya shouted. "Colonel, you need to get him out of there, now!"

"What does that mean?!" Asuka shouted.

"If we don't get to him soon, he'll die, princess!" Mari shouted worriedly. "Miso, do that thing and get him out of there."

"She's not wrong, Colonel." Maya said. "He needs help now."

"Misato, do something!" Asuka said.

"I will if everyone stops shouting in my ear!" Misato said angrily. "Send emergency teams immediately, the priority is Unit–01! Recover the pilot, and then focus on Unit–02!" Misato ordered over the comms as Shinji lost consciousness.

Gendo was smirking as he looked at the main screen. He saw the that Shinji had been safely recovered from Unit–01, and also saw Asuka run over to him after freeing herself from Unit–02. She was arguing with the medics about going with him. Several others views showed each of the Gundams on the ground being inspected by ground crews, trying find the pilots inside. Fuyutsuki hung up the phone he was on and walked next to Gendo.

"It's nice to see how much she cares." Fuyutsuki said.

"Yes, they would do well not to cross her." Gendo said. "I'm assuming that Keel was the one on the phone."

"Quite," Fuyutsuki said curtly. "He's less than pleased. Seems to thin you caused all this. Or something of the sort. Your presence has been ordered by the Human Instrumentality Committee, immediately."

"I would have loved to cause this... but alas I didn't." Gendo said. "Personally, I don't care that it happened. It's quite wonderful that their Dead Sea Scrolls have nothing about this little event happening."
"Well, what effect do you think this will have?" Fuyutsuki asked.

"Their plans will be set back until this issue is resolved." Gendo said. "And this is a very large issue. With any luck, we can siphon resources from this incident to increase the internal defenses of this base."

"For the impending assault from SEELE?" Fuyutsuki asked. "You're still convinced that will actually happen?"

"Of course." Gendo said. "I have a gut feeling about it, to say the least."

"You're not one for gut feelings." Fuyutsuki said.

"Well, it's bound to happen at some point." Gendo replied. "So, how much damage was caused by these rampaging… things."

"Minimal, all the fighting was kept outside the city." Fuyutsuki replied. "However, all the VTOLs have been shot down again, with a loss of everyone on air crew."

"How tragic." Gendo said. "We seem to lose so many of those poor souls."

"It's the nature of the job." Fuyutsuki said. "Unfortunately, outside the Evangelions, things aren't as safe." Fuyutsuki sighed. "What should we do if we recover anyone from those machines."

"Keep them under heavy guard in the Medical Wing." Gendo said. "We'll interrogate anyone once they're able."

"Understood, sir." Fuyutsuki said. "Anything else?"

"Get me a preliminary report to present to the old men." Gendo said. "I'd like to rub this development, and my lack of involvement in their faces."

"How will you explain the cause?" Fuyutsuki asked.

"An act of God of course, Fuyutsuki." Gendo said as he smirked.

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October 4, 2016 – NERV HQ, Medical Wing

Asuka was sitting impatiently by Shinji's bedside. She had a few bandages on from the previous day's fight, but was in much better shape than Shinji. He was still out cold from his injuries, which had been more extensive due to the damage Unit–01 took. Asuka looked to her right as Mari drifted off to sleep on her shoulder again. Asuka shoved Mari's head off her shoulder and Mari woke with a start.

"What was that for, princess?!" Mari said angrily.

"I don't want you drooling on me again." Asuka said angrily.

"Sorry that I'm tired, princess." Mari said. "And you're kinda comfy."

"Cut the shit, will you!" Asuka shouted. "I'm more worried about Shinji than you being tired, got it?!"

"Yeah, yeah, I got it princess." Mari said. "You know he's had a lot worse than this… he'll be just fine."
"Everyone keeps saying that, but he's still out cold." Asuka said worriedly. "I just want him to wake up."

"Asuka, he was beaten and cut up pretty good, not to mention that chunk that energy rifle thing took out of Unit–01's abdomen... he's just lucky to be..." Mari said.

"Don't you dare finish that sentence..." Asuka said threateningly.

"Alive." Mari finished.

" Fucking hell, four eyes, why did you say that?!" Asuka shouted angrily.

"It's true, that's why." Mari said matter–of–factly. "Maya was staring at his vitals for the entire fight, she was close to tears every time he got injured."

"Yeah, cause his sync score is too high!" Asuka said. "I'm just glad that Unit–01 kinda healed him a bit. That's probably what saved him."

"Wait, what?" Mari asked.

"When the medics pulled him out, he wasn't really bleeding anymore, except a little bit from the big wound in his side... and Unit–01 wasn't bleeding that much either."

"So that's the S2 Engine then..." Mari said as she cocked her head to the side. "No wonder he was able to keep up with those four things... all that power."

"What are you babbling about, four eyes?" Asuka asked.

"The S2 Engine, princess." Mari replied. "It really is powerful... shame our EVAs don't have one."

"Yeah, it'd be a big help." Asuka said. "I could have gone out with Shinji at the start and wrecked those fucking things with him."

"Well, let's just hope nothing else happens for the time being then." Mari said.

"Why?" Asuka asked.

"Apparently that socket of yours that exploded, they don't have any spares." Mari said. "So your Unit–02 is out for a while without anyway to power it."

"Fucking wonderful..." Asuka muttered. "What will they do if more of those things attack?"

"Well, they'll either put one of us in Unit–01... or throw rocks at them." Mari joked.

"I doubt they'll let me pilot." Asuka said. "I'm the screw up, remember?"

"Asuka, you're not a screw up, you're just really, really unlucky." Mari said. "You always run to the front and get caught off guard. But you never give up... that's what important."

"Are you just saying that?" Asuka asked.

"No, I'm serious." Mari said. "You're the best choice for Unit–01 is Shinji's not available. Plus you're the only one that's battle ready, so by default you win."

"What are you talking about, four eyes?" Asuka asked.
"Well… I'm still not really feeling that great. My ribs are killing me." Mari said as she rubbed her head. "I'm really in no condition to fight. I got wrecked by the Sixteenth… worse than what you got anyway."

"It's always a fucking competition with you." Asuka muttered.

"Yeah, says the most competitive person to ever exist in the world." Mari retorted.

"Oh, just shut it, four eyes." Asuka said. "Although… if those things had pilots… I'm gonna make them pay for hurting my baka."

"How exactly will you make them pay, princess?" Mari asked.

"Well, I'm going to beat them bloody." Asuka said. "Then I'm going to force them to apologize to my baka."

"Princess… you do realize Shinji wouldn't want you to hurt them." Mari said. "What if they're human?"

"I doubt it." Asuka said. "They're probably aliens or some shit." Asuka muttered.

"Or they're human." Mari said. "Those robots look like giant samurai, not aliens."

"Don't argue with me, they're aliens!" Asuka said punched Mari in the arm. "And I'm going to kick their fucking alien asses."

"Princess, stop hitting me!" Mari said. "I'm delicate!"

"Oh, quit fucking whining, it's not like you're the one in a coma." Asuka said exasperatedly. "You're so fucking dramatic all the time."

"I'm not in a coma anymore, princess." Mari joked. "But two days ago, we were both in comas. Really good comas too… such wonderful dreams."

"It's only been two days?" Asuka asked. "Really?"

"Yup, Shinji picked us up from here, and then he went out to fight." Mari said. "Probably one of our more memorable releases from the hospital."

"If by memorable you mean painful." Asuka said. "Those little things were fast. Even blocking their lightsaber things hurt."

"Hang on, you were actually worried?" Mari asked.

"Why are you surprised?" Asuka asked back.

"I don't know, you always seem so… unaffected… well, unless it has to do with Shinji missing or being dead or something…" Mari said. "So, yeah, I'm surprised."

"I do get scared, four eyes." Asuka muttered. "I don't want to die or anything you know."

"Yeah, I didn't think you did." Mari said. "I guess you're human after all!" Mari said brightly as she wrapped her arms around Asuka.

"Get off me, you idiot!" Asuka shouted as she slapped Mari repeated in an attempt to get her to let go.
Mari winced and recoiled from her. "Princess that hurt!" Mari said indignantly. "I'm injured you know!"

"Yeah, that's why I aimed for your ribs." Asuka said.

"Why are you so mean?" Mari asked.

"I don't like being attacked like that." Asuka said.

"Well, I can't exactly hug Shinji or Rei can I?" Mari said angrily. "You're all I've got, princess, I need to cuddle with someone."

"Wait, you're only hugging me because everyone else is injured?" Asuka asked. "That makes me feel special…"

"You're not my first choice, princess, sorry. I know you hate being touched, but I'm… I just need a hug sometimes," Mari said. "I guess Shinji's usually my first choice cause he doesn't really care… and Rei… well…"

"You love her." Asuka said.

Mari blushed. "Yeah, I do."

"Well, don't expect to be cuddling Shinji anymore." Asuka said. "I'm not sharing the bed with him and you."

"Wait, you want to sleep with him?" Mari asked as she smiled devilishly.

"Just sleep, you depraved pervert, not what your dirty mind is imagining." Asuka shouted.

"Hey… I wasn't imagining it before you said that…” Mari joked as she grinned from ear to ear. "But I am now."

"You're a fucking pervert." Asuka muttered.

"What, it's not my fault I have an active imagination." Mari said. "I just happen to imagine all sort so things… even if some people think it's perverted." Mari smiled. "Maybe you're just a prude, princess."

"I'm not a prude, I just don't like talking about sex." Asuka said.

"Well, I guess it's not your fault no one told you how that all worked." Mari said. "At least I taught you something."

"Yeah, that and you watch too much porn." Asuka said.

"There is no such thing, princess." Mari said.

"Yeah… whatever." Asuka said as she looked over at Shinji sullenly.

Mari noticed Asuka's sullen look and wrapped her arm around her. "What's wrong, princess?" Mari asked. "I told you not to worry."

"It's not that, I know my baka will be fine." Asuka said. "Our relationship is off to a bad start… we start dating and yesterday, and today he's in a coma."

"That's not your fault, princess." Mari said. "And it's not a bad omen either, it's just bad timing. Maybe when he gets out of the hospital you could help get him off…"

Asuka turned on Mari, her face flush with embarrassment and anger. "What the fuck is your problem?! Stop talking about sex!"

"Well, you want a healthy relationship, sex is a good way to fix that." Mari said.

"Not for nothing, four eyes, but I'm not talking about this with you." Asuka said. "I'm not really ready for… that…"

"Asuka…” Mari said seriously. "It's ok to be nervous you know… that's completely natural."

"How is it natural?" Asuka asked. "You touch yourself all the time."

"Asuka, masturbation and sex are two completely different things." Mari said. "Maybe I need to review some of the basics again…"

"No, I'd rather you didn't." Asuka said. "I'll just… figure things out on my own."

Mari nuzzled Asuka's cheek, earning a look of distain from the redhead. "I'm sure you'll figure something out that'll make you both very happy."

"If he wakes up soon enough that is… let me try something." Asuka said as she turned back to Shinji. "Baka, I order you to wake up and make me feel better!"

Shinji continued to lay silently, with his chest rising and falling gently.

"It was worth a shot, princess." Mari said.

"I'm not done yet." Asuka muttered. "Baka, get up, I need to tell you something! Baka, don't you ignore me, you know I don't like being ignored! You're being a bad boyfriend, you're supposed to be at my beck and call!"

"Princess, tone it down a bit." Mari said. "You're being a bit mean."

"Well, if anything will wake him up, it's the threat of me being really angry at him." Asuka said. "It's normal enough isn't it?"

"Point taken, princess." Mari replied. "Well, keep at it, maybe tell him you're hungry that might wake his ass up."

—

Misato was out in the field with Maya and Kaji. The three of them were overseeing the recovery efforts of the Gundams. Each one was found to have a cockpit, and inside, a teenager no older than their own pilots, and all male.

"Well… that's a development." Kaji said as the four boys were pulled from their Gundams. "Look at them… one's dressed like a priest."

"Yeah, and that one there has the nicest sandy blonde hair… and that tall one has such nice hair." Misato said. "They look like they're Shinji's age… it's disturbing."

"Yeah, it's nice to know we're not the only ones to use children in our death robots." Kaji joked. "Seems to be some kind of constant."
"Well, what about that fourth boy." Maya said. "The one in the tank top… he looks so sad."

"No Maya, he looks like a soldier, and he's riddled with guilt." Kaji said. "I saw that look a lot after Second Impact. He's had a hard life, and it's not gotten any easier for him."

"Ok, how the hell can you tell that if he's unconscious?" Misato asked.

"I've seen that look quite a lot in the mirror…" Kaji muttered.

"Kaji…" Misato muttered.

"Don't worry about it." Kaji said. "It was a long time ago."

"Are you sure?" Misato asked.

"Yeah, I'm sure." Kaji said.

"So, what are we going to do with them?" Maya asked. "Where will they go?"

"Well, I've been tasked by the Commander to interrogate them when they have recovered enough to be questioned." Kaji said.

"You're going to interrogate them?" Maya asked. "They're only children!"

"Yeah, with enough fire power to potentially destroy Tokyo–3, or all of Japan." Kaji said. "I don't really have a choice." Kaji saw Maya's disapproving look. "I'm not going to hurt them, Ibuki, don't worry. I just need to find out where they're from. With weapons like those, they should be fighting the Angels."

"But the wormhole…" Maya said.

"Yeah, Kaji, they might not even be from Earth." Misato said. "They could be aliens."

"Misato… they look too human to be aliens." Kaji said.

"Maybe they're from an alternate dimension." Maya suggested.

"Well, when they're feeling better, we'll find out." Kaji said.

"Just be sure not to tell Asuka." Misato said. "Somehow I think the prospect of there being pilots in those machines will mean she'll want revenge…"

"No kidding." Kaji said. "She'll kill them if she finds out they're alive. I'll make sure security keeps them under heavy guard, for their own protection more so than ours."

"What do you mean?" Maya asked.

"Well… didn't you notice that they didn't arm themselves until after the VTOLs launched?" Kaji asked. "That large white one with the massive rifle charged when they detected them."

"Yeah, so what are you implying?" Misato asked.

"They were defending themselves." Kaji said. "I don't think they meant to hurt anyone."

"How can you say that?" Misato asked. "They put Shinji in a coma!"

"Misato, relax." Kaji said. "We did attack first before figuring out their intentions. The AIS was used
to fend them off."

"He's right, ma'am." Maya said. "We did fire the first shot… we were the aggressors."

"Yeah, but I was… defending us." Misato said defiantly.

"Against unknown and potentially friendly targets." Kaji said. "Don't worry, I'll clear it all up when they're conscious."

"What about the giant robots?" Misato asked as she saw Wing Zero and Deathscythe loaded onto transport trucks. Heavyarms and Sandrock had already been recovered and were awaiting the convoy and all personnel to move back to NERV together.

"I think Dr. Akagi gets to look at those." Maya said coldly. "At least she'll be out of the way and not bother the rest of us."

"She's gonna have a fucking field day with all that tech." Kaji said. "I mean, however these things are powered, it's got quite an output… enough to power them without any loss of endurance. Maybe it can be adapted to the EVAs…"

"That would be nice, considering we only have Unit–01 able to fight." Maya said.

"It's actually ready to fight?" Misato asked.

"Well, its physical wounds are healed, but the armor is being replaced as we speak." Maya replied. "Should be ready in a few days."

"So… we're down to two pilots and one Evangelion…" Misato said. "We're screwed if there's another attack."

"Actually, we only have one pilot." Maya said. "Mari isn't medically cleared to pilot anything, Asuka's it." Maya sighed. "At least until either Shinji or Mari is in the proper condition to fight."

"So, we're not in good shape." Kaji said. "Maybe we can use those things in the meantime to protect ourselves." Kaji pointed to the Gundams. "They're at least as powerful as an Evangelion… we could use them."

"But will the pilots cooperate?" Misato asked.

"They might." Kaji said. "Like I said, I'll find out when I talk to them, individually."

"So…" Misato said. "What happens to them if you can't get them to talk?"

"Well… we have our own pilots, Misato." Kaji said. "Perhaps they can talk to them in a way I can't."

"Who would you send in there?" Maya asked. "Asuka and Mari are more likely to savagely beat them than talk to them… that means…"

"No." Misato said angrily. "You wouldn't put him through that."

"Actually, Shinji is the best candidate to talk to them peaceably." Kaji said. "He has this knack… this uncanny ability… people trust him and open up to him, it's astonishing. But I'll only use him if he agrees, and if I can't get anything out of the pilots. He's more of a last resort really."

"That makes sense." Maya said sensibly.
"You can't…" Misato pleaded.

"Misato, would you rather me use force against them?" Kaji asked. "They're kids."

"Well… no…" Misato muttered.

"Glad you understand, Misato." Kaji said.

"Fine, but if he says no, don't coerce him." Misato said gruffly.

"Misato, Kaji's not like that!" Maya said. "And Shinji's not an idiot!"

"She has a point, Misato." Kaji replied. "Shinji will do it because he's curious, and because he'll want to ask them why they attacked."

"So you're using his curiosity against him." Misato said.

"No, I'm just saying Shinji will want answers." Kaji said. "And if I don't get them, Shinji will, I guarantee it."

Ritsuko was looking over the Gundams. She still had no idea what they were, but she was fascinated by everything she saw. She was most fascinated by Wing Zero, whose cockpit was unlike any of the other three. It seemed to be wired similarly to the Evangelions, with neural feedback and everything.

"Wonderful, absolutely wonderful!" Ritsuko muttered to herself. "This tech is like nothing I've ever seen, it's… otherworldly!" Ritsuko looked at the cockpit again. "But I have no idea how to turn it on…"

Ritsuko popped out of Wing Zero's cockpit and looked around. "Where the hell is everyone?" Ritsuko said loudly. "Well, I guess I can investigate these things myself… or interrogate the children they found inside them. They must know how these things work." Ritsuko shook her head. "No… if they're anything like the pilots I'm stuck with, they don't know a fucking thing about their machines."

"They know enough, Ritsuko." Kaji said.

"What the hell are you doing here?" Ritsuko asked.

"Commander's orders." Kaji said nonchalantly. "He wants to know if you have any theories about the wormholes yet."

"No idea, haven't had time to go over the data." Ritsuko said.

"Well, get to it." Kaji said. "The Commander doesn't like waiting."

"Well, what about my staff to help me with these things?" Ritsuko asked.

"As of right now you're the only person assigned to this." Kaji said. "It's all on you, per the Commander's orders."

"He actually told you this?" Ritsuko asked.

"Well, the Sub–Commander did, in his usual gruff tone." Kaji said. "We could always call him you know…"
"No, I won't disturb him." Ritsuko said. "He would find it wasteful and annoying."

"Yes, yes he would." Kaji said. "Well, have fun with your new toys, and have those reports ready sooner rather than later."

"Whatever, Chief Inspector." Ritsuko said sarcastically. "Can you leave me in peace now?"

"Sure… but with an attitude like that, it's a wonder you weren't thrown out on your ass sooner." Kaji said. "You should have been more careful with Rei… I think that's what finally did you in."

"I don't care what you think." Ritsuko said.

"Hmmm…" Kaji said. "And that's your problem, you don't care about other people. Maybe if you did, people would find something redeemable about you."

"Well, thankfully, I don't care about anyone else's opinions." Ritsuko said coldly.

"Then you're right where you belong," Kaji said. "Surrounded by unfeeling metal as cold and heartless as your personality." Kaji turned away from and walked to the door, but stopped before he left. "Just remember what I told you, Ritsuko. If you hurt any of those kids ever again, I'll kill you… it's not a threat… it's not a bluff… it's a promise."

To Be Continued

A/N: I do not own Evangelion or any of the characters, GAINAX and the other distributors of NGE related material do. I am simply using them as a backdrop for my fanfic. I also do not own Gundam Wing, Sunrise does, as do their licensed distributors.

Sync Score Rankings!
Shinji – 92.5% (No Change)
Rei – 75.0% (No Change)
Mari – 36.4% (No Change)
Asuka – 32.7% (No Change)

The chapter name comes from both Duo's nickname for himself and Toji's nickname for Asuka. Thought it would be a fun title to use.

The chapter itself catches up where the first one leaves off. The battle rages on, and Shinji takes another beating, being put into yet another coma. Asuka is course out for blood because of this, and the pilots are safely confined in the Medical Wing, under heavy guard, as they're all injured. As for the Gundams themselves, Ritsuko is going to have a field day going thought their technology, which is leaps and bounds ahead of NERV's, so expect some interesting stuff to come of this.

As for the length… it's been awhile since I've written anything this short. Personally, it felt weird, but you can only drag out a conversation so long, especially considering Asuka's time limit with her cable being cut.

As I said before, and will always say at the end of chapter, please leave comments, as I would like to try to improve the story going forward any way I can. And, hell, constructive criticism is a good thing.
Chapter 3 – Just Communication
October 6, 2016 – NERV HQ

Kaji was walking calmly down the corridor. He was heading to check on Misato before going down to interrogate the four Gundam pilots. He walked into her office to see her sitting behind another ridiculous pile of paperwork.

"Ah, I see the bureaucrats have sent their usual complaints and bills." Kaji joked.

"Bite me." Misato grumbled. "They've sent more than usual… apparently our battle damaged too much green space." Misato said sarcastically. "One of these actually says we should contain the battles within Tokyo–3 itself, like we can control where battles happen."

"Wait, we blew up too much grass?" Kaji asked. "That's what this paperwork is for?"

"Yeah, bills for ground resurfacing, topsoil replacement, grass seed and grass sod for some reason, care and maintenance costs for the fields, oh, and the best one is a bill for rebuilding the hill Asuka crushed." Misato said hysterically.

"They want it rebuilt?" Kaji asked.

Misato rolled her eyes. "Yeah, they want reparations for everything, apparently things are expected to stay pristine after a fight… the fuck is this?" Misato exclaimed. "Oh… I got an even better one right here." Misato held up what looked like a ream and a half of paper. "This one is for dirtying the air with dirt and noise pollution from the battle."

Kaji snorted loudly. "That's the funniest thing I've ever heard."

"Well, I wish I could shove this invoices and complaints up their asses, and then light the complaint on fire…" Misato muttered angrily.

"That's oddly specific…" Kaji said.

"I need to think of something to calm me down, and that does it." Misato replied.

"Well, as long as you don't actually go out and do that, I think you'll be fine." Kaji said nervously.

"I'm not Ritsuko." Misato said. "I'm not gonna go nuts and start hurting people for fun."

"Yeah… right…" Kaji said. "You're far more stable than her even when you're wasted."

"Awww… you always know exactly what to say." Misato said.

"Cause I'm just that good." Kaji said.

"So, has the shelter order been rescinded yet?" Misato asked. "I've been down here since yesterday, I don't know."
"Yeah, Commander lifted it an hour or so ago." Kaji said. "The city's back on the surface where it belongs."

"Good… these poor people must be tired of running to shelters. The past few weeks have been kinda nuts."

"You're telling me…" Kaji said. "Second Impact was less chaotic…"

"Well… that says a lot." Misato said in shock. "Especially coming from you."

"It's true though." Kaji said. "But enough about that."

"Yeah, I'd actually like to know what you're doing down here, anyway?" Misato asked. "I'm guessing you're not here to actually help me with this shit…"

"No, sorry… but I think Maya or Hyuga would help if you ask." Kaji said.

"So, what are you down here for?" Misato asked. "I'm not in the mood for anything… plus my desk is covered in this shit, and the floor's a little gross…"

"I'm not here for that… although it sounds like a great idea…" Kaji said. "But I'm down here to go and interrogate those kids."

"Oh, they're better already?" Misato asked.

"Yeah, apparently they've healed quite quickly." Kaji said. "So, I can't really push it off seeing as they're doing so well…"

"Can you promise me something?" Misato asked.

"What is it, Misato?" Kaji asked. "I already told you, I love eating you…"

Misato blushed. "Not that…" Misato shook her head. "Stop trying to distract, you moron. Promise me you won't make Shinji talk to those boys."

"I can't promise that, Misato." Kaji said. "I told you the other day, he's probably the only one that can get through to them."

"Fine…" Misato said. "Be that way."

Kaji walked over to Misato. "I don't mean it like that, Misato." Kaji said soothingly. "I just want to get the information I need the least violent way possible. It's either me or that Yamada, and he's an evil version of me… no fucking soul whatsoever. He would dismember them to get information."

"He would actually do that?" Misato asked as she shuddered violently at the thought.

"Yeah, that would be the easy way out."

"Why does the Commander even hire someone like that?" Misato asked.

"To get distasteful things done." Kaji said as he sighed deeply. "Do you remember Jet Alone?"

"Yeah, nearly blew up Atsugi with its overloading reactor…" Misato said. "I nearly died trying to stop it."

"Well, it wasn't an accident, it was intentional." Kaji said. "Yamada brought them data on the
Evangelions, and it was laced with a program he designed. It was meant to actually destroy Atsugi… thankfully, the Commander modified it to be on the very edge of overloading… otherwise all those people would have died to prove the Jet Alone was unsafe… he has no soul.

"What is he, a demon?" Misato asked. "Who would do that?"

"A very sick and twisted person." Kaji replied.

"But why interfere with the project?" Misato asked. "I mean, sure the Jet Alone guy was kind of an insufferable asshole… but why sabotage it?"

"To get us more funding and prove that only the Evangelions are Angel destroying machines." Kaji said. "It was all about money, and the threat to NERV's supremacy."

"So they were in the way." Misato said.

"Exactly, and to be fair, I saw the data on Jet Alone… it would never have stood up to an Angel the way it was designed." Kaji explained. "It would have been ripped apart by any of the Angels we've encountered, and with a conventional nuclear reactor… it was a nuclear accident just waiting to happen, on the scale of Chernobyl. I just wish we found another way to discredit them…"

"You mean a way that didn't involve almost blowing up an entire city?" Misato asked.

"Well, I did suggest just wiping the OS and frying all the electronics in it." Kaji said. "Oddly enough, exactly what you tried to do as well."

"What else were they afraid of from that thing?" Misato asked. "I don't see how having a meat shield for the EVAs would be a bad thing."

"Well… there was always the possibility it could be deployed against NERV." Kaji said. "It seemed more suited for hand to hand combat with an Evangelion, even though I think the Evangelions would still win."

"Why would the U.N. attack us?" Misato asked.

"Ah… well that's for another time, Misato." Kaji said. "Right now, I have some work to do that I'd rather avoid."

"You never tell me the important stuff." Misato said gruffly. "Why don't you tell me more stuff like this?"

"It's to keep you safe, Misato." Kaji said. "I don't know what I'd do if I lost you."

Mari was sitting next to a very vigil Asuka. Asuka hadn't slept since she had awoken from her coma, and refused to sleep until Shinji was awake.

"Princess, you need to sleep." Mari said. "You're worrying me."

"I'll be fine." Asuka said stubbornly. "I want to be awake when he wakes up."

"That's stupid princess." Mari said. "You're gonna get sick or something before that… and then Shinji's gonna worry about you! All you need is a few hours. If he even twitches, I promise I'll wake you up."

"I SAID I WAS FINE!" Asuka shouted. "I don't need your help, just go away, Mari!"
"Asuka… I'm not leaving you here alone." Mari said. "You can't sit here all on your own."

"Yes you are." Asuka said. "Just go away, I can look after Shinji on my own… I'm more than capable of keeping him safe."

"I never questioned that princess…" Mari said. "I'm just saying that it's ok to ask for help."

"I don't care what you think." Asuka said angrily. "Just go away."

"Fine, princess." Mari said gruffly. "But if you decide you actually want help, or a nap, just call my phone."

"Whatever…" Asuka muttered as Mari got up and left the room.

Mari wandered out into the hallway and decided to go see Rei. When she got to the isolation ward, the nurses looked nervously at her and buzzed her in. Mari walked inside to see Rei still floating silently in a cylinder full of LCL. Her injuries still looked pretty severe, but otherwise she looked quite serene.

"Hey blueberry… how are you feeling?" Mari asked. "You look more buoyant today… do you have gas or something?" Mari smiled to herself. "You know, when you finally decide to wake up, I have to tell you all the jokes I've made standing here, just to see if I can get you to laugh or something. I don't think I've ever seen you laugh, so I'm gonna make it my mission to make you laugh." Mari sighed. "I know you wouldn't think it's weird that I'm doing this… talking to you while you're unconscious, but I wish I could actually talk to you, but they say if you're not in the LCL, you'll probably die… and I don't want that… so I have to wait patiently for you to get transferred to a bed so I can hold your hand… and you know how patient I am…" Mari pounded her hand on the glass separating her and Rei's room. "I hate seeing you like this… it hurts to watch you and not be able to do anything to make you feel better. Thankfuly that technology they're using was created by someone super fucking smart, Asuka's mom… she was a nice lady… oh… forget I said that, blueberry, I was just kidding… I'm not actually older than I really am or anything." Mari chuckled nervously. "I hate lying about this… I just want to tell the truth, but I might lose everyone I care about if I do… Shinji hates being lied to, and I don't think Asuka will take it well, and I'm not sure how you'd react… I'd imagine you wouldn't care… but I don't want to risk it." Mari sighed again. "Anyway… just get better soon, blueberry… I miss you, and with Shinji in another coma, Asuka's no fun to be around…" Mari placed her hand gently on the glass and looked at Rei sullenly. "Just remember how much I love you, blueberry… and I'll come back and see you later, ok?" Mari smiled. "Bye, blueberry…"

Mari walked back into the hallway and scratched her head. "Maybe I should go see them too… I haven't talked to them in a while."

Mari now moved with purpose towards the Evangelion Cages to go see two people she's been ignoring, her two old friends Yui and Kyoko. As she got to the Cages she saw that they were empty with no working on either of the EVAs. Mari noticed that everyone was surrounding her Unit–XP as its limbs were being rebuilt following the battle with Armisael. When she looked over to the other two Evangelions, she saw that extra scaffolding had been erected around Unit–02, and that there was no LCL around it. However, Unit–01 was submerged with only its neck and head exposed from the LCL in its dock. Mari walked over to Unit–02 and stood right in front of its head.

"Heya, Kyoko… how are you?" Mari asked. "Doing well I hope? You know, answer like always, once for yes, twice for no."

Unit–02's four eyes lit up brightly and blinked once in response.
"Glad to hear it." Mari said brightly. "So, do you know about the princess and the puppy?"

Unit–02's blinked its eyes once again.

"It's exciting isn't it?" Mari asked.

Unit–02's blinked its eyes once again.

"I know, right?" Mari said excitedly. "Well, they're not off to the best start… Shinji's in another coma… but they both admitted they loved each other, it was kinda adorable…" Mari paused. "Am I bothering you?"

Unit–02's eyes blinked twice.

"Ok, I'm glad… you're daughter's not exactly so accommodating… who does she get that from, her father?" Mari said.

Unit–02's eyes lit up brightly, and turned from green to orange, and the metal restraining the jaw could be heard creaking.

"Sorry… I know that's a sore subject…" Mari said sullenly. "Are you mad?"

Unit–02's eyes blinked twice.

"Ok… you know, she reminds me a lot of you…" Mari said. "Smart and beautiful to start with, and of course she's nice… at least when she wants to be. I guess that's where she's different… she more like how I was back then with my temper… hating things even though I didn't have any reason to… I should try and help her… right?"

Unit–02's eyes blinked once more.

"Ok, I'll try to help her the best I can." Mari said. "But she got her stubbornness from you at the very least. I guess I should go talk to Yui… I have to tell her something important."

Unit–02's eyes blinked one last time, the light in its eyes have faded, and it went dormant once more. Mari walked a short distance to Unit–01, she was once again face to face with the giant purple head.

"Hi Yui…" Mari said nervously. "How… how are you… are you, uh… well?"

Unit–01's eyes lit up and blinked once.

"Oh, good…" Mari said. "Look, I have to tell you something… are you ready?"

Unit–01 blinked once.

"Well… I fell in love with someone else… Rei actually… she's a lot like you actually… she even looks like you. I guess I haven't really thought too much about it, but she's my best chance at finding happiness…" Mari said nervously. "I know she has to be cloned from you, and that you're technically gone, and I can't wait for you forever… I don't want to be alone anymore… I just want to happy… does that make sense?"

Unit–01 blinked once.

"Ok…" Mari said. "I'll always love you, Yui… just know that…" Mari cleared her throat. "Sorry… I'm being stupid."
"So, uh, Shinji and Asuka… how you feel about that? You must be thrilled."

"So… did you actually help him in the last few fights?" Mari asked. "You know, the Fifteenth, and Sixteenth Angels, and those robots?"

"What do you mean no?" Mari asked. "Are you telling me that was all Shinji?"

"Son of a bitch!" Mari shouted. "Does he even know he can do that?"

"So, the next time he gets pissed, he could go on a killing spree?" Mari asked

"Would you try and stop him?" Mari asked.

"So, you'd let him rampage?"

"What do you mean, no?" Mari asked. "You have to be able to do something!"

"So, you have no idea how to calm him down…" Mari said. "We all better hope Asuka doesn't get hurt, otherwise it could get ugly…"

"Well, at least you agree with that…" Mari muttered. "I just wish we could actually talk… but I need to ask you something else… should I tell Shinji and Asuka about who I really am?"

"Alright… I'll keep my mouth shut then." Mari said. "I just don't like lying to them, especially considering everything we've been through, they've been nothing but honest to me, and I feel awful not telling them I know you two… maybe they could get some closure if they knew… but I guess it's for the best they don't find out." Mari smiled. "Well, I think the princess should be less angry now, I'm gonna head back… bye Yui…"

Mari walked back from the Evangelion Cages silently. She walked past several rooms with guards in front of them, wondering what they were for, but didn't really care about it. As she found Shinji's room again, she went silently inside, all set to apologize to Asuka, only to find the poor girl asleep, hunched over onto Shinji's bed, face buried next to his leg, holding his hand, and drooling slightly.
"See, princess… I told you that you needed to get some sleep." Mari said as she grabbed a blanket and put it over Asuka. "I hate that you're so stubborn… I hope Shinji can teach you to ask for help instead of being so insufferable all the time."

Mari plopped down in the chair next to Asuka and pulled a blanket over herself. "Maybe when you wake up, you won't be so damn cranky…" Mari mumbled as she smirked. "Who am I kidding, you're always cranky…"

—

Kaji had finally made it down to the Medical Wong and saw Mari disappear into Shinji's room. He picked the first guarded room and went inside. Inside the room was a boy with his hair swept over half his face, Trowa Barton.

"Hello there, I'm here to ask you some questions." Kaji said.

Trowa stared blankly at Kaji.

"Look, I just need a little information, and I'll get out of your hair." Kaji said. "My name's Kaji, what's yours?"

"I have no name." Trowa said.

"How can you have no name?" Kaji asked.

"That is just how I came to be." Trowa said. "I am no name."

"Fine, no name, what can you tell me about breaking the no fly zone over Tokyo–3?" Kaji asked. "That's why you're here, you know."

"I don't intend on tell you anything else." Trowa said matter–of–factly. "You may as well cut the small talk and just kill me."

"Well, I don't intend on seeing a kid get killed." Kaji said.

"I am an enemy combatant, it is your duty to kill me or imprison me." Trowa said.

"Fine, then you'll be confined here until you decide to talk." Kaji said as he left the room. As he stepped outside he sighed deeply. "Boy, that kid was tough… I hope they all aren't like that…"

—

Kaji took a quick break and then moved for a different room, hopefully with someone less angry on the other side. As he went in, he saw a young boy dressed as a priest, with a long, braided ponytail, Duo Maxwell, sitting up in bed and glaring at him.

"Who the fuck are you?" Duo asked. "You don't look like no doctor to me…"

"That's because I'm not." Kaji replied. "I'm here to ask you…"

"Are you gonna try and make talk?" Duo asked. "Good luck pal, the only thing you'll get out of me is a swift kick to your ass!"

"Why are you shouting?" Kaji asked.

"I don't like being shot and taken prisoner you dumb fuck!" Duo shouted.
"Well, I don't think anyone does, really." Kaji said.

"Yeah, well I didn't ask your opinion!" Duo shouted.

Kaji sighed. "Look, Father Psycho, I'm only here to ask you where you're from." Kaji asked. "That way we can try and get you back home."

"Who the fuck are you calling a psycho?" Duo asked angrily. "Why the hell did you attack us? We didn't shoot first!"

"That may have been an overreaction on our part, but the city gets attacked a lot." Kaji said. "Anyway, I just want to clear a few things up…"

"Why the hell would I talk to the people who tried to kill me?" Duo shouted "You're out of your fucking mind if you think I'm gonna tell you anything. So take your questions, shove them up your ass, and leave me the fuck alone!"

"Alright then." Kaji said as he left the room. He closed the door and sighed, leaning against it. "Man, he reminds me of an even more temperamental Asuka… and I didn't think that was possible." Kaji rubbed his head as he heard something impact the door behind him. "Well, maybe the next one will be less… abrasive."

Kaji walked bravely into the next room. Inside he saw a repentant looking young man with sandy blonde hair, Quatre Raberba Winner. Quatre looked up at him and sorrowfully from his hospital bed and began rambling quickly before Kaji should say anything.

"Please forgive us for this misunderstanding, I am very sorry we caused you think we were attacking, we were simply lost, and we couldn't communicate with you, and then you started shooting, we had no choice, we had to defend ourselves." Quatre rattled off quickly.

"Hey, hey, hey!" Kaji said. "Could you slow down? I can barely understand you."

"Sorry…” Quatre said. "I'm just so sorry that we had a battle outside your city. We really didn't mean to, but when you started shooting, we had to fight back, that's what we do, we didn't want to hurt anyone, we just wanted you to stop. You didn't respond to our communications, so there wasn't any other option."

"We couldn't communicate with you either." Kaji said. "But you didn't respond to our hails either, we had no other choice but to attack, even if that wasn't the best choice."

"What channel were you using?" Quatre asked.

"All the radio frequencies we have…" Kaji said.

"Were you using the upper end of the extremely high frequency bandwidth?" Quatre asked. "You know, somewhere in the far infrared part of the electromagnetic spectrum?"

"No, we call that the terahertz gap," Kaji said. "We have no technology to use those frequencies. We would never had been able to communicate."

"Well… I just hope that we didn't injure anyone," Quatre said. "Other than your living robots that is… the purple one and… and the red one."

"Well, there was someone inside of it, piloting it as you pilot your machines." Kaji said.
"Oh, please tell me that person is alright." Quatre said. "We really didn't want to hurt anyone."

"Unfortunately, one of the pilots is in a coma..." Kaji said.

"Oh, no..." Quatre muttered. "We ended up hurting someone... and all we wanted to do was find out what happened..."

"Hey, things like this happen." Kaji said. "And with that battle it was unavoidable."

"Well they shouldn't." Quatre said. "If we didn't fight, no one would have gotten hurt. Please, forgive us for injuring your pilot. I'm very sorry to have hurt someone try trying to defend the people they care about."

"How do you know that?" Kaji asked.

"I had a feeling..." Quatre said. "I can just tell things like that."

"Well, it would be a big help if you could answer a few of my questions." Kaji said.

"I'm sorry... I can't answer any of your questions." Quatre said. "I'm simply unable to."

"Why can't you answer any?" Kaji asked.

"If I answered anything you asked me I doubt you would believe me." Quatre said. "And anything I tell you would be a violation of my conscience."

"I'll give you the benefit of the doubt." Kaji said.

"I'm sorry, I just can't risk it." Quatre said. "Please, tell your pilots I am sorry for attacking them... they were only under orders."

"Excuse me then." Kaji said as he left the room.

Kaji stood outside and looked at the door. "Jesus, he reminds me of Shinji with all that apologizing and rambling. But he did tell me one thing... they use radio frequencies we can't... so where are they from?" Kaji said. "At least this one was polite... so I guess they aren't so bad after all... but I still need more answers from them. Maybe this last kid will be of more help in finding some answers."

Asuka woke up to find half her face covered in drool and a blanket on her that she didn't remember putting there. She lifted her head and saw that Shinji was still unconscious, and that Mari had come back.

Asuka wiped her face with her sleeve and glared at Mari. "Figures she'd help me when I told her I didn't need it... idiot." Asuka sighed. "I guess she was only being nice... I should probably apologize for shouting at her too... I really was tired."

Asuka got up and stretched. "Well, that was a nice nap... I really did need it." Asuka turned to Shinji. "And it was nice of you to stay in your coma until I woke up, baka, but it would be really nice if you woke the hell up now." Asuka grimaced at the boy. "Well, baka, I guess you're not as invincible as I thought. Now, if I leave, have the decency to not wake up without me in the room, but the second I get back in here, you better be awake."

Asuka walked out of the room as Mari emitted a large snore. "Well, if she keeps that up, he'll definitely wake up soon."
Asuka closed the door quietly behind her and walked into the hallway. She saw Kaji down the hall coming out of a room with several guards outside the door.

"What the hell is he doing coming out of there…" Asuka muttered. "And the room's guarded… what the fuck…" Asuka breathed angrily. "KAJI! WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU DOING?!

Kaji turned and looked at her, and looked worried.

"WHOSE'S IN THERE?!" Asuka shouted as she ran towards him. "IS IT THE PILOTS OF THOSE FUCKING MACHINES?! I SWEAR TO GOD IF YOU'RE PROTECTING THEM, I'M GONNA BEAT YOUR ASS!"

"Asuka, calm down!" Kaji said as she flew at him, pounding his chest with her fists. "Stop hitting me, Asuka, and let me explain."

"NO, THEY HURT SHINJI! I DON'T CARE ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE BUT PUTTING THEM EACH INTO THEIR OWN FUCKING PERMANENT COMAS!" Asuka screamed. "LET ME INTO THAT ROOM RIGHT FUCKING NOW!"

"Asuka, you need to calm down!" Kaji shouted. "You're not hurting anyone! We fired first, we started the fight, it's our fault Shinji got hurt!"

"WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!" Asuka shouted. "THEY ATTACKED US!"

"No, we attacked them! We shot first!" Kaji said. "So, will you calm the fuck down?"

"NO, NOT UNTIL I GET SOME REVENGE ON THOSE FUCKS!" Asuka shouted as she kept punching Kaji.

"Asuka, get off!" Kaji said.

Before Kaji could do anything, Asuka was tackled to the ground by Mari, and she pinned Asuka to the ground as Asuka struggled to get up.

"GET OFF OF ME FOUR EYES!" Asuka shouted. "I HAVE PEOPLE TO BEAT UP!"

"Asuka, calm the fuck down!" Mari shouted. "Do you think Shinji would want you to hurt them?! Well, answer me, do you?!"

Asuka stared at Mari for a moment. "I… I don't know…"

"The answer is no, Asuka." Mari said. "Shinji's not like that… he doesn't like people getting hurt. You should know that."

"I…" Asuka muttered.

"If I let go, are you going to calm down?" Mari asked.

"Yeah…" Asuka muttered.

"Are you done yelling?" Mari asked.

"Yeah…" Asuka muttered.

"Fine, get up." Mari said as she let go and rounded on Kaji. "And you… scruffy… why are you
visiting the enemy and not visiting Shinji, are you retarded or something?"

"No… I had to try and get some answers from these kids." Kaji said.

"Wait… kids?" Mari asked.

"You've got to be kidding." Asuka said.

"Nope, they're all about your ages." Kaji said. "So, don't be so annoyed, Mari, I didn't have much choice. We are trying to figure why they appeared here… and I don't think they're from Earth anyway."

"Where do you think they're from?" Mari asked. "Space?"

"No idea." Kaji said. "Out of the three I interviewed, I haven't gotten anything useful."

"Weren't there four?" Asuka asked.

"There are, but someone started beating me up before I got to interview the last one." Kaji said. "So if you'll excuse me, I have someone else to interview."

"What about Shinji?" Asuka asked.

"Why would I visit him when he has the two people who care about him the most taking care of him?" Kaji asked. "I care about him, and so does Misato… but not anywhere near as much as either of you."

"Kaji…" Asuka muttered. "I'm sorry…"

"It's ok Asuka." Kaji said. "Why don't you two go back to Shinji's room and keep an eye on him? I'll come see you later." Kaji said as he walked away.

"Sure." Mari said. "Come on, princess. We've left Shinji alone for too long."

"Yeah…" Asuka said. "And thanks for the blanket… it helped."

"You're welcome princess." Mari said. "So… are you sure you're alright?"

"Sort of." Asuka said. "I'm not exactly happy they get to live… but I don't want to disappoint Shinji."

"Yeah, I want to beat them up too, princess." Mari said. "But why don't we leave that decision up to him, huh?"

"I guess…" Asuka said as they walked back into the room to see Shinji still asleep. "It would have been nice to see him be awake when we got back."

"Well, I'm sure he'll wake up soon." Mari said. "Maybe you should kiss him like sleeping beauty… that might do it."

"I'm not kissing him without permission." Asuka said. "He's never done that to me. Even if it is a good idea…"

"Fair enough…" Mari said. "But you do want to kiss him, don't you?"

"I do…" Asuka said as she blushed. "But I'll wait until he wakes up."
Kaji was still rubbing his chest when he arrived at the last room. "Did she have to hit me so hard?" Kaji mumbled. "I get she's angry, but the girl doesn't know her own strength… thankfully Mari stopped her."

Kaji opened the door and walked calmly into the last room. He looked up and saw a teenaged boy with messy dark brown hair and blue eyes staring back at him, Heero Yuy.

"Hello, my name is Kaji, I'm here to…” Kaji started.

"How badly are the pilots we fought injured?" Heero asked.

"What?" Kaji asked.

"The pilots, how injured are they?" Heero repeated. "I heard the girl in the hallway, she was quite loud. She also seemed very angry."

"Well, if you tell me your name, I'll tell you what you want to know." Kaji said.

"I am Heero Yuy." Heero said. "Now tell me, why does that girl want us dead?"

"She was one of the pilots." Kaji said.

"Of which Mobile Suit?" Heero asked.

"What now?" Kaji asked. "A mobile what?"

"Mobile Suit." Heero repeated. "Was she in the purple one or the red one?"

"Oh… the Evangelions." Kaji mumbled. "She was in the red one." Kaji replied.

"Who was in the purple one?" Heero asked. "Did the other pilot die? She said she wanted revenge…"

"First, answer me this." Kaji said. "How did you get here?"

Heero sighed. "We were investigating a gravity well and then we appeared here." Heero said. "It was sudden and unexpected. Now answer my question, is the other pilot dead."

"No, he's alive," Kaji replied. "Other than that, I can't tell you more."

"Understood." Heero said. "So, why are you here?"

"That I can explain." Kaji said. "I'm here to figure out where you came from."

"I doubt you'd understand where we're from." Heero said. "This place seems so much different than it should be."

"What do you mean?" Kaji asked.

"What happened to Hakone?" Heero asked.

"We built over it." Kaji said simply.

"Why, this area of Japan has no strategic value what so ever." Heero said.
"That's classified I'm afraid." Kaji said. "Now, about your machines…"

"I can't tell you about the Gundams." Heero said.

"Why not?" Kaji asked.

"It's classified." Heero replied.

"I see, we're playing that game." Kaji said. "So, can you tell me your friends names? I'd like to try and search for them in the database we have."

"I doubt any of us will show up in your database." Heero replied. "So their names are really of no consequence."

"Why is that?" Kaji asked.

"I'm sure you'll figure that out soon enough." Heero said. "I am curious as to why you attacked first however. We showed no hostile intent."

"Your machines were armed." Kaji said. "But you're right, we fired first."

"I just said that." Heero replied. "Why did you fire first?"

"Why?" Kaji asked. "In short… a lot of previous experience with unidentified armed contacts above the city."

"Because if you knew who we are, then you would not have attacked us." Heero said. "You would have known better."

"Oh, we would have?" Kaji asked.

"Yes." Heero said. "Other than your two Mobile Suits, your alert forces were a joke. They barely put up a fight, and your city's defensive screen of guns and missiles could barely hit us."

"Well, the reason we attacked you is classified." Kaji replied.

"I see..." Heero said. "Then I have nothing else to say."

"Really." Kaji said.

"Yes, you can leave now." Heero said. "Although, I will say that being your prisoner, these are by far the best accommodations I've been given."

"Well we may have attacked hastily, but we're not monsters." Kaji said as he left the room.

Kaji closed the door behind him and rubbed his forehead. "Well, at least Heero gave me more than any of the others to work with… but I guess I need to go with my backup plan get Shinji to talk to them..." Kaji sighed. "I hope for everyone's sake he wakes up soon, before Yamada gets his hands on those kids."

Kaji walked started to walk towards Shinji's room. "And what the fuck is a Mobile Suit?"

——

Heero sat alone in hospital room staring at the door Kaji had just walked out of. He got up and went to the wall that met the adjacent room and knocked lightly on the wall. "Duo... Trowa... or
"Quatre?" Heero asked.

"It's Quatre." Quatre replied. "Are you alright, Heero?"

"Yes." Heero said. "Are you alright, Quatre?"

"Mostly." Quatre said. "That impact with the ground really hurt. I just hope Sandrock isn't too damaged."

"Sandrock can be repaired." Heero said. "And you've suffered a lot worse before." Hero sighed. "Did that man, Kaji, ask you any questions?" Heero asked.

"Yeah." Quatre replied.

"Did you tell him anything?" Heero asked.

"Only the radio frequencies we were transmitting on. Apparently they can't transmit on those frequencies." Quatre said. "I didn't tell him anything else though. Did you say anything?"

"Plenty… but it will lead to more questions than answers." Heero said. "They also have no idea what a Mobile Suit is."

"Really?" Quatre asked. "But they have two…"

"He muttered something else when I said it." Heero said. "Called them Evangelion… probably thought I didn't hear him."

"Well they certainly look a lot like Mobile Suits… just with biological components." Quatre replied. "And they apparently have pilots. Did you learn anything else?"

"No I did not, but it appears our assumptions were right." Heero said. "We're no longer on our Earth."

"Then where are we if we're not on our Earth?" Quatre asked.

"Either a different reality, or an exact copy of Earth in a completely different part of the galaxy." Heero replied. "Those are the only logical solutions."

October 7, 2016 – NERV HQ, Medical Wing

Shinji was lying motionless in bed, breathing softly. He felt very warm and comfortable and could hear familiar voices around him. He opened his eyes slowly and saw four blurry figures surrounded by a combination of the ceiling lights and the natural light streaming in from the windows. Before he could say anything he saw one of the figures jump on top of him and assault him with a bone crushing hug.

"PUPPY! YOU'RE AWAKE!" Mari shouted in his ear.

However, the crushing weight from Mari didn't last long, as Shinji heard the sound of a fist connecting with flesh, and Mari exclaim and slam onto the floor. "Get the hell off of him, four eyes, he's my boyfriend, not yours!" Asuka shouted as she herself climbed onto the bed and straddled him, moving her face within a few inches of his. "Hi baka, welcome back. Did you miss me?"

"Was I in a coma again?" Shinji asked.
"Yeah, you had Asuka all worried, Shinji." Hikari said. "You should be more careful."

"Yeah, you need to stop playing the tragic hero." Sakura said. "Otherwise you're really gonna get hurt one day."

"What are you two doing here?" Shinji asked. "Shouldn't you be watching Toji?"

"He's fine, he'll be released in a few days." Sakura said.

"And he told us to keep an eye on you instead, considering you were in worse shape." Hikari added. "He'll be glad to hear you're awake."

"Well, baka, I'm waiting." Asuka said impatiently. "Did you miss me?"

"Asuka, the last thing I remember is jumping in the air to dodge those robots." Shinji said. "How long have I been out?"

"You've been out four days, puppy, like a champ." Mari replied. "And princess, that was brutal, even for you…"

"You were rubbing your tits and junk all over my boyfriend." Asuka said venomously. "Next time you do that, I won't go so easy on you."

"Asuka, will you relax?" Shinji asked. "I've told you how many times that I don't like you two fighting."

"But she was accosting you!" Asuka said defensively. "And I'm defending my baka!"

"Asuka… she was hurting me with her hug, but that it." Shinji said. "Although I'm flattered that you're so protective of me…"

"Well, you've been so protective of me… and I do love you after all…" Asuka said sweetly. "And now that you're finally awake, I can do this…" Asuka leaned down and kissed him hard on the lips, barely able to restrain her enthusiasm.

"Awww…" Mari, Hikari, and Sakura said in unison.

Asuka and Shinji ignored them and happily kissed each other, tongues lashing =

"Oh, get a room already…" Mari quipped.

Asuka stopped kissing Shinji and glared at her. "We are in a room you idiot!"

"Asuka, stop." Shinji said. "She was only kidding."

"Fine…" Asuka said. "But I'm not going to stop yelling at her all the time."

"Sure you're not, princess." Mari purred.

"Mari, stop." Shinji said. "Can you not tease her?"

"I can try." Mari said.

"Mari…" Shinji said. "Please?"

"Oh, alright… but only because I like you, puppy." Mari said. "Sorry princess, you may now
continue to suck your boyfriend's face…”

"Good…” Shinji muttered.

"So, Shinji, you never answered my question." Asuka said. "Did you miss me?"

"Asuka, I didn't even know I was gone." Shinji said. "But thank you."

"For…” Asuka prompted.

"Coming out and saving me the other day." Shinji said. "Thanks for staying until the end."

"You're welcome, baka." Asuka said. "I'm just glad you survived."

"So am I." Shinji said. "I hope you weren't too worried."

"No, I knew you'd pull through." Asuka said. "You're the invincible Shinji."

"Don't lie, princess." Mari said. "You've barely slept since he went into a coma."

"And you've been worried sick about him too." Hikari said. "You just spent the last three hours telling us how worried you are you'd never be able to tell him how much you loved him again…”

"Hikari… that was private!" Asuka said through gritted teeth.

"Well, shouldn't your boyfriend know how much you love him?" Sakura asked. "If I had one, I'd never stop telling him."

"As if your brother would allow you to have a boyfriend…” Hikari muttered.

"Like he has a choice." Sakura said.

"Do you have a boyfriend?" Shinji asked innocently.

"No… but someday I will." Sakura said. "And Toji can shove his opinion about it up his ass."

"Sakura!" Hikari said admonishingly.

"What?" Sakura said. "Does he actually think I'm not going to have a boyfriend at some point?"

"Well, good for you kiddo." Kaji said as he walked in the room. "Life shouldn't be lived without love… and your brother will realize that eventually."

"Thanks Mr. Kaji." Sakura replied.

"Well, Asuka, I didn't realize you and Shinji were that close." Kaji joked as Asuka glared at him. "What, you're straddling the boy… and seem to have caused an issue to pop up…”

Asuka looked at Kaji and then to Shinji and turned bright red. "Baka, what the hell?!"

Shinji blushed as well. "What… I didn't really know how to bring it up…”

"Bad choice of words, puppy." Mari quipped.

"Shut up, four eyes!" Asuka shouted. "Baka, you need to mention these things!"

"Well… I didn't know how…” Shinji muttered.
"How did it happen?" Asuka asked.

"Asuka, your junk is rubbing on him every time you move." Hikari said. "Those things tend to happen…"

"And you're wearing a skirt." Mari said. "There isn't anything between you and him except some panties, a thin sheet, and maybe a hospital gown."

"Thanks for that, four eyes." Asuka muttered.

"It's ok, Asuka, I don't mind…" Shinji said.

"We can all see that, Shinji." Kaji joked.

"What are you doing here, Kaji?" Asuka asked angrily.

"Oh, just here to see Shinji." Kaji said.

"Kaji, I know that look." Asuka said. "You're about to ask for something you know is going to piss someone off."

"How…" Kaji muttered.

"You make a face." Asuka said.

"I do not." Kaji said.

"The hell you don't." Asuka said. "What is it?"

Kaji sighed. "Hikari, Sakura, why don't you go visit Toji." Kaji suggested. "I need to talk to these three alone for a few minutes."

"Sure…" Hikari said. "Come on Sakura, let's go tell Toji Shinji's ok."

"Alright." Sakura said. "Later, Shinji."

"Bye guys." Shinji said as the two girls walked out of the room. "So, Kaji, why do you need to talk to us alone?"

"Yeah… why so secretive, Chief Inspector?" Mari asked.

"They have a point." Asuka said as she climbed off Shinji's bed. "Why do you look so guilty?"

"I need to ask Shinji a favor." Kaji said. "And what I'm about to ask, I'm only doing in front of you two so you don't think I coerced him or anything."

"What are you going to ask him?" Asuka asked.

Kaji ignored Asuka and looked directly at Shinji. "Shinji… I know what I'm about to ask is way beyond anything we've ever asked you to do before."

"What is it, Kaji?" Shinji asked.

"I need your help with the pilots of those machines." Kaji said. "I can't talk to them, they're too closed off. And I need information from them, but I don't want to have to force anything out of them."
"So what can I do?" Shinji asked.

"Shinji, you have an uncanny quality about you that makes people trust you. They tell you things, they talk." Kaji explained. "So, I need you to talk to one of them, the only one that really opened up a little bit."

"Absolutely fucking not." Asuka said angrily. "They almost killed him and you want him to talk to them?!"

"Yeah." Mari said. "Why would you think he'd do this?"

"Let Shinji answer." Kaji said.

"Do I have to lie to them?" Shinji asked.

"No, just be yourself." Kaji replied. "So, will you help me?"

"Yeah…” Shinji said. "I'll do it."

"What the fuck are you talking about, baka?!" Asuka shouted. "Are you out of your fucking mind?!"

"No, Asuka, I'm fine." Shinji said. "But, Kaji, I have one condition."

"What's that?" Kaji asked.

"I'll speak to whoever it is alone." Shinji said.

"Shinji, you really have lost your mind!" Asuka shouted.

"Yeah, scruffy, does he have a concussion?" Mari asked.

"I said I'm fine!" Shinji shouted. "I can make my own decisions, Asuka." Shinji looked at Mari as well. "And I'm not injured, I feel fine!"

"Shinji… you don't have to talk to those bastards." Asuka said. "He's not gonna make you, you know."

"I want to talk to them." Shinji said. "So, Kaji, do we have a deal?"

"Yeah, sure." Kaji said. "A one on one meeting with the talkative pilot. Easily arranged."

"So, where am I going?" Shinji asked. "Back down to the holding cells?"

"No, you injured them all pretty well, so they're under heavy guard here in the Medical Wing." Kaji explained.

"When should I go?" Shinji asked.

"Whenever you're ready, Shinji." Kaji replied.

"I'm ready now." Shinji said. "Should I walk?"

"No, I'll get you a wheelchair." Kaji said. "Hold on a sec."

Kaji left the room and Asuka turned to him and looked worried. "Shinji, why are you doing this? I said you don't have to…”
"Asuka, I want to." Shinji said.

"Aren't you mad that they hurt you?" Mari asked.

"Why?" Shinji asked. "It was a fight against other people... I never wanted to actually fight another person... I feel bad for hurting them."

"They were hurting you too, you know, baka." Asuka said admonishingly. "Why would you talk to them?"

"To get answers." Shinji said. "And if Kaji thinks I can actually be of some use, then I'll do it, ok? It's my choice, Asuka."

"But, I don't want you to get hurt." Asuka said tearfully. "I want to be in there with you."

"Asuka, I'm doing it alone." Shinji said. "But you're welcome to sit outside with Kaji."

"Do you really think it's a smart idea to go in there alone?" Mari asked.

"Kaji wouldn't ask me if he was risking my life in the process." Shinji said. "And besides, if either of you two hear me scream, you'll be in there faster than anything to save me."

"That's an awful lot of risk..." Asuka muttered.

"I'll be fine." Shinji said. "I doubt they'd want to hurt me."

"Why do you say that?" Asuka asked.

"I just have a feeling, that's all." Shinji said. "I mean, I had a feeling about you and me too, and look at us now, Asuka..."

"Fair point..." Asuka said. "But if you get hurt at all and live, I'll never let you forget it, and tell you how dumb of an idea it was."

"What happens if I'm right?" Shinji asked.

"Whatever you want, baka." Asuka said coyly.

"Ask to fuck her!" Mari said excitedly.

"Excuse you?!" Asuka asked. "Can you stop being a fucking pervert for five gottverdammt seconds?!"

"What, he might fulfill a great fantasy of his if he had sex with you..." Mari muttered.

"Mari, stop." Shinji said. "If I'm right, I want you to promise me you and Mari will stop fighting? Like really stop?"

"That's what you want?" Asuka asked.

"Yeah, you could ask for any kind of sex..." Mari muttered.

"That's all I really want... for my best friend and girlfriend to get along." Shinji said. "Is that so wrong?"

"No..." Asuka said. "It's kinda sweet..."
"So… do you guys promise to honor that?" Shinji asked.

"I promise, baka." Asuka said.

"Yeah, I'll do my best too." Mari said sweetly. "I can be nice, you know."

"Good." Shinji said as he checked under his sheets. "Now, can someone get me a hospital gown or something?"

"Why?" Asuka asked absentmindedly.

"He's naked, princess." Mari purred.

"Don't worry, I brought one back." Kaji said as he appeared with a wheelchair and a hospital gown. "Nurses said they had cut you out of the plugsuit… so here." Kaji tossed him the gown. "Pull that on and we'll leave whenever you feel up to it."

Shinji pulled the gown under the sheets and fumbled around for a moment while Mari and Asuka watched curiously. Shinji then threw the sheets off and pulled himself carefully to the edge of the bed. "Alright, I'm ready now."

"Wait, you're sure?" Kaji asked.

"Yeah." Shinji said. "I want to help, and the sooner I talk to them, the sooner things can get back to normal, right?"

"Right, kid." Kaji said. "Asuka, Mari, help him into the chair. I'll hold it steady."

"Sure." Asuka and Mari said in unison. They each took one of Shinji's arms and gently lifted him to his feet and guided him to the wheelchair. Shinji sat down and looked at both girls.

"Thanks." Shinji said. "You guys are coming along, right?"

"Yeah, someone has to protect you if things go south." Asuka said.

"Fine, but you're all waiting outside." Shinji said. "Remember that. And no listening at the door either."

"Fine…" Mari muttered.

"You're the boss…" Kaji said.

___

A few minutes later, Shinji was sitting in a room across from Heero. Shinji was a bit nervous, as he'd never met an enemy before like this, in reality, let alone a human enemy. He was used to fighting Angels and having them be sadistic fucks, but not this. So, Shinji tried to act natural and was smiling, but Heero only looked at him with a blank stare.

"Hi there, I'm, uh, Shinji, Shinji Ikari…" Shinji said nervously. "What's your name?"

"Your superiors didn't tell you?" Heero asked.

"Do you mean Kaji?" Shinji asked.

"Yes, him." Heero replied.
"Oh, he's not my boss, he's my friend." Shinji said. "And no, he didn't tell me your name."

"I am Heero Yuy." Heero said. "So, Shinji, why are you here."

"Just to talk." Shinji said.

"How did you convince Kaji to let you talk to me alone?" Heero asked. "You clearly are a very important person."

"No, I just thought it was the only way you'd talk with me." Shinji said.

"No, I can't really divulge anything." Heero said.

"Why not?" Shinji asked. "If it has to do with the Angels, you can tell me, I fight them too. One only attacked a few days before you arrived."

"What are Angels?" Heero asked.

"Angels are the monsters that keep attacking us." Shinji explained. "How do you not know that? I mean, you were sent to help weren't you?"

"No, I'm afraid we weren't." Heero said. "I don't know anything about the Angels you speak of."

"So, why are you here?" Shinji asked.

"I'm not entirely sure." Heero said. "We simply appeared here."

"From where?" Shinji asked.

"I doubt you would believe me even if I told you." Heero said.

"I deal with crazy geometric monsters that shoot laser beams at me, or are living tentacles, or a giant shark thingy…" Shinji rambled on. "So basically, whatever you tell me, I'm not really going to be surprised."

"We were at a Lagrangian Point L4 investigating a gravity well." Heero explained.

"What's a Lagrangian Point?" Shinji asked.

"It's a point in space between two objects that have gravitational fields." Heero explained. "There are five such points in any system."

"Wait… so you were in space?" Shinji asked.

"Yes." Heero replied.

"I want to say that's impossible, but I don't think so…" Shinji murmured. "I've seen some weird shit, so what you're saying isn't that crazy."

"I'm glad you don't think so."

"So, why were you in space anyway?" Shinji asked. "How did you get there?"

"We live in space." Heero said. "In space colonies."

"Wait… in space…" Shinji muttered. "So, you're not… we don't have space colonies…"
“Exactly…” Heero said.

“So… what does that mean?” Shinji asked.

“Well, there are two theories me and my friends came up with.” Heero explained. “Either we've traveled to a different reality, or we're at an exact copy of Earth in a completely different part of the galaxy.” Heero replied.

“So… then that thing you were investigating…” Shinji asked.

“Brought us here.” Heero said. “It is a logical assumption to make.”

“So, then… you're very far from home.” Shinji said.

“Yes, with no way to get back.” Heero said.

“So… why didn't you tell any of this to Kaji?” Shinji asked.

“I didn't think he's believe it.” Heero said. “You seem to be having the same difficulty.”

“No, it's just… a lot to take in all at once.” Shinji replied.

“Understandable.” Heero said. “But I don't understand why they sent you…”

“Oh, uh, Kaji just asked me.” Shinji said.

“Why?” Heero asked.

“Oh, uh, I'm one of the pilots you fought.” Shinji said plainly.

Heero stared at him for a second. “So… you're the pilot of the purple Mobile Suit. You were the one that was injured that angry girl wanted revenge for.”

“What girl?” Shinji asked.

“I did not see her, but she was screaming very loudly.” Heero explained. “She was somewhat graphic with what she wanted to do.”

“Oh, that's Asuka, my… uh… girlfriend.” Shinji muttered.

“Your girlfriend?” Heero asked. “She's a fellow pilot, isn't that inappropriate?”

“No… but it's a long story.” Shinji said sheepishly. “But I do have a question… what's a Mobile Suit?”

“A weapon of war.” Heero said. “A giant mechanical machine capable of so much. They can be quite destructive.”

“So, do you pilot a Mobile Suit?” Shinji asked.

“Technically, I pilot a Gundam.” Heero explained. “With stronger construction materials and better weaponry, Gundams are far more powerful than a simple Mobile Suit.”

“So, which one did you pilot?” Shinji asked. “The one with the big swords, the one with load of guns, the one with the huge rifle, or the one with a scythe?”

“I piloted the one with the huge rifle it's called Wing Zero.” Heero said. “I hope you weren't too
seriously injured."

"No, I've had much worse," Shinji said. "Much, much worse. Don't worry about it. And I'm sorry we shot at you first… with the Angels, I guess they just overreacted."

"Fair enough." Heero said. "So, tell me, how were you able to keep up with the four of us?"

"Luck I suppose." Shinji replied.

"What do you pilot?" Heero asked. "If you don't call it a Mobile Suit, what do you call it, that giant purple thing?"

"We call it an Evangelion." Shinji said. "I pilot Unit–01."

"What is an Evangelion?" Heero asked. "It seemed almost alive. And these Angels, what are they?"

"Well, that's a little hard to explain…" Shinji said.

"It's not like we're going anywhere…" Heero said. "I have plenty of time, unless…"

"No… I don't have anywhere to go." Shinji said. "I can explain it, if you explain more about where you come from, and about your Gundams."

"Deal." Heero replied.

"So, the Angels began attacking during an event called Second Impact." Shinji began.

—

In a few hours' time, Shinji had explained everything he knew about Angels and Evangelions, and Heero, everything he knew about the original Operation Meteor, and how it was actually carried out, and of course, the events of the Eve Wars. Both were stunned about so much of what they had been told, even though both sets of stories were true. So, Shinji decided it was time to explain all of this to those who needed to know, and Heero agreed wholeheartedly.

A short while later, Shinji and Heero were still sitting across from each other, however there were far more people in the room than before. Duo, Trowa, and Quatre were all sitting behind Heero, while Asuka, Mari, Misato, Kaji, and Fuyutsuki were either standing or sitting behind Shinji.

After some awkward introductions, where Asuka and Mari glared at the four Gundam pilots, Shinji and Heero than began explaining everything they talked about, leaving both sides speechless as to the information they got from the other. When they finished speaking, the room was silent. Mari however was the first one who could think of anything to say.

"So… you're telling us that these kids from another reality where they fight wars in their Gundams…" Mari said. "Building a time machine that activates at 88 miles per hour out of a DeLorean that sounds more fucking plausible."

"Or a time machine that's a phone booth or something." Asuka muttered.

"Well, Maya said that the energy spike could have been a wormhole…" Misato said.

"Yes, well, we don't have fucking Stargate!" Asuka hissed.

"Ms. Soryu, an Einstein–Rosen bridge doesn't require a device to open… at least not in this case." Fuyutsuki said.
"So, you're saying that something created a portal, and we got sucked here as a fucking result?!
Duo shouted.

"Duo, please calm down and be more polite to our hosts." Quatre said.

"Whatever…" Duo muttered.

"Duo does have a point." Trowa said. "How did we end up getting pulled here?"

"We honestly are as clueless about this as you." Kaji said. "Or uh… top scientist is working on the
issue, as well as trying to understand your Gundams."

"Someone is touching my Deathscythe?!" Duo shouted. "I'll kick their ass!"

"Duo, will you stop, please." Quatre repeated.

"Why, they're touching our Gundams!" Duo said.

"Considering that NERV has Evangelion, I'm sure that the Gundams would be far simpler." Heero said.

"Well, your technology is far beyond our own in certain areas." Fuyutsuki said. "But if you're
willing to help out our chief scientist, things would progress much faster."

"I can conduct Heavyarms' maintenance." Trowa replied.

"I'd like to keep an eye on this person." Duo added. "I don't want them messing up my killing
machine."

"I'm not as worried about Sandrock as I am about getting home." Quatre said. "What about our
duties… what about the Protectors and everyone else. They must be worried sick by now."

"Whether they are or not isn't the issue." Heero said. "Right now, we have no way of getting back,
correct?" Heero asked.

"Well, save for 1.21 gigawatts of electricity… I don't see how we're getting you home." Mari joked.
"Or, am I wrong?"

"There is always a way… uh… Ms. Makinami." Fuyutsuki said.

"Yes, but wormholes don't just pop out of nowhere," Mari argued. "They need a powerful source of
energy to even open. And we're only talking theory here, there isn't any concrete proof of anything."

"Mari, stop it." Shinji said. "We have to get them home, they have responsibilities like ours… they
have their enemies to fight, and we have the Angels."

"I don't know, puppy." Mari replied. "They could be trapped here."

"Mari!" Misato said admonishingly. "You're not helping."

"What, I'm only pointing out the truth." Mari said. "They might be trapped here with no way
home… they need to be prepared for that possibility."

"We will find a way to get them." Kaji said. "Anything artificial that brought them here can be
reversed to send them home."
"That is a very simplified version, but not inaccurate." Fuyutsuki said.

"So, we can get home?" Quatre asked.

"The possibility exists for you to get home." Fuyutsuki explained. "However, we need to figure out how you got here before we can do anything else. One we know the cause, we work on the solution."

"When will you the cause be known?" Heero asked.

"Within a day or so." Misato replied. "So, with any luck, we can send you on your merry way without a hitch."

"That seems far too simple." Heero said. "Like they may be something we're missing."

"Yeah… more stuff could come through, right?" Asuka asked.

"Well, if is still open it could." Fuyutsuki said. "But if it's not, then we're safe."

"Well, whatever the cause, I know we'll get you home safely." Shinji said. "We've dealt with worse, right? This should be easy."

"Shinji, things are easier said than done." Kaji said.

"Well…" Quatre said. "Maybe it is this simple."

"Quatre, if anything we've ever done is anything to go from, we're not in for an easy fix." Duo said. "We might be here a while…"

"I don't care, as long as we can get home at some point soon." Quatre said.

"Well, there is always the possibility that our problems could follow us." Heero said.

"Why would you say that?" Shinji asked.

"Because, if we investigated the disturbance, the enemy may do the same and end up here." Heero replied. "And that is something we don't need."

"You're not wrong." Kaji said. "We've got our own Angel issues to deal with, we don't need an army appearing and causing havoc… so the sooner we get you guys home, the better… I'd rather avoid all hell breaking loose, wouldn't you?"

To Be Continued

A/N: I do not own Evangelion or any of the characters, GAINAX and the other distributors of NGE related material do. I am simply using them as a backdrop for my fanfic. I also do not own Gundam Wing, Sunrise does, as do their licensed distributors.

Sync Score Rankings!
Shinji – 92.5% (No Change)
Rei – 75.0% (No Change)
Mari – 36.4% (No Change)
Asuka – 32.7% (No Change)

The title of this chapter comes from the first Gundam Wing OP, "Just Communication" by Two–
Mix. The name of it fits the theme of the chapter, which is basically getting everyone to talk together.

So, this chapter finally gives us some introductions and answers. Now, a lot of the story details from both my fic's extended storyline, basically everything Shinji knows about Second Impact, the Angels, and all of everything he was present for was told to Heero, and Heero basically explained the entirety of Gundam wing anime. Basically, this chapter is more about exposition than fighting. Also, the change in tone from the Gundam pilots being enemies to non-hostiles is mostly because of the fact that they were brought to Tokyo–3 unwillingly, and mistaken for enemies, that has been mostly forgiven.

However, we're still missing some fun elements to make this a really great story… which will be explored in the next few chapters…

As I said before, and will always say at the end of chapter, please leave comments, as I would like to try to improve the story going forward any way I can. And, hell, constructive criticism is a good thing.

つづく
Ritsuko was standing nervously in Gendo’s office. She had been pouring over the data from the sensors the day that the Gundams had appeared above Tokyo–3. Gendo, Fuyutsuki, Misato, and Kaji were all eyeing her quite heavily as she prepared her brief presentation.

"Whenever you're ready to begin, Dr. Akagi." Gendo said.

"Yes…” Ritsuko said as she pulled up her presentation. "Which would you like first, the data on the Gundams, or how they got here."

"It doesn't really matter, Ritsuko." Misato said. "Either or."

"I could not have said it better myself." Gendo said. "Proceed, Dr. Akagi."

Ritsuko nodded. "As we're all aware, six days ago, four objects appeared above Tokyo–3, there was no A.T. Field present, and no waveform analysis lock was made on sensors."

"We're all aware of this, Doctor." Fuyutsuki said.

"I'm building up to it sir." Ritsuko said. "We fired on these four objects, and found they were highly resilient to damage. After they were defeated in a joint effort by Unit–01 and Unit–02, we recovered them and their pilots. After some research on their structure, and with some information gained from talking with the pilots, the Gundams themselves are made out of a highly resistant armor called Gundanium Alloy. This alloy can only be produced in space, and take a great deal more punishment than anything we've ever seen. The machines themselves, each with their own unique abilities, are capable of taking on an entire army each, with a high success rate."

"So, why does this matter?" Kaji asked. "I thought we were here primarily to understand how they got here, not get a rundown of their tech…"

"Background information is useful, Mr. Kaji." Fuyutsuki said. "Continue, Doctor."

"Their technology is light years ahead of ours." Ritsuko continued. "They have energy based weapons that I can't imagine us creating in the near future. The Positron Rifle we have is the closest in terms of tech, and does not do any physical damage such as the rifle that put a hole into Unit–01."

"What of each unit's capabilities?" Gendo asked.

Ritsuko pulled up display images from Unit–01’s battle with the Gundams. "Two of the Gundams, Deathscythe and Sandrock are meant for close quarters combat. Deathscythe itself is designed as a stealth unit. Heavyarms is classified as a heavy assault unit and features all ranged weapons, and is not meant for close quarters combat." Ritsuko explained.

"What about the fourth one?" Misato asked.
"The Wing Zero." Ritsuko said. "This one is apparently a prototype that the others were developed from. It's designed for both ranged and close quarters combat."

"Ok, so why does all this matter?" Kaji asked. "We are intending to send them back home, correct?"

"Of course." Gendo said. "However, we would be remiss if we did not study their technology to improve our own."

"Yes, well they all feature technology we can adapt." Ritsuko said. "And it's not just the weapons either."

"Like what?" Misato asked.

Ritsuko rolled her eyes. "Well, the engines on the Wing Zero use energy to power the thrust output, requiring no fuel. We could use this concept for the retro rockets in the shoulder pylons of the Evangelions. Removing the fuel and increasing the size of the engine could allow the Evangelions to jump and glide, rather than simply trying to slow down on their decent. Although, this is truly only viable on Unit–01, as the S2 Engine is far more practical to draw power from than the limited battery supplies."

"What else can you adapt?" Fuyutsuki asked.

"Their communications and data technology in the terahertz gap." Ritsuko said. "Better communications speeds and other applications can become practical, and with a roadmap like what we have, we can reverse engineer it." Ritsuko paused. "And then we have the beam technology itself… the Buster Rifle of the Wing Zero is a potent weapon, even scaling back the output and linking it to an S2 Engine would completely obliterate an Angel, with an increased range and penetrating power, an incident like the Fifth Angel can be avoided in future. And those beam sabres of theirs, those work far more effectively than our Progressive Series of weapons. We could easily adapt those technologies to our own."

"In what kind of timeframe?" Gendo asked.

"Three to five years…" Ritsuko muttered.

"So it wouldn't help much now, then." Kaji said.

"No, but the research…" Ritsuko started.

"Commander, I thought we were being briefed on how the Gundams and those kids ended up here, and how we were planning on sending them home." Kaji asked. "I didn't think a weapons analysis was part of the plan, especially considering none of these technologies can even be implemented in a reasonable amount of time."

"Fair enough, Mr. Kaji." Gendo said. "Your final summation on the Technology you've looked at."

"Much of the technology I've seen can improve the combat effectiveness of the Evangelions." Ritsuko said. "Even with the time needed to effectively develop them, it would be worth getting funding for these projects. However, the communications modifications are fairly easy… and are already underway."

"Already… why?" Misato asked. "It's not like we have receivers and transmitters everywhere for that."

"No, but we can now communicate on the same channels as the Gundams should anymore appear."
Ritsuko explained. "I was simply thinking ahead."

"Thank you, Dr. Akagi." Gendo said calmly. "Now, do you have any idea how or why these Gundams ended up here."

"Well, Commander, Maya's initial assumption was correct." Ritsuko said. "A wormhole was opened above Tokyo–3, and after the Gundams came through I've been tracking it."

"How do you know it's a wormhole?" Kaji asked. "Why isn't it another Sea of Dirac?"

"The gravimetric readings are much different than the Twelfth Angel's Sea of Dirac." Ritsuko explained. "Maya was incorrect in the assumption there was a gravity well. What she detected was the opening of the event horizon warping the gravity field around it, bouncing back false readings. In order to go through this, you actually have to enter it, you're not going to get pulled in."

"Ok, so I'm guessing this is different than like a Stargate…" Misato said. "Or am I wrong?"

"Misato, Stargates are fictional, this is reality!" Ritsuko exclaimed. "We have actual science behind us!"

"Alright, will you relax?" Misato asked. "You're going to have an aneurism if you keep shouting like that…"

"Or go postal and kill someone…" Kaji muttered darkly.

"Enough on her mental state you two…" Fuyutsuki said sternly. "Dr. Akagi, what can you tell us about the wormhole?"

"The wormhole is not in a fixed position." Ritsuko explained. "It keeps moving… or another theory is that there are more than one."

"How can there be more than one?" Kaji asked.

"I'm not sure, really." Ritsuko explained. "The fact that they exist in the first place is difficult enough to fathom, but the reason more than one is open isn't something I'm concerned about. However, they do have a very unique energy signature, something I've coded into the computer for the future, that way we know when one is opening somewhere in the world and can prepare."

"What kind of pattern?" Gendo asked.

"Waveform analysis, Pattern Violet." Ritsuko explained. "That way we can easily identify it, and go to alert status if it's close enough."

"It has a waveform pattern?" Misato mumbled.

"Yes, the signature of the event horizon is on the top end of the waveform spectrum." Ritsuko explained. "That's why it was hard to detect. Our sensors around the city have been modified, and the OBSATs and other ground and sea based monitoring sensors are being recalibrated to see that end of the spectrum more clearly."

"That's good, doctor." Fuyutsuki said. "But do you know how they were opened?"

"I have a theory, and from some of the evidence I pulled, it may be the actual cause." Ritsuko explained. "Although it's a scary possibility."

"What did it?" Misato asked.
"Unit–01." Ritsuko said plainly.

"How?" Kaji asked. "How is that even possible?"

"His outburst after Rei self–destructed." Ritsuko said. "I analyzed the data on that beam he shot into the air, it has the same energy signature as the wormholes… and the effects of the beam are still unknown. Anything that powerful has ramifications, especially considering we all know what an S2 Engine can do."

"Yeah, Second Impact, we're very aware." Kaji said sarcastically. "So you're saying Shinji caused all this?"

"In part anyway." Ritsuko said. "Unfortunately, none of us were aware of the Evangelion's true power with the S2 Engine being involved."

"And that's in your report?" Kaji asked.

"Yes." Ritsuko said. "His outburst was a factor, but not the only cause. However, I can't find him culpable because none of us knew that it was even possible for that kind of power to be released from any EVA in that kind of situation. However, we need to make sure his temper stays under control, lest we have more incidents like this occurring."

"Yeah, well with him and Asuka dating, he should be fine." Kaji said.

Ritsuko scoffed. "Yeah, sure, she'll keep him calm…"

"She will!" Misato said angrily. "I know the concept of love escapes you, but if you saw them together, you'd actually understand."

"And it's that feeling of compassion from Shinji that caused his outburst after Rei self–destructed." Kaji added. "As long as Asuka isn't injured or anything, he'll be fine."

"That should be relatively easy with the jobs they have." Ritsuko replied sarcastically. "Just keep the boy in check, we can't have him going on another rampage like that. Last time, if he had continued… Tokyo–3 would have been destroyed like Antarctica was during Second Impact… there would have been nothing left."

"What are you talking about?" Fuyutsuki asked.

"In the week and a half since the incident, certain readings have come to light." Ritsuko explained. "The S2 Engine had a massive buildup of power, and if it continued, even what the beam pumping out a great deal of that energy, there was still a surplus. Given another few minutes, he would have caused Third Impact and killed us all in the process."

"How is an Evangelion even capable of causing Third Impact?" Kaji asked.

"Only with an S2 Engine." Ritsuko said. "From what little data was recovered from Antarctica, Adam's S2 Engine overloaded, causing Second Impact."

"She's right." Misato mumbled. "That's one of the things I remember in flashes… it started glowing, and they tried to stop it with… that spear… the thing we used on the Fifteenth…" Misato glanced over at Gendo and Fuyutsuki. "Are you telling me that thing survived the explosion? Was that thing the same one?"

"Yes, Colonel." Fuyutsuki said. "I assumed you would rather not be reminded of the worst part of
your life by telling you. The Commander agreed."

"Yeah… sure…" Misato said. "So, Shinji could have caused a Third Impact?"

"Probably, but highly unlikely." Gendo interjected. "Shinji had no intent to cause such an action, he would have calmed down eventually, or passed out from the stress. The risk going forward is minimal."

"Commander, I don't think you understand…" Ritsuko protested.

"My wife and her best friend worked on these Evangelions for years, this possibility was discussed, but would require an external force, like the spear, or something else. There are safeguards in place." Gendo explained. "Now, enough about the Evangelions, what else about the wormholes?"

"Yeah… can we send those kids back?" Kaji asked.

"As of right now, no." Ritsuko said. "I have no idea how these wormholes work, and it will take time to figure them out properly."

"Will we ever be able to send them home?" Fuyutsuki asked.

"In time, yes, but as of now, I doubt it…" Ritsuko said sullenly.

"So, they're stranded here?" Misato asked.

"Unfortunately." Ritsuko said.

"Can you close them, or block them?" Fuyutsuki asked.

"No, I don't know enough about them yet to find a way to close them, let alone knowing if they're a one–way portal, or a two–way passageway." Ritsuko explained.

"So, you just know that they're there." Kaji said.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Ritsuko asked.

"That you have more questions than answers, Ritsuko." Kaji replied. "What did you think I meant?"

"That you find my answers inconsequential." Ritsuko said bitterly.

"Well, those are your words." Kaji said. "I just prefer questions getting answers, not making even more questions that need answers."

"You arrogant…" Ritsuko started.

"Enough. Dr. Akagi, I suggest you get to work, and get as many people as you need. Mr. Kaji is right, we need more answers and less questions" Gendo said. "This is a time sensitive matter."

"Why is that, Commander?" Ritsuko asked.

"The longer they are here, the more likely something else could happen." Gendo said cryptically.

"Understood, Commander." Ritsuko said as she gathered her things and hurried off.

Kaji relaxed a bit as Ritsuko left the room and turned to the Commander and Fuyutsuki.

"So, are we actually going to release the pilots?" Kaji asked. "I mean, they aren't under heavy armed
"No, I heard they were socializing with our pilots at Shinji’s insistence." Fuyutsuki said.

"They are not listed as prisoners." Gendo said. "Technically, to us, they don't even exist."

"So, what about the pilots themselves?" Kaji asked. "We shouldn't isolate them on base. They aren't prisoners, and if want them to have some distance, we should do something to get them out of here."

"No, they're not…" Gendo muttered. "Colonel Katsuragi, I assume you have empty rooms in your apartment building?"

"Yes, Commander, I do." Misato said.

"Wait… what does he mean by your apartment building?" Kaji asked.

"Oh… no one else knows… I own the whole apartment building." Misato said happily. "I decided to buy it cause it was nice, and figured it would make me money eventually. Once the Angels are all dead anyway…"

"Can you accommodate the pilots there?"

"Yeah, there are a few other apartments on my floor we can use." Misato said. "That way they're close at hand in an emergency."

"Understood." Gendo said. "Take what money you need to furnish those sparingly. Will you be able to accommodate them all for meals?"

"I guess…" Misato said as she scratched her head. "Shinji does love to cook."

"Kaji, I'm assigning you to watch the pilots, you will be staying in the apartment with them." Gendo ordered.

"Understood, Commander." Kaji said.

"Colonel, I'd like you to start doctoring some paperwork, old school records, birth certificates and the like, all for the pilots to be enrolled with Shinji's class." Gendo ordered.

"Why, sir?" Misato asked. "If I may ask, of course."

"We already have a hefty security team at the school, and it would be the best place to hide them." Gendo said.

"Right in plain sight." Kaji said.

"Precisely." Gendo said. "They will be monitored like our own pilots, but not be in custody."

"Fair enough." Kaji said. "So, should we go let them know?"

"Yes." Fuyutsuki said. "And before either of you ask, just inform them that a solution is being worked on to get them home, and that the cause is still unknown."

"That's for the best." Misato said.

"Yeah, Shinji would only feel guilty for causing all this." Kaji said. "When can we take them off base, sir?"
"As soon as everything is set up." Gendo replied. "I expect that will be sometime in the next few days."

"We'll let them know the good news." Kaji said as he left, with Misato following closely behind.

As the two of them left, Fuyutsuki turned to Gendo. "So, why did you let so much slip about the Evangelions and their… abilities?"

"It was necessary, considering Akagi blurted all that out so idiotically." Gendo said coldly. "She is becoming more of a nuisance."

"So, should I… handle it?" Fuyutsuki asked.

"Not yet." Gendo replied. "She still has her uses, and we need her to begin her research into those technologies so her replacement will have something to work from."

"Understood, Commander." Fuyutsuki said. "But what she did to Rei… it has to be punished."

"I am aware, Fuyutsuki." Gendo said angrily. "First, letting Rei die in her Entry Plug like that, and then inflicting all those injuries after transferring her to a new body… she will die in good time, Fuyutsuki, and suffer a worse fate than her mother…"

Shinji was sitting in a wheelchair, being wheeled by Mari down the hallway. Following them were all four Gundam pilots, and behind them, was a slightly irate Asuka. In the past day, Shinji and the Gundams pilots had been chatting a lot. They had discussed their lives, or at least what they felt comfortable sharing, and Asuka and Mari were noticeably absent from the chats, and instead eavesdropped from outside the room angrily. When they came to visit Shinji that morning, Shinji had a long talk with them about being nicer to the Gundam pilots, and with a great deal of convincing, Asuka and Mari decided they would be polite and cordial with the Gundam pilots. However, Asuka kept glaring at them every so often, and Mari only promised to be nice on the condition that Mari got to push Shinji's wheelchair and decide on where they were going.

"Can I ask where's we're going, miss Mari?" Quatre asked politely.

"Blondie, I told you, just call me Mari… you're making me feel way old." Mari quipped.

"Sorry… Mari." Quatre said kindly.

"It's ok, blondie." Mari said. "I'll forgive you this time."

"He's got a point, where are we going?" Duo asked.

"You'll see father…" Mari said.

"That kind of vagueness does not bode well for us." Trowa said.

"Why are you calling him that, his name is Quatre, and his name is Trowa!" Duo said. "And I'm not a father!"

"Then why are you dressed as a priest?" Mari asked.

"That's not the fucking point!" Duo said angrily.

"Duo, will you relax?" Heero said. "You're annoying me."
"Really? I'm annoying you?"

"Well, you're starting to piss me off." Asuka muttered darkly.

"Duo, I don't think you want a repeat of what she did out there." Trowa said. "But why does… Mari right?" Mari nodded and Trowa continued. "Why does she have nicknames for people?"

"She has nicknames for everyone." Shinji said. "She calls me puppy, Asuka is, uh, princess, Kaji is… what?"

"Scruffy." Mari replied.

"It means she respects you." Shinji said.

"Yeah, being called princess make me feel the respect." Asuka muttered.

"Asuka, be nice." Shinji said.

"Fine, baka." Asuka replied in a huff.

The large group took a turn into a darkened room and came to a stop with Mari pointing through the glass. "And this is my blueberry." Mari said proudly.

"You're what?" Duo asked.

"It's her girlfriend." Shinji said. "Her name is actually Rei."

"What happened?" Trowa asked. "And why is she in that tank?"

"She uh… blew up her Evangelion to save us." Shinji said sullenly.

"We got our asses handed to us good. Mari and I were in comas, and Shinji couldn't do anything, so I guess she thought she had no alternative… and…"

"Boom…" Mari muttered.

"That is so sad…" Quatre muttered. "Is she ok?"

"Oh…" Duo muttered. "Sorry…"

"Not your fault, father." Mari said. "At least she's alive…"

"Self–destruction is never the best option, there is always an alternative." Heero said. "Trust me, I've tried it, and she's very lucky to be alive."

"Wait… you've… blown yourself up before?" Shinji asked.

"The fuck is wrong with you?!" Asuka asked.

"Yes, during the war." Heero said. "OZ, our enemy, threatened to destroy the colonies unless we surrendered and handed over our Gundams. We agreed to surrender, but we were not to hand over our Gundams… I took the order literally and self–detonated, destroying most of my Gundam."

"Oh…" Mari said softly. "Then Rei will be ok after all…"

"Yes, your girlfriend should recover, it will simply take time." Heero said.
"Wait, you blew up the Gundam you're piloting now?" Asuka asked.

"No, my first Gundam." Heero replied. "My first Gundam is derived from my current one."

"Wait, so you're using a prototype?" Mari asked.

"Yes." Heero replied.

"Fucked up, ain't it?" Duo asked.

"Just… a lot." Asuka quipped.

"So, the tank she's in?" Duo asked. "What is it again?"

"Oh, we're not even sure." Shinji said.

"Yeah, it just heals us." Asuka said. "I don't ask questions when I don't really care."

"I know what it's for, puppy." Mari said. "It's filled with LCL and has an electrical current being run through it to speed up the healing process."

"And LCL is…" Duo asked.

"Life Creation Liquid." Mari replied. "It's what we sit in inside the Evangelions. It helps connect us to them or something like that. Also, smells a little like blood… and I love how it smells too."

"You're kinda weird, Mari." Duo said.

"You are literally preaching to the choir." Asuka quipped.

"You are literally preaching to the choir." Asuka quipped.

"Thanks! I don't have to try you know." Mari replied.

"We noticed." Duo quipped.

"So, Mari, why did we come here?" Shinji asked. "I thought we were going somewhere else… less depressing."

"Look, puppy, I told you it wasn't your fault." Mari said. "Besides, I thought we'd introduce our new acquaintances to her, so they know what we've gone through…"

"Don't you mean friends?" Shinji asked.

"For now, considering they injured you, acquaintances." Mari said sternly.

"Mari, I told you that its ok, it was just a very violent misunderstanding that our fault." Shinji said. "We shot first."

"Yeah, just like Han." Mari quipped. "At least before the fucking special edition… fuck you George Lucas…"

"Four eyes, shut up." Asuka said. "So, what, you think that because we fired first… that they're absolved or something?"

"Yes." Shinji said plainly. "Besides, I've had way worse… the Fifth Angel tried boring a hole through my chest, and I was absorbed by Unit–01 for a month."

"Absorbed…" Trowa muttered.
"How?" Heero asked.

"No idea." Shinji said. "Shit just happens around here for whatever reason, and then we just sort of…"

"Deal with it and never find out why it happened in the first place." Asuka finished.

"So, no one tells you anything?" Quatre asked.

"Pretty much." Asuka replied. "So, an Angel attacks, we fight it, we hopefully kill it, or somehow one or more of us ends up getting hurt one way or another…"

"Sounds awful…" Quatre said. "But, can I ask you something, Ms. Asuka?"

"Go for it." Asuka said.

"Could you please forgive us?" Quatre asked. "We never meant to hurt anyone… we just were confused at where were."

"And then those flying things attacked." Duo said.

Asuka grumbled silently. "I'm just not sure yet." Asuka said grumpily. "I just don't trust you guys yet."

"Yeah, but Shinji here does." Duo said defensively.

"Because, as much as I love Shinji, he's an idiot." Asuka said.

"Asuka… that's not very nice…" Shinji said.

"Yes, but you're my idiot." Asuka said with a smile.

"Understandable… we did almost kill your, boyfriend." Heero said. "What would change your mind though."

"Helping us in a fight or something." Asuka said. "OR you know, maybe let us see your Gundams."

"I'll show you mine, if you show me yours." Duo said jokingly.

"Pervert!" Asuka shouted as she slapped the back of Duo's head.

"Ow, that hurt!" Duo shouted as he rubbed his head as Mari giggled.

"You brought that on yourself, Duo." Quatre said. "You shouldn't be so suggestive with people, it's not polite."

"Yeah, yeah, whatever…" Duo mumbled.

"Fair enough, Asuka." Heero replied. "What about you, Mari. What would make you trust us?"

"Hmmm…" Mari said. "I don't know… maybe try not to kill us again?"

"I think we can handle that." Quatre said.

"So, Mari, can we go somewhere else?" Shinji asked. "I mean… what can we do here?"

"Well, we can watch over her, puppy." Mari said. "But I see your point, she's not waking up anytime
soon… so why don't we go somewhere else…"

"Oh, so this is where you all ran off to." Kaji said as he and Misato entered the room.

"What exactly do you mean, ran off?" Shinji asked.

"Yeah, all he can do right now is roll." Mari quipped.

"Well, we need to tell you guys something important." Misato said.

"Yeah, we should go somewhere more private too…” Kaji said, nodding towards the cameras.

"Alright, where to?" Shinji asked.

"What do you care, baka?" Asuka said. "You don't have to walk there."

"How about Shinji's room." Quatre suggested. "It's more than big enough."

Maya was sitting calmly at her console, going over the upgrades to the sensors and familiarizing herself with the readings from the wormhole. Considering no one else was in the room, Maya was ostensibly in charge, and silently hoping nothing went wrong. Hyuga and Aoba were at their consoles, but weren't looking at them, and were instead chatting away about something.

"So, are you guys gonna do your jobs, or keep talking like little girls?" Maya asked.

"Jeez, take it easy, Maya." Aoba said. "We're sitting here, aren't we? It's not like we're off hiding somewhere."

"Yeah, if anything goes off we're right…” Hyuga started as he was interrupted by an alert popping up on the main display. "You've got to be fucking kidding me…"

"What the hell is a Pattern Violet?" Aoba asked.

"And what the hell is that thing?" Hyuga added.

"If you guys actually did your jobs, you'd know that a Pattern Violet means another wormhole has opened, and that the thing coming out of it is most likely another one of those… I think they're called Guardams… or something like that…"

"That's a dumb ass name." Aoba said. "And it's coming straight for us… MAGI indicate Tokyo–3 as the travel destination, with a 97.4% probability."

"Great…” Hyuga muttered. "But at least it's not an Angel."

"That doesn't matter." Maya said. "Level–1 battle stations." Maya ordered. "Retract the city, and then put the AIS on standby… don't fire unless fired upon."

"Are those your orders?" Hyuga asked. "Or…"

"Again, new information packet explains standard procedure for a Pattern Violet…” Maya muttered. "Maybe you should learn to read or something…"

"Setting Level–1 battle stations now." Hyuga reported. "City retraction in five minutes, AIS is being armed and set to standby."
Aoba turned on the intercom. "Pattern Violet detected, an unidentified object is moving at high speed towards the city!" Aoba exclaimed. "Level–1 battle stations, all senior officers and pilots to the Command Center." Aoba shut off the intercom. "All relevant parties have been informed, Maya."

"Good, and we don't have any VTOLs… so now we wait for everyone else, and hope for the best." Maya said sullenly. "Bring it up on the main screen when it's in range."

"Understood." Hyuga said.

"Do you have any idea how we're gonna fight it?" Aoba asked.

"No… and that's the problem…" Maya muttered.

Wufei Chang was stunned slightly by the trip through the wormhole he had been sent to investigate. He found himself in the air, not far from Tokyo–3, although he didn't actually know where he was.

"What the hell was that?!" Wufei said angrily. "This is what happens when I let women tell me what to do! I should never have listened to "

Wufei did a diagnostic check of his Altron Gundam, and found no damage. "Well, Nataku, at least you're ok." Wufei then flipped another switch. "Now, I need to find the others…. At least I hope they ended up near here…"

An alarm beeped showing four signals in the distance on Wufei's scanners. "So there they are… under that city…" Wufei muttered. "The must have been captured, the fools." Wufei chuckled. "Well, this is what happens when the weak tell the strong what to do… the strong get caught off guard." Another alarm went off, indicating the Tokyo–3 and the surrounding area was teeming with weapons. "Well… it seems these fools are expecting me… they must be strong if they captured the others… but they haven't faced me yet…"

Altron armed its Dragon Fangs and Twin Beam Cannon and charged towards Tokyo–3 at high speed. "Come on, Nataku, let's destroy them all!" Wufei roared as he opened fire with the Twin Beam Cannon, which hit a missile silo outside Tokyo–3. "Ha, those weapons are weak! How could have weaklings like you captured the others?!"

Altron Charged forward, attacking other weapons stations as every weapon of the AIS opened fire on him. "Ha, you think you stop me and Nataku? Nothing can stop me and Nataku!" Wufei roared as he dodged weapons fire and attacked Tokyo–3 mercilessly.

Everyone was stunned by the explanation, considering how much was unknown, they were surprised Ritsuko had made any conclusions.

"Leave it to that fucking cow, Akagi to not know anything more than the fucking basics about all this stupid shit." Asuka grumbled.

"You don't like this woman, do you?" Heero asked.

"Trust me, if she pulled the same shit with you, you'd probably want to kill her." Asuka replied bluntly.

"She can't be that bad." Quatre said. "She seemed nice to me."
"Give it a few days…" Shinji muttered. "She's not as nice as she appears."

"Well, if Shinji doesn't like her, she must be a horrible person…" Trowa said pensively.

"Oh, do you want the list alphabetically or chronologically?" Asuka asked.

"So… they can't go home yet." Mari said to get Asuka out of her rage spiral.

"And until this Lady figures out how the wormholes work… we're trapped here…" Duo said. "Like actual rats."

"That is the long and the short of it." Kaji replied.

"Except you're not like rats. Actually we've made arrangements for you to…" Misato started but was interrupted by an alarm klaxon.

"Oh, please don't be an Angel…" Misato muttered.

"Pattern Violet detected, an unidentified object is moving at high speed towards the city!" Aoba announced over the intercom. "Level–1 battle stations, all senior officers and pilots to the Command Center."

"What's a Pattern Violet?" Shinji asked.

"New wormhole… which means…" Kaji said.

"Another Mobile Suit?" Trowa asked.

"Perhaps we should go to this Command Center." Heero said. "Unless we're still considered enemies."

"Oh, that's what I was going to say." Misato said happily. "You're not prisoners, we're getting you some temporary accommodations at my apartment complex, so I guess follow us."

"Wait, is Shinji coming?" Asuka asked. "I mean, he's in a wheelchair."

"And he has no pants on." Mari added.

"Just give him a blanket and he can Professor X it." Kaji said as he grabbed one off a shelf and tossed it to Asuka. "And this isn't really a good time to dawdle."

"Yeah, yeah, dad…" Asuka muttered. "And why did you throw the blanket at me?"

"You're his girlfriend…" Kaji replied.

"Makes sense to me." Misato said.

"I concur." Trowa said.

"Makes sense to me too, princess." Mari said. "So chop, chop, get the blanket on him."

"Bite me, four eyes…" Asuka said as she tucked the blanket hastily around Shinji's legs. "Let's get up there before whatever it is destroys the fucking city…"

As everyone arrived in the Command Center, seeing Ritsuko run in from the other side. On the main
screen Altron was entering Tokyo–3, and beginning its assault on the city with all the weapons in the
city firing endlessly on it. The Gundam pilots looked up at the main screen in confusion, taking a
moment to realize who it was.

"Colonel, we've got a definite hostile." Maya said.

"How do you know it's hostile?" Misato asked.

"And why are we firing?" Kaji asked.

"We set the weapons on hit standby, and it attacked." Hyuga replied. "We can't seem to hit it at
all…"

"You won't be able to." Heero said.

"Why not?" Misato asked.

"That's a Gundam." Duo said.

"Yeah, the fifth one we mentioned." Quatre said.

"Altron Gundam." Trowa finished.

"What Gundam?" Asuka asked.

"Altron Gundam, piloted by Wufei Chang…" Duo said.

"The idiot." Heero said plainly. "He never thinks anything through… he probably thought you were
strong and decide to attack."

"He hates weak opponents." Quatre said. "And he's a kind of a loner."

"And woman." Trowa added.

"He, what?!!" Mari and Asuka said angrily.

"He doesn't like woman." Trowa added. "I don't know why either… it's quite stupid."

"Well, he's an idiot." Heero said. "I'm surprised that he's even here. I didn't think he'd ever listen to
Lady Une, or Sally Po."

"Well, I bet he's blaming them for ending up here." Duo said. "But that Gundam of his is tricky…"

"Explain." Gendo said as he arrived.

"It has twin flamethrowers in each hand, with can extend out several meters. There are also claws
for grappling on each arm and a pair of beam cannons on some kind of tail." Heero explained. "It's quite
a powerful Gundam."

"You forgot about the double ended Trident and his martial arts skills." Quatre added.

"So, it's a walking killing machine." Misato muttered.

"That's any Gundam in a nutshell." Duo quipped.

"Well, we need to stop it." Kaji said.
"Yes, but we only have Unit–01 and one active pilot." Misato said.

"Who's that?" Shinji asked.

"Me…" Asuka said.

"So, we're defenseless…" Aoba said.

"Yeah, Unit–01 isn't configured for Asuka." Ritsuko said. "She can't pilot it."

"Fuck off Akagi, I can pilot Unit–01!" Asuka said angrily.

"No, it's impossible!" Ritsuko said. "Unit–01 is not your EVA!"

"Why can't I pilot it?!" Asuka shouted. "I'm the only pilot we have, Unit–XP and Unit–02 aren't in any shape to fight, and those Gundams are all damaged, I'm all we've got!"

"No, you've already ruined one EVA, you're not ruining another!" Ritsuko shouted.

"STOP IT!" Shinji shouted. "I don't care if Asuka pilots Unit–01, just let her get out there and do something!"

Everyone stared in shock at Shinji's outburst, as Asuka blushed at Shinji defending her.

"Well, Commander, what are your orders?" Misato asked.

"Send out Soryu in Unit–01, with any luck it will work, if not, Shinji… you will have to pilot it yourself, regardless of your condition." Gendo said.

"You've got to get out of your fucking mind!" Mari shouted. "Shinji's too hurt to do anything with Unit–01!"

"Well, then, perhaps that will motivate Asuka to make sure she syncs with Unit–01." Gendo said coldly.

"Mari… I'll be fine." Asuka said angrily. "I'll get out there and kick that idiot's ass."

"Asuka… you need a plan." Shinji said. "Heero… do you know of any weak points on that thing? Or maybe the pilot's weakness?"

Heero pointed at Ritsuko. "Has that one, Akagi, modified the communications system yet?"

"Only in Unit–01." Ritsuko said.

"Then communicate to him that you're a woman." Heero said. "That will distract him long enough for you to pummel him."

"Sounds like a good plan to me." Asuka said. "I'll go get ready."

"There isn't time." Misato said. "Wear your clothes, and get to the Cages."

"Yeah, yeah…" Asuka muttered.

"Asuka, wait." Shinji said. "Just… be careful."

"Of course, baka." Asuka said. "I'll be back before you can even miss me."
Asuka was sitting inside Unit–01. It was weird to for her to be in an Entry Plug without her plugsuit, but it was even weirder being inside Unit–01. It felt familiar, but different somehow.

"Well… this feels oddly comfortable." Asuka muttered. "Alright, I'm in here, guys."

"Asuka, are you ready?" Misato asked.

"Yep… let's start this thing." Asuka said.

"It is on." Maya replied. "Synchronization rate at 0.01%…"

"What?" Asuka asked.

"Your sync is too low." Ritsuko said cruelly. "I told you that you couldn't pilot it."

"Come on, her sync is fine." Mari said angrily. "I'm sure you're reading it wrong."

"No…" Maya said sullenly. "0.01%, and that's barely registering…"

"But, she… Unit–01…" Shinji said. "She can pilot Unit–01!"

"Shinji, get ready to deploy." Gendo said. "Your girlfriend is no use in Unit–01."

"She is not!" Shinji shouted. "I know she can pilot Unit–01!"

"Figures she couldn't deliver on her promise, just like always, all bark and no bite." Ritsuko said. "She's just a useless pilot."

"That's not a very nice thing to say." Quatre said.

"Perhaps she just needs to concentrate more…" Trowa said.

"I know what it is…" Shinji said.

"Quiet, Shinji." Ritsuko said. "You have no idea how the Evangelions work."

"STOP BEING SUCH A F**KING BITCH!" Shinji screamed at Ritsuko. "JUST SHUT UP AND LET ME TRY SOMETHING!"

At hearing Shinji over the comm, Unit–01 strained against its restraints. "Uh… what was that?" Asuka asked.

"Unit–01 responded to Shinji." Kaji said.

"Is that normal?" Heero asked.

"With Shinji and Unit–01 it is." Mari quipped.

"So, is anyone going to let my baka try whatever it is he was going to?" Asuka asked. "I mean, we're on the clock here…"

"Shinji, go ahead." Kaji said. "We don't really have anything to lose…"

"Asuka, are you ok?" Shinji asked. "Are your speakers turned up really loud?"

"Yeah, I'm fine. And I can turn them up for you." Asuka replied. "But I'm hoping your idea
works…” Asuka sighed. "Whatever it is."

"It should…” Shinji said nervously. "Unit–01, let Asuka pilot, she's the only one that can save us! Let her pilot! I can't, I'm too injured from last time… and Mari's still sick…” Shinji pleaded. "Please, she's our only hope!"

Inside the Entry Plug, Asuka felt a surge of power and feeling enter her body as Unit–01 lurched against its restraints once again. "I think it's on now!" Asuka said. "It feels like it should! Thanks, baka…”

"You're welcome Asuka." Shinji said. "Now go out there and kick his ass."

"You don't need to tell me twice." Asuka said. "Maya, is it all set?"

"Yeah, you're set Asuka, sync at 38.9%." Maya said. "Unit–01 is ready for launch."

"Bitchin." Asuka said.

"Move it to the elevator." Misato said. "Clear the launch path, and Asuka, you're being deployed right into the battle zone."

"No shit, Misato." Asuka said. "I'm ready."

"Asuka, be careful." Heero said. "If you're forced to engage in hand to hand combat, you will be at a disadvantage. Just try and distract him."

"Yeah, I know, my having a vagina will piss him off…” Asuka muttered angrily. "Misato, I'm ready when you are."

"Alright Asuka… Evangelion Unit–01… LAUNCH!" Misato ordered.

Asuka shot upwards at high speed, and she gripped the control yokes tightly, smelling the faint scent that Shinji had. "Alright… let's do this Unit–01…” Asuka said quietly. "For my baka Shinji…”

Wufei was flying around, dodging weapons fire as he saw the Evangelion elevator open up and the massive purple Evangelion emerge and stare towards him.

"What is that thing…” Wufei said. "It looks strong… but I'll still destroy you!"

Altrion charged towards Unit–01, firing its Twin Beam Cannons and flamethrowers at the Evangelion, only for its A.T. Field to deflect every shot, much to Wufei's shock.

"What… how is that possible?" Wufei muttered.

"Because asshole, I'm stronger than you." Asuka shouted over the intercom. "Deal with it."

"How do you have my frequencies?!" Wufei shouted. "No one has these!"

"Just think of it this way, I'm smarter than you, dummkopf!" Asuka said.

"I doubt it!" Wufei said. "You probably tortured it out of those fools!" Altron Gundam retracted its arms and retracted the Dragon Claws. "I won't be as easy to defeat as they were! My Natak is unstoppable!"

"You say that." Asuka said. "But I can't wait to see how you handle a girl beating you up!"
"What… a woman?" Wufei said. "A woman is doing this? Impossible, women are weak, they can't fight!"

"Well, then I'm gonna have to beat this lesson into you." Asuka said angrily. "I'm better than you!"

"No you're not!" Wufei shouted as Altron Gundam charged in for a close range attack, pulling out its Double Ended Beam Trident. "You're just a woman!"

Unit–01 was still locked in its restraints, and was unable to move, making Altron's attack unavoidable, with the trident burying itself in Unit–01’s chest. "Ha, see, she didn't even try to dodge!" Wufei said. "You should stop fighting and let a real warrior show you how it's done!"

"AAAAHHHHHH!" Asuka screamed. "You're gonna pay for that, motherfucker!"

Asuka was clutching her chest tightly as she saw a red mark start to form under her t–shirt. She saw Altron keep attacking her from all sides with its beam trident, causing her more and more pain and injuries.

"Asuka, are you ok?" Misato asked. "You're blood pressure is dropping."

"Yeah, I'm only bleeding a little bit…" Asuka said. "But there's a different problem… I'm stuck, can you release the restraints already?!"

"We're working on it, they're jammed." Hyuga said.

"Asuka, just break out of them!" Shinji shouted. "It's not that hard!"

"Alright… let's fucking do this!" Asuka shouted as she slammed the control yokes forward. "Time to kick his fucking ass!"

Unit–01 lurched against its restraints and ripped free of them. As Altron came in for another strike, Unit–01’s left arm, backhanding it away, sending it careening into the ground.

"Damn woman, how did you get free?!" Wufei shouted.

Asuka moved Unit–01 so that it was leering over Altron. "I told you asshole, you were going to pay for hitting me!"

Altron stood back up and charged at Asuka again. "I'm not letting some weak woman defeat me! You're not strong enough to defeat a true warrior!"

"What are you stupid, just shut the fuck up, Wufei!" Asuka shouted as she slammed Unit–01’s fist into Altron's chest and slamming the Gundam into the ground. "Being a woman means shit when it comes to fighting, it comes down to whether or not you just a fucking bitch!"

"You can't stop me…" Wufei said weakly.

"Sure, tell that to my fucking huge purple foot!" Asuka shouted as she brought Unit–01’s foot down on top of Altron, implanting into the ground. "Target down." Asuka said proudly. "Like a bitch…"

Everyone in the Command Center looked on in awe at how quick the battle had been. Misato had deployed recovery teams to get Wufei and Altron back into NERV HQ as the monitor watched
Unit-01 lumber back towards one of the launch elevators.

"What the fuck was that?" Duo asked.

"It was very fast…” Trowa said.

"I know, it felt like our battle went on forever." Quatre said.

"I know, right?" Mari said. "She wrecked his ass!"

"Asuka, are you ok?" Shinji asked.

"Yeah, baka, I'm fine." Asuka said. "I was bleeding, but it's kinda stopped."

"Alright, well, the medical teams will still be meeting you, ok?" Misato said.

"Yeah, yeah, I know, SOP and all." Asuka said. "But to be honest, I just wanted him to stop fucking talking … he was getting on my fucking nerves, and I still want to kick his ass." Asuka said angrily.

"Nice work, Asuka." Misato said. "You literally kicked his ass."

"Well, tell me when he's better, and I'll give him a round two." Asuka said angrily.

Duo turned to Shinji. "You're really going out with her? You must be suicidal!"

"I…” Shinji muttered.

"Or a masochist…” Heero quipped.

"They have something very… unique…” Mari said happily. "They're absolutely adorable together too."

Shinji blushed. "I love her, and that's all that really matters…” Shinji said shyly. "She's really wonderful to be with."

"That's right, baka, that's all that matters." Asuka said. "And you're not so bad yourself."

Heero turned to Misato and Kaji as Unit-01 got on the elevator. "What will happen to Wufei? Will he be interrogated?"

"No, I don't think it's necessary." Kaji said. "Is it, Commander?"

"No, it's not." Gendo said. "I leave whatever happens to the new one at your discretion, Kaji."

"Well, Kaji?" Shinji asked.

"I'll talk to him." Trowa said. "Tell him we're in a safe place and that he has no need to be so… difficult."

"We'll talk to him together and explain the situation." Heero said.

"Alright, then, problem solved." Kaji said. "When he wakes up, you get the first crack at him."

"Actually…” Mari said. "You'll need to let Asuka have a gone kinda deserves it."

"Wait, what?" Duo asked.
"Asuka will want to actually draw blood." Shinji said. "I convinced her you guys didn't mean to hurt me… but Wufei… said some things…"

Heero smiled. "Well, he could use a slight attitude adjustment."

"Heero, isn't that a little harsh?" Quatre asked.

"Not really, we all know what he's said before." Heero said.

"Yeah, it would be nice to not hear him go on about weaklings all the damn time." Duo said. "Maybe she could shut him up?"

"Well, then, after you talk to dopey, it looks like he's getting a visit from a very angry German…" Mari said.

October 10, 2016 – NERV HQ, Medical Wing

Wufei was unconscious and unbeknownst to him, there were two people watching him sleep. However, Heero's patience had run out, and he decided to take matters into his own hands.

Heero shook the bed "Wake up." Heero said loudly.

"Heero, we have to wait." Trowa said. "He'll be no use if he's groggy."

"I don't really care." Heero said. "He needs to take responsibility for being an idiot."

"Really, coming from the guy who blew himself up?" Duo asked.

"I admit I made a mistake." Heero said. "I've made many mistakes in my life… Field Marshal Noventa, not killing Treize when I had a chance… and that girl's dog…"

"What dog?" Trowa asked.

"Nothing." Heero said as he shook the bed again. "I said, wake up!"

Wufei stirred slightly, and looked over at Heero. "So, now I'm just like you fools…"

"What are you mumbling about, Wufei?" Duo asked.

"I've been captured, just like you." Wufei said. "And I was beaten by a woman…"

"Well, half of that is true." Duo said.

"I wasn't beaten by a woman?" Wufei asked.

"No, that happened." Trowa said. "She took you out in one punch."

"Actually, it was more like a one two punch…" Duo said. "The foot being the second punch and all."

"It doesn't matter," Wufei said. "I don't deserve Nataku anymore if a weak woman can defeat me…"

"Actually, for thinking like that, you don't deserve a Gundam at all." Heero said.

"What are you talking about?" Wufei said. "I am a warrior!"
"No, you're an idiot." Heero replied. "You attacked without assessing the situation, even though you enjoy pointing out how dumb we are for rushing into things."

"They had armed weapons…" Wufei said.

"They didn't fire until you did, you moron!" Duo shouted.

"Who is they?" Wufei asked. "All I know is that Lady Une sent me here to look for you… and where are we?"

"We're in a different reality." Duo said.

"What?" Wufei said. "How is that even…"

"Wormholes." Trowa said. "They brought us here."

"They what?" Wufei asked.

"A wormhole is what we were investigating." Heero said. "It lead here. When we were pulled through, we ended up in a fight with two those Evangelions."

"Yeah, and we lasted a hell of a lot longer than you did against one." Duo said.

"So what?" Wufei said. "That doesn't explain what we're doing here!"

"All you need to know is for the time being, we're trapped here." Heero said. "Beyond that, it's anyone's guess as to when we're going home."

"Well, that'll be a problem, as there's issues brewing back home!" Wufei said. "That's the only reason I agreed to help Lady Une… danger is coming, and another weak mind is trying to cause trouble."

"Enough with the weak people thing, man!" Duo exclaimed. "By the looks of things, you're the weak one now."

"Excuse you?" Wufei said. "I am a…"

"No… not really right now…" Trowa said bluntly. "You say you're a great warrior and were only able to score a hit when the enemy was restrained… I think you've gotten soft."

"I have not gotten soft!" Wufei said as he heard a banging on the door. "What was that?"

"Are you guys done yet?!" Asuka shouted. "I'm getting impatient!"

"Why does her voice sound familiar?" Wufei asked.

"That's the girl who kicked your ass." Duo said.

"And she wants to repay you for the things you said." Heero said.

"What things?" Wufei asked.

"Well, if you can't figure it out, she'll just beat it into you." Trowa said.

"She's a woman, she can't hurt me!" Wufei said as he saw the door get kicked open and saw a very irate Asuka staring him down.

"So, he thinks I can't kick his ass?!" Asuka shouted. "Get him out of bed, I don't like having a
handicap!

Wufei struggled to stand up, but got to his feet and faced Asuka down. "Listen, woman, I don't care what you think, I can take anything you can dish out!"

"Fine…" Asuka clenched her fists. "So, do you even know why I want to hit you?"

"No, but I assume it has something to do with your time of the month…" Wufei said.

"Wrong answer, asshole." Asuka said quietly as she ran at him and hit him with a right hook to the face followed by a knee to the gut, sending Wufei staggering back.

Wufei coughed up a bit of blood. "Are you guys gonna help?" Wufei asked.

"Nope." Duo said. "You brought this on yourself."

"Well, are you going to fight back, or keep acting like a bitch?" Asuka asked.

Wufei charged at Asuka, sending a fist towards her chest, catching her off guard. Asuka countered with a knee to his groin, making Wufei double over in pain.

"Look at that, he actually has a dick." Asuka said angrily. "So, have you learned your lesson, asshole?"

"Only that women can't fight properly and have to resort to cheap tricks." Wufei replied.

"Yeah, still hasn't learned yet." Asuka said as Wufei straightened up. "Alright, time to finish this…" Asuka stepped forward and sunk her fist into his gut, doubling him over again, then she followed up by taking both her hand and shoving Wufei's face into her knee, knocking him out cold.

"Is he unconscious?" Duo asked.

"Yep… like a bitch…" Asuka said.

"So, are you good now, Asuka?" Duo asked.

"Yeah, I feel a lot better." Asuka said.

"Well, after that fight, I would hope so." Mari said proudly from behind Shinji's wheelchair. "I mean, you might have broken his nose."

"No, I didn't feel anything fracture…" Asuka said. "But I think he'll have learned his lesson… maybe you can talk to him again when he wakes up."

"When would that be?" Trowa asked.

"Probably a few hours." Heero said. "The force of that blow and his other injuries, he'll have a mild concussion, some facial bruising."

"So, do you think he'll remember who knocked him out?" Trowa asked.

"I hope so." Heero said. "Otherwise, I think Asuka will end up hitting him again…"

"You're not wrong, Heero." Asuka said. "Oh, and seeing as you kept your promise to help with a fight… we're friends now I guess…"
"How did we help you with the fight?" Trowa asked.

"Well, you told me that moron's weakness, so that counts." Asuka said. "And somehow I think it will make my baka happy if we're all friends."

"You know me so well, Asuka." Shinji said.

"Yeah, I know how to make you happy." Asuka said.

"Phrasing, princess…" Mari said.

"Shut up, four eyes." Asuka snapped. "But, uh, baka, can you get me some ice?"

"Asuka, I haven't been discharged yet." Shinji said. "I can't really do much…"

"Well, my hands hurt." Asuka said. "His skull is fucking thick."

"Considering how he views people, that's not a surprise…” Heero quipped. "He's quite old fashioned…"

"He's a misogynist." Mari said.

"Well… yes…” Duo said. "Can't really defend that."

"No, you can't." Asuka said. "So, I guess you guys aren't so bad after all…” Asuka smirked. "Maybe it won't be so bad having you guys around."

"Well, as long as we have somewhere to stay…” Duo said.

"Oh, yeah…” Shinji said. "Misato told me to tell you guys, you'll be staying with us… or at least in the apartment next door. She was going to tell you before, but Wufei attacked."

"Is this true?" Trowa asked.

"Oh, yes, miss Misato old me everything." Quatre said. "She even said Wufei can join us if he wants to."

"Oh, that sounds nice…” Duo said.

"And the doctors have cleared the puppy here for release tomorrow morning." Mari said happily. "So we'll finally get a nice home cooked meal again!"

"I'm so glad that I mean that much to you, Mari…” Shinji muttered.

"Oh, relax puppy, you know I love you.” Mari said.

"Yeah, only for my cooking…” Shinji said.

"Hey, if you're going to accuse me of that, you have to accuse the princess of the same thing!" Mari said defensively.

"Don't drag me into this four eyes!” Asuka shouted. "I love him for how nice he is plus all the stuff he does for me!"

"Hey, didn't both of you promise to stop fighting?" Shinji asked.

"Yes…” Asuka and Mari answered sullenly.
"Well then, stop acting like children." Shinji said.

"Sure…" Mari mumbled.

"Fine…" Asuka replied.

"Good, now can we go get something to eat?" Shinji asked. "I haven't eaten all day…"

"What about Wufei?" Quatre asked.

"Yeah, he's just lying there…" Duo muttered.

"Leave him there." Heero said. "After what he said, he deserves it…"

To Be Continued

A/N: I do not own Evangelion or any of the characters, GAINAX and the other distributors of NGE related material do. I am simply using them as a backdrop for my fanfic. I also do not own Gundam Wing, Sunrise does, as do their licensed distributors.

Sync Score Rankings!
Shinji – 92.5% (No Change)
Rei – 75.0% (No Change)
Asuka – 38.9% (+6.2%)
Mari – 36.4% (No Change)

And now an addition to Mari's nicknames, Gundam Pilots Edition:
Heero – soldier boy
Duo – father
Trowa – sleepy
Quatre – blondie
Wufei – dopey

The title of this chapter is basically how I feel whenever Wufei talks shit about people. He could be so annoying at times, I usually muted him when he was bitching. So, having the chapter named after that was more of a catharsis for me than anything else.

Now, as for the reason the battle was short, in the dub, Wufei is nothing short than an asshole. So the fact that a woman is beating him up means that his reasoning goes out the window, and Asuka lays him out in one hit, that and he doesn't deserve such a long fight scene. However, the physical beating he takes is to reinforce the fact that he's being an asshole.

As for everything that happened before Wufei arrived, well, they're using wormholes, or rather, Shinji's outburst over Rei almost dying (or appearing to be dead) ripped open the fabric of time and space, causing this nightmare/crossover.

As I said before, and will always say at the end of chapter, please leave comments, as I would like to try to improve the story going forward any way I can. And, hell, constructive criticism is a good thing.

つづく
Shinji was walking beside Asuka and Mari as they headed for the apartment complex. They were still a few blocks away, and they could just see the top of it from where they were. Shinji was just glad that they were all finally out of the hospital, considering that they in the past week they had all been in comas from injuries sustained in battle. However, now that all of them had been cleared to pilot again, which meant they all had their first sync test since Armisael had attacked.

"Why did they even bother giving us a sync test?" Asuka asked angrily as they turned onto their block and saw the entrance to the parking lot. "I mean, Shinji's the only one with an Evangelion."

"Princess, you know they probably missed torturing us with those stupid tests." Mari quipped. "I actually forgot how fucking boring they are… I'm still saying we need apps in the Entry Plugs."

"Well, it doesn't help that you took a nap either, Mari." Shinji said.

"What, I was bored and they won't let me talk to anyone… so I got sleepy…" Mari said defensively. "I don't even know why we have the stupid tests anyway, they're a waste of time. Imagine how much time we've lost sitting idly in our Entry Plugs…"

"Too much time…" Asuka muttered.

"I guess you're not wrong." Shinji said.

"But you know what the worst part is?" Mari asked.

"No… but I'm sure you're going to tell me." Shinji said.

"Now I'm too tired to celebrate you getting out of the hospital." Mari said sullenly. "I wanted to go to the karaoke bar… but now all I want to do is die slowly in my bed…"

"Way to be overdramatic as always, four eyes." Asuka said. "But she does have a point, I wanted to do something special too, but I don't have enough energy left."

"Guys, it's ok, really." Shinji said. "It's not the first time I've gotten out of the hospital, and I'm sure it won't be the last."

"Don't say that, puppy!" Mari shouted. "It's bad luck!"

"Mari, look at the last few weeks." Shinji said. "If I gambled, I'd say at least one of us will end up in the hospital again before Christmas."

"That's kinda dark for you puppy," Mari said.

"Blame the millionth coma." Shinji said.

"Alright, enough baka." Asuka said. "I'll protect you from anything else that happens, ok? Or, at
least I'll try."
"Thanks, Asuka." Shinji said, giving her a peck on the cheek, which caused her to blush.
"Baka, I didn't give you permission to kiss me!" Asuka said.
"I… it was only the cheek…" Shinji said as he looked at her in confusion.
"Well… I don't like doing that kind of thing in public." Asuka said.
"I was just trying to say thank you." Shinji said.
"Man, you two have a lot to work out, don't you?" Mari asked.
"What are you talking about four eyes?" Asuka asked.
"Well, you're yelling at the puppy for being affectionate, and that's the wrong message to send, princess… look, his eyes are all sad." Mari said.
"No they're not…" Asuka said before looking at Shinji and seeing a great deal of sadness in his eyes. "Oh… baka, I didn't mean to hurt your feelings."
"It's ok, Asuka." Shinji said, giving her a smile.
"No its not, I don't want to screw our relationship up!" Asuka said emphatically. "I want it to… I want it to go well. I want you to be happy."
"I… I am happy, Asuka." Shinji said. "We're dating, aren't we? That's all I've really wanted for so long… anything else is just a bonus."
Mari's eyes teared up. "That's like the most romantic thing I've ever heard…" Mari said as she wiped the tears out of her eyes. "I'm not gonna cry… I'm not gonna cry…"
"Shinji, is that really how you feel?" Asuka asked as Shinji nodded silently. "Well… I'm not sure what to say…"
"You don't need to say anything!" Mari exclaimed. "Just kiss him you idiot!"
Asuka blushed profusely at Mari's suggestion, but decided to just roll with it and kissed Shinji passionately on the lips, wrapping her arms around him and holding him close. As the shock wore off, Shinji reciprocated.
Tears started streaming down Mari's face. "Awww… now I'm crying… damn it…" Mari said as she tried to stem the tears from falling.
As Asuka pulled away from Shinji's face, but kept him close she turned her head to Mari. "Why are you crying though?" Asuka asked.
"I… I'm just so happy for both of you…" Mari said as she wiped more tears away. "You both deserve to be happy more than anything else."
"Hey, Mari, you'll be happy soon too." Asuka said. "Rei will wake up and you guys can… well do whatever you guys are gonna do."
"We're gonna go out on a date…" Mari said.
"Hey, that's what we should do." Asuka said happily. "We should go out on a date!" Asuka saw Mari's face fall. "Or, you know, wait until after Rei wakes up." Mari's face perked up a little. "We can all go out together."

"Whatever you say, Asuka." Shinji said with a smile as he whispered to her. "That was nice of you, Asuka…"

"Well, she looked so sad when I said it, I felt bad…" Asuka whispered back to him. "And I don't want her to cry again…"

Shinji kissed Asuka on the cheek again and Asuka blushed once more. "Sorry, forgot to ask for permission." Shinji joked.

"Oh, be quiet baka." Asuka said. "You don't need to ask permission to do that, or this." Asuka grabbed his hand. "Whenever we walk somewhere, I want you to hold my hand. I want everyone to know you belong to me."

"Wrong choice of words, princess." Mari said.

"What?" Asuka asked. "That way no home wrecking whore tries to steal him away!"

"Why would someone do that?" Shinji asked.

"Ask my dumb fuck of a father." Asuka said.

"What did he do?" Shinji asked.

"He… uh… I don't want to talk about it…" Asuka replied.

"He probably cheated on her mother." Mari said. "Or am I wrong?"

Asuka glared at her. "No, you're not wrong." Asuka said. "But I don't want to talk about it, ok? Do you understand now, four eyes, or should I draw a picture?"

"Yeah… sorry Asuka." Mari said as she enveloped the girl in a hug. "Please don't hate me."

"I don't." Asuka said as they made it to the parking lot. "It's just a sore subject."

"Well, my dad's an asshole too if it helps." Shinji said.

"It doesn't, but thanks for trying baka…" Asuka said. "It's sad that somehow, your dad is probably nicer than my dad."

"Wow… that's a depressing comparison." Mari said.

"I know…" Asuka said. "But that's all I want to say about it."

"Ok." Shinji said as they reached the elevator. "So, what do you guys want for dinner? I feel like I haven't cooked in forever."

"Uh…" Mari said.

"Not sure." Asuka replied. "I don't think we have any food in the apartment."

"Oh, well, I'll figure something out." Shinji said as the trio got onto the elevator. "Oh… and I have to cook for the others too…"
"Oh, yeah, they moved in today." Mari said.

"Well, when we get up there, let's see what we have, and I'll help you with the shopping." Asuka suggested. "I should at least try and help."

"Are you sure?" Shinji asked. "You hate food shopping."

"Well, if it helps you out a little bit, it's the least I can do." Asuka said as she pecked him on the cheek. "Call it a bonus of dating me."

---

Heero was relaxing in an armchair in their new apartment. Duo and Quatre were sitting across from him on the couch and watching what was on the TV. Wufei was meditating in the corner, wincing slightly every time someone moved, and Trowa was asleep in one of the rooms on a simple cot.

"Well… this isn't so bad." Duo said. "Beats sitting in that depressing base."

"Yeah, but didn't you understand what Misato said?" Quatre asked. "We have to go to school now."

"Hey, that's not so bad." Duo said. "School is kinda fun, just ask Heero."

"I dislike hearing other people's opinions." Heero said. "And the teachers are sometimes quite useless. But overall, it could be worse, we could be fighting."

"So, you're glad for the break?" Quatre asked.

"Quatre, we can't fight all the time." Heero said. "It's not practical, everyone needs rest from war, otherwise there is no fun in life."

"Holy shit, that was deep…" Duo muttered.

"Are you sure it won't be that bad?" Quatre asked.

"Why does it matter Quatre?" Heero asked.

"Well, I've never been to an actual school before." Quatre said.

"Then how did you learn?" Duo asked.

"Well, I was homeschooled." Quatre said. "I've had tutors since I could walk to teach me all sorts of things, and of course Instructor H taught me how to pilot a Gundam…"

"So, you've never been to a normal school?" Duo asked. "I mean, even Heero has been to an actual school."

"Only as a cover, Duo." Heero said. "I never really enjoyed doing homework."

"Who does?" Duo asked.

"I do," Wufei said.

"How and why?" Duo asked.

"I enjoy learning." Wufei replied. "Learning opens whole new worlds of information and ideas to your mind."
"Wow, how hard did Asuka hit you?" Duo asked.

Wufei gave Duo a sideways glance. "I'm not answering that."

"Figured you wouldn't." Duo replied. "So, wasn't the kid getting out of the hospital today? Or am I wrong?"

"No you're right, Shinji was released this morning." Heero said. "They should have been back by now…"

"Do you think they're ok?" Quatre asked.

"I'm sure they're fine." Heero said. "I think alarms would have gone off if something happened."

"Well, I'm gonna look outside." Duo said. "Maybe they didn't know that we're next door."

"Or perhaps Shinji and Asuka want some time alone…" Heero said.

"Wait… what?" Quatre asked.

"Sex, Quatre, sex." Duo said. "Man, you're so innocent."

"Sorry, I just don't think like that." Quatre replied.

"It's alright, buddy." Duo said as he headed for the door. "Oh, hey, I can hear them!"

Quatre and Heero got up and followed Duo outside to the open air hallway that overlooked part of the parking lot. Shinji and Asuka were holding hands, and Mari was unlocking the door to their apartment.

"Heya, guys, where you been?!" Duo shouted.

"Duo, you don't have to yell." Shinji said. "We're right here."

"I know, I'm just glad to see you out of the hospital!" Duo said happily.

"I agree, I'm glad our fight didn't permanently injure you." Quatre added.

"Its fine guys, I told you I've had worse." Shinji said.

"Yeah, my baka's almost died a few times…” Asuka said. "And somehow he just barely escapes death."

"That seems unnatural." Duo said.

"Says the so called God of Death…” Heero said.

"Well, Kaji says my best skill is my luck…” Shinji said.

"That makes sense." Quatre said. "You have a guardian… well, I don't want to say angel… do I?"

"No, in that case, it's ok. An angel won't kill us, but an Angel will." Asuka said. "And he's gotta have someone protecting him, right?"

"Yeah, my mother." Shinji said quietly.

"I'm sure she is, baka." Asuka said. "Just like mine is there for me too."
'They don't even know how right they are…' Mari thought. "So, uh, do you guys want to come in?" Mari asked. "I mean, if you're cool with that. We're kinda tired…"

"Oh, sure." Duo said. "That'd be cool." Duo stuck his head back into their apartment. "Hey, Wufei, we're going next door!"

Wufei walked calmly out to the hallway and then froze when he saw Asuka. "I think I'll continue to meditate in silence."

"What, are you afraid the princess is gonna beat you up again?" Mari asked.

"No…” Wufei said as he dipped into a deep bow. "Miss Soryu, I wish to apologize for my actions the other day. They were unwarranted, and after deep meditation on the subject, I realize I was wrong. I am not seeking forgiveness, as I do not deserve it."

Asuka stared at him for a moment before she said anything. "Was it really the meditation, or was it the beating that made you rethink things?" Asuka asked.

"Both." Wufei said. "I have never met a woman as strong as you before. Logically my views have shifted with my deep meditation on the subject."

"Yeah, ok." Asuka said. "As long as you don't spout that shit again, we'll be fine."

"Understood." Wufei said. "If you'll excuse me…"

"Yeah, sure dopey, see ya later." Mari said as Wufei went back inside.

"Are you referring to me, miss?" Wufei asked gruffly as he passed in the doorway.

"Yeah…” Mari said. "I'm Mari by the way."

"I know, Heero explained who you are." Wufei said. "Why that particular nickname?"

"Because what you said the other day was kinda fucking stupid…” Mari said with a grin.

"Fair enough." Wufei said as he disappeared inside.

"Hey, where's sleepy?" Mari asked as the boys' apartment door closed.

"Oh, do you mean Trowa?" Quatre asked as Mari nodded. "He's napping."

"I think you picked an appropriate nickname there, Mari." Duo said as they walked inside.

As they went inside, Shinji made his way into the kitchen and looked around, finding the cabinets fully stocked with all sorts of food, and when he opened the fridge, he found it stocked with fresh meat, fruit, and vegetables.

"Where did all this come from?" Shinji asked.

"So, then the selection of food is adequate." Heero said.

"Huh?" Mari asked.

"Misato told us to go get food so you could cook." Quatre said. "So you think this will be enough for all of us?"
"For ten people?" Shinji asked. "It should last a few days."

"Ten?" Mari asked.

"Yeah Mari ten… you, Asuka, me, Misato, Kaji, Heero, Duo, Trowa, Quatre, and Wufei." Shinji said. "Ten people, Mari."

Mari counted off on her fingers and stared at Shinji. "That's a lot of people…"

"No shit, four eyes." Asuka said.

"Hey, me and Heero can help out of you need it." Duo said. "I can kinda cook, and Heero's good at a lot of things."

"I can prep the food, but am in way good at cooking it." Heero said.

"I'll take any help I can get." Shinji said.

"Yeah, we're not allowed to cook anymore…” Mari said.

"Why?" Quatre asked.

"Well… we almost killed Shinji trying to cook once." Asuka said. "So he banned us from cooking ever again."

"We're allowed to order takeout though." Mari said.

"So, did they figuratively…" Duo started.

"Literally." Shinji said. "It's kind of a gruesome story too…"

"Well… shit." Duo said.

"Well, I think we can ask about that later." Heero said. "I'm curious as to why it took you guys so long to get back from the base."

"Oh, well, they wanted us for some sync tests." Shinji said.

"What are sync tests?" Quatre asked.

"They test our sync rate with the Evangelions." Shinji said. "Our sync rate is what allows us to pilot. The higher it is, the better we can pilot, but the more severe our injuries from the fight. It's a… something."


"Yeah, that." Shinji said. "Thanks, Asuka."

"No problem, baka." Asuka replied.

"They sound like a waste of time." Heero said.

"You're not wrong, soldier boy." Mari said. "They are extremely boring and time consuming."

"And they don't really help us overall with fighting either." Asuka added.

"So why do them?" Quatre asked.
"We were ordered to." Mari replied. "We didn't have a choice."

"Some orders should be disregarded." Heero said.

"Yeah, but usually when we disobey orders, we're in Evangelions." Shinji replied. "Outside of those, we're just regular kids."

"Maybe you could complain to Misato." Quatre said. "She seems quite reasonable."

"Well…" Asuka said.

"She can be difficult at times." Mari said. "But maybe we'll try that…"

"It just seems cruel to do such pointless tests right after Shinji leaves the hospital." Heero said. "Who does that?"

"Dr. Akagi…" Asuka muttered angrily.

"Let's not talk about her, ok? We're having a good day, right, Asuka?" Shinji asked.

"Yeah, let's not talk about the cunt!" Mari said happily getting a stare from Duo and a shocked look from Quatre. "Trust me blondie, that still doesn't describe what kind of person she is."

"O… ok…" Quatre said nervously.

Shinji looked between Quatre's shocked look, Duo's half grin, and Mari trying not to laugh and decided to change the subject. "So, do you guys want to eat here or in your apartment?"

"Well, I'd rather eat here." Quatre said. "Less to worry about."

"What about Trowa and Wufei?" Quatre asked.

"Well, we can wake Trowa up." Duo said.

"And if Wufei wants to eat, he can socialize with the rest of us." Heero added.

"Sounds like a plan to me." Shinji said happily as he pulled on his apron. "Now… what can I make from this stuff…"

——

Asuka and Mari had just finished the dishes as Misato and Kaji got home. Shinji heard them come in as Asuka warmed up their food.

"So, you guys ate already?" Misato asked. "Thanks for waiting."

"Well, yeah, we weren't waiting for you." Asuka said. "You were busy with shit, right?"

"Yes, the damage from Wufei's arrival…" Misato said.

"But good news, Unit–01's been fully repaired." Kaji said. "And Unit–02 just needs the new power socket, which is being shipped as we speak!"

"What about Unit–XP?" Mari asked.

"Well…" Kaji said. "That still needs some work. The limbs were severely damaged, even the support trusses within them took too much damage. New parts are being custom fabricated now."
"What, they didn't stock spares?" Mari asked.

"Originally, your half an Evangelion wasn't meant for combat." Misato said. "We've adapted it since then, and they'll be adding extra supports to combat metal fatigue, and are putting in more powerful and energy efficient motors."

"Neat." Mari said. "How long?"

"At least six weeks." Kaji said. "There's just so much damage to fix."

"So, what, I'm the backup?" Mari asked.

"Basically yes." Misato said. "Sorry, Mari."

"Fine, I don't want any more sync testing then." Mari said defiantly. "If I don't have to fight, I'm not wasting my time on that shit."

"No go, Mari." Misato said. "You've got to."

"Why?" Mari asked. "We've had this argument with the cunt, it's really of no use at all."

"Well, it keeps you all occupied and out of trouble." Misato said.

"What trouble?" Asuka asked. "Besides the giant monsters that want to kill us."

"I don't know?" Misato said unconvincingly.

"Wait… what?" Shinji asked. "You don't have a single argument for why we have to keep doing those tests?"

"Yeah, I want a real reason, otherwise I'm not doing them anymore." Asuka said defiantly.

"Ditto." Mari said.

"Back me up, Kaji." Misato said.

"Nope, you're on your own on this one." Kaji said. "The kids could be out enjoying themselves instead of being in those Entry Plugs all damn day."

"Great, thanks." Misato said. "Look, because of all your fights with Ritsuko, she's not going to let you all get away without being tortured in those things."

"So it's our fault for standing up for ourselves?" Shinji asked. "How is that even remotely fair? She was the crazy person. And don't tell me life isn't fair, cause I know that, and this just seems excessive."

Misato stood there speechless.

"Wow… I didn't think that was possible." Mari said. "Miso's lost her ability to speak."

"Yeah, no shit." Asuka said. "Nice job, baka… clearly she can't answer your question."

"I… no…" Misato stammered.

"So, why do we have to keep doing sync tests?" Shinji asked.

"Look, you just have to, I'm sorry." Misato said. "It's not my choice."
"See, why couldn't you lead with that?" Asuka asked.

"Sorry, I'm tired and hungry." Misato said.

"Yeah, so are we." Asuka said. "So, we're going to bed now… come on Shinji, we'll go to your room."

"No, you're not." Misato said.

"Excuse me?" Asuka asked.

"You two are not going in the same room together." Misato said.

"Why not?"

"Sex." Misato said. "I'm not letting you two have sex under my roof."

"Oh, but we have to listen to you and scruffy fuck like wild dogs." Mari said. "How does that make sense?"

"I don't want Asuka to get knocked up!" Misato said.

"Hey, who said we were having sex?!" Shinji said angrily. "Why can't we just spend some time together alone?"

"I don't trust you two alone together." Misato said. "Kaji?"

"I don't see a problem with it." Kaji said. "I think you're being a bit unreasonable."

"I am not!" Misato said angrily.

"You are." Kaji said. "Those two are more than responsible, and it would nice if they could spend some time together alone."

"I said no." Misato said. "That's final."

"But…" Shinji said.

"I swear to…" Asuka started.

"If either of you argue about it, I'll make sure you all have more sync testing, got it?" Misato said threateningly.

"Fine, be a bitch." Asuka said as she stormed off to her room.

"Great, thanks for ruining a nice day, Misato." Shinji said. "Night, Mari. Can you tell Asuka I said goodnight… I don't think she wants to be bothered right now."

"Yeah… she looks pissed." Mari said as she glared at Misato. "And you're not allowed in our room either, you might try and fuck us both or something."

As Shinji and Mari walked away angrily, Misato was left quite confused as to what just happened.

"Kaji… why didn't you help me?" Misato asked.

"Because you're being a bit of an ass." Kaji replied. "Don't you trust them to make the right decision for them?"
"Not really…” Misato said. "They disobey orders all the time."

"Misato, that's inside the Evangelions, where they have the most experience on the battlefield." Kaji explained. "Here, they just want to be happy, and you're ruining that."

"I am not." Misato said defiantly. "I just want them to be safe."

"How does this keep them safe?" Kaji asked.

"Do they really need to worry about a baby with what they're going through?" Misato asked. "Would Shinji be able to cope?"

"Seriously?" Kaji asked. "That's your half assed reason?"

"Do you remember our almost accident?" Misato asked.

"Yeah, I was kind of excited to have a kid…” Kaji said. "It wasn't so bad."

"Well, I just don't want them to go through that." Misato said stubbornly.

"I think you're making a mistake." Kaji replied.

"No, I'm not." Misato said. "Asuka would never risk more sync tests, and neither would Shinji."

"I think you underestimate the power of their love, which led Shinji to tear apart the base to get to Asuka during the Fifteenth Angel's assault…” Kaji said as he smirked. "And do you really think your little rule is gonna keep Asuka in her room all night?" Kaji asked.

"Well… shit…” Misato said. "I swear to…"

"No, if she goes in there, just trust them to make the right decision." Kaji said. "Can you do that for me?"

"Sure." Misato replied. "So, are you staying to eat?"

"Might as well." Kaji said. "I should never pass up Shinji's food."

"Jerk." Misato grumbled.

"Oh, and we can spend time together." Kaji said as he pulled their food out of the oven. "But, maybe in solidarity with Shinji and Asuka…"

"Fine, I'll tell them tomorrow they can stay in the same room together." Misato said. "Happy now?"

"That's the spirit, Misato!" Kaji said happily. "Now, let's eat!"

——

Heero was lying in bed, unable to sleep. Many things were keeping him from getting a restful night's sleep. On the surface of his mind were a young girl and her dog that Heero had once met during a mission for Doctor J. Flashes of their meeting in park kept flashing in his mind as he tried to sleep. Her dog licking his face, her handing him a flower, the Leo falling into the apartment building and exploding, Heero finding the dog's body, and hers, and then burying them nearby with tear drops on the grave.

"Why did that girl have to die…” Heero muttered.
"Hey, buddy, you still awake?" Duo asked.

"Yes." Heero said begrudgingly.

"How are you still awake?" Duo asked.

"I can't sleep." Heero said.

"How long has it been since you were asleep?" Duo asked.

"When we were unconscious." Heero replied.

"Wait, it's been that long?" Duo asked in shock. "Dude, you need to sleep!"

"I can sleep when I'm dead." Heero said.

"Heero, you gotta sleep." Duo said. "Is something bothering you?"

"No…" Heero replied.

"Bullshit." Duo said. "There's something wrong."

"It's… nothing." Heero said.

"It's got to be something." Duo replied. "You're not sleeping."

"It's… our world." Heero fibbed. "We've left it unprotected…"

"You mean we left Relena unprotected." Duo said.

"No, everyone is unprotected." Heero rebutted. "Noin, Dorothy, Howard, Lady Une, Sally Po, Hilde, Catherine, the Maganac Corps, Quatre's family, and Relena."

"So, you're actually worried about everyone?" Duo asked.

"Yes, it's only been a few months since the White Fang and OZ were subdued." Heero said. "And Wufei was talking about rumblings when he came through, I'm worried."

"So, that's what keeping you up?" Duo asked.

"Pretty much." Heero said. "Every day we're stuck here, is a day our own universe doesn't have us to protect it."

"Well, I'm sure we'll get home soon enough." Duo said. "So in the meantime, just be happy about the break from protecting everything."

"As much of a break you might think this is, I have a bad feeling about this." Heero said.

"How can you have a bad feeling?" Duo asked.

"If we can come through a wormhole, and Wufei came through another one, what else could appear?" Heero asked.

"Oh, shit…" Duo said. "Do you really think more stuff could come through?"

"It's a possibility." Heero said. "But you should get some rest."
"Why?" Duo asked. "We're talking."

"One of us should be rested in case something happens." Heero said.

"Alright, if you're gonna be difficult…" Duo said as he rolled over. "Night."

"Goodnight." Heero said as he returned to staring at the ceiling with a single tear escaping his right eye and dripping onto the bed. "How many more times must I kill that poor girl and her dog?" Heero asked himself as Duo started snoring. "When does the cycle of violence end?"

Shinji was half-asleep in his room when he heard the door slide open and closed and felt a warmth press up against him and start nuzzling his back.

"Are you asleep?" Asuka asked as she got into bed next to Shinji.

"You know that's a silly question to ask someone when they're asleep." Shinji said groggily. "If the person's asleep, they won't answer, or you're likely to wake them up…"

"So, you're awake then." Asuka said.

"Yes, Asuka, I am." Shinji said. "And didn't you hear Misato? She didn't want us in the same bed."

"Oh, she can shove her hypocritical opinion up her ass." Asuka said. "I've been waiting forever to do this, and I wanted to talk."

"So you're not mad I didn't come to see you?" Shinji asked.

"How could I be mad at you for that?" Asuka asked. "Plus, I wasn't in the mood to talk, so it was better you gave me space."

"Well, I'm glad you came in here." Shinji said. "I was too afraid of getting caught."

"I figured as much, baka." Asuka said. "Now, can you turn around so I can see your face?" Asuka asked. "I don't want to have this conversation with your back."

"What do you want to talk about?" Shinji asked as he obliged and rolled to face Asuka.

"My mother… and I guess a bit about my childhood too…" Asuka mumbled.

"Wait, you really want to talk about all of it?" Shinji asked. "I thought…"

"It is, I just didn't want to tell Mari about it." Asuka said. "I'm not in love with her, so it's none of her business. And I'm hoping maybe you can tell me a bit about your childhood too…"

"Yeah, everything that happened after we stopped talking as kids." Shinji said. "We have a lot to catch up on…"

"Yeah… my abusive father… your absent father… my mother getting into her accident… her death… your mom's death…" Asuka rattled off.

"So many happy memories." Shinji said.

"Well, we have to start somewhere, baka." Asuka said. "So, you know I found my mother's body, right?"
"Yeah, you told me that after…" Shinji started.

"Arael…" Asuka muttered as she remembered her time with the sadistic Angel. "But I never told you about my father."

"You said he was abusive." Shinji said.

"Yeah, he is." Asuka said. "After my mother got hurt, he wouldn't let me see her… which in hindsight was for the best, but he was really mean about it. He hated everything about Japan for some reason… and he's why I never called you again."

"How is that his fault?" Shinji asked. "Not that its yours…"

"He burned your number so I couldn't call you again." Asuka said. "That's when I started to hate him. He was just doing things to hurt me… and for a while it worked. I'd shout at him, and he'd hit me. I got used to it after a while, but I wanted to get away from him, and I did try, and so did Misato, but she couldn't do anything either. Finally, when Kaji came into my life, he got me away from him and beat him up a little bit."

"Well, that explains why you like him so much." Shinji said. "He saved you."

"Yeah, I guess…" Asuka replied. "So, I guess I should start at the beginning so this makes more sense." Asuka sighed. "I grew up in Germany with my mother and father…"

Asuka talked about her childhood and her Evangelion training for a few hours, telling Shinji everything she could remember, even that she remembered she had a friend but had forgotten their name. Shinji had stayed quiet all through her explanation, except when he told her not to explain her mother's death, or when he gasped at all the stories of about Asuka's father and his new wife. When Asuka was finally done, she breathed a sigh of relief, being glad that someone else finally knew her story.

"Alright, baka, that's everything up until I met you on the carrier." Asuka said. "You're up. What do you want to start with?"

"Well… I'm not sure." Shinji said. "I guess I could start off that I saw my mother's accident. But I forgot about it… just like I forgot about you too…"

"How did you remember?" Asuka asked.

"After the Fourteenth Angel, while I was trapped in Unit–01." Shinji said. "I remembered the accident, and started remembering bits and pieces, but nothing concrete."

"Oh…" Asuka muttered. "Well, baka, you don't have to explain you mom's accident… start after that. You didn't make me explain about my mother's death…"

"Thanks, Asuka." Shinji said as he kissed Asuka gently on the cheek. "So after that, my father disappeared for a few days after my mother… died… then when he came back, he was different, and he tricked me into going to Atsugi. Said it was a vacation…" Shinji said as he though hard about what to talk about. "And then I started living with Sensei…"

Shinji's explanation however, was met with a lot of comforting hugs when Shinji explained about how his father left him, and what life was like in Atsugi. She was mad no one helped Shinji when he was being bullied and wanted to go and crush their houses with Unit–02. Then when Shinji got to explaining everything that happened when he arrived in Tokyo–3 forward to meeting Asuka, which was a far less emotional explanation.
By the time the two of them fell asleep, the sun was just creeping over the horizon, and neither of them had any intention of getting up when their alarms went off.

October 12, 2016 – NERV HQ, Medical Wing

Toji was getting dressed in his hospital room. Hikari had been kind enough to bring him a track suit and underwear from his house the previous day, and Sakura had bought him a new pair of sneakers, considering his last pair were vaporized after Bardiel blew them to bits. Toji smiled as he tossed his itchy hospital gown on the floor. As he was getting dressed, he felt weird standing up and walking around, as he hadn't done much of either outside of physical therapy. Once he was dressed, he sat down on his bed and waited for a knock on the door, which came a few minutes later.

"Yeah, it's cool." Toji said. "I'm dressed."

Hikari and Sakura walked inside, both smiling from ear to ear.

"It's so nice to see you up and about, Toji." Hikari said happily as Toji got up and hugged her, lifting her off the ground in the process.

"Yeah, I think you've grown too…" Sakura added.

"Maybe." Toji said.

"Well, do I get a hug, you big dummy?" Sakura asked. "I've missed you too, you know."

"Yeah, you do, little sis." Toji said as he lifted her up with the hug too. "I'm so glad you're ok…"

"And I'm happy you're not hurt anymore." Sakura said.

"I still think you're lucky to be alive…" Hikari said quietly.

Sakura gasped. "Hikari, why would say that?!"

"Well, it's true right?" Toji asked. "Shinji saved my neck again… but to be honest, I'm just really glad to be leaving this place. I miss real food." Toji caught Hikari's glare. "And I missed being with you too, babe… and your wonderful cooking…"

"Nice save…" Hikari said. "You're lucky I love you."

"I know." Toji said. "But where's everyone else, didn't they miss me? I figured Shinji would come see how I am. Don't tell they're hurt again or something." Toji asked. "I mean, the alarms did go off again…"

"Oh, well, a lot's happened since then, they haven't been to school at all." Hikari explained. "Kaji couldn't talk about it, which is new." Hikari said. "But he said we should stop by the apartment, and they'll explain everything."

"Oh… you know, I've kinda gotten used to the alarms…" Toji said. "Well, he's forgiven then, same with the devil and Mari."

"Oh, you can't call her that anymore…" Hikari said.

"Why the hell not, babe?" Toji asked.

"Him and Asuka are dating, you bonehead." Sakura replied.
"Oh… I need to sit down." Toji said. "How long has that been going on?"

"A little over a week." Hikari replied. "But most of that was spent inside the hospital."

"How long have you guys known?" Toji asked.

"A week or so." Sakura replied.

"And you didn't tell me?" Toji asked.

"Well, we didn't think you should know until you got out." Hikari said. "Don't be all mad about it."

"Yeah, we knew you'd react like an idiot." Sakura said.

"Well… I'm just surprised…" Toji said. "He and Mari seemed way more, I don't know, similar… and Asuka hates him…"

"No, he's liked Asuka for a while." Hikari said. "He told me a while ago, he and Mari are just very close."

"Oh, in addition to that, Mari is apparently dating Rei." Sakura said.

"But I though Asuka and Rei would… you know…" Toji muttered. "Lesbians or whatever…"

"No luck there." Hikari said. "But they would be cute together… fire and ice colored hair and all…"

"Ok, I forgive you guys, this is a lot to explain and take in." Toji said. "Shit, now I'm really tired… can we just go home?"

"Not quite yet, Mr. Suzuhara." Ritsuko said as she walked into the room.

"Why not?" Hikari asked.

"I have something to discuss with him." Ritsuko said. "If you could give us some privacy, that would be much appreciated."

"No, doc." Toji said. "Anything you got to say, you can say in front of them."

"Alright." Ritsuko said. "It's regarding your status as an Evangelion pilot."

"Wait, I thought that was done." Toji said. "Unit–03 got trashed by that Dummy Plug thingy you installed in Shinji's EVA."

"Not quite." Ritsuko said. "The Core and most of the components were salvageable."

"Well, shit." Toji said. "Ok, so, uh, what does that mean for me? I don't really want to get back in that thing…"

"Well, technically, the Evangelion still needs to be repaired. However, Unit–03 still exists, therefore you are still a pilot." Ritsuko explained. "However, without an active Evangelion ready for you, you're a reserve pilot until further notice, and you may be mostly healed, but you're still not fit for any sync tests, at least not for the next month or so."

"So, he's still a pilot?" Hikari asked.

"Yes." Ritsuko said. "Unless he is deemed unfit to continue after he's been thoroughly examined
again, and put through a series of synchronization tests."

"Wonderful…" Toji muttered. "It that all, doc?"

"Yes." Ritsuko said gruffly. "Have a good day."

"Yeah…" Toji muttered as Ritsuko left.

"Hey, bro, don't worry about it." Sakura said. "You've got nothing to worry about, so stop pouting."

"How do I have nothing to worry about?" Toji asked. "I might have to pilot that thing again, sis. It's not a happy experience."

"I'm sure it's not, but you have Shinji, Asuka, and Mari there to protect us in the meantime." Sakura explained. "They'll keep you from ever having to pilot again."

"I don't want him to pilot again…" Hikari said. "He could… he could end up like Rei. He almost did end up like Rei."

"Hey, everything will be fine." Sakura said. "You've got to have faith. The doctors never thought I'd walk again, and here I am." Sakura jumped up and down a few times. "I can do more than just walk, I can run." Sakura clapped Toji on the back. "Come on, there's a sad nerd who's been waiting to see you for like ever."

Toji perked up a bit. "Really?"

"Yeah, and he'll be thrilled you're still a pilot." Sakura said. "Come on, he's been waiting up there all morning. He's missed you."

"Yeah…" Toji said as he got up. "Alright, let's blow this pop stand."

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After a long trip to the surface, Toji, Sakura, and Hikari were in the middle of Tokyo–3. Waiting just outside the surface entrance to NERV HQ was none other than Kensuke.

"Toji!" Kensuke shouted. "You're alive!"

"Come here, you little nerd!" Toji shouted back. "I've missed you're weirdness!"

As Toji and Kensuke ran towards each other and started acting like they used to, Toji giving Kensuke a playful noogie, Sakura poked Hikari's arm a few times.

"Hikari… it this a bromance?" Sakura asked.

"Yeah… yeah it is…" Hikari said. "And it's adorable. Kensuke hasn't been that happy in a while… and Toji's missed him, even if he didn't admit it in the hospital."

"Tell me about it." Sakura said. "Those two are the best of friends."

"So, you think it's safe to go over and interrupt the fun they're having?" Hikari asked.

"Probably not, but we can talk and walk." Sakura said as she started walking over.

When Hikari and Sakura walked over, Toji had stopped giving a noogie to Kensuke and they were starting to chat.
"So, Toji, how ya feeling?" Kensuke asked. "You're... done with the hospital, right?"

"Yeah, I'm free and clear." Toji said. "Just have to stay away from things that're gonna kill me and whatnot."

"So, are you coming back to school?" Kensuke asked.

"Unfortunately." Toji said. "I go back Friday."

"Good." Kensuke said.

"Dude, you can't have missed me that much." Toji said. "I mean, it can't have been that bad..."

Hikari started shaking her head, but Kensuke ignored her. "No, it hasn't been that great." Kensuke explained. "Bullies and stuff."

"What bullies?" Toji said. "No one comes near our class, right?" Toji looked at Hikari. "Class Rep, if there are bullies, it's your duty to tell me so I can handle the problem."

"Don't call me that." Hikari said sternly.

"And don't neglect to tell me my buddy's being bullied." Toji said.

"Well... Shinji, Asuka, and Mari handled it when they came back... but..." Hikari started. "They miss so much school, they can't really scare them all the time."

"They came back?" Toji asked.

"Yeah, they think Shinji and the others aren't a threat cause they never come to school." Kensuke explained. "And I'm not strong enough to take them..."

"Where are they?" Toji asked angrily. "This ends now."

"Toji, stop it, you're not going to go beat anyone up." Hikari said.

"The hell I'm not." Toji said. "I don't like bullies, they deserve to be hit a lot in the face for being massive douche nozzles."

"Toi, you just got out of the hospital!" Hikari pleaded.

"So, then they'll have a bed for these goon to share during their recovery." Toji replied.

"You haven't fought in months!" Sakura said. "You're just gonna get hurt."

"No, I'm not." Toji said. "Kensuke, where do they hang out?"

"Kensuke, do not tell him." Hikari said angrily.

"Kensuke, tell me." Toji said. "I'll make sure they stop. No one hits my friends."

Kensuke looked between Hikari and Toji and looked very conflicted, but he knew what he wanted, and knew what to say. "They hang out outside the arcade near your apartment, the one next to the shitty dive bar."

"You mean the one near the titty bar?" Toji asked. "No shit."

"How do you know it's... that kind of bar?" Hikari asked.
"What did you think the name "White Stain" meant?" Toji asked.

"White Stain?" Hikari asked. "I thought it was "White Satin" like the fabric."

Toji and Kensuke shook their heads. "No… totally not that." Toji said.

"You clearly saw what you wanted to see." Sakura said. "Hell, even I knew what it was."

"Oh… wait…" Hikari said. "You live near a strip club?"

"Technically, babe, it's a nude bar." Toji said. "And based on the name, it's probably not just a bar, if you catch my meaning…"

"Seriously, that's gross!" Hikari shouted.

"Yeah, tell that to the guys that leave the place." Toji said. "But anyway, let's head there now, I wanna beat these assholes up."

"Toji, I said no." Hikari said.

"Why not?" Toji asked. "I've been in the hospital forever. My name used to scare people, but now my best buddy is getting beat, so it's time for some payback."

"But, Toji…" Hikari started.

"Nah, I'm going babe." Toji said. "I'm sorry. Come on, Kensuke, point em out to me, and I'll make their grandkids regret their decisions…"

"Toji! Come back here!" Hikari shouted as Toji and Kensuke walked away.

"Hikari, don't stop him." Sakura said. "He needs this."

"Why not?" Hikari asked. "He's gonna get hurt…"

"Cause, like Shinji, he wants to protect people too..." Sakura said.

"That's nothing like what Shinji does…" Hikari started. "Wait… it kinda is…"

"Yeah, so why don't we go follow them and make sure they're ok." Sakura said.

"Fine…" Hikari said. "But I'm not gonna like it."

"You don't have to like it, Hikari." Sakura replied as they followed the boys. "You just have to support him."

Shinji was busy in the kitchen getting lunch ready for everyone. Heero, and Duo were helping prep the food, while Asuka was setting the table. Trowa, Quatre, and Mari were in the other room watching TV, and Wufei was absent, choosing silent meditation in the pilot's apartment instead.

♪DING DONG♪

"Who could that be?" Shinji asked.

"Misato probably forgot her keys again…" Asuka said. "What a moron."
"Is someone going to get the door?" Heero asked.

"Nah, Misato can rot out there." Asuka said. "Maybe it'll help her remember her keys next time. That'll teach her."

"Maybe she's gotta pee or something?" Duo said. "No one ever rings a doorbell more than once… unless they're a dick."

"I'm getting the door." Heero said. "The doorbell is giving me a headache."

"Ok." Shinji said absentmindedly as Heero walked to the door.

As Heero got to the door, he could hear fists being slammed against it. "Shinji, stop railing the ginger and open the damn door!" Toji shouted through the door.

"Toji, don't say that!" Hikari said admonishingly.

Curious as to who was pounding on the door, Heero pressed the button and opened the door, causing four people to tumble in.

"Can I help you?" Heero asked as Toji got up and leered over Heero.

"Yeah, I'm here to see Shinji." Toji said angrily. "And you are…"

"The one asking the questions." Heero retorted. "State your business."

"Shinji Ikari, you heard of him?" Toji asked. "Why are you in his apartment."

"Toji, stop being a dick." Sakura said as she turned to Heero. "Look, we're just here to visit Shinji, that's all."

"Yeah, well, I don't like this guy's attitude!" Toji shouted.

"I don't enjoy yours either." Heero said bluntly.

"Hey, buddy, listen to me." Toji said angrily. "I just kicked five guys' asses without a problem. And they were all bigger and stronger than me, so either tell me where by buddy is and move the fuck out of my way, or pay the price."

"I have a question though…" Heero said. "Did any of those men ever kill a man?"

"What the fuck…" Toji muttered.

"Oh my god… he's so cool!" Kensuke muttered.

"Heero, don't!" Shinji shouted as he ran over. "Toji's a friend of mine!"

"Understood." Heero replied. "Please, enter."

"Wait, that's it?!" Toji shouted. "Shinji, did you hire a body guard or something while I in the hospital?"
"No, I didn't hire anyone, Toji..." Shinji said as the realization hit him. "You're out of the hospital! You're all better!"

"No shit buddy." Toji said. "And where were you? Did you even remember I was in the hospital, or did you forget about me?"

"I... I didn't forget..." Shinji said. "It's been... hectic."

"How has it been hectic?" Toji asked.

"We've had some... issues..." Shinji said. "With Gundams..."

"What's a Gundam?" Toji asked.

"I don't know..." Kensuke said happily. "But I want one..."

"Shinji, we really shouldn't talk about this." Heero said. "It's classified."

"Classified...?" Kensuke said with a slight squeal in his voice.

"Hasn't stopped him before." Hikari said.

"Then let's at least talk about this inside." Heero said as he closed the door. "To lessen the security risk the information poses."

"Alright, come on inside, there's a lot to talk about." Shinji said, beckoning them to follow. "I'm glad you're ok though."

"You don't seem happy about it." Toji said.

"I have a lot on my mind, Toji..." Shinji said as he led them all to the kitchen. "But I am happy you're better. But, uh... what happened to your face?"

"Oh, the bruises?" Toji asked.

"Yeah, I thought you were all better." Shinji said. "How are you bruised?"

"Well, Toji took care of Kensuke's bullies." Sakura said proudly. "Beat them all to a pulp, even though he was outnumbered."

"Seriously? Not one day out of the hospital and you're already getting into fights." Asuka said. "You beat up how many guys?"

"Five..." Toji said. "All because I wasn't at school to protect him. And to make up for my absence and announce I was back properly."

"And beating the shit out of five people is the best way to do that?" Asuka asked.

"Of course it is!" Toji shouted. "But I just wish I could have done more to help Kensuke sooner..."

"It's not anyone's fault." Kensuke said. "I'm just not strong enough to defend myself."

"Hey, don't go blaming yourself for what those assholes did." Toji said.

"I wish we had done more to stop them..." Shinji muttered.

"Don't worry about it." Toji said. "Kensuke told me all about that threat you made. But with you
guys being out all the time, it didn't really do much…" 

"Shinji, he's right." Kensuke said. "You guys are way too busy to have done anything."

"I just wish we weren't always so damn busy." Shinji said. "It would be nice if we could just be normal teenagers for once."

Trowa, Quatre, and Mari walked in after hearing all the commotion as Shinji went back to prepping lunch for everybody.

"Why is everyone talking so loudly?" Trowa asked. "You interrupted a very interesting program on TV about Second Impact… the amount of false PR about the event is impressive."

"We have company." Heero said, pointing to the new arrivals. "Friends of Shinji's from school apparently."

Mari smiled at seeing everyone there. "Heya, jock. Nice to see you're still with us after all this time." Mari said. "Glad to be out of the hospital?"

"Yeah… really fucking glad." Toji said. "But is no one surprised or excited to see me out and about? I'm feeling a little neglected here, like you all forgot about me."

"Well, not really forgot about…" Asuka said. "You were going to get out eventually, but at least you're out of there. Be happy about that, and things can go back to normal. And it's not like we didn't visit you when he had time, you know."

"Or whatever in our lives that passes as normal that is." Shinji said as he continued to slice several kinds of meat. "But, Toji, I said I was glad you were out."

"I'm with you, buddy." Toji said. "I'd love a normal life too… but for now, I'll settle for some frozen vegetables for this bruise."

Asuka reached into the freezer and tossed Toji a bag of Brussels sprouts. "We've had those forever, just use them…"

"You know, puppy, that ship has sailed." Mari said. "We're pilots, we're never going to have normal lives as long as those things exist. Even afterwards, EVA pilots for life!"

"Mari, don't ruin my dream of a normal life." Shinji said.

"Is there a picket fence, a dog, and a crazy redhead wife in that dream?" Mari asked.

"Yeah, Shinji, how exactly do you see our future together…" Asuka asked sweetly.

"I… this isn't something I want to talk about…" Shinji muttered. "At least not in front of everyone."

"Tonight then, baka." Asuka said. "That way the nosy, four eyed moron can't make fun of out for whatever you're thinking."

"I wonder if it's how many kids Shinji thinks you two will have…" Sakura muttered.

"Or what there wedding will be like…" Hikari murmured.

"It's probably more along the lines of what sexual positions he's thinking about." Duo quipped.

"Ha… doggy style." Mari said. "Do you want to fuck the princess doggy style, puppy?"
"Oh, shut he hell up, four eyes!" Asuka shouted as Shinji blushed a deep crimson.

"Yeah, it's definitely that, father." Mari joked. "Good call."

"It's a gift." Duo bragged.

"Well enough about Shinji boning Asuka." Toji said.

"Toji, that's not how you talk about that!" Hikari said admonishingly.

"No time to be subtle, babe." Toji said. "Shinji, weren't you gonna tell us something?"

"Yeah, you promised." Sakura said.

"I will, but I've got 10 people to cook for… or 14 if you guys are staying for lunch." Shinji said. "So the explanation can wait a minute."

"Why does Shinji have to be the one to explain whatever it is that needs explaining?" Mari asked. "What needs explaining, exactly?"

"Us and the Gundams." Heero said.

"Ohhh…" Mari said. "Puppy, you can explain all that, right?"

"Mari, I'm too busy to explain it." Shinji said as he turned on the frying pan.

"Mari, we're more than capable of explaining everything without baka's help." Asuka said gruffly. "We're not idiots."

"And we can help with the parts they don't understand yet." Quatre said innocently.

"Excuse you, blondie." Mari said. "Me and the princess are geniuses, we can handle the explanation ourselves."

"Sure, you can, four eyes." Asuka quipped. "Can you explain everything about the Gundams and the pilots' lives?"

"I… not really…" Mari said as her head fell in shame. "Fine, they can help out…"

"Good." Trowa said. "Mari, you should start."

"Yeah, yeah, sleepy." Mari said. "So, last week when me and the princess were released from the hospital, these four things appeared out of thin air."

"Our Gundams." Quatre said.

"Yeah, but we didn't know that then." Mari said. "Let me get to that part."

"Sorry…" Quatre said. "Continue…"

"So, Shinji was deployed in Unit–01 after we fired on them first, and the VTOLs were all ripped apart by these guys, kinda effortlessly to be honest…" Mari explained.

Mari, Asuka, Trowa, and Quatre explained everything that had happened since the Gundam pilots arrived, with Hikari being shocked at how brutal the fight was, and Kensuke getting turned on by their being new kinds of massive death machines being held in Tokyo–3. Toji and Sakura really
didn't have a reaction, but Toji's mood had changed when he heard everything that had happened.

"So… that's what you've been up to?" Toji asked. "How the hell did you survive that battle? Shouldn't you be like…"

"Don't say it, you moron." Sakura said.

"Dead or something?" Toji finished.

"Jesus Christ…" Sakura said as she shook head.

"What, it's not like it's a surprise?" Toji said.

"Sakura, he's right, I almost died." Shinji said.

"And luck saved my baka once again." Asuka muttered.

"You're probably right, princess." Mari said. "Shinji does have an awful lot of luck."

"He also has a great deal of skill." Heero said. "Not many people could fight off a Gundam, let alone four at the same time."

"So, what are you guys going be doing while you're here?" Hikari asked. "You're not just going to sit around all day, will you?"

"No, we're gonna be going to school." Duo said. "Something called Tokyo–3 Junior High School."

"Wait, what?" Asuka said. "I don't remember hearing that… do you?"

Mari smiled. "I don't listen to half of what Misato says, she yammers a lot."

"I didn't hear Misato say anything about it." Shinji said. "She probably assumed that Heero and the others would tell us."

"She should know by now that assuming makes her look like a huge ass." Asuka muttered.

"Yeah, she does have a great ass…" Duo muttered. "And that rack is like… gravity defying…"

"Duo, it's not polite to say things like that." Quatre said. "Miss Misato is a very nice lady."

"What the fuck are you on about?!" Asuka shouted.

"What class?" Hikari asked loudly to avoid Asuka getting angry and punching Duo.

"Class 2–A." Quatre said. "Why does it matter?"

"We're all in class 2–A, Quatre." Shinji said.

"So, you'll be joining us then?" Kensuke said in a squeaky voice.

"Can he stop making that sound?" Duo asked. "It's kinda annoying."

"I'm just excited…" Kensuke said as he looked down. "I just want to learn more about the Gundams and everything. Can we be friends?"

"If you don't stop…" Heero said. "I will kill you."
"Wha…" Kensuke said worriedly. "What did I do?"

"Ah, don't worry about that too much." Duo said. "He says that a lot, it's just his way of saying he likes you, he's not really a people person."

"No kidding." Toji muttered.

"Ok, no one is killing anyone." Shinji said. "But lunch is almost ready, so can someone get Wufei? He'll starve if he doesn't eat."

"Yeah, I'll go get him." Duo said. "He's probably napping or whatever."

"Meditating." Heero corrected.

"Yeah, like I said… napping." Duo said as he left.

"So, when are you guys starting school?" Hikari asked.

"Friday, I think." Trowa said. "Kaji wanted us to get used to being in your world first… it's very different than our own."

"Yeah, no shit." Toji said. "Space colonies and wars in space… it's like a weird sci–fi."

"With giant robots piloted by teenagers." Sakura said. "Sounds more like Shinji's life than a half assed sci–fi."

"Yeah, you got a point, sis." Toji said. "Kensuke, all this shit must have you excited."

"Not really… I don't want to die…" Kensuke muttered.

"Kensuke, we was kidding." Shinji said nervously. "Right, Heero?" Shinji asked.

"No comment." Heero replied.

"Well, that's comforting…" Toji said.

"So, are you guys looking forward to school?" Sakura asked.

"Not entirely." Heero said. "I prefer quiet."

"As do I." Trowa said.

"I'm a little nervous…" Quatre muttered.

"Why are you nervous?" Sakura asked. "It's only school."

"I've never been to school before." Quatre said.

"How have you never been to school?" Hikari asked.

"Yeah, what kind of luck do you have?" Kensuke asked.

"I… well…" Quatre mumbled.

"Quatre, should I tell them?" Trowa asked.

"No thank you, Trowa, I can handle it." Quatre said. "My father, he owned and operated many
resource satellites, basically asteroids we captured to mine for materials in space for the colonies. Iron, water, other metals, all used to supply the colonies and even Earth. My father became quite rich, and he had me homeschooled as a result... I was his prodigal son, his only male heir, so he wanted to keep me safe."

"So, you've never been to a school before?" Sakura asked. "Lucky…"

"That's correct." Quatre said. "So, I'm a little nervous."

"Wait... you're rich?" Toji asked. "Like how rich?"

"He owns a colony." Heero said.

"And he runs his dad's old company too." Trowa added.

"Guys, stop..." Quatre said bashfully. "You're embarrassing me..."

"Quatre, relax, we're only telling them the truth." Heero said.

"Besides, it's nothing to be embarrassed about, blondie." Mari said. "You should be proud of never having to step foot in a school. School kinda sucks, it's boring, there are too many, and the teachers suck."

"Oh... please don't let it be that bad..." Quatre said worriedly.

"Mari, shut the hell up." Asuka said. "You're worrying the poor boy for no reason."

"But..." Mari protested.

"Mari, be quiet, or you're not having lunch." Shinji said.

"But... you made my favorite rice curry..." Mari said.

"Exactly." Shinji replied.

"Fine, I'll be good..." Mari said.

"Well, Quatre, if you have any problems, just come talk to me, ok?" Hikari asked.

"Sure, Miss Hikari." Quatre said kindly.

"Well, if any of you have a problem, just bring it to the Class Rep here." Toji said.

"Toji, I told you to stop calling me that." Hikari said.

"It's your title, isn't it, babe?" Toji said. "You're our Class Representative."

"So, Miss Hikari, what does the Class Representative do?" Quatre asked.

"Well, a Class Representative basically is in charge of the class." Hikari explained. "I deal with the after school cleaning assignments, I lead the class with the greeting to the teacher, and also take charge of the teacher is not in the classroom, or if we're on a school trip, I'm responsible for everyone."

"Wow..." Quatre said in awe. "How did you become the Class Representative, it sounds like a very demanding job."
"It's not." Hikari said. "At least for me anyway... and I was elected by my class."

"And re-elected when we were all held back." Kensuke said.

"We were not held back." Hikari said. "Last school year was interrupted far too much, so they decided to extend our second year for another year."

"Yeah, we got held back, babe." Toji said. "It's not our fault, though... we can blame the Angels for that. It's not like we're dumb or anything."

"Fine... but don't say it like that..." Hikari said. "It just has the wrong connotation, Toji."

"Alright, babe, I'll do that just for you." Toji said as he turned to Shinji. "So, Shinji, when's lunch? I'm starving!"

"What a mooch..." Asuka muttered.

"Asuka, be nice..." Shinji said.

"I'm just being honest!" Asuka said defensively.

"Well, she's not wrong." Toji said. "I can accept being a mooch when the grub is great."

"As soon as Wufei and Duo get here, we'll eat in the other room." Shinji said. "That work for you, moocher?"

"Finny, Shinji..." Toji said. "But, yeah, that works."

"Oh, I'm sooo stealing that nickname for him." Mari purred.

"Please don't..." Toji muttered.

"Too late moocher!" Mari said happily.

As Toji shook his head sullenly, Duo and Wufei walked in.

"Duo told me lunch was ready?" Wufei asked.

"Yeah, but today you can eat with the rest of us." Shinji said. "You can't keep hiding."

"I would rather eat alone..." Wufei protested.

"No luck there, buddy." Duo said. "Sit down and deal with it. You can't be so damn anti-social. You're making Heero look like a people person."

"And I won't hit you again." Asuka said. "I told you, as long as you don't spout that crap, we're even."

"It's not that..." Wufei protested.

"Bullshit." Mari said. "You think she hates you... well, newsflash, Asuka hates pretty much everyone. That's her "raison d'etre" as it were."

"Wait, Asuka hit him?" Kensuke asked.

"More like beat the shit out of him." Mari said.
"How?" Sakura asked.

"Why?" Hikari added.

"Was it brutal?" Toji asked.

"Quite brutal." Heero said.

"Do we really have to talk about this now?" Wufei asked.

"Yes, they asked." Trowa said. "And we were explaining things to them, and we left out a part of the story."

"So, Mari, blow by blow…" Toji said. "How did this happen?"

"Oh, well, it's a funny story…" Mari said joyfully as she ate and explained what happened to everyone. "Remember how we said there was a second Gundam attack? Well, we heard the pilot this time… and boy did he say the wrong shit…"

October 14, 2016 – Tokyo–3 Junior High School, Class 2–A

It was quite early in the morning, and it had been a while since Shinji, Mari, or Asuka had been to school, and none of them were used to getting up so early anymore. Shinji was tasked with waking Mari up while Asuka showered, which involved shoving her out of bed when nothing else worked. When they got to the kitchen, they saw Heero and Trowa waiting patiently for them in their new uniforms, while Quatre was rallying Duo and Wufei to get ready. After a hurried breakfast, the eight of them set off at a slow pace, as Duo and Mari were still dragging their feet. After a great deal of effort, the group made it to the school with ten minutes to spare.

"Finally, we got here." Duo said as he yawned loudly. "Where's the classroom, I wanna take a nap…"

"I'll show you." Mari said as she pulled him along. "And don't worry, once the teacher opens his mouth, you'll be fast asleep."

"So, Shinji, this is your school?" Quatre asked as Duo and Mari disappeared into the building. "It's bigger than I imagined."

"Yeah, I guess it's kinda big." Shinji said. "I don't really think about it much."

"So, what do you think about?" Heero asked.

"Not falling asleep, mostly." Asuka said.

"Why is that?" Quatre asked.

"The teacher is boring as shit." Asuka said. "Wufei, it would be a good time for you to meditate, you won't miss much."

"Why is the teacher boring?" Quatre asked. "I mean, I thought we would be learning or something."

"He drones on about life before Second Impact." Asuka said. "But we have computers, so feel free to look up anything you want. It'll keep you busy."

"What about lunch?" Trowa asked.
"Well, I think I packed enough lunch for all of us." Shinji said. "It's basically the leftovers from the other day… but I don't think I can keep cooking this much all the time."

"Why not?" Asuka asked.

"I'm tired, Asuka." Shinji said. "Cooking for that many people is hard. We're just gonna have to order out for the time being."

"That kinda sucks…" Asuka muttered. "I like your cooking, it tastes better than the school food…"

"Asuka, we'll use the leftovers from the takeout for our lunches too." Shinji said. "I would never make you eat school food, I love you."

"So, is the school food really that bad?" Quatre asked.

"Well, it's _that_ not bad, just not the best…" Shinji said. "Only Toji has the stomach to eat loads of the school's food."

"It's food, it can't be that bad." Heero said.

"Heero, it may look like food, but its prepackaged and overly moist." Asuka said. "Trust me, take out leftovers will be far better."

"I trust your judgement, Asuka." Heero said.

"So, should we go inside?" Quatre asked nervously.

"Knowledge can't hurt you, Quatre." Wufei said.

"Yeah, Quatre, it'll be fine." Shinji said. "We just have to sit through class, then we can go home afterwards."

"That doesn't sound very educational…" Quatre said.

"That's what Google and Wikipedia are for." Asuka said. "Come on, let's get there before Hikari comes and hunts us down."

"Is that a bad thing?" Trowa asked. "Hikari seemed like a very calm person the other day."

"She's not that calm when it comes to us being late." Asuka said as she shuddered. "I don't think you'll want to see that."

"I have a question though." Trowa said. "How will we be notified if there is an attack?"

"There are alarms that go off sending us all to shelters, or the civilians at least." Asuka explained. "But we head to NERV HQ just in case."

The group rushed into the shoe locker room, and changed their shoes quickly, with Shinji handing everyone a pair of indoor shoes to wear. They the hurried upstairs to their classroom to see Hikari trying unsuccessfully to wake up Mari and Duo.

"Yeah, that's an impossible battle." Asuka said.

"Oh, good, you guys are here." Hikari said with a sigh of relief. "Shinji, can you please wake her up again? I'm sure you had to do that this morning too."
"Yeah, he shoved her right onto the floor." Asuka said with a smirk. "She was not happy."

"Can you try that again?" Hikari pleaded "She can fall asleep after the teacher starts talking, but she needs to stand up when he arrives. SO does Duo, but he's even worse than she is…"

"I'll figure something out." Shinji said.

"And I'll handle Duo." Trowa said.

Shinji went over and picked up Mari's pen and jabbed her tit with it, causing Mari to yelp in pain. "Puppy, what the hell!" Mari shouted as she rubbed her boob. "That hurt… and all this stimulation is causing my nipples to get hard."

"You need to stay awake for a few more minutes, hard nipples or not." Shinji said with a slight blush. "Do you want to piss Hikari off?"

"No…” Mari grumbled.

"Good, then stay awake, or I let Asuka do that next time." Shinji threatened.

Trowa looked at Duo snoring quietly at his desk, poked his head with no effect. Then he leaned down and spoke right into Duo's ear. "Deathscythe is under attack, it needs your help."

Duo jumped up, sending his chair flying behind him as he looked around frantically. "What, Deathscythe, where?!" Duo shouted. "Trowa, what the fuck?!"

"You were asleep, and you needed to be awake." Trowa said simply. "I knew that would wake you up."

"Yeah, but you nearly gave me a heart attack, man." Duo said. "Don't do that again."

"Don't fall asleep before class again." Trowa said.

"Fine… I'll try and stay awake until after class starts." Duo said gruffly. "Just don't joke about Deathscythe like that again."

Hikari gave Shinji and Trowa each hugs while Mari and Duo muttered silently to themselves. "Wow, that was great, thanks you guys."

"No problem, Hikari." Trowa said.

"Mari decided to stay up too late doing whatever, so it's her own fault." Shinji said. "But I think the threat of Asuka waking her up will keep her awake for a while."

"Shinji, that's a little mean." Kensuke said.

"Not really, she almost made us late." Asuka said. "And she snored half the night too, so this is nothing compared to what she put us through."

"What do you mean by us?" Hikari asked.

"Oh… uh… nothing." Asuka said.

"Shinji?" Hikari asked.

"I'm not saying anything." Shinji said. "But I can hear Mari through my wall…"
"I get the feeling you two aren't telling us something…" Hikari said.

"Watch it, Hikari." Asuka said. "There's plenty of stuff you don't tell the rest of us too… three fingers…"

"Asuka!" Hikari said as she blushed.

"What?" Asuka said.

"Asuka, be nice." Shinji said.

"What does that mean, Hikari?" Kensuke asked. "It's kinda cryptic."

"It's none of your business!" Hikari said. "Go sit down, class is about to start!"

"Must be something important… you never yell…" Kensuke said as he sulked off.

"So, where should we sit, Miss Hikari?" Quatre asked.

"Quatre, you don't have to call me Miss Hikari, Hikari is just fine." Hikari said. "Even though the sentiment is nice." Hikari smiled. "Well, there's a seat next to me, and there are two seats in the front of the class, and one in the back."

"I'll take point." Heero said as he walked to the front of the class.

"I'm with you, Heero." Wufei said, following him.

"I guess I'll go to the back." Trowa said. "I think I would prefer it."

"So, I guess I'll sit next you, Hikari." Quatre said.

"Good, you can keep me company while everyone else sleeps." Hikari said.

"Please, you fall asleep too, Hikari." Asuka said.

"Yes, but I at least try not to." Hikari said. "And Shinji doesn't sleep either."

"Yeah, but I'm on the internet, I may as well be asleep." Shinji said.

"Suck up." Asuka muttered.

"And yet you still love me." Shinji quipped.

"Don't push it though, baka." Asuka warned.

"I'll do my best." Shinji said.

"Oh, go sit down before the bell." Hikari said as she rolled her eyes. "You can be all lovey after school."

Asuka chuckled. "Fine… before you give yourself an aneurism from the stress."

"Thanks…" Hikari quipped as Quatre followed her to her seat.

Shinji and Asuka went to their desks and sat down, readying themselves for another boring day in Class 2–A.
"Hey, did you notice that Duo is sitting in Rei's seat?" Shinji asked as he sat down.

"Yeah, must be where Mari put him." Asuka said. "It's weird, not seeing her staring blankly out the window."

"I know…" Shinji said. "Should we go visit her after school?"

"Yeah, just to make sure she's ok." Asuka said. "And maybe it'll cheer up Mari too."

"Then you can order takeout." Shinji said. "Whenever you want, even if it's that European food place… just don't make me cook."

"Alright, but you're trying blood sausage this time." Asuka said. "I'm telling you, it's not as gross as it sounds."

"Fine, but you have to try wasabi." Shinji said. "It's not that spicy."

"It's a deal, baka." Asuka said.

♪
Ding dong ding ding… ding dong ding ding ♪

"Well, now we have to deal with this guy…" Asuka said as Nebukawa no Sensei walked in. "If I snore or anything, please wake me up gently…"

"Kick to the shin?" Shinji asked.

"Perfect, baka." Asuka said. "Just don't bruise me."

"I know." Shinji said as Hikari rose authoritatively.

"Rise… Bow… Sit!" Hikari said.

Nebukawa no Sensei walked to his podium and looked at the class roster, noticing the changes that had been made. "Ah, it appears we have several new transfers to the class, so late in the year too…" Nebukawa no Sensei said. "Please introduce yourselves gentlemen."

"Who the hell transfers into a class in the middle of a warzone?" Someone muttered.

"They must have parent that work for NERV or something…" Someone else said.

"We lose like seven people, but five more mysteriously appear…" Someone else quipped.

Trowa stood up first and spoke loudly from the back of the room. "I am Trowa Barton." Trowa said and he sat right back down.

Wufei stood up and bowed to the class. "I am Wufei Chang, it is a pleasure to be here."

Duo didn't stand up, but talked clearly enough so everyone else could hear. "Yeah, I'm Duo Maxwell, how ya doing?"

Quatre stood up nervously. "I've never had to do this before, but I'm Quatre Raberba Winner." Quatre said as he bowed. "I'm very excited to be here."

Heero stood up last and glanced around the class. "I am Heero Yuy." Heero said sternly. "I am not here to makes friends."
"What a weird bunch of guys." Someone said.

"Yeah, why do most of them seem anti-social?" Someone replied.

Shinji leaned over to Asuka. "That could have gone better." Shinji whispered.

"Well, he didn't threaten to kill anyone, call it a win, baka." Asuka whispered back.

"Good point." Shinji said as Nebukawa no Sensei cleared his throat.

"Now that the interruption is over, let us begin." Nebukawa no Sensei said in his signature monotone voice. "The year was 2000, the last year of the twentieth century. Humankind was about to face its greatest trial. In the last year of the twentieth century. The small, fast moving meteor from outer space collided with the continent of Antarctica. The continent's massive ice cap was melted almost instantaneously…"

"Oh my god… this is so boring…" Duo muttered.

"Well, at least we can nap through it…" Mari replied tiredly.

To Be Continued
Chapter 6 – The White Zodiac
October 22, 2016 – NERV HQ

Misato was in the Command Center staring at the blank display screen in front of her. Her normal bridge crew were sitting at the stations in front of her while Ritsuko was going over loads of sensor data looking for any new wormholes, or the ones they knew already existed. Kaji was sitting down near Maya, looking at surveillance of the school courtesy of Section 2. Gendo and Fuyutsuki were absent, as they were dealing with SEELE's reaction to things. The bridge bunnies themselves were simply trying to stay occupied, as when things were quiet, they also happened to be dreadfully boring.

"So, anything yet?" Misato asked.

"Why are you so worried about it?" Ritsuko asked. "Wouldn't a lack of new wormholes be a good thing?"

"Well, no." Misato said. "But if you can get more data, you can figure out how to send those kids home where they belong."

"At the risk of all of our lives?" Ritsuko asked.

"Working at NERV involves taking your life into your hands every time you come to work." Misato said. "This is no different. Hell, we're probably more at risk while those wormholes are allowed to… wander or whatever, right?"

"I'm still not entirely sure if they move or not, or if each wormhole is for one use only." Ritsuko said. "There are too many variables, and two occurrences isn't enough data to give me any answers."

"But you are looking, aren't you?" Kaji asked.

"Of course I'm, looking." Ritsuko said. "Why would suggest that?"

"Oh, maybe all that fancy tech those Gundams have." Kaji said. "I mean, sure, all the improvements would make the Evangelions even more formidable, but do we really need that? The Evangelions are deadly enough as it is."

"Better weapons and defenses aren't a bad thing, Kaji." Ritsuko said scathingly.

"No, but keeping five kids here so you can research their tech is." Kaji countered.

"Look, given how the wormholes were created in the first place, it's impossible to know how to stop them right now." Ritsuko explained. "The MAGI are analyzing what little we have, but keep returning insufficient data errors."

"So, the catch is, we need more of these things to open up, but we don't want to risk more stuff coming through… especially if they're not the Gundam pilots' allies." Misato quipped. "Great, I love irony."
"Well, how come there isn't enough data?" Maya asked. "Our sensors got loads of it when the two wormholes opened up."

"The instances of those wormholes were too short to get more detailed readings." Ritsuko explained. "We need a wormhole that's open for at least 60 seconds to get in depth data we don't already have."

"Why do you need the in depth data?" Maya asked. "Shouldn't the stuff we have be enough?"

"It's just not enough about how the wormholes work." Ritsuko said. "Data dealing with how they stay stable is missing, as both of the ones we've seen were only open a few seconds."

"Fine… if you don't have enough data, if you get what you need, will you ever be able to figure out how to get them home?" Kaji asked.

"Most likely." Ritsuko said. "Once it's compared to the data of Unit–01 shooting that energy into the sky, I should be able to replicate and reverse the process."

"So, what happens if one of those wormholes opens up outside Tokyo–3?" Hyuga asked.

"We've modified the sensors our bases have around the world, and sent the program updates to the satellites and other monitoring stations that the U.N. maintains." Ritsuko explained. "Even if a wormhole opens in what's left of Antarctica, we'll know about it."

"I hope one doesn't open up there." Misato said. "How would we defend against that?"

"Not sure." Ritsuko said. "The Gundams could deploy however. They aren't limited by internal batteries like the Evangelions, and I'm sure their pilots are more than capable of intercepting anything."

"But how will we transport the Gundams?" Maya asked. "We don't have the infrastructure."

"The same transports we'd use for the Evangelions." Ritsuko said. "We just need some way to attach a cargo pod or something to carry one or two of them."

"Speaking of the pilots…" Misato asked. "How are they doing, Kaji? I haven't seen them since last week."

"Well, it seems like they're adjusting to life at school." Kaji said. "From the surveillance, it looks like they're as inattentive as our own pilots in that classroom."

"So, they're asleep?" Misato asked.

"Basically." Kaji said.

"Why are they asleep, they're at school?!" Ritsuko exclaimed. "They should be learning, not napping!"

"Well, have you ever listened to their teacher?" Kaji asked. "I have, out of curiosity… he drones on about life before Second Impact… every single damn day."

"That… sounds dreadful…" Ritsuko muttered.

"How is that man still teaching?" Aoba asked.

"How do some of them stay conscious?" Hyuga asked.
"Well… in a city like this, not many are keen on a job like that." Kaji said. "So, we let him teach how he teaches."

"So, he's all we could get." Misato said. "What about the other teachers?"

"Mostly retirees." Kaji said. "Some of them are quite good, but Shinji's class got the boring one. Not like they're missing anything, school was always boring."

"Kaji, what kind of example is that?" Misato asked.

"An honest one." Kaji said. "I don't blame them for not wanting to go, but it keeps them busy, and they can't sit around at home all day."

"You almost sound like a dad, Mr. Kaji." Maya said.

Kaji smiled. "Not quite."

"Well, dad or not, just don't let them hear you say that, or they'll never want to go to school again." Misato said.

"Yeah, don't worry." Kaji joked. "I'm a responsible adult."

"Sure you are." Misato joked.

"Colonel, I don't mean to interrupt, but I'm getting a message from the Cage." Maya said. "They've finished the power up test on Unit–02, the new power socket is installed, we're now back to two active Evangelions."

"Good, so at least if an Angel attacks our new power couple can go deal with it." Misato said with relief. "We'll have Asuka test it out to make sure it still works properly."

"Are you doubting the repairs?" Ritsuko asked.

"No, I just want to be ready in case anything happens." Misato paused. "Hmmm, usually when I say that, an alarm goes off or some other shit happens."

"Well, for once, I guess you didn't jinx it." Kaji joked.

Just then an alarm klaxon went off, signaling another alert, causing Misato to slap her forehead. "Son of a bitch!" Misato shouted. "What is it now?"

"Pattern Violet!" Hyuga reported. "Wormhole detected, 42 km southeast of the city… multiple targets detected… wormhole is still open."

"Can we get a visual?" Misato asked.

"Not yet, ma'am." Aoba said. "We have a survey drone in the area, I'm redirecting it."

"Good job, Aoba." Misato said.

"I'll go prep the Evangelions for launch." Ritsuko said.

"No, wait until we know what it is." Misato said. "Go to Level–3 battle stations. Set the AIS to hot standby."

"Is the wormhole still open?" Ritsuko asked.
"No, it closed… but we got a good 45 seconds of data." Maya reported.

"And the drone?" Misato asked.

"Drone is coming into range now…" Aoba said. "Visual on screen."

The main display lit up to show several large aircraft and several dozen flying Mobile Suits. Their legs were folded up into a flying configuration, and they were armed with missile pods and chain guns. The aircraft and Mobile Suits were all flying in formation, and all heading in the same direction. One of the Mobile Suits saw the drone and aimed one of its guns at it, cutting the feed off.

"Well… looks like they don't want to be watched." Misato said.

"Shame, I was interested in what was going to happen next." Kaji said.

"So, how many were there?" Misato asked.

"Well, I counted 24 of those flying things, and at least four of those transport planes." Kaji said. "At least I think I'm right."

"Spot on, sir." Hyuga said. "Sensors confirmed 24 flying Mobile Suits, and six transport planes. Looks like they all came through the wormhole."

"Where are they headed?" Misato asked.

"Not that we can't already guess." Kaji quipped.

"MAGI predict their heading for Tokyo–3 ma'am, 98% probability." Maya reported.

"Here's hoping for that 2% to finally come true." Kaji joked.

"I'm going to prep the Evangelions now." Ritsuko said.

"No, it's an air attack, there aren't any Angels, so we don't need the Evangelions for once." Misato said. "So… this is different."

"It looks like we'll finally have a fair fight without needing the Evangelions." Kaji said.

"Well, it's been a long time since we've an air battle over Japan too." Misato said.

"You mean the one where the nuke dropped a third time?" Hyuga asked.

"Yeah, that one." Misato replied.

"We just have to hope this battle goes better than that one." Kaji said.

"Well, if it helps, I don't think they have nukes." Aoba said. "No radiological alarms have gone off."

'Yeah, without a Shinji Ikari dying in the process…' Misato thought.

"Are you sure we don't need any of the pilots?" Ritsuko asked. "Not even the Gundam pilots? Is that wise?"

"No, for once, simple military strategy will win this battle." Misato said. "So… Level–1 battle stations, prepare for an air attack. Issue an order for everyone to find a shelter, and then have interceptors and VTOLs launch at once… hopefully we can keep the battle out of the city this time.
Just in case, activate the AIS and set it to Active Radar/IFF mode. We don't want to shoot down our own fighters."

"Yes, ma'am!" The bridge bunnies replied in unison.

"I still think it's a bad idea." Ritsuko muttered.

"Perhaps then, Doctor, you could be of more use elsewhere." Gendo said as he arrived with Fuyutsuki. "The Colonel has the right idea, proceed Colonel Katsuragi."

"Understood, Commander." Misato replied.

"What about the pilots?" Maya asked.

"Don't worry, they'll head here when the alarms go off." Kaji said.

"How long till the enemies are in range?" Misato asked.

"Five minutes." Maya replied.

"Alright, weapons free." Misato ordered. "All units have permission to fire as soon as the enemy is in range."

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It had been a week since the Gundam pilots had started school, and for them it had been quite an interesting experience. They did not entirely enjoy the school, but it was better than fighting, so they went. They were finally starting to get used to things,

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"Oh... I guess the bell means it's time for lunch... we'll pick where we left off when we return..." Nebukawa no Sensei said in his monotone voice. "Class dismissed."

"Rise... Bow... Sit." Hikari commanded.

Duo stood up and stretched, yawning loudly as the teacher left. "Jesus Christ, how do you guys not kill yourselves listening to him drone on?" Duo asked.

"With a great deal of effort." Mari said. "Though sometimes I just want to jump through the window and run away from his boring talk."

"If you survive the fall, you moron." Asuka said.

"Hey, you know this guy?" Duo said, pointing to Heero. "He jumped of a fucking sheer cliff and rolled to the bottom, got up without a scratch."

"Seriously?" Asuka asked. "Who does that?"

"We were escaping the enemy." Heero said. "It seemed like the only thing to do."

"You could've gotten killed or something!" Mari said.

"It seemed like the best idea at the time." Heero said. "Although, faced with the same issue again, I'd most likely do the same thing."
"That's stupid." Asuka said.

"No, that's just Heero." Trowa said.

"So, can we like go eat on the roof or whatever?" Duo asked. "It's a nice day out, and it'd be nice to look at the city."

"That does sound nice." Quatre said.

"Yeah, they don't exactly lock it." Mari said. "Come on, I'll ask freckles."

Mari walked over to Hikari and gave her a big hug. "Heya freckles, wanna come eat on the roof with us?"

"You know it's against school rules to go on the roof." Hikari said.

"We know, that's what makes it fun." Mari replied. "So, you staying down here?"

"No, if you just wait a minute, Kensuke and Toji should be back from the cafeteria." Hikari said. "If I leave, he'll probably choke or something."

"Don't you make his lunch?" Shinji asked.

"He ate it this morning cause he was hungry." Hikari grumbled. "At least he enjoyed it."

"I always love your food, babe!" Toji exclaimed as he walked into the classroom with an armful of food.

"Yeah, I just wish you'd eat a normal breakfast." Hikari said.

"Nah, your food is better than any breakfast I can try and make." Toji said. "I should just have you cook all my food."

"As nice as that sounds, Toji, it really shouldn't be that hard." Hikari said. "Maybe I can bring you leftovers for our walks to school."

"Wow, freckles, why are you being so accommodating?" Mari asked.

"It seems like you're going out of your way for him." Trowa said.

"That's what love is." Hikari said. "Right, Shinji?"

Shinji blushed. "She's not wrong." Shinji sighed. "But we should head to the roof before there's no time left to eat."

"Yeah, the puppy's right." Mari said. "We can talk more on the roof."

So the dozen of them traipsed up to the roof, and settled in. Most of them sat facing the city, while Wufei sat facing the hills on the other side. Duo and Toji scarfed down their food, while everyone else ate at a more manageable pace. When Duo finished, he looked over at Wufei with a snarky look.

"Wufei, why are you over there?" Duo asked. "The city's this way!"

"I know that, but I prefer nature's serenity." Wufei said as an alarm klaxon went off.

"Shit..." Shinji muttered.
"What is it?" Wufei asked.

"Nature's serenity just got interrupted." Trowa said.

"I think it's that." Kensuke said as he pointed to a force of aircraft flying towards Tokyo–3 as the city sank into its all too familiar battle configuration.

"Kensuke, can I see your camera?" Heero asked.

"Sure." Kensuke replied. "Is something wrong?"

"Does this zoom well?" Heero asked.

"Yeah, it's got a pretty good zoom…” Kensuke said.

"Thank you." Heero said as he glanced looked at the dots as they moved ever closer to the city. "Hmmm…”

"Are those…?" Duo muttered.

"Mobile Suit carriers…” Quatre said worriedly.

"Four of them to be exact. They're approaching the city at high speed, and are being escorted by Aries Mobile Suits." Heero said. "Heavily armed Aries Mobile Suits."

"How heavily armed?" Trowa asked.

"Each mounted with four missile pods and carrying two chain guns." Heero said. "Thankfully their maneuverability will be limited with that much extra weight."

"No… the White Zodiac…” Wufei mumbled.

"What are you muttering about?" Asuka asked.

"It's the threat I was talking about." Wufei said. "We need to mobilize right now."

A barrage of missiles fired from a nearby weapons encampment, and many others from around the heavily defended city, all aiming for the Mobile Suit transports, the Aries began firing on the missiles, but several made it through, hitting one of the transport aircraft, ripping it to pieces and causing its Mobile Suit cargo to explode.

"Nice shot." Duo said. "Heero, can you see what it was carrying?"

"Looks like it was carrying Leos." Heero said as debris littered the city.

"Didn't you hear me, we need to get to our Gundams!"

"I think it can wait." Shinji said as several dozen VTOLs, Su–37s, MiG–35s, and F–15s flew overhead. "Looks like they might be able to do this without us."

"I think Shinji's right." Trowa said. "The firepower this city has is far above what they will be expecting."

"Wufei, there are two dozen Aries, which are being besieged with weapons fire, and three transports left, carrying at most 18 Mobile Suits." Heero said. "For once, we can watch the battle from here."
"Shouldn't get to a shelter?" Hikari asked as more missiles fired over their heads. "It doesn't seem very safe out here…"

"Actually, it's about to become a lot safer." Heero said. "Two more of the transports are down. They were barely able to maneuver."

"This city has far more weapons than is necessary." Wufei said.

"Well, if we have an Angel attack us while you're here, you might rethink that idea." Asuka said.

"Can't you guys just show them one of the fights?" Kensuke asked.

"Probably." Mari said as more missiles fired, aiming for several of the Aries now within the city limits.

"Looks like that last transport is speeding up." Heero said. "It's going to go over the school, or come fairly close."

"Then we should move." Toji said.

"Yeah, let's get to the shelter." Hikari suggested. "We'd be far safer."

"I'm staying." Heero said. "I want to see how this plays out."

"As do I." Trowa said.

"Yeah, we never get to relax and watch the fighting." Asuka said.

"We're generally the ones doing the fighting." Mari quipped. "It is a nice change of pace."

"I'm staying then too." Kensuke said.

"Do you remember what happened the last time we did this?" Toji asked.

"Yeah, but that was an Angel, this is just a bunch of Mobile Suits." Kensuke replied.

"Not seeing the difference buddy." Toji said.

"Hey, guys, that plane is getting really close…" Hikari said.

Quatre looked up. "It's loading ramp is opening."

"Alright, let's get out of here." Heero said. "It's deploying its Mobile Suits."

As if on cue, another barrage of missiles fired from the weapons encampment near them and hit the transport and its four Aries escorts as the first Leo got free, deployed its parachute, and dropped to the ground. The plane exploded in a brilliant fireball, which even from 40,000 feet was still felt on the ground. The Leo was hit with several missiles as well during its decent, taking off its legs, left arm, and parachute.

"Never mind." Duo said as what was left of the Leo slammed into the ground just outside the school gates. "That ended quickly."

"We should look at that Leo's cockpit." Heero said. "It may contain useful information."

"Why?" Asuka asked.
"Any data on why they came here from wherever their wormhole opened would be useful." Heero said. "Trowa, I could use your help."

"Right." Trowa said as the two of them headed for the door.

"Wait, you're leaving now?" Toji asked.

"The battle is over." Heero said, pointing to the sky over Tokyo-3, where three Aries could be seen still dodging the heavy fire, but nothing else could be seen. "They've lost, it's safe to go inspect the Leo."

"That was fast…" Kensuke muttered.

"Well, imagine this, these things are nothing compared to an Angel." Asuka said proudly. "It's only metal against missiles and guns."

"Their armor is certainly not anything compared to the Gundams." Quatre said. "Mass produced models always have moderately good titanium armor."

"So, they're easy to wipe out." Mari said. "Good, we may not have to actually fight them."

"Don't speak too soon." Wufei said darkly. "Just imagine several thousand of these things converging on this city. It wouldn't be so easy then. With their sheer numbers, they can overwhelm any position."

"Then we'd have to fight." Asuka said. "But what are the odds more of these things come through the wormhole?"

"I'd say pretty good, Asuka." Shinji said. "This would make three wormholes in like two weeks. The only thing that can happen is for more of these damn things to open up."

"Very astute, Shinji." Wufei said. "Once Heero and Trowa investigate that Leo wreckage, we need to get back to NERV… if this is the White Zodiac, I need to tell everyone what I know about them."

"Hikari, take Toji and Kensuke to the shelter." Shinji said. "I'm sure they'll let you guys out of there soon enough."

"Well, it would be better than being in the middle of another war zone." Toji said. "Come on, babe, Sakura's probably wondering where the hell we are."

"Sure." Hikari said. "Be careful you guys."

"We always are, freckles." Mari said.

"Here, don't forget this." Heero said, handing Kensuke back his camera.

"Thanks, Heero." Kensuke said as he followed Toji and Hikari.

"You guys should come with us." Trowa said. "It is not wise to separate in a war zone."

"I wouldn't call this a war zone." Asuka said.

"There was an aerial incursion into the city." Wufei said. "And you fight these… Angels. The city is armed to the teeth. This is a war zone."

"Plus, you know, you guys have the Evangelions in your glorified basement." Duo quipped.
"Ok, fair point." Asuka said. "Well… then let's go look at that… thingy."

"It's called a Leo." Shinji said.

"Thanks, baka." Asuka said.

"Alright, lead the way, soldier boy!" Mari said as the group headed downstairs.

Back in the Command Center, everyone was celebrating the successful defense of the city, without the aid of the Evangelions.

"All hostiles confirmed destroyed." Hyuga reported.

"What about our casualties?" Misato asked.

"Several planes damaged. We lost three MiG–37s, an F–15, and half of the VTOLs." Aoba reported. "No crews have been recovered from the VTOLs, but the fighter pilots were able to eject safely."

"What about the AIS?" Misato asked.

"Minimal damage." Hyuga reported. "Several sites near the main battle zone were damaged, but nothing was destroyed. Teams are moving to re–arm the system."

"Alright, stand down from Level–1 battle stations." Misato ordered. "Go to Level–2, but keep the city in battle configuration, and set the AIS to standby to allow for rearmament, and have the fighters stand down too. No use wasting jet fuel."

"Yes, ma'am." Maya said.

"Deploy clean up teams to deal with any wreckage." Gendo ordered. "Bring anything of use back for inspection."

"Understood, Commander." Aoba said.

"And keep the shelter order in place for the time being," Fuyutsuki said. "We don't need unexploded ordinance killing anyone."

"How long will the cleanup take?" Kaji inquired.

"With standard shifts, probably 20 hours within the city limits." Hyuga said. "Three times that for everything outside."

"Can we hurry that along?" Misato asked. "It's not like we're in the middle of a battle, people can't stay in the shelters forever."

"Set double shifts for the recovery teams until further notice, and deploy all of them." Gendo ordered. "The Colonel is correct, we need the city back to normal as soon as possible. There is no need for a state of emergency if there aren't any Angels."

Heero and Trowa were working on opening the Leo's cockpit. The torso, upon closer inspection had been badly damaged in the fall, meaning that the hatch was jammed shut. With a great deal of effort, Heero and Trowa were able to blow the hatch off to reveal the pilot of the machine in a military
uniform, lying dead, with lacerations from shrapnel and completely covered in blood.

"Holy shit… someone was in that thing…" Asuka muttered.

"He looks really dead." Mari said.

"The horrors of war." Duo said as Heero and Trowa moved the man's body to access the cockpit. "So many people die fighting for what they believe in."

"Do you think he died horribly?" Shinji asked.

"Most likely." Wufei said. "It would have been a painful death… but it should have been fairly quick as well."

"What a shame." Quatre said. "But why were they even here?"

"No idea." Duo said. "They sent such a small force too… like they weren't expecting a fight."

"Or it was a recon mission." Wufei suggested.

"A one way recon mission?" Shinji asked. "Isn't that kind of dumb?"

"Not if they were to have a report ready for a main invasion force." Duo said.

"So, this could just be the beginning?" Mari asked.

"Looks like it." Duo replied.

"I think I know what they were looking for." Heero shouted as he came out of the cockpit. "They were looking for us."

"How can you possibly know that?" Asuka asked.

"The cockpit computer was tracking a unique signal." Trowa said as he approached carrying several hard drives.

"What signal?" Quatre asked.

"Trackers on our Gundams." Heero replied.

"So that's why they attacked the city." Quatre said. "They were looking for us."

"How did they get the trackers on our Gundams?" Wufei asked.

"Yeah, we never leave them unattended anywhere unsafe!" Duo said.

"Duo, that's not always true." Trowa said. "We've all hidden our Gundams away before where we have no idea who could find them."

"The bottom of the ocean doesn't count." Duo said.

"The how is not important at the moment, and neither is the why." Heero said. "We have to report this to NERV, they need to know that our Gundams are being tracked."

"And I need to inform them about the White Zodiac as well." Wufei added.

"How much do you know about them?" Duo asked.
"Just what Lady Une informed me of before I left." Wufei replied. "That's why I had to find you, they are an imminent threat."

"And now they're trying to come here." Trowa said.

"We can talk about this later." Heero said. "I suggest we get back to NERV HQ."

"I agree with Heero." Shinji said as his cell phone started ringing. "Hold on…" Shinji pulled the phone from his pocket and answered it. "Hello?"

"Shinji, why are you all standing next to one of those Mobile Suits?" Kaji asked.

"We'll tell you when we get there." Shinji said.

"Then you'll also explain why you stood on the roof and watched the battle?" Kaji asked.

"It was nice to see the other side of it for once." Shinji joked.

"Just get soon, please, before something else happens." Kaji said.

"Sure, but why are you calling?" Shinji asked. "Don't you trust us?"

"Yeah, I do, but a certain someone doesn't." Kaji said. "Just get here before she throws a fit, ok?"

"We're on our way. Bye, Kaji." Shinji said as he hung up the phone. "Alright, let's go, Misato's pissed we watched the fight or something."

"Typical…" Mari muttered.

"Really, she's worried about us?" Asuka asked. "We weren't even the ones fighting."

"It doesn't matter now, let's just go." Shinji said.

After arriving back at NERV HQ, Gendo cleared the Command Center of everyone that wasn't needed there. Maya, Hyuga, and Aoba were allowed to stay and continue coordinating the cleanup efforts. Ritsuko arrived back from the field to also overhear Wufei's briefing on the White Zodiac.

"So, Mr. Chang, please explain what you know about these enemy forces." Gendo said.

"Before my trip to find the other Gundam pilots, I was contacted by Lady Une, the head of the defense force for the Earth Sphere Unified Nation, known as the Preventers." Wufei explained. "A new threat has risen out of what is left of both OZ and the White Fang. DO you know what those are?"

"Yes, your comrades informed us of those organizations and their demise during the Eve Wars." Fuyutsuki said. "You may continue."

"After the deaths of Treize, the Chief Commander of OZ, and Quinze, the Leader of the White Fang, those forces were left in utter disarray with no one to lead them." Wufei continued. "There was a massive surplus of mass produced Mobile Suits and Mobile Dolls. With this vacuum of power from the two gutted factions and a new peace between the Earth and the colonies, someone took advantage of that and has formed a new organization from the ashes, the White Zodiac."

"Who took command?" Heero asked.
"Treize's older and less honorable brother." Wufei said. "Trente Khushrenada."

"That ass had a brother?!” Duo asked. "Why didn't we kill him too?"

"We didn't really know much about him." Wufei said. "He was a part of Romefeller, he oversaw OZ. He was the one who convinced Duke Dermail to exile Treize. He took over Romefeller after Dermail's death and publically dissolved both it and OZ, but started to secretly consolidate power."

"So, how did he get two opposing forces to unite?" Quatre asked. "White Fang wanted the colonies free from Earth's rule, while OZ wanted to rule the colonies with an iron fist."

"He promised to destroy the governments of both Earth and the colonies without reservation." Wufei explained. "He would set up a new government for Earth under his leadership, and promising to never harm the colonies once the war was over."

"So, is he lying?" Duo asked. "Cause I don't see that happening."

"No one's entirely sure, but he's reactivated the base on the Moon to continue to produce Mobile Suits or Mobile Dolls, most likely Virgos."

"Do you think they'll try to invade us here?" Misato asked.

"If he thinks it would be beneficial, most likely." Wufei replied. "While Treize was an honorable warrior who valued human life, his brother does not. The information Lady Une knew about him was quite disturbing."

"What kind of information?" Quatre asked.

"He thinks anyone who isn't Aryan isn't human." Wufei replied. "He wants to purify the human race, with him as its leader, and his kids by his side."

"Son of a botch… that's fucked up…" Duo muttered.

"So, he's insane." Mari said.

"Most likely." Wufei replied. "He at least believes his own propaganda. He believes himself unstoppable."

"Then we'll have to prove him wrong." Heero said. "Arrogance always leads to one's downfall. That has been proven throughout history time and time again."

"So, we are under another imminent threat." Gendo said.

"Yeah, but instead of the Angels, we're dealing with a megalomaniacal madman." Kaji said.

"Yes, I believe so." Wufei said.

"And Mr. Yuy, what did you find in that downed Mobile Suit?" Gendo asked.

"At some point in the last few months someone has planted trackers inside our Gundams." Heero explained. "That force that was sent was only a scouting force meant to try and capture the Gundams without incident, or at least determine our location for the main invasion force."

"We need to remove and destroy any trackers inside the Gundams to render them useless." Trowa said. "Otherwise when they arrive, they'll be able to find us."
"Agreed." Misato said. "Can you guys handle that on your own?"

"I believe so." Heero said. "We'll work on each Gundam one at a time. Once we find them on one of the Gundams, they most likely hid the others in the same place on the others."

"Then get to it." Gendo ordered.

"I think it's too late for that!" Hyuga shouted. "Pattern Violet detected!"

"What?!" Misato exclaimed. "Where is it?!" Misato asked.

"It's… over Russia." Aoba replied. "On the far eastern edge."

"Russia?" Misato asked. "What the hell is coming through?"

"The White Zodiac." Wufei said. "It appears they've waited long enough."

"It's only been a few hours." Kaji said. "Why come through this soon after the initial incursion?"

"While our forces are busy with their initial force, they can set up a beachhead." Heero said. "Once that happens, they'll have a base to launch an invasion?"

"But why invade at all?" Maya asked.

"Indeed, what point is there?" Fuyutsuki asked.

"This is only my own speculation, but if they were to find a way to control the wormholes, they could use your planet for resources in our world, and subjugate your population for use as slaves."

"That's dark." Asuka muttered.

"Sounds like a sci-fi movie." Mari said. "A shitty one at that."

"Then we must put up the best defense possible."

"Get me a visual!" Misato ordered. "We need to see what we're up against."

"Bringing the OBSAT into position now, ma'am." Maya replied. "On screen."

When the main screen came online, a terrifying scene unfolded on the before them. A large, glowing blue wormholes was open with what appeared to be hundreds of ships coming through it and landing not far from what looked like a small village. Each ship was massive. As the ships kept streaming through, everyone looked on in awe at the force that was assembling on the ground. As each craft landed on the barren terrain, clouds of dirt rose into the air. Guiding each ship was what seemed to be many hundreds of Aries.

"Oh my god…" Duo muttered. "There must be thousands of Mobile Suits."

"More like Mobile Dolls." Heero said. "I don't see many troop carriers… but those things are far larger than anything they used the last time."

"Based on the size increase from the original it must carry over 100 Mobile Dolls." Trowa said.

"What does that mean exactly?" Shinji asked.

"It means they've just landed over 10,000 Mobiles Dolls not that far from here."
"But where exactly?" Kaji asked.

"Kozyrevsk, Kamchatka Krai, between a small airfield and the village itself." Maya said. "According to this, approximately 2,700 km from here."

"How long would it take for an attack force to get here?" Gendo asked.

"At least three hours." Heero said.

"I agree." Trowa said. "Factoring in the speed limiting factor atmospheric drag and a non-aerodynamic design, any Mobile Doll or Mobile Suit would be limited to a cruising speed of around 900 to 1,000 km/h. Three hours is a good estimate."

"So, if they start moving towards us, we have three hours to deploy a defense." Misato said. "This is just great."

"At least we have Unit–02 back online." Kaji said.

"My Unit–02 is back online?" Asuka asked.

"Oh, yeah, kinda forgot with everything that happened today." Misato said. "Yeah, all fixed, try not to break it again."

"I didn't break it." Asuka muttered.

"I said I was sorry." Duo replied. "I promise it won't happen again."

"If it does, I'll cut something off you're gonna miss…" Asuka muttered darkly.

"I said I wouldn't, just relax."

"Enough." Quatre said. "We shouldn't be joking around right now. The enemy is out there, and they can track our Gundams. We should be working on that instead of bickering."

"Quatre has a point." Heero said. "We should go remove the transmitters."

"Well, they're already through, so they would have a lock on our location anyway." Duo said. "I say we go there and wipe them all out."

"We're vastly outnumbered." Wufei said. "They have over 10,000…"

"Actually, we're counting over 1,200 carriers now." Maya said. "So, a more accurate figure would be more like 120,000 plus."

"120,000 or more?!" Duo shouted. "How do these guys hide all this fucking shit?"

"He has the entire Lunar Base." Heero said. "A few hundred thousand Mobile Dolls would be easy to hide there."

"How would they control them?" Shinji asked.

"Mobile Dolls are controlled by their onboard computers and a control station. 3,000 km isn't very far for the control system to operate." Trowa explained. "They can attack us without putting anymore humans at risk."

"So, what should we do?" Shinji asked.
"Colonel, alert the air base and have all the fighters prepped to launch within one hour until further notice." Gendo ordered. "And keep the AIS on standby."

"Yes, Commander." Misato said. "What about the Evangelions?"

"Have them ready to deploy at any time, along with the Gundams." Gendo said. "If we are attacked we will deploy everything at our disposal."

"Sounds good to me." Duo said. "Killing a computer isn't anything… it isn't even killing."

"Well, with three hours to react to an attack force, we can muster up a good battle plan." Heero said.

"So, how would we fight?" Asuka asked. "I mean, the Evangelions are pretty large, but we can't just swat at them and hope to destroy them."

"Mobile artillery." Misato said. "Gatling guns with exploding rounds, maybe two of them for each of you. Or really any weapons we can give you to shoot. You can probably react faster than the weapons encampments."

"So we have a plan." Kaji said. "Now we have to wait."

"In the meantime, what can you tell us about the enemy Mobile Suits?" Gendo asked.

"I have a question." Duo asked. "For Dr. Akagi. Do you have enough data to send us home? I mean, that wormhole was open for a while."

"Technically, it's still open." Ritsuko said. "But the data will be very helpful in determining how to get you all home."

"Good." Duo said. "Now that's out of the way, what do you want to know about the other Mobile Suits?"

"We know an awful lot about them from all the fights we had." Quatre added.

"Start at the beginning." Gendo said.

A tall, older man was walking down a long runway. He had just exited an aircraft from its rear ramp, which had a single Mobile Suit inside of it, covered in a heavy tan tarp. He was wearing a dark blue uniform with white frilly epaulettes. He had dark blue eyes and golden brown hair. All around him were massive aircraft that made the tall man seem almost insignificant. He was walking up to a group of men who were standing at attention.

"Supreme Commander Khushrenada, I'm so glad you could be with us." One of the men said. "We are glad you made this journey with us."

"I am more than pleased to be here." Trente said smugly. "I wanted to see the world I was going to enslave to help us with our goal."

"All 2,000 ships have landed, sir." Another officer informed him. "And all of our Aries and Leos are set to secure the area."

"What is there to secure, the small village?" Trente asked. "Just kill everyone you see. Leave no survivors."

"Understood, Supreme Commander." The officer replied.
"What of the scouts we sent ahead?" Trente asked.

"No response." One of the officers replied. "It appears they were entirely wiped out."

"Hmph, I can see why little Treize had such trouble with those pesky Gundams." Trente replied. "What about the trackers on the Gundams?"

"All five are active and showing them about a three hours' flight from here." Another officer replied.

"So… within easy striking distance." Trente said. "And our Mobile Doll forces? How are they? Are they ready to deploy?"

"Not quite, Supreme Commander." The officer replied. "The control system is still being set up. And we need someone to control it."

"We have someone." Trente said. "I will command the forces using my ZERO Doll System."

"What about your Mobile Suit, Supreme Commander?" The officer asked.

"Only if need be." Trente said. "For now, I will stay here. Have our defense systems been deployed yet?"

"Yes, sir." The officer replied. "Hurry up with the Mobile Doll control system, I want to launch an attack tomorrow."

"Of course, sir." The officer replied. "How many units should be prepped for the assault."

"50,000 units." Trente replied "A third of our force should be sufficient, released in three waves… 20–20–10. A nearly unstoppable assault."

"When would you like to launch, sir?" The officer asked.

"As soon as the control system is ready." Trente replied. "Then we'll either force the Gundams into submission, or utterly destroy them."

October 23, 2016 – NERV HQ

Misato and Kaji were standing in the Command Center, deep in Central Dogma. The main screen still displayed the satellite feed of their landing area, with a great deal of movement happening. Neither of them had slept as they were too worried about what might happen when they did. It was early in the morning, and the shift of technicians had just changed, bringing Maya, Hyuga, and Aoba back to their stations.

"You're here early." Aoba quipped.

"Never left." Misato said.

"Never slept either." Kaji added.

"Colonel, you need sleep, you can't stay awake forever." Hyuga said.

"I'm aware of that, but I have this bad feeling that the second I leave, they're going to attack." Misato said.

"There's been a lot of movement at that base of theirs." Kaji said. "But we're not too sure if they
were organizing or inspecting their Mobile Dolls. So we wait."

"Do you think they're going to attack?" Maya asked.

"Probably in the next few hours." Kaji said.

"At least that's our guess." Misato said.

"Were you able to identify the weapons they brought?" Hyuga asked.

"Heero and Duo gave us the run down last night." Kaji explained. "They've got about 5,000 Aries and 20,000 Leos setting up a defensive perimeter around their area, along with moveable weapons systems for added firepower."

"They also were able to identify those Mobile Dolls. All different variations of the Virgo, equipped to fly independently of their carriers."

"How many are there?" Hyuga asked as he sat down.

"Final tally is 150,000 Mobile Dolls, with three varieties of Virgos." Kaji said. "Which is an awful lot of bad guys to deal with."

"Well… looking at the feed, there's an awful lot of movement." Maya said. "Thermal imaging shows that they're getting ready for something. The Virgos are lining up in some sort of formation."

"Oh shit." Kaji said.

"Well, what does that look like to you?" Misato asked.

"The first wave of an attack force." Kaji said.

"Alright, it's time to get everyone to shelters." Misato said. "Set a timer for three hours when the first group of those things launches…"

"Understood ma'am." Hyuga said. "Timer is set and on standby."

"Where are the pilots?" Maya asked.

"It's Sunday, they're probably sleeping." Misato said.

"I'll go pick them up." Kaji said. "I have a feeling we're going to need them in a few hours."

"Actually, we'll need them in about three hours." Aoba said. "Several thousands of those things are launching."

"Timer counting down." Hyuga reported.

"Yeah, I'll be back within the hour." Kaji said. "With the Evangelions be ready?"

"Yeah, everything will be ready." Misato ordered. "Activate the alarm system and set Level–1 battle stations. Have the city evacuate or hold up in shelters, and set the city to battle configuration. Bring the AIS online and alert the airbase to get ready to launch all their fighters."

"Understood, Colonel." Hyuga said.

"Call the Commander as well, tell him the enemy is coming." Misato ordered.
"I'm calling him now, ma'am." Maya replied.

Shinji was sitting patiently in his Entry Plug. All around him, there was a flurry of activity. Unit–02 was on the launch elevator next to them, power cable attached and ready. In front of him, the five Gundams were getting ready to move to a third elevator on Shinji's other side. The launch shaft was open and the lights were yellow, showing they were ready for immediate deployment. As he was looking around, a video chat notification popped onto his screen from Asuka.

"Hey, baka, you ready?" Asuka asked.

"Mostly." Shinji said. "But we've never done something like this before."

"We'll be fine baka." Asuka said. "You're a great shot, you'll rack up loads of kills."

"Thanks Asuka." Shinji said as he blushed. "You're pretty great at this too."

"Don't you know it." Asuka said.

"Are we sure there aren't any people on these things?" Shinji asked. "I don't want to kill anyone."

"Shinji, they are Mobile Dolls, controlled by a computer." Heero assured him. "No one will get hurt, I can promise you that."

"Yeah, kid, don't worry too much." Duo said. "You'll be fine."

"Puppy, princess, just be careful for me." Mari said. "I'm not there to take a beating for the two of you this time."

"Mari, it isn't as simple as that." Kaji said. "This is a large force of enemies. Some 20,000 Virgos are heading straight for us, with another 30,000 following behind them."

"Look, this will be one of the hardest battles we'll face."

"Not really." Shinji said. "These machines don't scare me like an Angel does. They're not alive, it's a computer."

"Yeah, we've faced far worse than this in the past." Quatre said. "These kinds of odds are always overwhelming, but we can handle it."

"We've come close to death so many times." Trowa added. "This is no different."

"How long until the Virgos are in range?" Heero asked.

"14 minutes." Maya replied.

"That's not very long..." Wufei said. "We should deploy so we can set up our defensive perimeter."

"I agree." Trowa said. "We should be waiting for them."

"Does everyone know the plan?" Misato asked.

"Defend the city at all costs and wipe out every enemy we see." Heero said.

"Well, you won't be the only ones out there." Misato said. "Be sure not to hit any of our fighters, and try not to let any of those things into the city."
"We understand, Misato." Shinji said.

"So, can I take it that's everyone's ready?" Misato asked.

"Mission accepted." Heero said.

"Heero certainly is." Duo quipped. "And so is the God of Death."

"Sandrock and I are ready." Quatre said.

"Heavyarms, set to launch." Trowa said.

Shinji gripped his controls tightly. "I'm ready, Misato."

"Altron ready." Wufei said sternly.

"Yeah, let's go kick some robot ass." Asuka said.

"Evangelions... Gundams... LAUNCH!" Misato ordered.

Mari was standing next to Kaji with her arms crossed, she looked quite annoyed as she watched the Evangelions and Gundams head to the surface.

"Well, this is fun." Mari said angrily. "I wish I could help them."

"You know you can't." Kaji said. "Your Evangelion is still too damaged."

"I know, but I'm tired of fucking sitting here watching them get hurt." Mari grumbled. "I want to be out there with them."

"Sorry, kid, you're stuck herewith us, watching everything unfold." Kaji said. "You know they know you want to be out there."

"Yeah, but that doesn't help." Mari said as the view on the main screen switched to the surface showing everyone deploying into position.

"Well, how do you think we feel?" Kaji asked. "We sit here and can't do anything but hope for the best. Try to understand it for our perspective."

"I'll do my best scruffy." Mari said.

"Colonel, everyone's on the surface." Hyuga reported.

"Deploy the weapons crates." Misato said. "Send Shinji and Asuka everything in the inventory we have."

"VTOLs deploying the weapons now." Hyuga said.

"10 minutes until the Virgos are in range." Aoba said. "All shelters and district captains are reporting that the civilians are safe and sound."

"Good, and the AIS?"

"Ready to fire on the incoming targets." Maya reported. "When do you want the system to open fire, ma'am?"
"As soon at the enemies breach the outer perimeter." Misato said.

"Alright, setting it now…" Maya said as her console beeped. "Wait, I'm picking up another Pattern Violet!" Maya shouted. "It's 47 km away, due south!"

"How many contacts?" Kaji asked.

"Yeah, cause more is gonna make a difference." Mari quipped.

"Not now, Mari!" Misato grumbled.

"Wormhole was only open for a few seconds… sensors indicate two targets, maybe more, moving at high speed… MAGI predict their destination will be Tokyo–3 with a 99.7% probability factor."

"Just wonderful." Misato muttered.

"I'll take care of it." Heero said.

"Don't go alone, Heero." Shinji said. "Take someone with you, even out the odds."

"Heero, I'll follow you." Duo said.

"It won't matter." Heero said. "They'll be in range I a few minutes, just before the Virgos arrive. But we can go meet them."

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Wing Zero and Deathscythe were moving quickly to intercept the other force before it could reach Tokyo–3.

"Duo, be ready." Heero said. "We're up against more than just a few Mobile Suits. There are two dozen Taurus Mobile Suits inbound, with a pair of shuttles… and…" Heero paused. "We need to get within visual range."

"This mountain is good." Duo said. "Nice and high, we'll have a clear view of whoever is coming at us."

"Right." Heero replied.

As Wing Zero and Deathscythe set down on the mountain Unit–01 used to shoot Ramiel, they saw the approaching force of Mobile Suits. Heero had been correct, 24 Taurus Mobile Suits, painted in a bright white regalia, all in their flight configuration, there were also two atmospheric shuttles following closely behind them. Leading the charge were two additional Mobile Suits which caused Heero and Duo to do a double take. One of the remaining Mobile Suits was maroon and had a huge whip attached to its left wrist, and a massive beam sabre stored on its right hip. The second Mobile Suit was mostly white and had a very ornate helmet, similar to a Roman Centurion's, and carried a huge Mega Beam Cannon attached to its right shoulder, and a shield with two sheathed beam sabres on the other shoulder.

"Is that?" Duo asked.

"Epyon and Tallgeese…" Heero muttered. "But how?"

To Be Continued
A/N: I do not own Evangelion or any of the characters, GAINAX and the other distributors of NGE related material do. I am simply using them as a backdrop for my fanfic. I also do not own Gundam Wing, Sunrise does, as do their licensed distributors.

Sync Score Rankings!
Shinji – 93.7% (No Change)
Rei – 75.0% (No Change)
Asuka – 44.4% (No Change)
Mari – 42.0% (No Change)

The chapter name comes from the new threat that has emerged from the wormholes from the After Colony timeline. The name "White Zodiac" itself comes from a combination of the two antagonists at the end of Gundam Wing, OZ, also known as the Organization of the Zodiac, and the White Fang.

So, this chapter obviously leaves off on a cliffhanger, after a large amount of enemy forces, the title's White Zodiac, have decided to come and try to conquer and enslave NGE's Earth. Treize's older brother, Trente, is behind this after having taken up a great deal of power in the massive vacuum left after the end of the series.

Yes, there are Nazi overtones to the White Zodiac, however, given the series Romefeller Foundation, OZ, and even the White Fang, they were all rather white, not a person of color anywhere in those organizations. Treize's nationality is even listed as "Aryan" on the Gundam wiki… so those connotations were already there.

As I said before, and will always say at the end of chapter, please leave comments, as I would like to try to improve the story going forward any way I can. And, hell, constructive criticism is a good thing.

つづく
Chapter 7 – Return of the Lightning Count
October 23, 2016 – Outside Tokyo–3

Milliardo Peacecraft was sitting inside his Gundam Epyon, looking over towards the mountaintop and the city beyond it as the group of Mobile Suits he was leading followed closely behind. He looked over and saw the new Gundam he made, the Gundam Tallgeese, based on the original, with some improvements meant for Noin, when she contacted him.

"Zechs, are you alright?" Noin asked.

"Yes, I am, Noin." Milliardo replied. "Just lost in thought."

"Not such a great idea when we're flying at these speeds." Noin quipped.

"Thank you, Noin, I know." Milliardo said. "It's just been a while since I've been in combat… its so familiar…"

"I know, Zechs, but maybe we should contact Heero first." Noin said as she noticed Wing Zero and Deathscythe on the mountain ahead of them. "He does think you're dead after all, he may see you as an enemy."

"Identify yourselves." Heero said over the comms as Wing Zero pointed its Twin Buster Rifle at the pair. "Or be destroyed."

"Don't you recognize me, Heero?" Milliardo asked.

"Same old, Heero." Noin said. "Aren't you glad to see us?"

"Zechs… Noin?" Heero said. "How?"

"There will be time for explanations later, Heero." Milliardo said. "For now… we have a fight to win! Where are the Mobile Dolls?"

"Several minutes out." Heero said. "They are approaching the city from the north west."

"What about your shuttles?" Duo asked.

"Do you have an airfield where they can land?" Noin asked.

"Something can be arranged with our allies here." Heero said. "Lieutenant Colonel Katsuragi, did you receive all this?"

"Yes, Heero." Misato replied. "Friends of yours?"

"Yes, our allies." Heero said. "They can be trusted."

"Are you sure?" Kaji asked.
"Very much so." Heero replied.

"Duo?" Misato asked.

"Yeah, they're cool." Duo replied.

"The shuttles can land at the airfield." Misato said. "Transmitting coordinates."

"Thank you Colonel." Milliardo said. "Thank you for accommodating us."

"Don't thank me yet..." Misato said. "Uh, what's your name?"

"Milliardo Peacecraft, sometimes known as Zechs Merquise," Milliardo said. "It's a pleasure to meet you."

"Well, like I said, don't thank me yet." Misato said. "You wipe out those Virgos coming at us, and then you'll have earned it."

"With pleasure... let's go destroy those malcontents..." Milliardo said. "Epyon moving out!"

Epyon transformed into its Mobile Armor form and flew off at high speed, followed closely by Wing Zero transforming and doing the same.

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Duo stood there as Heero and Milliardo jetted off to the northern end of Tokyo-3.

"Well... it was nice of them to wait for us." Duo quipped.

"Well, Zechs hasn't been this happy in a while, Duo." Noin said. "I guess this fight will let him feel like himself again."

"That's kinda weird, but whatever." Duo said. "Who's on the shuttles, anyway?"

"Not over an open channel, Duo." Noin said admonishingly. "Although, I'd be appreciative if you led me and the Taurus to the battle zone."

"Yeah, just follow me." Duo said as Deathscythe closed its armor and jetted off. "And try to keep up."

"How many of them are there?" Noin asked as her Tallgeese and the Taurus Mobile Suits followed suit.

"50,000 or so." Duo said. "But we've got a good chance of wiping them all out."

"So... it's as bad as we thought." Noin said.

"What do you mean, Noin?" Duo asked.

"We had intelligence reports that they had half a million Mobile Dolls ready for transport." Noin explained. "At least they didn't send through that whole force."

"Yeah, we can be glad for that." Duo said. "Come on, we only have a few minutes before the Mobile Dolls arrive."

"Roger that." Noin replied.
Asuka was sitting impatiently in her Entry Plug looking out on the horizon. She could just start to see a swarm of small dots coming into view. She looked at the weapons crates scattered all around her, and could feel the weight of the twin Gatling guns in her hands. She looked over and saw Shinji a few hundred meters away, with the same amount of weapons crates as she had, and also holding twin Gatling guns.

"Damn it, these things are taking forever to attack us." Asuka growled. "Can they just attack us already so we can wipe them out?!"

"Asuka, don't be impatient." Trowa said. "The Virgos will still put up a very tough fight. They have small electromagnetic shields that will deflect most beam blasts."

"Maybe our A.T. Fields can neutralize them." Shinji suggested. "Right, Misato?"

"Well, it's worth a try you two." Misato said. "Extend your fields to maximum."

"Roger." Asuka said as her A.T. Field extended, causing the ground to quake slightly.

"Alright..." Shinji replied as his own A.T. Field caused the ground underneath his EVA to buckle slightly just as the Wing Zero and Epyon arrived on scene, transforming back into their Mobile Suit mode and landing between the two Evangelions.

"Where the hell have you been?" Asuka asked. "And who's the new guy?"

"An old ally." Heero said. "Don't worry about it now, we have to focus on the enemy."

"Fine..." Asuka said. "But he better be on our side."

"Don't worry, miss, I am on your side." Milliardo replied. "Get ready, here they come..."

"Hold your fire until I tell you to attack." Misato ordered.

"We know, Misato." Asuka said as Unit–01 and Unit–02 brought their weapons to bear. "We're not gonna waste ammo."

Heavyarms and Wing Zero brought up their weapons while Sandrock, Epyon, and Altron active their various weapons and the Deathscythe, Tallgeese and the Taurus landed behind them. Several dozen fighters flew overhead towards the enemy's Virgos.

"Oh look, we have reinforcements." Shinji said happily. "This is a nice surprise."

"Shinji, don't expect the fight to be any easier." Wufei warned. "We are still heavily outnumbered, even if we can easily destroy a computer, we have a lot of enemies to kill."

"Enough talk." Asuka said. "Let's just kill these fucking things."

"They're in range." Misato said. "All units, WEAPONS FREE!"

The first wave of Mobile dolls arrived and they deployed their Planet Defensors as the AIS opened fire with a mad barrage of weapons fire. The bullets and the missiles were surprisingly effective, destroying several hundred with the opening volley.

The Taurus' opened fire with their beam rifles, and the Epyon, Sandrock, Deathscythe, and Altron leaped towards the Virgos. Unit–01 and Unit–02 opened fire with Wing Zero's Twin Buster Rifle
firing its powerful, and the TALLGEES's Mega Beam Cannon split open along its horizontal axis and fired a massive charged blast, wiping out several dozen Virgos with the Wing Zero's blast. Both unit–01 and Unit–02 ejected their spent ammo boxes on the Gatling guns and changed them out as more Virgos approached, and resumed their weapons barrage as soon as the guns were reloaded.

"Eat lead you fucking bastards!" Asuka shouted as Unit–02 fired a relentless stream of exploding ammunition into the thick approaching cloud of Virgos, destroying several of them as several rounds hit each, breaching the Planet Defensors with ease. "I've still got two clips for each of these fucking guns!"

"Regardless of your remaining gun ammo, Asuka... several hundred have gotten past the perimeter and are attacking the city." Misato stated. "Duo, Sandrock, Altron, move to intercept and protect the city. More will most likely get through. Anything we can't hit, you take out."

"Roger, moving into defensive position." Wufei replied reversing the Altron after wiping out several more Virgos. "Let's go Nataku."

"Alright, time to clean up a mess, Deathscythe." Duo said cheerfully, moving the Deathscythe towards the city. "I better get plenty of enemies to destroy."

"I'm on my way, Miss Misato." Quatre said as Sandrock moved towards the city as well. "Let's do it, Sandrock."

"Fucking hell, how many of them are there?!" Asuka shouted as she shot down several dozen Virgos with at least twice as many taking their places. "They just keep fucking showing up! It's never fucking ending!"

"Over 16,000 left in this wave with another 30,000 inbound." Maya reported.

"We've only killed a few thousand?!" Asuka shouted. "Seriously?!!"

"We should have killed more." Shinji moaned. "We need to try harder."

"Sorry guys, just keep at it." Misato said. "Try something different."

"Fucking hell, Misato! Why don't you come up here and try something different!" Asuka shouted as both Evangelions continued blanketing the sky with exploding rounds. "We need more weapons up here if there are still this many."

"We're working on it." Misato said. "You can switch out the ammo drums yourselves."

"We know, Misato, we just need the extra ammo." Shinji bemoaned. "We've already changed them without any issues."

As the heavy blanket of weapons fire continued, the Virgos decided to change tactics and swarm towards Unit–01 and Unit–02. Several hundred clumped together in two tight swarms and charged each Evangelion. The pair of Gatling guns each Evangelion had were shooting down many of the Virgos as they approached, but they were unable to shoot enough of them down before they began mass firing their beam weapons at them.

"Shinji, dodge!" Asuka shouted as unit–02 jumped backwards as it continued firing.

"NO!" Shinji shouted as the ground started to shake. "Get away from me... AND LEAVE US ALONE!" Unit–01 A.T. Field fluctuated and shot out a massive expanding shockwave at the approaching Virgos, as it crackled with electrical discharges, ripping apart the Virgos charging Unit–
01 and Unit–02, and any others in the immediate vicinity stretching out to what seemed like several hundred meters.

"What the fuck was that?" Asuka shouted.

"Whatever it was, it was impressive." Maya said. "Over 2,000 signals just disappeared off the screens."

"Seriously?" Milliardo said in awe. "Over 2,000 in one shot…"

"Baka… can you do that a few more times?" Asuka asked as she looked on in awe.

"I… I don't know." Shinji said. "It just… happened."

"Maybe because you were in danger." Misato suggested.

"Whatever it was, it was impressive." Heero said as Wing Zero fired into the void Unit–01 created, catching some of the newly advancing Virgos off guard, destroying them. "We need to attack more of them en masse, otherwise we will never win."

"I agree." Noin said. "Something with a large area of effect would be great right now."

"Well… we can't keep using these things." Asuka said as unit–02 threw its Gatling guns to the ground. "I'm out of ammo."

Unit–01 threw down its Gatling guns as well. "So am I." Shinji added. "Switching to Positron Rifles." Unit–01 picked up a pair of positron rifles and began firing them into the groups of approaching Virgos, causing several of them to fall out of the sky with each shot.

"Good idea baka." Asuka said. "Unit–02 switching to bazookas." Unit–02 aimed the bazookas, armed with proximity fuses and opened fire, with the explosives going off as they approached several groups of Virgos. However the explosions only damaged the Virgos, but it was better than nothing.

"Fuck!" Asuka shouted. "These aren't gonna work very well! I need more Gatling ammo!"

"Additional ammo is on the way you two." Misato said. "Hold on."

"We need to find another way to attack them. There are just too many to effectively kill from a stationary defensive position." Milliardo said as Epyon landed gracefully between Unit–01 and Unit–02, its Heat Rod slamming into the ground and its massive beam sabre shutting down. "Otherwise dwindling ammunition supplies will be the least of our worries."

"Well, we have to figure something out." Noin said. "Heero and I may have near unlimited energy, along with the Taurus, but there is going to be some kind of weapon fatigue at some point, or pilot fatigue."

"I would be more worried about pilot fatigue." Misato said. "You've only been out there 20 minutes, but it's a fairly intense battle."

"Thanks for letting us know that, Misato!" Asuka grumbled. "We missed that important fact while we were SHOOTING AT EVERYTHING!"

"Asuka, please calm down and focus." Shinji said. "We have to try and stop these things." Shinji paused. "And Misato, could you please not say stuff like that? It's only going to distract us."
"I'll be more careful." Misato grumbled. "Ammo is coming in hot too, four VTOLs are inbound. It's the last of it however, so don't expect any more ammo drops."

"We'll be on the lookout." Asuka said as she switched the magazines of her bazookas and then continued to fire into the Virgos. "And we'll try not to waste it."

Unit–01 tossed its Positron Rifles down as they also ran out of ammo. "Misato, drop all the ammo near Asuka." Shinji said. "I'm not just gonna stand here anymore." Both shoulder pylons opened, revealing Unit–01's twin Prog Knives. Unit–01 pulled them both from their holsters. "I can move freely, she can't."

"Shinji, that's an awful plan." Misato said. "You're more effective holding your position."

"No, I'm not." Shinji said. "I'm going!"

"If you're going into the fray, I will follow." Milliardo said as Epyon's beam sabre activated again. "What was your name again?"

"Shinji." Shinji replied. "Nice to meet you… uh…"

"Milliardo." Milliardo replied.

"Shinji, I said you're not going anywhere." Misato said. "That is an order."

"Leave it alone, miso." Mari said. "He has a tendency to ignore stupid orders like that."

"Yeah, Misato, Shinji can handle this." Kaji said. "He'll be fine."

"Colonel, I agree with Shinji." Fuyutsuki said. "He would be far more effective charging the enemy, right Commander?"

"Let him do as he pleases." Gendo replied which only made Misato grumble.

"Asuka… will you be ok?" Shinji asked. "I don't want you to think I'm…"

"You're not abandoning me, baka… you're taking the initiative for once." Asuka joked. "But seriously… go for it, baka." Asuka said proudly as she looked over at Unit–01. "I'll be right here waiting for you to get back. Give 'em hell."

"Thanks, Asuka." Shinji said as Unit–01 bounded forward, followed closely by Epyon, as they headed into the ever thickening force of Virgos that were on approach.

Asuka smiled as she saw the cargo drop all around her, clattering to the ground behind her. "No problem, baka… I'll keep them busy."

Back in the Command Center, everyone was watching the main monitor as the battle raged on. The main monitor had several video feeds up, notably a feed of Unit–02’s continuing assault on the approaching Virgos, and several other static cameras from around the city as the battle raged on.

Mari looked on in agony, not being able to help her friends while they fought against the massive enemy force. However, something Noin had said made something click in Mari's mind. "Hey, miso?" Mari asked. "I think I have an idea."

"Not now, Mari." Misato said. "Maya, that new group… how many are there?"
"20,000." Maya replied. "Adding in the 12,000 or so still remaining from the first wave, that's at least 32,000 before the third wave arrives with another 10,000."

"The second wave will be within weapons range in seven minutes." Hyuga said. "With the third wave being in range in fifteen minutes."

"We'll be overrun in that time." Misato said. "42,000 is too many…"

"What is the status of the AIS?" Fuyutsuki asked.

"The AIS is taking some heavy damage." Aoba replied. "We've lost 18% of the weapons encampments to heavy damage, with moderate damage to another 27%. Ammunition at current fire rate will run out in 47 minutes."

"We've also lost many of the VTOLs and other fighters." Hyuga replied. "Out of the 36 of each aircraft, we have 3 VTOLs, 14 F–15s, 7 MiG–35s, and 9 Su–37s."

"What about the Gundams?" Kaji asked. "And the Evangelions."

"Unit–01 and Unit–02 are fine, no appreciable damage."

"Alright… we need a plan." Misato said.

"Miso, I have an idea." Mari said again.

"Mari, stop interrupting with your silly comments, we're trying to think." Misato said as she focused on the issues in front of her. "See if you can have those white Mobile Suits move to city's edge and perch themselves on some buildings."

"I'll coordinate with the commander of those forces." Hyuga said.

"Aoba, have the Duo, Quatre, and Wufei split the city into thirds, and have each of them be responsible for a third." Misato said.

"Right." Aoba replied.

"Maya, keep an eye on…" Misato started.

"But, miso, it's important!" Mari pleaded. "Please pay attention!"

"Mari, enough!" Misato shouted as she kept staring at the main screen. "Either be quiet or get the hell out of here!"

"I'm not gonna be quiet until you listen to me!" Mari shouted. "I have an idea that may help us a bit and maybe end this stupid fight! JUST FUCKING LISTEN TO ME!"

"Mari, calm down." Kaji said. "Yelling isn't going to get her to listen."

"No, but it will make me listen." Gendo said. "Colonel, perhaps you should listen to her."

"Yes, sir." Misato said. "Make it quick Mari."

"What about the N2 Mines." Mari said. "That lady… Noin I think… she said that we need something with a large area of effect. That would qualify, wouldn't it? And they're not Angels… so they should work."
"We're not nuking the ground, we'll risk destroying ourselves." Misato replied.

"Not if you detonate the bombs in the air… and use the airburst and EMP to knock those things out of the sky. That does still exist with N2 mines, correct?"

"Yeah, N2 explosives have the same effects of a conventional nuke without those nasty radioactive side effects." Kaji said.

"So use it." Mari said. "Drop them on the second and third waves as they come into range, it'll thin them out."

"She has a point, ma'am." Maya said. "We just have to pick an appropriate height so we don't damage anything."

"1,500 meters." Aoba said. "The MAGI report that it's high enough to keep the fireball from damaging the city or any surroundings, but low enough for the shockwave and EMP to do their jobs and wipe out a good portion of the enemies."

"Fine… someone contact the airbase and notify the JSSDF to launch all of Archangel Squadron." Misato said.

"All of them?" Hyuga asked. "Isn't that like four planes?"

"Doesn't matter, they should be on standby anyway with their armaments ready to go." Misato said. "Send three of them to hit the second wave, then have the last one ready to launch against the third wave."

"Understood, ma'am." Hyuga said. "Contacting the JSSDF now."

"Heero, can you hear me?" Misato asked.

"Yes." Heero replied.

"I need you to head for the airbase and escort three bombers." Misato said. "Do not let them get shot down at any cost."

"Mission understood and accepted." Heero replied.

"I'll accompany him." Noin said.

"That is acceptable." Heero said.

"Get to it then." Misato said.

"Colonel, the JSSDF are launching Archangel–1, Archangel–3, and Archangel–4." Hyuga reported. "Launch ETA is two minutes."

"Good… let's hope this works." Misato said. "Let everyone know to get out of the way."

"Understood." Hyuga replied.

"Colonel, why didn't you activate them before?" Gendo asked.

"I didn't want to destroy the city in the process of saving it." Misato replied. "I'm trying to keep the civilians as safe as possible, and N2 Mines are the opposite of safe."
"Colonel, sometimes destruction is the only way to salvation." Gendo responded.

"Respectfully Commander, I'd rather not risk destroying the city to save ourselves." Misato said. "Detonating in the countryside is one thing, but the city is something different."

"She's right, Ikari." Fuyutsuki said. "We can't risk destroying the only protection the Geofront has. Otherwise we'd be vulnerable."

"So how will you clear out the forces inside the city?" Gendo asked.

"With the Gundams, Evangelions, and Mobile Suits we have available, plus the AIS." Misato said. "It's the safest way."

"But certainly the most labor intensive." Fuyutsuki replied.

"The MAGI predict that the city will be saved considerable repairs by doing it this way, so that's the tactical plan." Misato replied. "Unless you order me otherwise."

"No, proceed Colonel." Gendo replied. "Your plans tend to work in some ridiculous fashion or another."

"Trente was sitting inside his control room all on his own. He was wearing a helmet that was wired to the ceiling. The room itself was a large and featured an encompassing display of the entire battle sphere over and around Tokyo–3. He was control the entire Mobile Doll force with his mind, directing each unit or group to attack specific targets, and trying to make sure as many of them evaded enemy fire as possible.

"Well… aren't they putting up a good fight." Trente said to himself. "I didn't think they could affect our forces this much. But perhaps those massive Mobile Suits are the real issue… the raw power that one had was astonishing… shame the pilot can't seem to control it, otherwise he'd be far more dangerous. And that red one is stubborn, the pilot must be a foolish boy with no idea of how combat works."

Trente noticed that his forces were dwindling slightly. "9,000 remaining from the first wave after 40 minutes of grueling combat." Trente chuckled. "Oh, this is far more enjoyable than I originally imagined. At least they aren't just rolling over and letting me take what I want. But I always get what I want… my brother is dead after all… perhaps I'll let the pilot of Gundam 05 live after I capture him, as a thank you for killing my insufferable younger brother and his ideals about honor and loyalty in combat…"

Trente looked around as he guided a set of Virgos at a charging Unit–01, which promptly cut through them with his two Prog Knives. "Well… attacking the purple one is a bad idea, perhaps the red one… it seems less mobile. Perhaps cutting that power cable would be a smart move. But it's so hard to get close with that barrage of weapons fire coming at every single Virgo I have."

Trente noticed another squad of Virgos getting ripped apart. "Well… That creation of my brother's is still certainly a menace. Epyon… such a noble weapon, no ranged weapons. What a waste."

An alert beeped, notifying Trente of new enemy contacts. "Hmmm… three new slow moving contacts being escorted by Gundam 01 and that other new Mobile Suit." Trente said. "Most likely nothing… I'll keep focusing my attacks on the Mobile Armors. Once the second wave moves in they will have little recourse left but to surrender."
As the three new contacts approached Trente pressed the assault, moving the second wave towards the city at high speed, and pushing the third wave as fast as they could go. "Well… three large aircraft. What could they be doing near the second wave… wait, what are they dropping?" Trente watched through one of the Virgo's eyes as three N2 Mines dropped through the air towards the approaching Mobile Dolls. He saw a bright flash of light, and then nothing. "What was that? An EMP or an explosion?" Trente asked as several alarms went off.

"Second wave… force diminished to 3,000… and the first wave is down to roughly 8,000." Trente said angrily. "What were those weapons?!" Trente shouted. "How did they wipe out my forces so easily?!"

Trente's outburst caused him to lose concentration, which broke the mental link for a moment, causing the Virgos to lose their battle cohesion. "I need to find a way to get the third wave into range faster." Otherwise I won't be able to keep up this attack much longer.

Trente looked over his forces briefly. "21,000 out of 50,000 Virgos… how is that even possible." Trente was shaking with rage. "I've underestimated m enemy… I need to turn the power up on this system and take total control, risks or not… I need to fight harder."

Heero was in the Wing Zero's cockpit, cutting down every Virgo he came across. After watching the three N2 Mines wipe out a large portion of the advancing second wave, Wing Zero, Epyon, Tallgeese, and Unit–01 were now dealing with the 2,500 odd remaining Virgos of the second wave. However, Heero was noticing that their responses to attacks were becoming much faster than before, and their ability to predict attack patterns was also showing.

"Interesting…" Heero said. "ZERO… what do you think?" The screens around Heero flashed quickly, showing him several tactical paths to take. "That seems like the most logical one… Shinji, Zechs, Noin, fall back for a moment." Heero said. "I'm going to try something."

"Copy, Heero." Milliardo replied as Epyon pulled back.

"Good… I'll head back and help defend the city." Noin said as Tallgeese jetted off towards the distant skyline in the distance.

"Be careful." Shinji said as Unit–01 moved back nearer to Epyon.

Wing Zero flew into the air and stowed its beam sabre and split its Twin Beam Rifle in two, spreading its arms out and began charging a beam shot. Wing Zero than began spinning on a fixed point on all three axes and fired the beam shots, firing them in a constant stream in all directions as all of the Virgos were swallowed up in the ensuring beam sphere. When ZERO beeped that there were no more Virgos within range of the beams anymore, Heero stopped the rotation and reconnected his rifle.

"Second wave annihilated." Heero said.

"Good, but we still have the first and third to deal with." Milliardo said.

"Well, its progress in the right direction." Shinji said. "Maybe you should try that more often, Heero."

"I don't think it will work a second time." Heero replied.

"So you noticed it too." Milliardo said.
"Noticed what?" Shinji asked.

"That the fight with the Virgos after those bombs went off became much more difficult." Heero said.

"They're reaction time has increased... and their predictability has gone down." Milliardo added. "They're acting far more humanlike than before." Milliardo paused. "Almost like what I did with them during the final battle above Earth."

"Do you think Trente is using a ZERO System?" Heero asked.

"It's the only possibility." Milliardo replied. "That's why we're having more trouble with them."

"ZERO System?" Shinji asked.

"We can explain it later, Shinji." Heero said. "Needless to say, it is meant to increase the battle effectiveness of a person to its limit and beyond. What we need now is for one of us to go back to Tokyo–3 and lead the rest of the Gundams."

"I'll go." Milliardo said. "You and Shinji can handle the rest, correct?"

"Probably." Shinji said.

"We should be fine." Heero replied. "Now go."

"Right..." Milliardo said as Epyon transformed and flew off at high speed towards the city.

"Heero, are you sure we'll be fine?" Shinji asked.

"I believe so." Heero said. "Once the final N2 Mine is dropped, there will be far less to enemies to worry about."

"Heero, the next wave of Virgos is moving in." Misato said. "I need you to guard Archangel–2 on its final approach."

"Why is it flying so much slower than the others?" Heero asked.

"There are two N2 Mines aboard." Misato replied. "Once they detonate can you handle the remainder alone?"

"Yes." Heero said. "But what about Shinji?"

"He's needed back here." Misato said. "There are still roughly 7,000 left to handle."

"Heero, will you be ok?" Shinji asked.

"I will survive." Heero replied.

"Then I'm on my way Misato," Shinji said as Unit–01 stowed its Prog Knives back in the shoulder pylons and began running at full speed towards Tokyo–3. "Good luck, Heero."

"Same to you, Shinji." Heero replied as Wing Zero transformed into Mobile Armor mode and flew off towards the slow flying Archangel–2. As Heero approached the plane, he circled around it and matched its heading, speed, and altitude, flying behind and to the left of the aircraft. As he settled in to the slow flight, Heero opened a secure channel.

"Archangel–2, are you ready?" Heero asked.
"Are you our escort fighter?" Archangel–2 asked.

"Affirmative." Heero replied.

"You need a callsign." Archangel–2 said. "How about Mobius–1?"

"Whatever you deem appropriate, Archangel–2." Heero said. "Once you drop your ordinance, you are to immediately return to your airbase."

"Understood Mobius–1." Archangel–2 replied.

Wing Zero and Archangel–2 kept moving a slow pace as they saw the force of Virgos ahead of them. The Virgos however noticed their approach and having learned from last time decided to swarm the aircraft and its escort.

"Mobius–1, what should we do?" Archangel–2 asked.

"Evasive maneuvers." Heero said. "And arm your ordinance."

"Understood." Archangel–2 replied.

As the massive bomber began to evade the shots being sent its way by the highly aggressive Virgos, Heero transformed Wing Zero back to Mobile Suit mode and drew his beam sabre and charged at the closest Virgos, slicing them down the middle. Wing Zero did its best to screen the attacks from the Virgos, but the bomber was too big a target to miss and it took several hits to the wings and fuselage.

"Mobius–1, we're experiencing some trouble here." Archangel–2 said shakily. "We're losing fuel and lift... we need to lose some weight."

"Are the safeties disengaged on your ordinance?" Heero asked.

"Yes." Archangel–2 responded.

"Drop your ordinance and get out of here." Heero said. "I'll take care of the rest."

"Understood, Mobius–1." Archangel–2 said. "Bombs away..." And then all Heero heard was static.

Just as the bomb bay doors opened and the N2 Mines cleared the bay, the aircraft was hit again in one of the engines, causing the left wing to erupt in a massive fireball that engulfed the aircraft and prevented any of the crew from escaping. As the wreckage and the N2 Mines fell to the ground, Heero turned Wing Zero and activated the Machine Cannons and took careful aim and sent a stream of bullets towards them, causing them to explode. The moment they exploded, Wing Zero's thrusters were pushed to full power to evade the shockwave and resulting EMP, while the Virgos were caught up in the explosion and sent to their end.

"Heero, are you still with us?" Misato asked.

"Mostly." Heero replied as he saw a good portion of the Virgos fall from the sky. "How many are left in the air?"

"3,000." Maya replied somberly.

"Far less than there were." Heero said. "And how many are still active within the city limits?"

"Just over 6,000." Maya replied. "So in total there are over 9,000 of them left."
"Then I will return to the city and we will make our last stand there." Heero said.

"Hurry back then." Misato said. "And be careful."

"Mission accepted." Heero replied as Wing Zero jetted back to the city.

Trente was sitting in his control room, watching and controlling the movements of the remaining Virgos while also combating a powerful headache.

"I need to end this battle soon." Trente said angrily. "This system, I can't handle the mental stresses much longer... not at this level anyway." Trente looked around at the display screens. "So, they're falling back to the city... perhaps I should choose one to story, to even out the odds... the red Mobile Armor... that's the best choice... it seems to be almost out of ammo anyway..." Trente motioned his hands and moved a large mass of red dots on his screen towards their intended target, with them moving in from all sides. "I doubt anyone can handle over 1,000 Mobile Dolls attacking them at once."

Trente laughed manically. "Yes, there is no way this can fail! I can still win this fight!"

Shinji was moving Unit-01 as fast as it could go. As he moved closer to the city, he could see flashed of beam rifle fire, and explosions from the missiles, and the stream of tracer rounds coming from the AIS.

"Shinji, how far away are you?" Misato asked.

"Just another few minutes, Misato." Shinji said. "Why?"

"You need to hurry up." Misato said.

Shinji was about to ask again when he realized why his help was needed. "What the... ASUKA!" Shinji screamed as he saw a mass of enemies swarming around Unit-02, with a power cable dangling uselessly from its plug. It's A.T. Field kept flashing as it reflected the attacks being sent its way, but the field's bright flashes were becoming duller as if the A.T. Field were close to failing.

"Shinji, she's using the A.T. Field at full strength, she only has 20 seconds of power left." Misato said. "You need to hurry!"

"ASUKA, ANSWER ME!" Shinji shouted. "ASUKA!"

Unit-01's shoulder pylons opened up revealing its retro rockets, which fired as the Evangelion crouched more in its running posture, giving it a huge burst of speed, causing it to break the sound barrier once again. As Unit-01 came within striking range of Unit-02, Shinji watched as the A.T. Field flickered and died and the red Evangelion fell to its knees and its eyes went dark.

"ASUKA!" Shinji screamed. "NOOOOOO!" Shinji roared. "LEAVE HER ALONE! GET AWAY FROM HER RIGHT NOW!"

Unit-01 sent a shockwave outwards sending the Virgos flying away from Unit-02, but when they recovered from the shock, they resumed their assault on the defenseless Unit-02.

"I SAID TO LEAVE HER ALONE!" Shinji roared as his eyes turned red and the ground began to shake. "YOU'RE GONNA REGRET WHAT YOU DID!"
"WHY CAN'T YOU JUST LEAVE US THE FUCK ALONE!?!" As the ground shook beneath them, the Virgos stopped in their tracks as a massive field of energy built around Unit–01. "WHY CAN'T YOU JUST GO… THE FUCK… AWAY!?!" The field collapsed for an instant before exploding outward in all directions, in the form of a massive blue and purple shockwave crackling with electrical discharges. As the field expanded rapidly, every Virgo the field touched was wiped out, but nothing else was damaged. The field expanded outward, encompassing the entire city, the countryside, wiping out every Virgo that was attacking the city. When the last Virgo was destroyed, the shimmering blue and purple dome collapsed, and Unit–01 collapsed in a heap on the ground next to Unit–02.

Unit–02's hatch opened up and the Entry Plug ejected itself and opened, with Asuka clamoring out and looking over at the collapsed Unit–01.

"Shinji!" Asuka shouted as she ran over to Unit–01 as Wing Zero landed next to them. The cockpit opened and Heero emerged and lowered himself to the ground. He made it over to Asuka and Unit–01 unbeknownst to her just as she pulled the manual override and ejected Shinji's Entry Plug.

Asuka slammed the manual override on the Entry Plug hatch and the LCL flooded out. She saw Shinji lying inside, semiconscious and hopped in to see if he was ok.

"Baka, are you alright?!!" Asuka shouted. "Baka, look at me!"

"Ten more minutes Asuka…” Shinji mumbled. "I'm sleepy…”

"What happened?" Heero asked from outside the hatch, which made Asuka jump.

"I… I don't know, he just collapsed." Asuka said. "Before that I felt the ground move, and then I just felt safe."

"So you don't know anything about the shockwave?" Heero asked.

"What shockwave?" Asuka asked.

"Unit–01 emitted a shockwave that destroyed every Virgo that was attacking the city." Heero explained. "But it didn't damage anything else."

"Unit–01 did that?" Asuka asked. "Of course he did… but how did he do it?"

__—

Everyone in the Command Center was sitting there in stunned silence. They the shockwave dissipate and saw Wing Zero land near both Evangelions. It took several minutes for everyone to process what had just happened.

"What the fuck just happened." Misato said.

"Shinji happened." Mari said.

"Where are the Virgos?" Misato asked.

"The sensors are clear…” Maya sad in a state of shock. "There are no more enemy hostiles, they're just… gone…”

"Verify the readings!" Gendo shouted.

"Visuals confirm sensor data." Hyuga said. "No enemy hostiles remain… no severe damage to the
city."

"Where did they go?" Kaji muttered.

"Uh… guys… where did all the Virgos go?" Duo asked. "And what caused that wave thing to appear?"

"Yeah… where did everything go?" Quatre asked.

"We're not sure guys." Misato said.

"I'm not complaining that the enemies are gone…" Wufei said. "But it is very suspicious."

"Well… we'll try and figure it out." Misato said. "But for now, return to the elevators and we'll bring you back down here."

"What about the people in our shuttle?" Milliardo asked.

"They'll be here when you arrive." Kaji said. "Does that work for you?"

"Very much… thank you." Milliardo replied.

Misato clicked off the comms. "Ok… damage report."

"AIS has taken some heavy damage. 29% of the weapons have been disabled or destroyed, and another 58% have been damaged in some way." Aoba replied. "And all ammunition has been depleted."

"What about damage to the city?" Kaji asked.

"Minimal." Hyuga replied. "Superficial damage to armament and power buildings, and to some roads. But otherwise the city is in good shape."

"Is there any Virgo wreckage?" Fuyutsuki asked.

"None that we can see." Maya said.

"So the field destroyed all the Virgos within it." Gendo muttered.

"Dr. Akagi, do you know how Unit–01 generated that field?" Fuyutsuki asked.

"Most likely the same way he generated that beam several weeks ago." Ritsuko said. "It may be tied into his emotions."

"Is that a guess?" Kaji asked.

"Based on his reactions in both instances, one to Rei blowing herself up and this, Asuka getting attacked, his emotional state played into what happened." Ritsuko said. "Ergo… Shinji's emotions caused that shockwave."

"Which means there is no way to predict how or when it will happen again." Misato muttered.

"Yeah there is." Mari said. "Anytime he feels like we're gonna die, or if he's in danger, he'll do whatever the fuck that was to protect us."

"Do you really believe that, Mari?" Kaji asked.
"Yeah, I do." Mari said. "Shinji just wants to protect his friends, nothing more, and he'll do anything to protect us."

"Speaking of Shinji… is he ok?" Kaji asked. "Unit–01 is down after all."

"Establishing connection now…" Maya said. "Shinji… are you there?"

"Yeah?" Shinji asked weakly. "I'm awake…"

"Baka be quiet." Asuka said. "Just keep laying down. What is it guys?"

"Is Shinji ok?" Misato asked.

"Yeah, he just needs a minute to wake up." Asuka said. "He should be able to walk back to base."

"He doesn't appear injured." Heero added.

"What about Unit–02?" Kaji asked.

"Well, I guess he could carry it…" Asuka said. "Or you can drop a battery and he can install it."

"We'll send the battery." Misato said. "Just hold on a few minutes."

"Yeah, yeah." Asuka said. "So… is it over?"

"For now." Misato replied. "Do you know what happened?"

"Nope." Asuka replied. "Do any of you?"

"Not yet, Asuka." Kaji said.

"Colonel should I return to base with Shinji and Asuka, or head back now?" Heero asked.

"You can return with them." Misato said.

"Understood." Heero said.

"Alright, we'll see you soon." Misato said as she switched off the comms again. "Hyuga, is it safe to let people out of the shelters?"

"There aren't an enemies in the area." Hyuga said. "All remaining enemies are still located at their base."

"Then stand down from Level–1 battle stations and bring the city back to the surface." Misato ordered. "But maintain Level–3 battle stations."

"Alright, Colonel, do you have any plans for the enemy base?" Gendo asked.

"Yeah, can't we just go and hit them with N2 Mines?" Hyuga asked.

"Hyuga, there are civilians down there." Misato said. "I will not put them at risk just to destroy our enemies."

"Misato don't be so stupid, the deaths of a few people in a faraway village for the safety of the planet." Ritsuko said. "What kind of choice is that?"

"The choice between being a person and begin a monster." Misato replied. "We can more than easily
fight them without killing innocent people needlessly."

"Then what is your plan?" Fuyutsuki asked.

"We let them come to us and we destroy them." Misato replied. "Just like the Angels."

Milliardo had just secured Epyon from its operating mode and set it to diagnostic mode to check for damage that needed repair. He shut off his Epyon System, pulled off his helmet and opened his cockpit. He looked around the Cage and took it all in. He saw the Evangelions coming down the launch shafts next to him, with Wing Zero hitching a ride on Unit–01's left shoulder pylon. He looked down and saw a transport vehicle pull into an assembly area next to the launch pads and saw a familiar main of long blonde hair exit the vehicle next to another vehicle with a familiar Mobile Suit sized lump under a tarp. Milliardo slid down the rope from his cockpit to greet his sister, Relena.

"Milliardo!" Relena cried as she saw her brother.

"Relena…" Milliardo said as Relena hugged him.

"So, was the fight a success?" Lady Une asked as she stepped off the truck and walked up to him.

"Mostly." Milliardo said. "Although that would have been of some assistance." Milliardo pointed at the tarp on the back of the other truck.

"It's not quite battle capable yet." Lady Une replied. "But it will be soon with his help." Lady Une pointed to the last person coming off the truck, Howard.

"Well, it'll be easy enough to fix if you have the materials." Howards said. "Then Lady Une here should be able to assist you guys."

"Well, if you saw what we were facing, you'd understand we still don't have enough firepower, even with all of us and our Gundams, there are just too many." Milliardo said.

"Well, you defeated this force, didn't you?" Howard asked.

"No, that purple machine over there did." Milliardo replied, pointing at Unit–01. "Somehow it created some field and wiped them all out."

"That's damn impressive." Howard said. "I'd love to know how he did that."

"We all would." Mari said as she walked over.

"Who are you?" Milliardo asked. "You don't pilot one of those… things do you?"

Mari pointed to the partially reconstructed Unit–XP. "Yeah, that one's mine, it's still getting fixed from the last fight we had here. I was stuck in the Command Center watching you guys have all the fun."

"A true warrior always hates watching from the sidelines." Milliardo said. "But your voice is familiar…"

"I came up with the idea to bomb them." Mari said proudly.

"Ah… that was your outburst then." Milliardo said.
"So, which new Gundam is yours?" Mari asked. "That maroon beast or the elegant white one?"

"The maroon one." Milliardo replied. "Epyon."

"So, you pilot for this organization?" Lady Une asked.

"Yeah, name's Mari Illustrious Makinami, pleasure to meet you." Mari said.

"The pleasure is ours young lady." Howard said.

"Yes, it was very kind of you to let us land at your airbase." Relena said.

"And that you are welcoming s to your base of operations." Lady Une added.

"Well… allies of Heero's and the others are our allies too." Mari replied.

"Speaking of…" Relena said. "Where is Heero?"

"He just landed, give him a minute to secure Wing Zero." Milliardo said just as Heero walked over.

"Heero!" Relena said happily.

"What are you doing here?" Heero replied as the others wandered over. "You should not be here."

"Heero, I had to come here." Relena replied. "Everyone who could protect me was here."

"Is the threat back home that bad?" Quatre asked.

"Worse actually." Lady Une said. "Had we not left when we did, Relena would probably be dead by now."

"So, the usual shit we have to deal with then." Duo said.

"Basically." Milliardo replied. "We decided to try out the wormhole and see what would happen when we did, then we appeared here."

"Well, as you can see, it's really no safer here." Wufei quipped.

"Except for the fortress city protected by eight Gundams and two…" Lady Une said. "What are they called exactly?"

"Evangelions." Mari said.

"What an odd name…" Relena mumbled.

"Well, to us, Gundams sounds pretty odd too." Mari quipped back.

"Regardless… the Evangelions are certainly powerful machines." Milliardo said. "Odd names or not."

"Hang on…" Mari said. "Eight Gundams?"

"Eight?" Duo asked. "I only see six."

"I've modified this new Tallgeese with Gundanium alloy among other things." Milliardo said.
"Still, only makes seven." Quatre said.

"Not if you include what Lady Une brought under the tarp." Howard said.

"What did she bring?" Quatre asked.

"Yeah, which Gundam did she cart here?" Duo asked.

"Wing Gundam." Relena said.

"Wing Gundam..." Heero muttered.

"Wait, it survived again?!" Dupo shouted. "I thought it was destroyed!"

"No, we recovered the remnants and repaired it in case it was needed again." Howard explained. "Well, mostly repaired it, still needs some fine tuning to get it working again."

"So, does that mean you can fix up our Gundams too, Howard?" Duo asked.

"Yeah, probably." Howard said. "I'll take a look, see what I can do."

"Awesome!" Duo said happily.

"Hey, what are those things coming out of the backs of the Evangelions?" Relena asked.


"Interesting." Howard said. "What kind of control interface does it have?"

Mari pointed to her A10 connectors. "Mental." Mari said. "But if you'll excuse me, I have to go see if my friends are ok." Mari said happily. "But I'm sure we'll see each other later."

"I'm sure we will." Relena said as Mari wandered towards Shinji and Asuka.

"What a strange girl." Lady Une said.

"Well... she's not that bad." Duo said.

"She's actually quite funny." Trowa added.

"Just wait till she gives you all nicknames." Quatre said.

"Nicknames?" Milliardo asked. "Why?"

"Just something she does." Quatre said.

"You'll get used to it." Heero said.

October 24, 2016 – Comfort 17 Apartments

Shinji and Asuka were lying in Shinji's bed. Shinji had fallen asleep quite quickly when they arrived home after he was given a clean bill of health by the Medical Wing. So, by the time Asuka finished getting ready for bed, Shinji was snoring quietly. Asuka crawled into bed next to him, jostled him over to give herself room and fell asleep with her arms around him. When she awoke, Shinji was still fast asleep. But because she wanted to talk to him, she shook him gently until he woke up.
"Ugh… what time is it?" Shinji said tiredly. "It's too early…"

"It's time talked, baka." Asuka said. "We didn't really get to before you fell asleep."

"Can it wait?" Shinji asked. "I'm not really awake yet."

"Baka…" Asuka said threateningly.

"Sorry…" Shinji said as he snuggled against her. "Can you at least let me wake up?"

Asuka started gently poking the back of his head. "No… I wanna talk now, its important."

"Ok…" Shinji said as he rolled over and faced Asuka and kissed her gently on the lips. "Good morning."

"Guten morgen, baka." Asuka said.

"So, what is so important you won't let me sleep?" Shinji said.

"It's a bout yesterday." Asuka said.

"What about it?" Shinji asked.

"What do you think?" Asuka asked.

"The shockwave thingy?" Shinji asked.

"You guessed it, baka." Asuka said. "What the hell happened?"

"I… I still don't know." Shinji said. "All I can remember was that I saw you getting attacked by all those Virgos, then got I really, really angry, and then, I remember you waking me up in the Entry Plug."

"So you blacked out again." Asuka said disappointedly.

"Well… there are flashes." Shinji said. "A massive dome, and my body shaking a lot. But that's it… I'm sorry, Asuka."

"It's ok, baka." Asuka said. "But maybe… maybe you need to try and harness that power."

"Why?" Shinji asked. "It's too dangerous."

"The Evangelions are always dangerous." Asuka said. "But that power you have access to… it's amazing, it could save us."

"Asuka… every time this power erupts from Unit–01, I have to lose control for it to happen." Shinji explained. "I don't like when it happens, it's scary, Asuka. You don't understand."

"Try and help me understand, baka." Asuka said.

"Asuka, it's like I have no control over myself…" Shinji said. "It's like you're watching yourself do stuff, and you know why you're doing it, but then you just can't stop yourself."

"Oh…" Asuka muttered. "So, I feel like an idiot suggesting you control it…"

"Asuka, you didn't know." Shinji said. "Don't feel bad."
"I'll do my best…" Asuka started as Shinji's door slammed open.

"Puppy! Princess!" Mari shouted happily.

"We'll finish this talk later." Asuka muttered as Shinji nodded.

Mari jumped on the bed, and squeezed Shinji and Asuka in a tight embrace. "I'm so happy you guys are alright! I hate watching the fights from the sidelines… its fucking boring as hell, and I can't help you guys out at all."

"Mari, can you get off please?" Shinji said. "You're crushing me."

"Sorry, puppy." Mari said as she squeezed herself between Shinji and Asuka. "So, did you guys miss me on the battlefield."

"Not really…" Asuka said. "No annoying singing, no annoying sexual innuendos while we're fighting… I'd say it was far less chaotic."

"Hey…" Mari said.

"Mari, forgive her." Shinji said. "She's tired and you kinda barged in after all."

"Well, excuse me for being concerned about you guys." Mari said in a hurt voice.

"I swear to god if you cry, I'm gonna punch you in the face." Asuka said.

"I'll only cry if I can't stay here with you guys…" Mari muttered. "I've missed you."

"Well, the she'll have to stay." Shinji said. "I don't like when she cries, and I don't want you punching her in the face."

"Fine…" Asuka muttered. "But watch where you put your hands, four eyes."

"Yay!" Mari shouted. "You guys are the best!"

To Be Continued

A/N: I do not own Evangelion or any of the characters, GAINAX and the other distributors of NGE related material do. I am simply using them as a backdrop for my fanfic. I also do not own Gundam Wing, Sunrise does, as do their licensed distributors.

Sync Score Rankings!
Shinji – 94.2% (+0.5%)
Rei – 75.0% (No Change)
Asuka – 47.8% (+3.4%)
Mari – 42.0% (No Change)

And now an addition to Mari's nicknames, Gundam Pilots Edition II:
Zechs/Milliardo – count
Noin – badass
Relena – demure

This chapter names comes from the return of Milliardo Peacecraft/Zechs Merquise. Kinda self-explanatory, but still worth the mention anyway.
The attack Wing Zero uses is based on its Partner Strike LV 3 special attack in Gundam Dynasty Warriors 3, where the Wing Zero will spin around on all axes and sweep its Twin Beam Rifle in all directions. This is personally a favorite attack of mine as it really clears out a field, and it's a shame that it disappeared from the sequel.

Also, "axes" is apparently the plural of axis in addition to being the plural form of ax and axe… kinda odd, but thought it was a funny fact.

As for Shinji's new found power… considering that in the next story for NGE: Legacy, a Third Impact will be happening, his ability to tap into the raw power Unit–01 has while in an emotional state is just starting to crop up, so in addition to opening a wormhole(s) to another dimension, he can also wipe out all the bad guys when they hurt his girlfriend and so much more. However, with his lack of control, this power can't really be relied on too much, so it comes close to "deus ex machina" it's not quite there yet.

In addition more people have come through the wormhole and this time they're on the Gundams' side of things. So, with these additional reinforcements, things should be a bit easier going forward.

Finally, on the point about the Tallgeese being a Gundam now, and of course, with Noin piloting it… Noin is just as good of a pilot as Milliardo, so she deserved a proper Gundam, and in the interim since his disappearance, Milliardo has repaired the Epyon and built the Tallgeese again with Gundaninium instead of the typical titanium alloy armor. Also, the Gundam Tallgeese is designed like the Tallgeese II, but features the massive Beam Cannon from the Endless Waltz Tallgeese III.

As I said before, and will always say at the end of chapter, please leave comments, as I would like to try to improve the story going forward any way I can. And, hell, constructive criticism is a good thing.

つづく
Milliardo was relaxing in NERV HQ while waiting be hear where he would be allowed to go. After the battle, the new arrivals were given an extensive debriefing about this Earth, Tokyo–3, and the events that had occurred since the wormholes opened. Heero, Duo and Quatre, along with Relena, and Lady Une were all sitting with him patiently. Howard however was too busy going over the Gundams and seeing what repairs could be made, he had made it clear he intended to stay at NERV HQ instead of going somewhere else. Trowa and Wufei were scrutinizing their own Gundams in the Cage, and Noin joined the rest of the group as Milliardo broke the silence.

"Heero, what's the outside world like here?" Milliardo asked.

"Vastly different." Heero said. "All of that talk about Second Impact… there is far less life on this planet than there should be."

"The water levels are also apparently higher or something…" Duo muttered. "And those Angels we keep hearing about… they sound pretty terrifying."

"Shinji and Mari did offer to show us some footage when we got back." Heero said. "If you're interested, why not take them up on their offer?"

"Cause… I don't feel like it." Duo said nervously.

"Duo…" Quatre said disapprovingly.

"If they call it an Angel, it can't be that threatening, can it?" Noin asked.

"Well, Leo or Virgo doesn't sound particularly threatening either." Relena replied. "They're just constellations, but to us, they're Mobile Suits. It's all in the context."

"Very true, Miss Relena." Quatre said. "And Sandrock and Altron don't sound particularly threatening either."

"So, are they at war with these so called Angels?" Lady Une asked.

"They are in open conflict." Heero replied. "The Angels attack this city and are a direct threat to the whole planet, and they destroy them at great risk to their lives."

"They also are at an extreme disadvantage every time they fight an Angel." Quatre added. "At least that's how it's been described to us."

"Why not try and make peace with them instead?" Relena asked. "Wouldn't that put less lives at risk?"

"The way Heero is describing it, our father's ideals for pacifism would not work against them, Relena." Milliardo said. "Am I wrong?"
"No you're quite correct actually. They attack with little warning, and don't seem capable of anything but destruction and devastation." Heero said. "Shinji has almost died…"

"Three times buddy." Duo said. "They've all almost died. Even that other girl in the hospital… uh… cute with the hair…"

"Rei." Heero said sternly. "Were you distracted when we saw her?"

"I… so what if I was…” Duo muttered.

Noin chuckled and Heero shook his head. "She scarified herself to save her friends, Duo." Heero said. "By self–destructing her Evangelion, try and remember that in addition to her… feminine figure."

"Wait, she pulled a you?" Noin asked.

"Yes," Heero said. "Apparently the battle went so poorly, she was the last one left standing and did it to save them." Heero said. "She barely survived."

"Is that how the… boisterous girl damaged her Evangelion?" Milliardo asked.

"Yeah." Quatre said. "Mari kept charging the thing recklessly till it was damaged quite severely. She was lucky to survive as well."

"I still find it interesting that they use children to fight." Lady Une said.

Duo scoffed. "Sounds kinda familiar actually."

"It must be a universal constant." Heero said. "Children fighting the wars of adults."

"A sad, but true statement." Milliardo said somberly.

"But for us, that's changing," Relena said. "The peace talks with Earth and the Colonies have gone well… only Trente Khushrenada and his children are blocking the peace."

"And when we get back, we will destroy them." Milliardo said.

"Unless Trente is here." Heero said. "Your descriptions of him top Wufei gave the impression he is an arrogant and foolish man."

"That and he's a massive asshole." Duo added.

"Both are apt descriptions." Lady Une replied. "But for now, we should only focus on the White Zodiac forces here on this world. We can worry about the rest of them when we return home."

"Are you quite sure?" Quatre asked. "I'm worried that without us there things might get worse."

"Sally Po can keep an eye on things for now." Noin said. "Between her and the remnants of the Alliance military, they can keep things steady until we return."

"Even without the prospect of being able to return in the near future?" Noin asked.

"I am not concerned about getting home." Milliardo said. "They built these massive machines called Evangelions, this underground base, I'm quite sure they will come up with something soon. But we have plenty to focus on here for right now. Our enemy is effecting this Earth, and it's our responsibility to utterly destroy them."
"But can we?" Lady Une asked. "We are heavily outnumbered."

"Even with Unit-01’s apparent latent power, we can't rely on that." Noin added.

"We've handled worse with less." Duo said. "And we have what, eight Gundams and some Taurus Mobile Suits, so we're fine."

Noin's face fell. "Yeah, the Taurus…"

"Noin, how many Taurus' did we lose?" Heero asked.

"Howard says three of them are unrepairable, and the other 21 are going to need all the spare parts from those to get back in fighting shape. The Gundams he said were in ok shape… should only take a few days to get them in full working order again."

"What about the pilots?" Duo asked. "Did they all… uh… make it…"

"Just one dead." Noin said. "There are like nine others who got injured, but nothing life threatening. It could have been a lot worse."

"It could always be worse." Quatre said. "We just have to be careful while fighting."

"Or perhaps we should hold back deployment of the Taurus unless we really, really need them." Milliardo suggested.

"That could work…" Noin said. "But I don't think they'd like being told that they can't fight an enemy."

"I think they would prefer it to dying needlessly." Milliardo replied.

"I agree." Heero said. "They are in standard Mobile Suits, they have far less protection in those Taurus than our Gundams provide."

"So, how do we determine if we deploy them."

"An overwhelming enemy force assaults the city." Milliardo said. "Otherwise, they stay put, agreed?"

"Agreed." Noin said. "I'll tell them before we leave for… wherever."

"I believe I can help you folks with that." Kaji said as he walked into the room. "Unless you'd rather stay here forever… underground and everything."

"Where are you taking us?" Milliardo asked.

"I'm not taking you anywhere," Kaji said. "I'm escorting you to the same apartment these fine gentlemen are staying at. Milliardo is it?" Kaji asked pointing to Milliardo. "You'll be bunking with the boys and the three lades here will be in another apartment next to you."

"How exactly is there more room in that apartment building?" Heero asked.

"Misato owns it and she hasn't rented it out yet." Kaji said. "In her typical fashion she didn't think it through when she bought the place."

"Buying an entire apartment building is typical?" Lady Une asked.
"Well, not thinking of getting a building supervisor or hiring a real estate agent to rent out the units is more what I meant." Kaji said.

"It wasn't on my mind at the time, I had a new job to worry about." Misato said, leaning in the doorway. "So leave it alone, I'll deal with renting the place out in my own time."

"Fine." Kaji said. "So, are you joining the group on the way home, or what?" Kaji asked.

"No, we have a meeting in the Commander's office, Kaji." Misato said. "The mandatory kind we can't be late for."

"Oh… well then, I guess I won't be escorting you anywhere." Kaji said. "Heero, you can show them the way, right?"

"Of course." Heero replied.

"Oh and before I forget, take this with you." Kaji said, handing Heero a disk. "Shinji and Mari requested this be sent along."

"What is it?" Duo asked.

"They'll tell you when you get there." Kaji said.

"Damn… I don't think I can wait that long." Duo said.

"For someone who has a Gundam capable of cloaking you lack the basic stealth skill of patience." Heero quipped to Noin and Quatre's laughter.

"Who asked for your opinion?!" Duo said angrily.

"Enough, children." Noin said jokingly. "We should get going."

"Mr. Kaji, should we pick anything up from the store?" Quatre asked.

"No, Shinji sent Mari out to the store already." Kaji said. "Dinner should be there by the time you arrive."

"Awesome, I'm starving!" Duo said happily.

"What about Trowa and Wufei?" Quatre asked.

"They said they'd be along eventually." Misato said. "I just told them, and your friend Howard will be staying on base. He said it would be easier to repair the Gundams that way." Misato eyed Kaji. "But we have to get going, the Commandeer… requires punctuality."

"I had a boss like that once." Milliardo said. "It can be quite trying."

"Have fun guys, and tell Shinji to save us some food." Kaji said. "We'll be back eventually."

"Do you live there too?" Relena asked.

"On and off, you could say…" Kaji said.

Misato however, grabbed Kaji by the arm and dragged him off. "Enough, you."

"So, should we get going?" Noin asked. "I'd like to shower or something…"
"I could go for a nap." Relena added.

"Yeah, we're all tired." Duo said. "Come on, follow us into this strange new world."

A few minutes after they left the Gundam universe group, Kaji and Misato arrived in the Commander's office and saw Gendo, Fuyutsuki, Ritsuko, and Maya waiting for them there.

"Sorry for the delay Commander…" Misato started.

"Were you informing the new arrivals where they would be staying?" Gendo asked.

"Yes, we have, sir." Kaji said.

"Then all is well." Gendo said. "Akagi, if you would begin."

"Yes, Commander." Ritsuko said. "In going over the data from the recent battle we know several things to be certain. One is that an attack of that magnitude is far too powerful for us to repel effectively without the aid of Unit–01's… unique abilities. The N2 Mines were effective enough, but I believe the surprise of that attack has been lost."

"Well, I've still ordered 7 additional planes to loadout Archangel Squadron." Misato said. "That'll bring us to 10 aircraft, all ready to launch within an hour."

"Ten aircraft that we may lose in a fruitless assault." Ritsuko said. "From what Heero and the older one said… Milliardo I believe, the Mobile Dolls were using a ZERO system."

"A what?" Misato asked.

"It stands for Zoning & Emotional Range Omitted." Maya replied. "How did they explain it… uh… right… the system decreases the pilot's reaction times and is linked directly to their brain. The onboard ZERO Computer uses the data from the sensors to make the pilot aware of all future outcomes based on all possible courses of action. But with the direct interface to the brain, it can be too much for some people to handle, and their brain can get so overloaded with the ZERO System's input they can be driven insane…"

"How is that a good thing to have in any weapon?" Fuyutsuki asked.

"Well, apparently both Heero and Milliardo have mastered it." Ritsuko said. "And it causes no ill effects for them."

"You don't intend to adapt this technology, do you?" Misato asked.

"No, it would be far more dangerous inside an Evangelion." Ritsuko said. "I would rather not temp fate."

"How nice of you." Misato said sarcastically.

"Back to the matter at hand, please." Fuyutsuki said before Misato and Ritsuko could get into another argument.

"Very well." Ritsuko replied. "IN addition to the fact that our forces were depleted in the last attack, we're running out of resources to stock the AIS with."

"How is that possible?" Fuyutsuki asked.
"We never really used so much ordinance against the Angels, but with these Mobile Suits, the weapons were actively defending the city." Ritsuko explained. "And with the damage they sustained, it'll take at least a week to get them all loaded and back online."

"And the Evangelions?" Gendo asked.

"Both Unit–01 and Unit–02 are repaired, they took minimal damage from the attack." Maya said. "And work on Unit–XP has been suspended to allocate those workers to other repairs."

"Will we be prepared for another attack?" Gendo asked.

"I've put in a request to the JSSDF and the U.N." Misato said. "The Pacific and Southern Pacific Fleets are being deployed, and all JSSDF troops are being mobilized around the country. We should be ready sir."

"Will they be of any use?" Gendo asked.

"They will be of more use then they have been against the Angels." Misato said. "They can actually fight and assist, sir."

"Very well…" Gendo said. "Now, Akagi, to the topic of Unit–01 and its most recent… outburst. Have you found a source of its power? Or a way to curtail it?"

"There is no way to curtail it." Ritsuko said. "Short of knocking Shinji out when the spike is detected… but I doubt it would do any good, Unit–01 can react without his input, and any kind of medication meant to stabilize moods will make him unable to pilot."

"So it's a catch 22." Kaji said. "Restraining Unit–01 makes it useless, but not doing so leaves a risk open for Shinji to accidentally cause more damage… we've got to tell him, maybe that will get him to control himself more."

"We can't tell him yet." Misato said. "If we do, without a solution to the whole wormhole dimensions… thingy, then he won't pilot at all…" Misato looked at Ritsuko. "Unless you do have a solution…"

"I do not." Ritsuko said. "And I will be getting to that in a…"

"Can we just skip to that?" Kaji asked. "We know that Unit–01 is probably capable of just about anything as long as Shinji is angry or distressed enough, let's not beat the dead horse so much the white meat shows…"

"As much as I don't like to say it…" Fuyutsuki said. "I agree with Mr. Kaji. Perhaps moving on to what you have about the wormholes would be the most appropriate thing to do at this point."

"Yes, Sub–Commander." Ritsuko said. "The only good thing of our new enemies having come through the wormhole is I was able to gain a great deal of insight into the wormholes. As of right now, I can confirm that Unit–01's outburst over Rei opened the wormholes. The energy signatures of the wormholes match the beam that shot into the sky. The wormholes also seem to be one directional, drawing things here. I don't know what would happen if we forced someone through the wormhole the other way… I doubt it would be pleasant."

"Can you reverse it?" Kaji asked.

"I'm not sure." Ritsuko said. "I know whatever solution I come up with will require Unit–01 to fire another beam in order to somehow reverse the process."
"Isn’t that inherently dangerous?" Fuyutsuki asked.

"Yes, that would be dangerous." Ritsuko explained. "But I have a far safer and controllable alternative. We can create a device that mimics what Unit–01 did and hook it up to Unit–01’s S2 Engine… but it will take some time to figure out the proper frequency the beam would need to be at, to reverse the process, and then of course to seal off the worlds from each other. We can use the old JSSDF Positron Rifle as a base for the project, considering it can already take a huge amount of power."

"Sounds complicated." Maya muttered.

"Yes… it will be more difficult than anything before seeing as it deals with theoretical physics nearing the realm of science fiction." Ritsuko said. "It will most likely take several months to synthesize something like that."

"Well, at least we can tell them you’re making progress on their eventual return home." Kaji said. "I’m sure they’ll be happy about that."

"But before they leave, I’m sure they will want to wipe out their enemies." Gendo said. "I highly doubt they’re going to go back to their own world voluntarily."

"True, but I’m sure they’ll be gone before Ritsuko finishes her Stargate." Misato said.

"It is not a Stargate!" Ritsuko grumbled.

"It opens wormholes, right?" Misato asked.

"Yes…" Ritsuko said.

"Then it's a Stargate." Misato said finally.

"Son of a bitch…" Ritsuko mumbled. "I'm not calling it a Stargate."

"Whatever you call it is not the issue." Gendo said. "How many people do you need to build the device? You have all of NERV’s scientists at your disposal."

"All of them." Ritsuko said. "The more people I have, the faster the device can be built."

"Very well." Gendo said. "I will issue the order and have every scientist at our disposal come here to assist you."

"Thank you, Commander." Ritsuko said.

"Now, as for the new arrivals…" Gendo said. "Do you have a plan to keep them all occupied?"

"Well, Relena, the younger girl, she's 14 or so, so she can be put in Shinji's class without a problem." Misato explained. "But the other three are like 19 or something, they can't go into a class like that."

"Well, they can… as teacher's assistants." Kaji said. "Or something like that anyway."

"Then inform them of the plan and enact it immediately." Gendo ordered.

"Yes, sir." Misato replied stiffly.

"Shouldn't be a problem." Kaji added.
"You're all dismissed." Gendo said as everyone turned and left the office.

Trente was walking around his makeshift base of operations. Men scurried around, either moving Mobile Suits around or simply on maneuvers, when they saw him, they froze, faced him and saluted. Trente saluted them as he walked past. He was heading to his command center, which was quite a distance from his temporary quarters. However, he liked looking over his forces and felt a sense of superiority when he did so, as all these men and women had pledged their loyalty to his new world order… to his ideology… to him.

The command center was nothing more than a heavy canvas tent with computers and two sectioned off areas in the back, which were also tents, that served as Trente's office and conference room respectively. However temporary the structure, as Trente entered the command center, everyone inside snapped to attention and saluted him.

"As you were," Trente said with an air of arrogance in his voice.

As he walked through the command center, he pointed to the officer in charge, and beckoned him to follow. The young soldier did, as Trente entered his office tent and took a seat at his ornate desk and leather padded chair. The young man stood at attention as Trente relaxed himself into his chair.

"At ease..." Trente said.

"Thank you, Supreme Commander!" The soldier replied.

"Major, what can you tell me about the Virgos?" Trente asked.

"All of our Virgos are in good condition and are set to maintenance mode for safety, Supreme Commander." The Major said.

"Did you receiver my latest orders?" Trente asked.

"Which orders, sir?" The Major asked. "You have issued several commands in the last 24 hours, sir!"

"The orders on our next strike." Trente said.

"Those orders are being carried out as we speak, Supreme Commander." The Major replied. "We are preparing a force for Virgos for a sneak attack."

"Excellent..." Trente said calmly. "Have the cloaks been tested?"

"Several of our scientists tested the system last night." The Major said. "It was equipped to an Aries and did a lengthy flyover of the fortress city. It was not detected by their early warning systems or weapons platforms. The Aries successfully landed at 0745 after an eight hour flight without incident."

"Are you quite sure it wasn't detected?" Trente asked.

"The science division is positive, Supreme Commander." The Major replied. "It did several low-level passes at low and high speed, and no indications of a counter attack were detected."

"Very well." Trente said. "Did it have any appreciable effects on the Aries ability to maneuver or engage in combat?"
"There are two points the scientists wish to make clear." The Major said. "First is that while the Virgos are compatible with the cloaking device, they will not be able to mount the flying unit to travel to the fortress city, which will lengthen the time it takes to mount the strike."

"Understandable." Trente said calmly. "And what is the second?"

"That while the cloak is engaged, the Virgos will be unable to engage their Planet Defensors or their Beam Cannons due to power usage of the cloak." The Major replied.

"The downside to stealth… no way to truly catch your enemy off guard." Trente said. "Very well, if it unavoidable. So, how long will it take for the Virgos to travel that far under cloak?"

"Just under 72 hours, Supreme Commander." The Major replied.

"And how many units can be outfitted?" Trente asked.

"10,000, Supreme Commander." The Major replied. "They are being installed on our Mobile Dolls now."

"How long until the install is complete?" Trente asked.

"Just under 12 hours, Supreme Commander." The Major replied.

"Excellent… I look forward to wiping them out with this sneak attack of ours." Trente said. "Perhaps we can cripple them with this and show them that defied the wrong man! With their deaths, we will occupy the fortress city thereafter and make it the capital of my government here in this world."

"We can prep the other Mobile Dolls for deployment, Supreme Commander." The Major said. "To launch as the attack commences to give your glorious mission the best odds of success possible!"

"No, the cloaked force will be enough." Trente said cockily. "They won't be able to stand up to those forces… they'll have no time to prepare. Surprise is always the best weapon. They will cower at my might, Major, and they will perish."

"Then what of the other 90,000 Mobile Dolls?" The Major asked.

"Keep them protected in the shuttles, we won't be needing them." Trente said.

"By your command, Supreme Commander." The Major replied.

"Back to your post, Major." Trente ordered. "Dismissed."

"Hail Trente!" The Major said with a salute before he left. "Glory to Trente's Empire! May it live for 10,000 years!"

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After arriving back to the apartments with a minimalist tour of the city, Relena, Noin, and Lady Une had going to their apartment to freshen up while Milliardo was shown the boys' apartment. After everyone had gathered themselves, they went into Misato's apartment and were greeted by the sweet smell of takeout and a warm greeting from Mari. Trowa and Wufei had arrived in their absence and were also waiting patiently at the table for everyone else to arrive.

"Hey, puppy, princess, company's here!" Mari shouted.

"We're not deaf, you idiot." Asuka said, which earned her a disapproving glare from Shinji. "What,
she's being an idiot."

"It's still not nice." Shinji said.

"Fine, sorry, Mari." Asuka said halfheartedly.

"It's ok princess, I don't hold it against you." Mari said.

"Whatever…" Asuka muttered as she grabbed a plate.

"Shinji, Kaji asked me to give this to you." Heero said, handing him the disc.

"Oh, good, we can watch this while we eat." Shinji said.

"Yeah, but what is it?" Duo asked.

"It's the footage of all of our Angel fights." Shinji said. "Well, all of them except the last two… it's… uh… still too difficult to watch those."

"So… we get to finally see these Angels?" Wufei asked.

"Yep." Mari said. "I told Kaji to pull all the footage together."

"Yeah, just be prepared." Asuka said. "It's gonna be rough to watch some parts of it."

"Well, let's get started then." Duo said. "I wanna see these freakish things for myself."

When everyone sat down Asuka hit play on the video, Sachiel appeared on screen during her first approach towards Tokyo–3. The fruitless VTOL attack, and then Unit–01 maiden deployment. Every battle from Sachiel to Zeruel, excluding Ireul for the lack of actual battle footage, was shown, including footage from the Jet Alone incident. With each different Angel, there was a gasp of shock and horror at their form, and their incredible power. The biggest reactions came with Sahaquiel and Zeruel, due to the brutality of those particular fights. When the video ended, everyone looked to Shinji, Asuka, and Mari in awe of what they had accomplished.

"How are you not dead?" Duo asked.

"Skill." Asuka replied.

"Luck." Mari said.

"No idea." Shinji said.

"So, you just accept that explanation?" Noin asked.

"Well, we fight massive monsters in equally giant machines." Shinji said. "It's best not to question how we win, just accept it and move on."

"And hope that the last Angel is actually the last Angel." Mari added.

"How do you live like this?" Relena asked. "Under the constant threat of death?"

"You get used to it." Mari said.

"But you shouldn't get used to it." Relena retorted. "You should be able to live in peace."

"In a perfect world, maybe." Mari said. "But at this point, we're well past having a normal, mundane
"It's not that bad." Shinji said. "In the beginning, it was awful... but now we have each other, so it could be worse. I could still be alone."

"That's a positive outlook." Lady Une said as Shinji smiled kindly.

"So, those creatures... those Angels... do you know why they attack you?" Milliardo asked.

"Nope, all we know is they attack and we kill them." Asuka said. "Or die trying anyway."

"Well, we come closer to dying more often than not." Mari said. "Well, you saw what happened with the Angels."

"You fought valiantly." Heero said.

"And your penchant for getting injured explains how you were still conscious when we fought and injured you so much." Trowa added.

"Yeah, you kinda get used to it after a while..." Shinji muttered. "Not that it's wonderful being used to all that pain."

"That kind of pain tolerance is impressive." Heero said.

"You would know." Duo said.

"Duo, it's not Heero's fault he has a high pain tolerance." Quatre said.

"I was trained to ignore pain." Heero said.

"By who?" Shinji asked.

"My... mentor... Odin Lowe." Heero replied.

"Your mentor?" Quatre asked.

"It's a long story for another time." Heero replied.

"Well, I gotta here this." Duo said. "Who's Odin Lowe, Heero?"

"Duo, Heero doesn't have to tell us if he doesn't want to." Shinji said.

"Thank you, Shinji." Heero replied as the group heard the sound of Misato and Kaji stumbling inside.

"We're back!" Misato called out as they entered the living room. "Oh, good, you're all still here."

"Why is that good, exactly?" Noin asked.

"Well, remember how we mentioned we had to decide what you'd be occupying your day with?" Kaji asked. "Well, we've figured out what you'll be doing."

"What will be doing?" Relena asked.

"Well, Relena, you will be enrolled in the same class as everyone else," Misato explained. "And Milliardo, Noin, and Lady Une will be sent to that same class as teaching assistants, practicing to become teachers themselves."
"I wanna say that's the dumbest idea you've had." Asuka said. "But you also had us catch an Angel with our hands… so that bar is kinda high."

"Asuka, it's not that bad of a plan." Shinji said. "But it's gonna get suspicious with more people just showing up again."

"Well, we'll figure something out." Kaji said.

"How exactly are we to act like teachers?" Milliardo asked. "And why do all of us need to be there?"

"Well, the school is under heavy, but subtle guard." Kaji said. "For our kids' safety of course. But it's the best place where we can keep everyone safe."

"How many men guard the school?" Milliardo asked.

"Several teams," Kaji said. "I can't really give specifics."

"Understandable." Milliardo said. "As long as we'll be guarded."

"Well, you can be armed too, if that helps." Misato said.

"That would be helpful." Noin said.

"Can we be armed too?" Duo asked.

"Why?" Misato asked.

"We're capable of handling a sidearm safely." Heero said. "If they were to attack, we should be able to defend ourselves."

"Fair enough." Misato said. "But anyone taking a firearm is going to have to prove that the can handle them."

"When and where?" Duo asked.

"Firing range, tomorrow, after school." Misato said.

"So, for tomorrow, I'll have the guard doubled until you're all armed." Kaji added.

"That should more than compensate for the lack of weapons." Milliardo said.

"He, miso, can we get guns too?" Mari asked innocently.

"Absolutely not!" Misato said loudly.

"Why not, we're responsible." Mari retorted.

"Mari, we're not giving you three guns because you've never killed anyone before." Kaji explained. "They have, they know the weight of having that death on their conscience."

"But…" Mari protested.

"Mari, killing someone is not something you forget about easily." Heero said. "Every death will haunt you until the day you die. You would not wish to carry that burden."

"No…" Mari said, but she was cut off from finishing.
"So, when do we start school?" Relena asked quickly to change the subject.

"Tomorrow morning." Kaji said. "We've already dealt with the cover stories, and Relena's been enrolled, so everything's set."

"What about… clothes and things?" Relena asked.

"Well, you can borrow one of Asuka's uniforms until we can get you one tomorrow." Misato said. "Not sure about you three though, we're not quite sure what a teacher's assistant wears."

"I'm sure we can figure something out." Milliardo said.

"Well, I've taught people before." Noin said. "I think I can fake being a civilian teacher."

"Good, you're hired." Asuka quipped.

"Yeah, you'd probably be better than our actual teacher." Shinji muttered.

"Why would we be better?" Lady Une asked. "We're not even teachers."

"Let's just say you may want to turn that gun on yourself once he starts talking." Duo said.

"Duo, how can you say something like that?" Noin said angrily.

"Trust me, listen to him for an hour and you'll be begging for death." Duo said.

October 28, 2016 – Outside Tokyo–3 Junior High School

It had been several days since the new arrivals from the After Colony timeline had started at the school. Everyone in class was confused why they had three teacher's assistants when Nebukawa no Sensei didn't actually teach anything. But the class ignored it, as the boys had someone to distract them, namely Relena. Relena, as polite as she was, her brother was less than cordial, as he glared at any boy that dared flirt with her. Milliardo also had his own fan club to contend with, as Shinji and Mari had told him about their new friends, and Kensuke was dying to buddy up to him, but Milliardo's glare kept him at bay.

In addition to that, the classes themselves had droned on, which caused Noin along with everyone else to fall asleep. Ever the soldiers, Lady Une, Milliardo, and Heero were the only ones that were still awake. After several days of the same monotonous droning, and Kensuke's repeated attempts Milliardo's nerves had been severely frayed by the monotony, and he impatiently awaited the end of the day bell.

♫

Ding dong ding ding… ding dong ding ding ♩

"Thank whatever god I believe in…" Milliardo grumbled as Hikari stood up.

"Rise… Bow… Sit!" Hikari said as the class followed her instructions and Nebukawa no Sensei left the room. Well, everyone in class save for Duo.

Duo stirred from his slumber and looked around the room. "Oh… it's finally over."

"Duo, what did I tell you?!" Hikari said angrily. "The next time you were asleep when the teacher left, I'd make you stay after school and do all the cleaning up yourself!"

"Well, then it sucks to be Duo." Mari quipped.
"Hang on, I gotta clean the room all by myself?" Duo said.

"She did warn you, Duo." Quatre said.

"It's not my fault the teacher's boring as shit." Duo said. "He's the reason I fall asleep."

"That's not an excuse." Hikari said.

"Yeah, Duo, everyone else woke up when the bell rang." Noin said. "Why couldn't you?"

"He bored me into unconsciousness." Duo replied.

"Enough whining, Duo." Milliardo said. "You heard your Class Rep, you're cleaning the room yourself."

"Fine…" Duo said. "Where the uh… stuff."

Hikari shook her head. "Well, it looks like you're gonna be here all day."

"I'll stay with him." Quatre said. "I think I can help him."

"I'll stay too." Wufei said. "I don't think either of them has done much cleaning in their lives."

"Fine, just don't take all day." Hikari said.

"Have fun." Noin said. "And try not to spill the mop water, boys."

"Shut up, Noin." Duo said angrily.

"Come on, let's get home." Asuka said. "I wanna take a nap."

As the gang was heading out the door, Toji, Hikari and a very nervous Kensuke walked up behind them.

"Mind if we tag along?" Toji asked. "As long as your bodyguards say its ok."

"As long as you keep the excited one in check." Milliardo said gruffly.

"Don't worry, Kensuke's harmless." Shinji said. "He just wants to ask you about your Gundam."

"Yeah, he gets star struck at all the military teach we're around all the time." Mari added.

"Why didn't you explain this before?" Milliardo asked. "I just thought he was being creepy."

"Well, it comes off that way…" Toji quipped. "But he's just fascinated with weapons."

"Because that's not a cause for concern…" Lady Une said.

"It really isn't." Asuka said. "Once you get past the whole "nuts for weapons" thing, he's not such a bad person."

"You must think he's a good person if you're all defending him so much." Milliardo said. "Heero, what do you think?"

"I simply ignore him." Heero said. "I have other things to worry about."

"He's not so bad, Heero." Trowa said. "He just asks a lot of questions. On the whole, he is quite
"Then I guess it's alright if you tag along."

"Yeah, we have homework to do anyway." Shinji added.

Asuka and Mari walked out towards the shoe lockers. "Fine, if you guys don't mind, we'll see you there." Asuka said.

"Yeah, I'm tired of talking, I wanna go home." Mari added.

"Fine, we're right behind you." Shinji said.

"Hey, we should grab Sakura too." Toji said. "She likes hanging out with us, ya know?"

"Who's that?" Noin asked.

"His younger sister." Hikari said. "She's adorable."

"Well, what's one more person?" Noin said as the group entered the shoe locker.

"Well, there's already ten of us." Shinji said. "It shouldn't really matter at all."

On their walk home, everything was moving quite slowly due to the large size of their group. Asuka and Mari had decided to fall back so everyone could keep up with them, but Milliardo and Noin were in no rush to go anywhere, which slowed everyone down even further. It was a nice day out, so the slow walk wasn't really an issue. For once, the heat wasn't unbearable, and the cicadas were mostly quiet.

Everyone was enjoying the nice, quiet walk home, chatting about nothing in particular, at least until the roar of a missile broke the silence. It impacted several dozen feet above them, blowing apart the side of a heavy concrete building, and sending all of them right to the ground. Shinji looked around him in a daze, he couldn't hear anything except a loud buzzing in his ears, and the flash that accompanied the explosion kept him from seeing everyone around him very clearly.

As he staggered to his feet, he tried to get his bearings and wondered where the missile came from. His question was answered when he saw several hundred Virgos jetting around the city around them. Shinji didn't notice that some of his friends were getting up, and he felt a hard slap on his face that stopped the buzzing, and turned to see Asuka staring angrily at him.

"Baka, did you hear me?!" Asuka shouted. "Are you ok?!!"

"I… I think so." Shinji said. "Did you see the…?"

"Yeah, I saw them." Asuka said. "I think there are more on the way…"

"What about everyone else?" Shinji asked.

"I… I was more worried about you." Asuka said.

"Asuka…" Shinji said as he blushed. "I appreciate that, but we need to see if everyone else is ok."

"I know that…" Asuka said. "Are you sure you're ok?"

"I've had worse." Shinji replied as he started looking through the dust for anyone else. "MARI!
"HEERO! TOJI! SAKURA!" Shinji shouted. "SOMEONE ANSWER ME!"

"I'm alive!" Mari shouted. "At least I think so!"

Shinji and Asuka followed the sound of her voice and helped Mari up from the ground. She coughed a bit as she wiped some of the dust and debris off her uniform.

"Did we just get attacked?" Mari asked.

"I think so." Shinji said.

"There are a lot of Virgos." Asuka muttered.

Trowa staggered over to them and tapped Mari on the shoulder. "We need your help over here." Trowa said. "Noin and Heero are under some rubble."

They followed Trowa to large piece of rubble that Milliardo was trying to desperately move on his own.

"Help me..." Milliardo pleaded quietly and Shinji, Mari and Asuka obliged and lifted the rubble just enough to get Heero and Noin clear.

"Noin, are you alright?" Milliardo asked worriedly.

"Zechs, I'll be just fine." Noin replied.

"Heero, are you ok?" Trowa asked.

"I believe my leg will need to be set." Heero said, pointing to his leg which was pointing in the wrong direction. "Give me a moment." Heero drew his leg up to his chest and twisted it with one quick motion, with a sickening crack was back in the right place.

"Who does that?!" Asuka shouted.

"He does." Noin replied.

"It does not hurt." Heero said. "It is simply what must be done."

"But what about everyone else?" Shinji asked. "We have to find them."

"No, we have a city to defend." Noin replied.

"The primary responsibility of any soldier is to their duty." Milliardo said. "And your duty is to defend this city."

"No one gets left behind!" Shinji shouted. "I'm not leaving my friends!"

"SAKURA! TOJI!" Hikari shouted from out in the dust cloud. "SOMEONE, HELP ME! THEY'RE TRAPPED!"

"That was Hikari." Shinji said.

"We need to help her." Asuka added.

"NO, we have to go!" Milliardo retorted.

"What about Relena?!" Noin asked. "She's missing too!"
"She'd understand." Milliardo said.

"I just want to help my friends!" Shinji said angrily.

"No, you three need to leave." Heero said forcibly. "Milliardo is right, you need to defend the city. But Shinji, you're also right... no one should be left behind. Shinji, your Evangelion may be powerful, but within the city it is too dangerous. Take Wing Zero, you will have better luck that way. Go and defend this city and we will save your friends."

"Heero, I have no idea how to pilot it..." Shinji muttered.

"It's not that difficult." Heero said. "ZERO will help you. Zechs... does that work?"

"Yes, that works for me." Milliardo said. "And Asuka, take my Epyon. The controls are not difficult to master. You can pilot an Evangelion with grace and skill, you will be fine."

"And Mari... take my Heavyarms." Trowa said. "You deserve to be out there fighting next to your friends."

"Are you sure?" Mari asked.

"Yes, but please be careful." Trowa said. "I saw your Evangelion after our last battle, you are quite rough on your machines, please do not destroy mine."

"I'll do my best." Mari said.

"Noin, go with them." Milliardo said.

"Zechs, I'm not leaving you here." Noin protested.

"No, they need you more in the Tallgeese." Milliardo said.

"What about Lady Une?" Noin asked. "What about Wing Gundam?"

"When we find her, we'll send her along." Milliardo said. "Now, enough arguing, go!"

"Fine, I'll explain the basics of Mobile Suit operations on the way." Noin said.

"Wait, so you're really an instructor?" Shinji asked as they ran in the direction of a NERV access point.

"Yes, the best." Noin said as they ran as fast they could to NERV HQ.

Inside the Command Center, things were going crazy. The alarms were going off and the AIS had activated automatically and began firing at Virgos that suddenly appeared within the city limits.

"General evacuation in place, all military fighters launching, Archangel Squadron is on standby." Maya reported. "Level–1 battle stations have been called, and the core blocks are in battle configuration."

"Good... now where the hell did that attack come from?!" Misato shouted. "Someone get me some answers!"

"No idea, Colonel!" Hyuga reported. "They just appeared out of nowhere!"
"It appears a number of Virgos were sent on a cloaked approach course to us." Aoba reported. "But they are not capable of flight like the first attack wave was."

"So they traded speed for stealth…" Misato said. "Fine, damage report?"

"AIS came online when the first enemy de–cloaked." Maya reported. "As of right now, we can confirm at least 2,000 Virgos within the city. The city itself is suffering minor damage at the moment, but unless we launch a counterattack, it's only going to get worse."

"Do you think there are more?" Misato asked.

"Probably, ma'am." Maya replied. "But we're not entirely sure."

"Where are my pilots?" Misato asked angrily. "Get Unit–01 and Unit–02 prepped for launch!"

"The pilots are on their way." Kaji huffed as he ran into the Command Center. "They were caught up in an explosion on the way home, but they're fine."

"Where are Section 2?" Misato asked. "Why didn't they pick them up?"

"All dead." Kaji said. "A separate blast killed them all in one shot. Entire surveillance team went dark following the kids home…"

"Fine, let me know the minute they arrive." Misato said.

"They're here." Hyuga reported. "They're all in the Cages… heading for the Gundams!"

"Who's here?" Misato asked.

"Shinji, Mari, Asuka, and Noin." Aoba replied. "They're in their uniforms, heading for the Gundams Wing Zero, Epyon, Heavyarms, and Tallgeese."

"Why?!" Misato asked. "And where is everyone else?!"

"No idea." Kaji said. "But they must have a good reason for commandeering those things."

"Get me those Gundams on comms." Misato ordered.

——

Shinji was settling into the cockpit of Wing Zero. It felt a lot different than being inside Unit–01, mainly because there was no LCL to breathe through during the fight. As the cockpit sealed, and the lighting came on, Shinji buckled up into his seat as a loud beeping sound went off around him. He flipped the switch that was beeping and heard a very irate voice on the other end.

"Just what do you think you're doing?!" Misato asked angrily. "Get in Unit–01 right now!"

"I can't Misato." Shinji said. "Heero told me to take Wing Zero… he said it would better in the confined spaces of the city for combat."

"I don't care what he said, you can't pilot that thing!" Misato protested.

"Actually, he's more than capable of handling it." Noin chimed in. "I gave all three of them a basic rundown of the control systems on the way over."

"You mean a crash course." Misato said.
"I don't call it that." Noin said. "Sends the wrong message."

"Whatever you call it, we're wasting time." Shinji said. "Misato, clear us for launch… Heero and the others will be here as soon as they find everyone."

"Everyone?" Misato asked.

"Everyone we were walking home with." Shinji said. "They're our responsibility."

"That doesn't matter." Misato said. "You should be in Unit–01."

"No… this feels right." Shinji said. "I need to be in Wing Zero… I think it'll be better for this fight. I know in my heart it's the right choice."

"Shinji…" Misato mumbled.

"Misato, let him go out there." Kaji said. "He knows what's best, we don't."

"I hate when you make a good point." Misato huffed.

"And yet you still love me." Kaji joked.

"Don't push it…" Misato mumbled.

"Thanks, Kaji." Shinji said happily.

"No problem kiddo." Kaji said. "Always happy to help."

"Fine, give me a minute to check on the others." Misato said.

"Don't take too long." Shinji said. "I'll be ready for launch in a minute."

"Well, I'm ready when you are." Noin said. "Tallgeese, ready for launch."

Shinji flipped a few switches in the cockpit and the rounded globe in front of him came online. The screens around him turned on and glowed a soft yellow color and he felt the Gundam activate around him.

"Alright… I guess we're fighting together, Wing Zero." Shinji said as the screens around him flashed in response. "Ok, I guess that means you're ready. Now… Noin said this is what makes you walk forward…" Shinji moved the pedals on the floor with his feet, making Wing Zero lumber forward. "I always have trouble with the walking…" Shinji muttered. "I bet I can make it run without a problem…"

Shinji checked the controls again and his confidence increased as he got Wing Zero to walk towards a launch elevator without stumbling. "Wing Zero ready for launch."

——

Asuka was also settling herself into an unfamiliar cockpit. She looked around for the switches to use to turn on the Gundam and when she found them Epyon activated with ease. As the screens around her flashed a soft yellow as well as the control systems came online. She felt weird not wearing her plugsuit, but she didn't miss it, as sometimes it was uncomfortable to wear.

"Alright… this doesn't seem so difficult…" Asuka muttered. "So… Epyon, will you lay nice and let me pilot you the way I want."
The screens around Asuka flashed frantically.

"Huh… that's odd…" Asuka muttered. "That almost looked like you were responding to my rhetorical question…"

The screens flashed again, which concerned Asuka a bit. "Somehow I think you're less of a toy than my Unit–02…" Asuka murmured. "So, let's just go out there and wipe out the enemy… no mercy."

The screens flashed in response and Asuka buckled her restraints. "Excellent."

"Asuka, are you there?" Misato asked.

"Yep." Asuka replied. "Can we go already? I heard what Shinji said, we're wasting time."

"Are you ready for launch?" Misato asked.

"Give me… 75 seconds." Asuka said. "I need to see what I have for weapons…" As soon as Asuka said it, the weapons displayed in her mind's eye. "Heat Rod and shield on left arm… beam sabre attached to directly to my reactor mounted on right hip… head mounted Vulcans… and that's it." Asuka grinned. "Just the way I like it… up close and personal."

"Asuka, are you ready?" Misato asked again.

"Yes, I'm ready." Asuka replied.

"Hey, Asuka, everything ok?" Shinji asked.

"Yeah, just a little weird in here without the LCL. But otherwise… I think I'm gonna have fun." Asuka said. "How bout you?"

"The same." Shinji said. "At least I know what Wing Zero can do... I fought it long enough when we met…"

"Don't think about that now, baka." Asuka said. "Just focus on the fight."

"I know, Asuka." Shinji said. "Mari, how's things?"

"Coming along…" Mari said as she hummed to herself. "Heavyarms… online! What about you guys?"

"If you didn't here, slowpoke, we're ready for launch." Asuka said proudly as she followed Wing Zero and Tallgeese to the launch elevator without an issue. "So get the lead out, you're holding us up!"

Mari, unlike the others, was having a wonderful time adjusting to her new surroundings. She looked like a kid in a candy store. Before her cockpit had closed itself, she had activated Heavyarms and was running through the pre-flight checks. The display screens showed the Evangelion Cage around her with Wing Zero to her left and Sandrock to her right. She fastened her restraints, as she had learned not wearing them could be dangerous. However, Mari was distracted by the newness of everything, and was so excited, she could hardly contain herself.

"Oh my god… I'm so wet right now!" Mari said excitedly. "It's like fucking Christmas! So many shiny new things to play with!"
"MARI!" Misato shouted. "This is not the time!"

"Well… for some of us, anytime is the right time," Mari purred.

"Mari, stop aggravating her." Shinji said tiredly. "We have work to do."

"Alright, puppy." Mari said. "Controls seem pretty easy. Legs, arms, head moves too, that's cool… thrusters… not ready for those yet… weapons… holy shit… I have titty cannons!"

"Four eyes!" Asuka shouted. "Focus!"

"I am!" Mari replied ecstatically. "I can shoot shit with my titty guns!"

"Are you ready for launch or not?" Misato asked, angrily.

"Yeah, I could launch two or three times with how excited I am." Mari said absentmindedly as she tested the various controls and turned off the weapons safeties.

"MARI!" Misato shouted again. "The Gundam, is it ready for launch?!

Mari eased the foot pedals and throttle to move Heavyarms forward. "Yep… Heavyarms moving out." Heavyarms moved at a decent pace and joined the other three Gundams on the launch elevator. "Ready to launch, miso!"

"About fucking time…" Asuka muttered.

"Is she always like this?" Noin asked.

"Yeah, but surprisingly her attitude isn't anything like her combat ability." Asuka said. "You saw the video, she can actually fight."

"Awww…. Thanks princess." Mari said sweetly.

"Yeah, yeah." Asuka said. "So, Misato, are we gonna get this show on the road?"

"Just a second guys," Misato said. "Final checks."

"Launch path clear." Aoba reported.

"Launch elevator safeties offline." Maya reported. "On your command, Colonel."

"Good," Misato said. "Get ready everyone, we're detecting over 9,000 Virgos operating in and around the city."

"We're ready." Shinji said.

"We can handle it." Noin said.

"We're gonna go kick their fucking asses!" Mari said proudly.

"Fuck yeah!" Asuka added.

"Good… Wing Zero… Epyon… Heavyarms… Tallgeese…" Misato ordered. "LAUNCH!"

To Be Continued
A/N: I do not own Evangelion or any of the characters, GAINAX and the other distributors of NGE related material do. I am simply using them as a backdrop for my fanfic. I also do not own Gundam Wing, Sunrise does, as do their licensed distributors.

Sync Score Rankings!
Shinji – 94.2% (No Change)
Rei – 75.0% (No Change)
Asuka – 47.8% (No Change)
Mari – 42.0% (No Change)

And that's where this chapter leaves off. Yes, I put the EVA pilots in the Gundams. For anyone who guessed that, congratulations, and I hope you enjoy what happens next chapter. The reason the EVA pilots are in the Gundams? Simple, it's a crossover, and I'd be remiss if they didn't test out the Gundams at least once in combat. That and Shinji and Asuka will have a very interesting experience with Wing Zero and Epyon respectively… if you all catch my meaning.

Also, the Gundam pilots and Relena, they're all basically 15 at this point (same age as Shinji), while the older characters, Milliardo, Lady Une, and Noin are all 19, according to the several sources I looked up. Just a quick reference on their ages.

Now, at the halfway point (as there are 15 chapters), things are gonna get a bit crazier. How I can't say, but I promise the next seven chapters will be full of awesome shit and plot twists you won't see coming. I have to ya this story has done far better than I expected it would, and I do hope everyone reading it is having as good of a time as I did writing it thus far. Thank you to everyone who has read, followed, favorited, and reviewed this work. I am always humbled to see how many people read and enjoy my work.

As I said before, and will always say at the end of chapter, please leave comments, as I would like to try to improve the story going forward any way I can. And, hell, constructive criticism is a good thing.

つづく
Chapter 9 – The Gundam They Called Zero
October 28, 2016 – Southwest of Tokyo–3

As the Gundams launched towards the surface, Shinji felt a sense of foreboding. He looked around and could see the yellow screens, but also see everything around him, inside his mind. He shook it off as the elevator slammed up to the surface and the four Gundams deployed. Shinji had trouble moving Wing Zero at first, and took a few uneasy steps as he tried to move off the elevator. However, Shinji was becoming sidetracked with the amount of information being fed to him, and his responses began to slow down. The Tallgeese on the other hand opened its Vernier thrusters and took off dead ahead, popping a beam sabre off its shield and igniting it in its right hand while taking aim with the beam rifle in its left. Heavyarms moved clumsily off the elevator and activated its thrusters, only to impact the building in front of them.

"Oops…" Mari giggled. "Wrong button."

"Fucking hell, four eyes! You're an idiot!" Asuka said angrily. "We're trying to protect the city, not help destroy it!"

"Let's see you do better, princess..." Mari quipped. "This isn't as easy as it looks."

"I'm working on it..." Asuka muttered.

"Just be more careful, Mari." Noin said as Tallgeese cut through several Virgos with ease while vaporizing several more. "That's not your Gundam."

"I know..." Mari said. "And the computer says its fine. No damage to speak of... maybe some scratched paint at the most..." Heavyarms got unsteadily back to its feet and then successfully activated its thruster, shooting straight upwards, limbs flailing wildly, and landed on the top of a building rather ungracefully. Heavyarms then rose its Double Barreled Beam Gatling Gun and opened its chest plates to reveal the Gatling Guns stored inside. "Time to light these fuckers up!"

Mari shouted. "Eat lead and plasma motherfuckers!"

Heavyarms opened fire to devastating effect, with several hundred Virgos deciding to move on her location, Mari started using the Machine Cannons and head Vulcans as well to try and slow their advance. "Yippie–Ki–Yay, Motherfuckers!" Mari screamed. The Virgos closed in even more, and several were able to directly attack Heavyarms, causing Mari to have to dodge the attack and slam the offending Virgos into the ground with the side of the Beam Gatling. However, Mari was quickly being overrun and had nowhere to go.

Luckily for her, Asuka found her footing and jetted the Epyon up into the air, activated its Heat Rod, and sliced through the advancing Virgos, causing them to explode. Epyon moved away from Heavyarms searching for its own enemies to destroy.

"Try not to get yourself killed, four eyes." Asuka said sarcastically.

"You know that's impossible." Mari quipped.
"Whatever…" Asuka muttered. "Hey, baka, are you going to grace us with your presence or not?" Asuka asked loudly, bringing Shinji out of his daze.

"Huh… oh right." Shinji said as he activated the Wing Zero's fixed thrusters and shot into the air. Shinji moved the Twin Buster Rifle to the left hand, mounting it with the shield, and drew one of the beam sabres and activated it. He charged towards a group of Virgos targeting a building. They fired at him, which Shinji surprised himself by dodging, and slice through them with the beam sabre, and spun around in midair while those were exploding to take aim at another group of Virgos moving towards him with the Twin Buster Rifle, firing a blast that disintegrated them.

"Whoa…" Shinji said. "How did I do that?"

"Why are you even asking, baka?!" Asuka shouted as Epyon cut through Virgos with its beam sabre and Heat Rod while flying around in circles. "Just be glad and keep it up!"

"I know that!" Shinji said while Wing Zero powered up another shot and fired at some unsuspecting Virgos. "I can be surprised, can't I?"

"No, you can be surprised after the battle, baka!" Asuka said scoldingly. "Focus on the battle!"

"Yeah, puppy, focus!" Mari added while Heavyarms made sweeping motions, ripping into hundreds of Virgos damaging them and keeping them at bay. "You need to hold it together!"

While Asuka was berating Shinji, Epyon was approached by several dozen Virgos from behind which caught her by surprise. As she turned around to face them, they disintegrated right as Epyon started its counter attack.

"What the fuck…?" Asuka mustered.

"I was paying attention." Shinji said as Wing Zero flew past. "Practice what you preach, Asuka."

"Oh, you are so paying for that when we get home!" Asuka shouted.

"Ok, Asuka…" Shinji muttered while Wing Zero flew at another group of Virgos, cutting them down with the beam sabre in an impressive twirling motion. Wing Zero then aimed its Buster Rifle at another group of Virgos and fired. As it happened, Tallgeese was fringing at the same exact group of Virgos, and when the two beam shots collided, they created a large ball of plasma that expanded outwards eating up Virgos until it finally exploded, sending even more Virgos tumbling out of the sky or knocking those on the ground off their feet.

"Holy shit…" Shinji muttered.

"Can you guys do that again?" Mari asked as Heavyarms was fighting off several Virgos at once. "Cause that would be helpful."

"I think that was a onetime thing." Noin said. "It's not very often beam shots interact… and it would be dangerous to try again."

"Well, it would be helpful if you did." Misato said. "Maya, how many are left?"

"We figure at least 8,000 are left." Maya said. "We're not sure how many were sent, but thermal imaging shows about 90,000 Virgos at their base… so you've killed 2,000 so far."

"How many enemies?" Mari asked. "We're so f*cked…"
"Enemy…" Shinji muttered.

"Who is the enemy…?" Asuka murmured.

"What are you guys mumbling?" Noin asked.

"Yeah, take the dicks out of your mouths so we can understand you!" Mari quipped.

"Enemies are everywhere…" Shinji muttered. "If I fail again… they'll all die… I'm going to get everyone killed…"

"Puppy, snap out of it!" Mari said. "Just fight and everyone will be fine."

"No, I have to fight, or everyone dies!" Shinji shouted. "I HAVE TO DESTROY EVERYTHING TO KEEP EVERYONE SAFE!"

"Shinji, pull yourself together!" Mari shouted.

"NO, MY ENEMIES MUST BE DESTROYED!" Shinji roared.

Wing Zero started firing its Buster Rifle erratically at random targets, blowing Virgos out of the sky, or cutting through them and putting a crater in the ground. One of those erratic shots passed very close to Epyon, catching its attention.

"Who is my enemy?!" Asuka screamed. "You're my enemy!" Epyon charged at Wing Zero, Heat Rod flailing as it struck Wing Zero's shield and was counterattacked with a fist to the piledriver in Wing Zero's shield. "You are my enemy!"

"That means I have to destroy you!" Shinji shouted back.

"What the fuck is going on…" Mari said. "You two love each other, stop it already!"

"Mari, it's no use."

"Mari, it's no use." Noin said. "It's the ZERO System… its beginning to affect them. I thought seeing as things started out ok it would be fine… but the mental strain is starting to show."

"The thingy Heero told us about… it's in the Gundam?" Mari asked.

"Wait, that system is online now?!" Misato asked.

"The Gundams can't run without it." Noin said. "Wing Zero and Epyon were designed around the system."

"And it's effecting their minds?!" Misato shouted.

"Yes, I explained the risks to them on the way here, but they didn't care." Noin said. "They thought they could handle it."

"Well, they were wrong weren't they?!" Misato shouted.

"Misato, calm down." Kaji said. "From what Heero has said, is someone can see through the illusions, they'll be fine. Shinji and Asuka have faced far worse against the Fifteenth Angel." Kaji sighed. "Give them a few minutes and they'll be fine."

"I will not calm down!" Misato said angrily. "I am the opposite of calm!"

"Colonel Katsuragi, please." Noin said. "The shouting is more distracting than helpful. I'm trying to
"not get destroyed out here."

"Fine, sorry Noin." Misato replied.

Heavyarms shook its Twin Beam Gatling at the Wing Zero and Epyon. "Come on you two, pull yourselves together!" Mari shouted. "Puppy, I know you can hear me, snap the fuck out it right now! Princess, get your head out of your ass!" Heavy arms fired a burst from the Twin Beam Gatling between them. "Don't you fucking ignore me!"

"Mari, just focus on fighting, and stay clear of them." Noin said. "There's nothing we can do now but hope for the best..."

"DIE!" Shinji screamed.

"YOU FIRST!" Asuka screamed back.

Wing Zero discarded its Buster Rifle and charged Epyon with both of its beam sabres out and active. The two Gundams began twirling around the sky, trading blows from their beam sabres and blocking each other with impressive reflexes. Neither had scored a direct blow on the other, but any Virgos around them were destroyed in the sheer madness and reckless abandon of their attacks. As the fight between them intensified, and rose higher into the air, it just proved that is was only the beginning.

—

"We are so fucked..." Mari said as she watched the Buster Rifle fall from the sky towards the ground, only to be caught by the Tallgeese.

"Mari, take this!" Noin shouted.

"How?" Mari asked.

"It's powered by the onboard reactor of your Gundam, anyone can use it." Noin said as the Tallgeese hovered near the building Mari was on. "Just don't break it, or destroy any buildings."

Heavyarms caught the Buster Rifle and mounted it where its own Twin Beam Gatling would be placed. "I think its safest right there for now."

"Mari, its more powerful!" Noin said.

"Yeah, and I think it's safer to wait until I'm put of ammo." Mari said. "I'm not Asuka, I actually like hitting targets with my ammo."

"Whatever you say." Noin said. "Just be careful... the odds just got a lot worse."

"Thanks, I'm aware of that." Mari quipped as she moved Heavyarms to the edge of the building and saw a mass of Virgos below and leapt of the building.

"YEEEHAWWWW!" Mari shouted. "Welcome to the Thunderdome bitches!"

Heavyarms landed dead in the middle of the group, buckling the road beneath, and fired the Beam Gatling while spinning in a circle, destroying all the Virgos in the vicinity, and also damaged some of the surrounding buildings.

"I'll work on the execution." Mari muttered.

Heavyarms looked up to see Epyon and Wing Zero fly by seemingly intertwined. "God... will you
two snap out of it?" Mari pleaded.

Her plea was interrupted by the arrival of yet more Virgos. They began moving on Heavyarms in a large group and Mari opened all the weapons on the Gundam and fired every missile and gun she had.

"Burning Big Bang!" Mari shouted as the missiles scattered, each one destroying a Virgo and the chest Gatlings and Machine Cannons fired the last of their ammo, ripping through any Virgos in front of the Gundam.

"Yeah, get the fuck out of here, you assholes!" Mari shouted as she tried to use the chest guns again, but to no avail. "Awe, come on… I'm out of ammo already?" Mari fired the Twin Beam Gatling and shot down another Virgo. "Well… at least I'm not completely out of ammo."

Mari heard the sensors ding in the cockpit very loudly. She glanced at it and saw a mass of red dots heading towards her. "Oh… that's not good." Another alert went off, showing less than 10% power remaining in the Beam Gatling. "Well, shit… I'm gonna die. Hey, uh, badass… little help?"

"Sorry, I'm a little busy myself!" Noin replied as the Tallgeese fired its Beam Cannon repeatedly at the approaching Virgos, wiping several of them out only to have twice as many appear to take their place. "Use the Buster Rifle!"

"Oh… yeah." Mari said absentmindedly. "Totally forget about that." Mari aimed the Beam Gatling and placed a well–aimed barrage at the approaching Virgos, emptying the energy from it, and detaching it from the left arm. The Twin Buster Rifle was released from the weapons rack on the back and switched out with the Twin Beam Gatling. Mari took careful aim at the approaching Virgos, making sure she wasn't going to level any buildings in the process. "Take this!" Mari shouted as the Buster Rifle fired, disintegrating all the Virgos in front of her. Mari sighed in relief for a moment before her sensors chimed again, showing even more enemies approaching. "Oh, come on!" Mari shouted. "Miso, how many of these bastards are left?"

"Still about 7,000 or so." Misato replied.

"Confirm, 7,003 sensor targets confirmed as enemy combatants." Maya reported.

"Great…" Mari said. "I hope Shinji and Asuka pull their shit together soon, otherwise we're not gonna be able to save the city…"

While the battle for Tokyo–3 raged around them, Asuka was solely focused on Wing Zero and Shinji. Every attack she made was met with a fierce counterattack from Wing Zero, either blocking it with a beam sabre or the large shield. She wasn't thinking at all, and was only out for blood, out to kill her enemy… Shinji.

"Why won't you give up?!!" Asuka screamed. "My enemies are supposed to die!"

"And I won't let my enemies hurt my friends!" Shinji screamed back. "I won't let you hurt them!"

"No, I'm just going to kill you, Shinji Ikari!" Asuka screamed. "You're my enemy, and I'm finally gonna prove that I can protect myself!" Epyon surged forward with a lunging thrust of its beam sabre, only to be deflected by Wing Zero's shield. Epyon countered with its Heat Rod, wrapping it around Wing Zero's right arm. Wing Zero threw its right arm outward, jerking Epyon with its Heat Rod, forcing Epyon to release Wing Zero. The two Gundams once again stared each other down.
"I have to destroy you… I can't let you keep protecting me, I'm not weak!" Asuka shouted as she tried to decide what to do. Epyon was showing her so many possibilities she could hardly process them all. It was taking all her might just to stay conscious and not pass out from the stress. Due to fighting another ZERO System, which Epyon was aware of, there were far more possibilities than would normally be available due to the learning and predicative properties. Asuka was actively fighting the system for control of the Gundam so she could fight how she wanted, but she couldn't overcome the system entirely, as she wanted to win the fight.

"I have to win… if I don't, I'm just a weak little girl who needs some idiot protecting me all the time… I need to show everyone I can fight for myself! Shinji is my enemy, and I will destroy him!"

Epyon charged again, striking with both weapons at once, which Wing Zero had difficulty blocking, but was able to hold off long enough to activate its main thrusters and jet away from Epyon, firing its Machine Cannons, to minimal effect.

"Bastard!" Asuka shouted. "I'll fucking show you! I'll fucking kill you?!"

As Asuka went to charge Wing Zero, she slammed the thrusters to full and rose the beam sabre up high. Epyon brought the beam sabre down quickly, catching Wing Zero just above its left elbow, severing the arm, and losing Wing Zero one of its beam sabres and its shield. Before Wing Zero could begin to react, Epyon brought its activated Heat Rod up from below, slicing off its right leg below the knee, and damaging the left leg quite severely.

"I told you I'd destroy you!" Asuka shouted at the damaged Wing Zero. "I don't need your help, see?!" Asuka screamed. "I can finally fight and win… ALL ON MY OWN!"

Wing Zero's only remaining beam sabre held aloft in its right hand. Its main engines opened up and ignited, charging Epyon with its beam sabre held high. Epyon anticipated the attack and Wing Zero spun so that its left shoulder pauldron was the only thing destroyed and it sliced off Epyon's left arm, and with it, its shield and Heat Rod. Epyon countered by attacking Wing Zero with its beam sabre, slicing downwards, and cutting right into the cockpit, exposing who was inside. Finally, Asuka realized who was in there.

"SHINJI!" Asuka screamed.

"Asuka… I was only trying to help…" Shinji muttered.

Asuka watched Shinji's bloody and dying body try to control the damaged and falling Wing Zero, until its engines cut out, and it fell from the sky. As it was falling Asuka watched in horror as Wing Zero exploded just before impact with the ground.

"NOOOOOOOOOO!" Asuka screamed.

The scene dissolved and left Asuka right where she was before, right before she charged Wing Zero. It had all been an illusion.

"Wha…?" Asuka muttered. "Was it all an illusion?"

Epyon seemed to respond in the affirmative.

"Princess, is it you?" Mari asked.

"Mari?" Asuka asked.

"Oh, thank god…" Mari muttered.
"Asuka… the system can overload your mind and make you see things." Noin said bluntly. "Just try and focus on processing everything it's sending you."

"Wait..." Asuka muttered. "I... I almost killed Shinji... I'm the monster... I'm the enemy..." Asuka said. "Shinji only helped me because he loved me and wanted to protect me." Asuka said sullenly. "How could I act like this... why did I act like this?"

"The Epyon System made you temporarily insane." Noin explained. "I told you it might happen."

"So I didn't almost kill him?" Asuka asked.

"No, it was a possibility shown to you." Noin said. "You could have killed him if you didn't fight the system."

"I... I can't believe I almost killed him..." Asuka muttered.

"Princess, you need to focus." Mari said. "Shinji's still insane, and he's focused on you."

"Wait... he's crazy too?" Asuka asked, but did not get a response from either Mari or Noin.

"We're not done yet!" Shinji shouted. "You're my enemy, and I have to destroy you!"

"Baka, I'm not your enemy!" Asuka shouted as she moved Epyon out of the way of Wing Zero's charge. "I love you, remember? And you love me!"

"No! Stop trying to trick me, you're trying to hurt Asuka!" Shinji shouted. "I won't let you trick me into letting you hurt her!"

"Baka, it's me in the Epyon, not anyone else!" Asuka shouted. "Please listen to me!"

"NO!" Shinji roared. "I'M TIRED OF LISTENING TO YOU, IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO FUCKING DIE!"

Wing Zero charged with both beam sabres raise high, and Epyon countered with its Heat Rod to block them from making contact.

"Uh, guys... I need some help." Asuka asked.

"Sorry, princess, kinda busy." Mari said as Heavyarms fired the Twin Buster Rifle several more times in quick succession, destroying some Virgos.

"Asuka, we're heavily outnumbered here." Noin said. "You're on your own."

"Wonderful..." Asuka said sullenly as Wing Zero attacked once again and Asuka had to think quickly to dodge it. "I don't think I can survive this without his help... but for once, I'm actually on my own..." Asuka sighed. "I hate irony."

"Just hold on everyone, help is on the way." Misato said.

Mari was having a difficult time fighting all the Virgos. She was beginning to get tired after having to fight so hard against the superior force. Sweat was pouring out of her, and mixed with the concrete dust from earlier and made her look like a blotchy mess. And while Wing Zero's Twin Buster Rifle had been a great weapon, the Heavyarms wasn't designed to use it so extensively. Warnings had gone off in the left arm about recoil damage, and Mari switched the weapon to the right hand, but was running out of options, as there were no alarms going off for that arm too.
"This is not how I wanted to spend my fucking day!" Mari shouted. "Noin, I'm kinda out of options her! I need help!"

"I'm sorry, Mari." Noin said as the Tallgeese struggled with its own issues. "My Beam Rifle is overloading here... I think I've used it too much."

"Well, all I have is a damn knife!" Mari shouted. "At least you have a beam sabre!"

Noin corrected her. "Actually, I have two."

"Well, can I borrow one?!" Mari pleaded.

"I'm sorry Mari, you can't." Noin replied. "Heavyarms was designed for ranged combat. It's too slow to fight in close quarters combat with the Virgos."

"So what the hell am I supposed to do?!" Mari shouted. "Stick my thumb in my ass and pray?!"

"Yeah, pray for Asuka to help Shinji before he kills her." Noin replied.

"Or you could get out of the way, because the God of Death has arrived!" Duo shouted as the Deathscythe de-cloaked and flew in front of Heavyarms and began spinning its Beam Scythe around at high speed, slicing through the surrounding Virgos with ease. "Did you think we'd let you have all the fun?"

Duo was grinning stupidly from inside his cockpit as he turned around and faced Heavyarms. Deathscythe jetted over Heavyarms to destroy the Virgos approaching from the other direction. After slicing them to pieces, Deathscythe put its Beam Scythe over its left shoulder and glanced around the city.

"Well, this is a fucking mess, isn't it?" Duo said.

"No shit." Mari quipped. "And it took you long enough, father."

"Well, he had to find our way to NERV with the dust and missiles and explosions everywhere." Quatre piped in as Sandrock used its Heat Shotels to slice through several dozen Virgos. "It wasn't exactly easy."

"The challenge is what made it all the more enjoyable!" Wufei shouted as Altron extended its arms out to slam through several Virgos and used its Twin Beam Cannon to wipe out approaching Virgos from behind. Altron then retracted its arms and drew out its double ended beam trident and charged at another group of Virgos.

"And, miso, you couldn't have mentioned this sooner?!" Mari shouted.

"I said help was on the way, but no one listened."

"Any word on Zechs and the others?" Noin asked.

"No, they still haven't reported in." Misato said.

"Damn..." Noin muttered.

"Hey, uh, Mari." Duo said. "You know that you've at least partially recharged the Beam Gatling, right?"
"What?" Mari asked.

"Yeah, that's partly what the mounting rack is for." Duo said. "That and Trowa reinforced that thing to slam enemies with the barrels… when he was out of ammo anyway."

"Awesome… I can still fight." Mari said cheerfully. "I'm gonna go kill some shit now."

"No problem." Duo said as Heavyarms swapped its weapons again, and flew off to go fight some more. "And speaking of killing shit, how many of these things are left?" Duo asked. "I wanna know how many of these things I gotta bring the veil down on."

"There are still over 6,200 enemies remaining." Maya reported.

"Awesome, I get to deal with at least 2,000 of these assholes." Duo said happily. "Alright, buddy, let's go and teach show them they fucked with the wrong city."

Deathscythe activated its thruster and jetted off, charging a group of nearby Virgos trying to destroy a building. "Not today, assholes!" Duo shouted as Deathscythe cleaved through them, causing them to explode into a massive fireball. "Yeah, seven down, 6,193 to go."

"Well, try making more of a dent!" Mari shouted as Heavyarms started mowing down groups of Virgos with its half–charged Beam Gatling. "You know, chop them up and make some stir fry out of these assholes!"

"I don't think that would taste very good…" Quatre said as he racked up a long string of combo kills in Sandrock, moving gracefully from one group of Virgos to another, slicing through several at a time with very little effort.

"It's more about the taste of revenge than anything else!" Mari said angrily as Heavyarms was hit with several beam shots from some approaching Virgos. "They ruined our nice day, they're trying to wreck where I live, and they're pissing me the fuck off!" Mari took out her anger on the approaching Virgos, and fired Heavyarms thrusters and charged, slamming the end of the Beam Gatling through one Virgo, and fired it at the several behind that one, blowing them right to hell. "That's what happens when you piss me off!"

"Yeah, you show them, Mari." Duo said as he looked around. "So… uh… where are the lovebirds?"

"Oh… you don't know." Noin said while Tallgeese flew through several Virgos, cutting through them with one of its beam sabres, its Mega Beam Cannon mounted to its other shoulder, still overheated and useless. "Check your seven o'clock."

Duo looked up and saw Wong Zero erratically trying to cut through Epyon. "Oh… the ZERO System, eh? That's a problem." Duo said. "Is it both of them?"

"It was." Mari said. "Asuka's snapped out of it. But she's still got to deal with… whatever it is he's going through."

"Yeah, that doesn't look easy." Duo said. "He's a really good pilot.

"We've all experienced the ZERO System..." Quatre said sullenly. "To snap out of it, it took the death of Trowa... and then I was heartbroken, even though I found out later he was alive. I just hope for Shinji's sake that it doesn't come to that."

"Well, I think Asuka can handle him." Wufei said. "She's doing a good job, I just hope she can keep it up."
"Yeah… so do I." Mari said. "They've already been through enough…"

"Well, quit talking about it and get back to fighting!" Duo said while Deathscythe continued cleaving though enemies at an impressive rate. "If we get rid of these fucking things, then we can go help her. Until then, she's on her own."

While the battle raged on in the city above, down in NERV HQ, there was a great deal of panic about how much damage the city could receive. The amount of Virgos still in the city was quite alarming, and they were everywhere.

"Status report!" Misato shouted.

"We still have 5,500 Virgos within the city limits." Maya reported. "The AIS is proving less than effective because they're inside the city."

"How bad is the damage?!" Misato asked.

"We're unsure." Hyuga reported. "The fighting is being contained to the southeastern side of the city, where the Gundams are deployed."

"What about the initial attacks in the other areas?" Kaji asked.

"The Virgos have all converged on the Gundams." Aoba reported. "They're focusing on overwhelming them rather than destroying anything."

"And Shinji?" Fuyutsuki asked.

"He's still trying to kill Asuka." Hyuga reported. "Asuka's doing her best, but she sounds like she's getting tired."

"What's wrong with Shinji?" Lady Une asked as she appeared in the Command Center with Relena by her side. Both of them were caked in dust, had some small scratches, but were otherwise unscathed.

"He's in Wing Zero." Misato said.

"Oh no…" Relena muttered. "Has he lost his mind?"

"Well, he views Asuka as an enemy." Kaji said.

"Then we're in a lot of trouble." Lady Une lamented.

"Where are Heero, Milliardo, and Trowa?" Misato asked.

"Heero and my brother are heading down to join the fight." Relena said. "Trowa went to bring the others we were walking with to the Medical Wing."

"What others?" Misato asked.

"Uh, Toji, Hikari, and two other people." Lady Une said. "Their names escape me."

"Sakura and Kensuke?" Kaji asked.

"That's them." Relena said confidently. "That Kensuke boy was badly hurt protecting that girl,
Sakura.

"Never thought he had it in him." Misato quipped.

"Misato, he's a nice kid." Kaji said.

"I don't mean to interrupt you, but there is a battle going on." Lady Une said. "Is it as bad as it looks?"

"Worse, we're outnumbered and down two Gundams." Misato said. "And there's still over half of the enemies that attacked still active."

"How did they surprise us?" Lady Une asked.

"Cloaking devices." Ritsuko said. "They de–cloaked and attacked."

"So they can't attack while cloaked." Lady Une said. "How very fortunate."

"What would be fortunate is if Heero and Milliardo would get out there already and do something." Misato said. "We need all the help we can get."

"In times like these, Colonel, we always need all the help we can get." Lady Une replied.

Heero and Milliardo ran into the Cage. Heero was limping ever so slightly from his broken leg that he had reset himself. As the two of them looked around, they only saw one Gundam remaining… Wing Gundam. The only other things in the Cage were Unit–01 and Unit–02, and the half repaired Unit–XP.

"So, Heero, which of us is going out there?" Milliardo asked.

"Take Wing." Heero said. "Howard seems to have restored it to good working order."

"Yeah, I did." Howard said from behind them. "I was wondering how long it would take for you two to get here."

"We were otherwise engaged." Heero said.

"Doesn't matter, just so long as you get up there to help them." Howard said worriedly. "I don't think it's going that well, I've been listening in, and it looks like that boy Shinji isn't taking too well to the ZERO System."

"That was expected." Heero said. "He can master it."

"And I'm assuming Asuka is back to normal?" Milliardo asked.

"Well, yes…" Howard said. "Wait, you put them in there knowing this would happen?"

"Of course." Milliardo said. "They hesitated a lot in our last fight against the Virgos. They have self–doubts, just like I used to before Epyon showed me the true path."

"ZERO did the same for me." Heero said. "It was to help them overcome what it is they have within their minds, and apparently it's working."

"That may be, but it wasn't right." Howard said.
"Howard, in war, sometimes the best option isn't the right thing to do." Milliardo said. "But if it helps
them in this fight, and their fights against those Angels, they'll be better off for it, won't they?"

"I guess…" Howard said. "But I'm still not sure how both of you are deploying with only one
Gundam."

"Simple." Heero said. "I'll deploy in Unit–01."

"How is that simple?" Milliardo asked.

"I'll provide heavy cover fire." Heero said. "I have excellent aim."

"I don't think you should do that…" Howard said.

"I must." Heero replied as he walked towards Unit–01's berth. "I'll meet you out there, Zechs."

"Yeah, sure." Milliardo replied.

"He's one crazy kid." Howard muttered.

"Yes, but his brand of crazy tends to win fights and saves lives." Milliardo quipped.

"Well, he's just that kind of person." Howard said.

"So, is Wing ready for combat?" Milliardo asked.

"Yes with a few modifications." Howard replied. "First, the Buster Rifle, the shot canisters can
recharge, each one takes about a minute."

"Where do they recharge?" Milliardo asked.

"On the rifle itself." Howard said. "I added a small reactor to pull that off. It'll fire regular shots
drawing directly from that, but those big blasts, it needs time to charge those, so I changed the
canisters into capacitors."

"Is it any more powerful than before?" Milliardo asked.

"Nope, same firepower, just more endurance." Howard replied.

"Excellent, then I'll deploy at once." Milliardo said as he scrambled up the scaffold to reach Wing's
cockpit.

"Good luck, Zechs." Howard said as Milliardo got into the cockpit.

"I believe Heero needs that luck far more than me." Milliardo said as he closed the cockpit hatch and
activated Wing Gundam. It moved quickly towards the launch elevators. It placed its Buster Rifle on
the ground for a moment and deployed its beam sabre from its shield. It switched the beam sabre to
its left hand, and picked the Buster Rifle back up. "Colonel Katsuragi, clear me a launch vector." Milliardo said as he braced himself for launch.

"Copy that." Misato said. "You're being deployed right in the middle of the battle zone."

"Understood." Milliardo said.

"Launch path clear." Maya said.
"Before you launch, Milliardo..." Relena said. "Where's Heero?"

"He was heading for Unit–01." Milliardo said. "He's going to pilot it."

"He's what?!" Misato exclaimed.

"He's going to pilot Unit–01." Milliardo repeated.

"Damn it... he can't possibly pilot Unit–01." Ritsuko said. "It's a waste of time."

"Good luck telling him that." Milliardo said.

"Thanks for the intel." Misato said. "So, we're ready when you are."

"Wing Gundam... launching!" Milliardo shouted as Wing shot upward towards the surface.

Heero was staring at the Entry Plug of Unit–01. He wasn't quite sure how to enter it without the seat being moved out onto the platform for him to board, so he decided to simply walk across Unit–01's shoulders to enter.

As he clambered across Unit–01's back and shoulders, someone shouted up to him, which he ignored as he got to Entry Plug without any issues. When he sat down in the seat he looked around for an activation switch, and was surprised when everything lighted up without his input.

"I don't think it should be doing that." Heero said.

"Heero, what are you doing in there?" Misato asked as the comm came to life, showing a holographic image of Misato. "How did you turn it on?"

"I didn't." Heero said. "It turned itself on."

"Heero, what are you doing in there?" Misato asked.

"I'm going to help Shinji." Heero replied. "Unit–01 is the most logical way to do that."

"You can't pilot Unit–01." Ritsuko explained. "It's only meant for Shinji's brainwaves."

"All I want to do is assist Shinji and the others." Heero said as the Entry Plug shook, and he could hear the sounds of metal straining.

"Then what the hell..." Misato said. "Maya, Ritsuko, what it's doing now?"

"It's stuck in diagnostic mode." Maya said. "Entry Plug online, primary connections not established, no LCL flooding. But the readings from Unit–01 show it's online..."

"How is that even possible?" Ritsuko shouted. "That doesn't even make any sense!"

"From our prior experience, anything with the Evangelions making sense is basically impossible." Kaji mused. "Perhaps it's just one more thing we'll never understand about these... creatures."

Heero heard the bite in the beginning of Ritsuko's response, but it was cut off when the comm shut off the Entry Plug sealed itself and Heero heard the sound of rushing water... or so he thought. When he looked towards his feet, he saw orange liquid starting to fill the Entry Plug. He felt the Entry Plug move, and heard a dull thud as the armored hatch went over the Entry Plug.
"What the hell is that?" Heero muttered as the comm came back to life. "I have been trained to resist all forms of torture." Heero deadpanned.

"It's LCL, once the Entry Plug is filled with it, it will be oxygenated, and you will be able to breathe with it. Just take a deep breath and let it fill your lungs." Ritsuko explained. "It's the medium we use to better connect the pilot's mind to the Evangelion's systems."

"How archaic." Heero said as he inhaled a large gulp of LCL. "Why does this stuff taste like blood?"

"No idea, but we didn't start the activation sequence." Misato said. "Who did?"

"Unit–01." Maya replied. "Primary connections established... S2 Engine online and stable... secondary connections activating... I'm astonished..."

The Entry Plug lit up in a dazzling array of colors, then it was lit up further by a brilliant flash of light, followed by a rainbow of swirling color, then more colors flashed on the walls around Heero until he could see the inside of the Cage displayed all around him. The control panel in front of him lit up and showed that it was ready for use. "Interesting." Heero said as he looked around some more. "Very interesting."

"Secondary connections online?" Maya reported. "A10 connections established... nerve connections are on standby... it's like it's waiting for something."

"What does that mean?" Heero asked.

"It means you can't pilot." Ritsuko said in amazement. "It shouldn't even be possible... but it is... I... this isn't happening."

"So what should I do?" Heero asked as he felt a warmth envelop him. The Entry Plug's surroundings disappeared in a bright flash and he was standing a white void with a slender figure of a woman in front of him.

"Do you truly mean to help Shinji?" The figure asked.

"Yes." Heero said. "I wish to assist him. But who are you?"

"I am Yui Ikari." Yui replied. "I am Shinji's mother."

"Then why are you here?" Heero asked.

"I am the resident soul of the Evangelion, its control system within the Core as they like to say out there." Yui said. "Shinji knows I am here, and I know he has kept that fact very secret. I am what protects him when he calls for it."

"So you created those shockwaves when we fought, and that destruction wave when we fought the Virgos." Heero said.

"I only assisted Shinji in controlling what he desired." Yui said. "Otherwise those blasts would have been far more destructive."

"Hmmm..." Heero said.

"Do you not believe me?" Yui asked.

"No, I believe you." Heero said. "Quatre said he could feel this machine's sadness... you must be what he felt."
"Most likely." Yui said. "I am surprised you're not more shocked by my presence."

"You're a lot like ZERO." Heero said. "A living being inside a machine."

"Yes, but once I had a human body." Yui said. "I was absorbed into the Core not unlike Shinji was during his fight with the Fourteenth Angel."

"So, if you're trapped in here, how do you know so much of the outside world?" Heero asked.

"I listen, and I can see inside Shinji's mind when he's in here." Yui said. "Just thoughts on the surface of his mind. As his mother it's hard to ignore such a doorway to his life." Yui frowned. "And you have quite a lot on your mind, Heero Yuy." Yui said. "Do you feel guilty for exposing him to the ZERO System?" Yui asked.

"No, I still think he needs ZERO to guide him, to show him who is enemy is." Heero replied.

"Good." Yui replied. "And that girl and her dog? Why does that plague you so much?"

"I made a mistake and an innocent girl was killed." Heero said. "I can never forgive myself for that."

"But you accomplished your mission." Yui said kindly. "You didn't mean for her to die. Perhaps you could try and forgive yourself."

"There are some things people do that do not ever deserve forgiveness." Heero replied.

Yui stepped forward and hugged Heero. "Well, if it helps, I forgive you, Heero."

"Why do you care?" Heero asked bluntly.

"You remind me a lot of Shinji." Yui said. "Forced into a life of battle by your father, having great feelings of regret for things beyond your control, losing your mother at a very young age..."

"I don't see the similarity." Heero said.

"You will eventually." Yui said. "Now, are you ready to fight?"

"Yes." Heero said.

"Now, I know Shinji has kept my presence here a secret from everyone, and I wish that you would do the same." Yui said calmly.

"Of course." Heero said. "Discretion is the better part of valor."

"Then you may pilot at will." Yui said. "I think you'll know what to do."

In another flash, the inside of the Entry Plug was all around Heero once again, and Yui was gone.

"Heero, are you still there?!" Misato shouted.

"Yes, I was... adjusting to Unit–01." Heero said. "May I launch?"

"Synchronization rate at 40%..." Maya said. "He's clear."

"Alright, transfer Unit–01 to launch position." Misato ordered. "And prep the armament buildings with weapons, he'll need them."

"Roger." Hyuga said.
As Heero watched his surrounding change, he fastened his seatbelt and prepared to be thrown into combat once more.

"Launch path clear." Aoba said. "Elevator is on standby."

"Are you ready Heero?" Misato asked.

"Of course." Heero replied.

"Right, launch him!" Misato ordered.

"Unit–01… launching." Heero said calmly as Unit–01 shot up the shaft.

While the battle dragged on around him, extreme fatigue setting in with Mari and Noin, near exhaustion for poor Asuka, Shinji was still ever focused on defeating his enemy, Epyon, who he believed was his enemy. He could hear the "fake" Asuka shouting at him to halt his attack, but he would not yield. Even without the Twin Buster Rifle, the Wing Zero was a very formidable Gundam, and Shinji's erratic, yet somehow coherent attack pattern was keeping Asuka on her toes, as at times, she could barely keep up with his two thrashing beam sabres blending attack and counterattack flawlessly. Even though he was near total insanity, the ZERO System had finally made Shinji, the perfect, ruthless soldier his father had always wanted.

"Shinji, can you hear me, or do you still have your head in your ass?" Asuka shouted. "Stop attacking me! Don't you remember that I'm in this thing?"

"Stop trying to distract me, I'm not letting my friends get hurt anymore!" Shinji screamed. "I'm tired of letting them down, and once I destroy you, they'll all be safe again!"

"Baka, I am the real Asuka!" Asuka shouted as the mental strain of dodging Wing Zero's attack was starting to show. Her reaction times were starting to slip, and this led to a direct hit to the main body of Epyon, causing sparks to fly inside the cockpit.

"AAAAHHHHHHHHHHH!" Asuka screamed. "Shinji, you're hurting me!"

"No, you're an enemy, I don't care how I make you feel!" Shinji shouted back a Wing Zero pulled back and relented for a moment, surveying the lack of damage to Epyon. "YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO DIE!"

"Shinji, you promised to protect me!" Asuka shouted. "We said we'd always look out for each other, don't you remember? Would a fake Asuka say that?"

"You're not Asuka!" Shinji shouted. "Asuka would never try to kill me, she loves me! Stop telling me you're Asuka!"

"Not until you get your head out of your ass!" Asuka shouted.

"I SAID STOP!" Shinji roared as Wing Zero charged Epyon again, and as Epyon moved to dodge, Wing Zero changed direction and kicked Epyon right in the chest, sending the maroon Gundam tumbling out of the sky towards one of the many hills surrounding the city.

"AAAAHHHHHHHHHHH!" Asuka screamed as Epyon collided with the ground, creating a large cloud of dust.
"STAY DOWN!" Shinji shouted. "NOW I'M GONNA FINISH THIS!"

"No you won't, Shinji." Heero said as Shinji looked over and saw Unit–01 pointing a Gatling gun at him. "Stop attacking her.

"It is my enemy, I have to destroy Epyon!" Shinji shouted. "Then everyone will be safe!"

"What about the Virgos, will you destroy them?" Heero asked. "People are still not safe, Shinji… by fighting Epyon, you're putting even more people at risk."

"No, I don't believe you!" Shinji shouted. "You're lying to me, which means you're my enemy too! That means I have to destroy you!" Wing Zero glanced down at the disabled Epyon below. "But first, I need to finish what I started."

"I said no, Shinji." Heero deadpanned as he fired the Gatling gun in Wing Zero's direction, but it was too late, Wing Zero was charging at Epyon at full speed, aiming both beam sabres for the kill shot… piercing the cockpit.

"Shinji…" Asuka said weakly and she tried one last ditch effort to make him remember the truth. "Why do you think I'm your enemy? We're in love… and you don't believe that it's really me… what kind of heartless monster are you? You're just like my father… or worse… you're just like your father…"

Everything froze for a moment. Scenes started flashing through Shinji head. His first battle with Unit–01 against Sachiel, Toji and Kensuke interrupting his fight with Shamshel, Rei saving him from Ramiel, Asuka and him fighting Israfel together, holding up Sahaquiel, not fighting against Bardiel, watching from afar while his friends were decimated by Zeruel, watching in torment while Asuka was assaulted by Arael, and watching in vain as Rei scarified herself and Unit–00 to save him.

"NOOOOOOOOOO!" Shinji screamed as Wing Zero froze midair. "I'M NOTHING LIKE MY FATHER!"

"Yes you are… you let other people get hurt for you…" Asuka muttered. "You let Rei get hurt, you always wait… you always… get people killed…"

"No I don't!" Shinji screamed. "I… I… I… I hate when people get hurt! I ate seeing people get hurt because of me! If I could go back and change it, I would be the one to always get hurt! I would be the one to die, I'm the one who deserves to die! I let people get hurt when it should have been me!"

Suddenly, Shinji felt his rage dissipate and it was replaced by his sorrow. "You're not the enemy…" Shinji muttered. "I'm… I'm my own enemy. I… can't get out of my own way… if I hesitate, people get hurt and I hate myself, and if I act recklessly, people get hurt and hate myself." Shinji looked horrified. "That means… I almost killed Asuka…"

Wing Zero shut down as Shinji realized that he had actually tried to kill her, and slammed into the ground next to Epyon.

"What have I done…?" Shinji muttered.

"Shinji, this isn't the right time to feel bad." Asuka said weakly. "We have enemies to fight, and a city to save, remember?"

"But I almost killed you." Shinji said. "I didn't even believe it was you."

"Shinji, this kind of self-doubt is exactly what ZERO was trying to show you." Milliardo said. "Everyone who uses the ZERO System the first time has issues. ZERO shows you the way to get past
them. Take what you've learned, get up, and fight!"

"Shinji, we don't have much time, you need to pull yourself together." Heero said.

"Yeah, come on, baka..." Asuka said. "We need you to pull something else out of your ass."

"But I'm not in Unit–01." Shinji said. "I'm not really a good pilot outside of Unit–01."

"Shinji, the way you were fighting just a little while ago, you were piloting just as good as the rest of us." Milliardo said. "You're a natural pilot, just like your friends here. Now get up and help us destroy these things!"

Heavyarms appeared above where Epyon and Wing Zero had impacted the ground, its thrusters moving it quickly through the air. When it landed, it held out the Twin Buster Rifle. "Hey, puppy, if you're planning on getting up, you'll probably need this." Mari said. "Come on, we've been in worse spots than this." Mari sighed. "And if you don't get up, people are liable to get hurt."

"She has a point, baka." Asuka said. "And you know how much I hate agreeing with her."

"Yeah, I know." Shinji said as Wing Zero came back online. "I'm going to fight." Shinji pushed the controls and struggled to get Wing Zero back on its feet. When he regained his balance Wing Zero stowed its beam sabres and split the Twin Buster Rifle into its two halves. "Asuka are you coming, or not?"

"Ha, things all boyfriends ask their girlfriends." Mari joked.

Epyon also struggled to its feet. "If I wasn't already injured, I'd kick your ass for saying that." Asuka said angrily. "So, when we get back, you better run..."

"Hey, princess, just like you told the puppy, we need to focus." Mari said. "Cause it looks like some of the bad guys were going for easy pickings."

Heavyarms lifted its Twin beam Gatling and pointed to a large mass of approaching Virgos, all heading for where the Gundams had been disabled not more than moment before.

"That is problematic." Asuka said. "What do we do?"

"How many of them are there?" Shinji asked.

"There are 4,500 left, Shinji." Maya said. "And it looks like all but a few hundred are heading right for you."

"Where are the rest going?" Asuka asked.

"Towards Unit–01." Maya replied. "It appears they're ignoring everyone else."

"Great, so what do we do?" Mari said.

"Stand back." Shinji said. "ZERO's telling me what I should do."

"Hang on, after everything you went through, you're really gonna trust that thing?" Mari asked. "I mean... Asuka's nickname for you is sounding kinda realistic right now."

"Mari just move." Shinji said as he recombined the Twin Buster Rifle and aimed it at the oncoming Virgos. "This should work, or at least I hope so."
"That's comforting." Asuka said.

"It's all we've got." Shinji said as the Virgos came within range and started firing towards the three of them.

"Hey, puppy, before you shoot them, say something corny." Mari said.

"Mari, this is serious." Shinji said. "Just let me focus."

"Come on, like all those old action movies!" Mari pleaded. "Pretty please…"

"Just do it so she'll shut up." Asuka muttered. "And hurry up, cause they're getting really fucking close!"

"Yeah… say something and finish this!" Mari shouted.

"Fine…" Shinji sighed as he took final aim with the Buster Rifle starting to collect particles at the end of its barrel. "Say hello to my little friend!" The buster rifle fired an extremely wide blast that ripped through the ground and destroyed all the approaching Virgos. "Happy now, Mari?"

"Yes, very much so." Mari said. "Scarface was a good choice too, puppy."

"Is that where it's from?" Shinji asked.

"After all this time I'm disappointed." Mari said. "I thought making you watching all those movies you would at least remember them…"

"We can talk about this later, Mari." Shinji said. "There are still Virgos in the city. Right, Maya?"

"Just over 500 enemy contacts, all converging on Unit–01." Maya said. "No other contacts detected."

"So, is that good or bad?" Mari asked.

"No idea." Asuka said. "But who is in Unit–01?"

"Heero." Shinji said. "Heero, are you alright? Can you handle those Virgos?"

"It won't be a problem." Heero said.

"As long as you're sure." Shinji said.

"I am." Heero said calmly. "I believe Unit–01 will take care of this before I can do anything."

Shinji watched as Unit–01's A.T. Field expanded and condensed around the Evangelion before exploding outward and ripping apart every Virgo on approach just like before. Shinji was in awe of what this looked like from the other side.

"Is that what that looks like?" Shinji asked. "Cause that's really cool, and really scary."

"How do you not know?" Mari asked.

"Well, stupid, he's usually inside the damn thing when it happens." Asuka said sarcastically. "You know, he is Unit–01's pilot after all."

"Ok, point taken princess…" Mari said woefully. "You don't have to be so mean about it."
"Yes I do." Asuka said. "Cause you're an idiot a lot of the time."

"Enough you guys," Shinji said. "It's been a long day."

"Yeah, so pack it in and return to base." Misato ordered. "It looks like everything is clear."

"Roger that, Misato." Shinji said as they started moving towards the closest elevator.

In the Command Center, everyone sat there in awe. The alarms had stopped, and the AIS had stopped firing. Three elevators had been sent up to recover everyone, but other than that, nothing else had been done.

"Maya." Misato said, asking the girl slightly. "Are the screens actually clear?"

"All enemies have been destroyed." Maya reported. "I… I'm just shocked that it ended that quickly. After all that, two shots just… end it."

"How did Unit–01 even do that?" Ritsuko muttered in shock. "Shinji wasn't even the pilot… it should even be capable of that kind of output without a higher sync rate!"

"Again, the Evangelions are unpredictable." Kaji said sarcastically. "I mean, Unit–01 isn't even controllable, and Shinji has an outburst, and the ground starts to shake. How is this still a surprise?"

"Surprise or not, the enemy has been destroyed once again." Gendo said. "Is there a preliminary damage report?"

"Uh, not at this time, Commander." Hyuga said. "We're deploying damage control teams now though, to recover what we can from the Mobile Dolls."

"And the Gundams and Unit–01?" Misato asked.

"Being brought down into the Cage as we speak." Hyuga said. "They should be secured in a few minutes."

"Good." Misato said. "Commander, permission to meet the pilots in the Cage?"

"Granted." Gendo said. "The Sub–Commander will take charge in your absence."

"Understood sir." Misato said as she went for the exit.

"Wait up, Misato." Kaji said playfully. "You're not the only one who wants to see them!"

"Yes, we shall accompany you as well." Lady Une said as she and Relena followed.

"Whatever, I don't mind." Misato replied as the group entered the elevator Misato had called. "May as well congratulate them for a job well done."

Trente was in his Mobile Doll Control Room. He was surrounded by a cloud of gray smoke, and sparks were coming out of several terminals all around him. Trente was staring in disbelief at his screens. They showed no more active Mobile Dolls. The screens that were still active showed only error screens.
"My… my ZERO Doll System… it's been destroyed?" Trente said. "How did it overload? How did it break? How could I lose?!" Trent stood up and slammed his fist through the screen in front of him. "I can't lose! I am unbeatable! These rabble have dodged my blade for far too long! I have numerical superiority, I had the hidden advantage and I had my ZERO Doll System! I should never have lost!"

Trente pulled his hand out of the display and looked at it for a moment. He then wrapped it in his handkerchief and glared at his shattered reflection on the broken screen in front of him. "Those three Gundams were out of commissions… the ZERO System thought it was the tactically ideal assault. Destroy three Gundams and that massive Mobile Armor, and then the rest would fall in line… they would have been destroyed. But they got back up, and that damned infernal machine fired its weapon and destroyed the entire force at one!" Trente punched the shattered screen with his wrapped hand again. "How is it even possible for that weapon to be so powerful… that Gundam is overwhelmingly strong and capable of so much… it needs to be destroyed. I can't be made a fool of like this…"

Trente began pacing around the room, in a quiet rage. "I can't let this stand… but I can't attack them again until this system is repaired." Trente fumed. "I have to… consolidate my forces… plan a counterstrike… use everything I have to utterly destroy that city and those troublesome Gundams. As long as they stand, my new world order… my pure world order is in danger. I cannot let that happen, I can never let them take my dream away, just like my brother tried to, and I showed him who the better person was… he's dead."

Trente walked over to a panel on the wall, and pressed a button. "Major." Trente said curtly.

"Yes Supreme Commander!" The Major replied.

"Pull back all our forces and fortify our position." Trente ordered. "All Mobile Dolls are to be shut down until further notice."

"Supreme Commander?" The Major asked.

"Just follow my orders!" Trent shouted. "Fortify our position and make sure all of our equipment is properly secured until further notice, is that understood?!"

"Yes, Supreme Commander." The Major said worriedly. "Do you have any additional orders, Supreme Commander?"

"All of our troops are on 24 hour standby as of this moment." Trente said. "Any threat to tis base of operations is to be terminated with extreme prejudice, and any survivors are to be brought to me to be executed by my hand. Is that understood?"

"Yes, Supreme Commander!" The Major said.

"Then execute my orders, and send a repair team to the Mobile Doll Control Center." Trente said angrily. "I'll be in my office, and I don't want to be disturbed."

"Understood, Supreme Commander…" The Major replied. "Hail Trente!" The Major said as an afterthought. "Glory to Trente's Empire! May it live for 10,000 years!"

Trente punched the comm button so hard, he shattered its casing. "Once I conquer this planet, I will ensure my empire lasts for all time."

——

Everyone was getting out of their respective cockpits after being received into the Cage once more.
The mood was quite jovial, as yet another battle had been won. However, they were all still covered in dust from their encounters with the Virgos blowing buildings up, except for Heero, who was drenched in LCL, and was coughing heavily.

"How do you three tolerate that piloting system?" Heero asked.

"You get used to it, soldier boy." Mari quipped. "Doesn't it smell fantastic?"

Heero turned to Shinji and Asuka. "Is she always this… odd?" Heero asked. "Because that fluid, the LCL, tasted like blood."

"Yeah, we try to ignore that fact." Asuka said. "It's just easier."

"So you do notice it." Heero said.

"Well, yeah, it's great!" Mari said.

Heero raised an eyebrow. "You are a very unique person, Mari."

"Thanks, buddy!" Mari said happily.

When duo walked over, her clapped Shinji and Asuka hard on the back. "So, nice job you guys. Mari too, you guys really did pretty well your first time in a Gundam."

"They're simply excellent pilots, Duo." Milliardo said.

"Yeah, they have a natural talent for this kind of work." Noin added.

"Well… I'm still not quite proud of myself for how I acted." Shinji said. "I'm very sorry…"

"Don't apologize, you have nothing to apologize for." Milliardo said. "You only reacted the way we've all reacted to the system."

"Yeah, I went crazy and almost killed a bunch of people." Quatre said. "I almost killed Trowa too…"

"I killed a slew of soldiers in a fit of rage." Heero said.

"I could barely control myself when I flew Wing Zero the first time." Milliardo added.

"I was this close to dying when I used it." Duo said.

"Really?" Shinji asked.

"Baka, they have no reason to lie to you." Asuka said. "Come on, I tried to kill you too."

"Yeah, but I said tings I didn't mean…" Shinji muttered.

"So did I." Asuka said. "And what I said to you after… I'm sorry. You're nothing like your father."

"Is that a bad thing?" Quatre asked.

"Yep." Mari said. "We'll explain later, but we've got company." Mari pointed to Kaji, Misato, Lady Une and Relena walking in.

"Oh, so everyone got here alright." Quatre said happily.
"Yes, but where is Trowa?" Wufei asked.

"Medical Wing." Milliardo said. "Your odd friend, Kensuke, he was hurt protecting Toji's sister. Trowa made sure they got down there."

"Will he be ok?" Shinji asked.

"Most likely." Heero said. "His injuries are not severe."

"We got a call from down there too." Kaji added as they joined the group. "He's resting comfortably and will be out by morning, just a sprained ankle and some bruises."

"Oh, good." Shinji said. "And everyone else?"

"Just fine." Kaji said. "And nice job out there today, too."

"Yeah, that was some impressive piloting." Lady Une said.

"It may have been, but I'm still upset these two were exposed to a system that effected their minds." Misato said angrily.

"Misato, its fine." Asuka said. "We learned a lot about ourselves with that thing."

"No it's not…" Misato started as an alarm klaxon went off. "Oh… what the fuck…"

"Angel or wormhole." Kaji said. "Who wants to bet."

"Well, neither one is a good option, scruffy." Mari said crossly.

"But do you have a preference?" Kaji asked.

"Not particular." Mari said as an alert came over the intercom.

"Pattern Violet detected over Old Tokyo." Hyuga said. "Two targets identified, immediate intercept required. Colonel Katsuragi, report back to Central Dogma immediately."

"Damn it." Misato said gruffly. "The day was just starting to look up too."

"Come on, we'll head back." Kaji said.

"Who's going to intercept?" Lady Une asked.

"I'll go." Milliardo said, volunteering himself.

"Mission accepted." Heero deadpanned.

"Fine, go get ready, we'll have a launch elevator prepped immediately." Misato said.

Shinji started to follow them. "I'm going too."

"Shinji, what are you doing?" Asuka asked. "You shouldn't be going anywhere, those two can handle it."

"I'm going to Unit–01." Shinji said. "We damaged their Gundams, they're gonna need some assistance."

"Why, we just got back!" Asuka said. "We only scratched the paint a little bit, and they've probably
"Asuka, I can still help." Shinji said. "I'm not that tired."

"But you look it." Asuka said.

"Asuka, I'm just trying to make up for what I did." Shinji said.

"Baka, Heero and Milliardo said its ok you lost your shit with the ZERO System! I did too, you don't have to make up for anything!" Asuka pleaded. "I just don't want you to get hurt again, you idiot!"

"Asuka, if I stay here, other people will get hurt." Shinji said. "I have to stop doubting myself and go protect everyone I care about. ZERO showed me that… and so did you."

"Fine, but you'll need these." Asuka said as she reached into her hair and pulled out her sync clips. "You can't really pilot without them. Just… bring them back when you're done. They're my favorite pair."

"Asuka…" Shinji muttered.

"Don't ruin the moment by saying something stupid and just kiss me you idiot." Asuka grumbled and Shinji obliged with a quick kiss on the lips. "You know, for luck and all that."

"Thanks, Asuka." Shinji said sweetly. "And no matter what happened today, all the stuff we said to each other, I still love you."

"Shinji, if you're going, get a move on!" Misato shouted. "Save the love fest for later!"

"I love you too, baka." Asuka said, ignoring Misato. "Get going already, I know I'm really great to look at, but you've got to focus your priorities."

"Then I'll stare blankly at you when I get back." Shinji said as he walked off, putting Asuka's sync clips into his hair.

Shinji was deployed once again in Unit–01, and he felt exhausted. They were charging through the countryside looking for anything out of the ordinary. Shinji looked around as Unit–01 ran on the relatively flat ground and saw both Wing Zero and Epyon perched on his shoulder pylons as he moved quickly towards the origin of wormhole.

"Shinji, are you alright?" Heero asked.

"Yeah, I'm good." Shinji said. "What about you?"

"I will be fine." Heero replied. "Are you, ready, Zechs?"

"I am." Milliardo responded. "Shinji, prepare yourself. Enemy contacts detected heading towards us at high speed."

"Already?" Shinji asked. "But were only part way to the wormhole!"

"It doesn't matter now, get ready." Heero said.

As they got close to the origin of the wormhole, Shinji saw what they were looking for and what Milliardo had detected, two white figures, one with folded wings on its back and a large beak like
chest plate, and the other featured very square shoulders. Both of them were getting closer as Shinji brought Unit–01 to a halt.

"Is it me, or do those look like Gundams…” Shinji muttered.

"They don't look like any designs I've ever seen. But they do indeed look like Gundams." Milliardo said. "Heero?"

"I don't know." Heero said. "But I agree, they do look like Gundams. We should approach with caution, but be ready to counter attack."

"I think that plan is moot." Shinji said as the Gundam with the folded wings charged forward, raising its right hand, which started to glow as a transmission came over the comm. "It's coming at us!"

"ERUPTING!"

"Move!" Milliardo shouted As Wing Zero and Epyon bolted from Unit–01 as Unit–01 stood there braced itself for impact.

"BURNING!"

"Shinji, move!" Heero shouted.

"No, I'm staying right here!" Shinji replied. "I can handle this!" Unit–01's A.T. Field extended, sending out a small shockwave, which didn't stop the approaching Gundam.

"FINGER!"

To Be Continued

A/N: I do not own Evangelion or any of the characters, GAINAX and the other distributors of NGE related material do. I am simply using them as a backdrop for my fanfic. I also do not own Gundam Wing, Sunrise does, as do their licensed distributors.

Sync Score Rankings!
Shinji – 94.2% (No Change)
Rei – 75.0% (No Change)
Asuka – 47.8% (No Change)
Mari – 42.0% (No Change)

The title for this chapter comes from the 24th episode of Gundam Wing, well it actually is the name of the episode. I chose that episode as it's the introduction of the Wing Zero, and considering that Shinji pilots this particular Gundam, the title seemed to fit.

This chapter features yet another battle, and it switches perspectives quite a lot. It focuses mainly on Mai, who hasn't really been in a fight in some time, and now she gets to participate with her "titty guns" (Patent Pending), while Asuka and Shinji go have mental breakdowns in their respective Gundams. All in all, it was a chapter I was glad to write, as we finally got some characters into different machines for once, which was the most enjoyable part for me to write.

Now, as for the reactions Shinji and Asuka have to the ZERO System. Asuka's is simple, after Arael, she had to do a lot of thinking about what she felt for Shinji. She loved him, but deep down, even though she buried it, she hated him for saving her so much. All the times she was saved by Shinji or watched helplessly while he sacrificed himself, she hated it. It takes her a lot to realize he did this all
out of love and that she's her own enemy. Shinji on the other hand feels guilty for all the people he's let get hurt, and he has to destroy all his enemies to protect them. He goes a bit father off the deep end, like Quatre in the show, and doesn't believe anything anyone tells them. It takes some convincing before he realizes that his doubt and guilt are his true enemy, and that he saves far more people than he hurts.

And for the next chapter… you'll just have to wait and see what happens…

As I said before, and will always say at the end of chapter, please leave comments, as I would like to try to improve the story going forward any way I can. And, hell, constructive criticism is a good thing.
Domon Kasshu was disoriented. The trip though the disturbance he and Rain were investigating had been a rough one.

"Rain, are you ok?" Domon asked.

"Yes, Domon, I'm fine." Rain said. "And so is Shining Gundam."

"I was more worried about you." Domon said as he saw Shining Gundam hover next to him and give him a small wave.

"Well it appears your Burning Gundam is also alright." Rain reported. "But where are we, Domon?"

"I feel like we're on Earth…" Domon said. "But it feels wrong. I mean… this city was destroyed by something powerful. It almost looks like the old Tokyo I saw in the history books…"

"How can it feel wrong?" Rain asked. "It certainly looks like Earth."

"I dunno…" Domon said. "Call it a gut feeling… and I've got a really bad feeling about this… we should be on guard."

"Well, you're right again, Domon. I can't get any of the colonies on the comms…" Rain said sullenly. "And I'm detecting elevated levels of radiation commonly associated with thermonuclear warheads…"

"None of the colonies?" Domon said worriedly. "This is far worse than I feared…" Domon looked around the ruins of Old Tokyo. "This is all wrong…"

"Well it's not all bad, there's a city not far from here." Rain said. "Should only take a few minutes to get there. Maybe we can ask for help."

"I still don't like this, but we don't have any other options." Domon replied as Burning and Shining Gundams jetted off, heading southwest towards the unidentified city.

"Rain, is there anything out there?" Domon asked as they flew along. "Any other Gundams?"

Domon sighed. "My gut just keeps telling me something bad is going to happen, and considering what we've seen, I'm inclined to agree."

"Nothing yet." Rain said as Domon heard a beeping go off. "Wait… there are three contacts, coming in fast from the direction of that city."

Domon saw the large purple Evangelion first, running towards them at high speed, not quite understanding its size until he stared at it and zoomed in to see Wing Zero and Epyon riding on Unit-01’s shoulder pylons.
"Those look like Gundams…" Domon muttered. "But… what is that thing? It's… massive… it reminds me of the Dark Gundam."

"Domon, it's not the Dark Gundam." Rain said.

"How can you know that for sure?" Domon asked.

"It captured me and used me as its Core Life Unit." Rain said. "Trust me, I'd know. We killed it together, so there's nothing to worry about."

"Fine, but I don't like it." Domon said. "I should destroy it."

"Domon, it may not be an enemy." Rain said. "At least let me try and contact them."

"No time… that is the Dark Gundam." Domon proclaimed of Unit–01. "I'll protect you, Rain! Get back!"

"Domon, don't do it!" Rain shouted.

Domon held his right fist up near his face, the mark of the King of Hearts burning brightly on its back. "HERE I GO!" Domon shouted as he and Burning Gundam charged Unit–01 and the other Gundams.

"THIS HAND OF MINE IS BURNING RED!" Domon roared as Wing Zero and Epyon moved away from Unit–01. "ITS LOUD ROAR TELLS ME TO GRASP VICTORY!"

The particle collectors on the back of Burning Gundam opened up, creating a red and orange mandala within them, and then the chest plate opened up to reveal a particle accelerator that flashed the emblem of the King of Hearts and then glowed a deep red after it came online.

"ERUPTING!" The blue gantlet around the right hand slid down, armoring the hand with it and morphing it into a three fingered piercing weapon. The golden claws on the forearm armor also popped out and made the attack look all the more menacing.

"BURNING!" The right hand began glowing with a tremendous orange light. Domon felt a shockwave emanate from Unit–01, but he didn't stop.

"FINGER!" Domon drove the glowing hand right at Unit–01's chest, but it was blocked by a flashing octagonal barrier.

"IT STOPPED MY ERUPTING BURNING FINGER?!" Domon shouted in surprise. "WHAT IS THIS BEAST?!"

"Domon, stop attacking!" Rain said. "Whatever that is, it isn't the Dark Gundam! You're overreacting for absolutely no reason!"

"Rain, I know what I'm doing!" Domon shouted. "I'll try again!" Domon assumed a fighting stance again. "I won't let this beat defeat me!" Burning Gundam charged Unit–01 again "ERUPTING… BURNING… FINGER!" The attack was once again deflected by, but Domon didn't relent, he kept the attack going, trying to force his way through, but was unable to and retreated back a short distance and saw Wing Zero and Epyon hanging back as well, not wishing to interfere.

"Fine! I have no other alternative! I must defeat you!" Domon shouted. "The School of the Undefeated of the East, Ultimate Secret Technique!"
"No, there are other alternatives, Domon!" Rain pleaded. "Stop attacking and talk to them! Someone's going to get hurt because of you!"

"Rain, it's the only way to defeat this monster!" Domon shouted.

"Domon, be rational!" Rain shouted. "Before you hurt some innocent person! Think before you act!"

"Rain, you know that a fighter only thinks with their fists!" Domon said proudly as he held his right fist up near his face once again, the mark of the King of Hearts burning brightly on its back. "THIS HAND OF MINE BURNS AND ROARS!" Domon roared. "ITS LOUD CRY TELLS ME TO DEFEAT YOU!"

Both of Burning Gundam's hands began to glow brightly, as energy crackled around them. "HERE I GO!" The energy began to form into a great ball of light that brimmed with power and crackled with electrical discharges.

"SEKIHA…" Burning Gundam drew its hands down and turned to the right, crouching and preparing to throw the attack. "…TENKYOKEN!"

The great ball of fire was thrown towards Unit–01, and impacted the A.T. Field with a massive shockwave knocking Wing Zero, Epyon, and Shining Gundam backwards. The blast was starting to dig its way through Unit–01's A.T. Field, but when Wong Zero recovered, it countered with a shot from its Twin Buster Rifle, causing the Sekiha Tenkyoken to explode in a brilliant flash of light and heat, sending all the Gundams tumbling away from the explosion, and enveloping Unit–01's entire A.T. Field.

"DOMON!" Rain cried out.

"RAIN!" Domon screamed as his eyes were bombarded with a bright white flash from the massive explosion, in which he lost sight of Rain and Shining Gundam, the enemy, and was thrown into the back of his cockpit at great speed.

Back in the Command Center, everyone watched as the screen turned bright white, and the visual of the fight was lost.

"Shinji… Heero… Milliardo…" Misato said loudly. "Someone, respond! Can any of you hear me?!" But all Misato got was static, and she turned to her bridge bunnies for answers. "What the hell was that?!" Misato asked. "Maya, what was that attack? Is it an Angel?!"

"No, it's not an Angel, ma'am." Maya replied. "It's looks consistent with a Gundam."

"A Gundam that just put out a massive buildup of energy from its hands." Hyuga said. "It was very close to breaching Unit–01's A.T. Field."

"How close?" Misato asked.

"Another few seconds and that blast would have hit Unit–01 square in the chest." Hyuga replied.

"I swear when he gets back here I'm so rubbing this in his face…" Asuka muttered.

"Why bother, princess?" Mari asked.
"Because, I told him he'd get hurt if he went out there, and look what happened, we can't see anything now!" Asuka exclaimed.

"Are we getting any readings from Unit–01?" Misato asked.

"No, the feed was cut when that blast went off." Aoba said. "There's some kind of electromagnetic interference that's scattering the signals."

"So what do we do now?" Relena asked.

"We wait for them to contact us." Kaji said. "Can't do much else."

"We could deploy another Gundam." Lady Une suggested. "To go and recon the situation."

"Yeah, I'll go!" Duo said.

"No one's going anywhere." Misato said. "I think between the three of them, they can this, or am I wrong?"

"Miss Misato is right." Quatre said. "Heero and Zechs have been through a lot worse than this, I'm sure they're alright."

"And Shinji has luck on his side." Kaji added.

"Fine, we wait and see." Asuka said. "But if he doesn't answer in the next few minutes, I'm going out there to kick his ass for making me worry."

Shinji was groaning in pain as he opened his eyes again. The last thing he saw was a bright burst of light that knocked him backwards. Indeed, the explosion had collapsed his A.T. Field and Unit–01 was sent flying several hundred meters, and skidding even further on the hard landing had given Shinji yet another injury in his long list he'd sustained as an EVA pilot.

"Well… it doesn't feel like another concussion." Shinji said. "I think they added more padding to these seats, I remember these kinds of landings being a lot more… violent."

Shinji looked around and identified the other Gundams laying on the ground. Wing Zero and Epyon were still down, as were the other two. Shinji eyed the one that had attacked cautious, worried that it would attack again before he could get his A.T. Field back up.

"Ok, let's see if I can stand us back up." Shinji said as he eased the controls forward. "Oh, this is gonna hurt a bit." Unit–01 slowly sat up and eased itself to its feet, almost as though it were wincing in pain. Shinji's face was flushed when he finally succeeded in getting Unit–01 upright again.

"Ugh… I may not have gotten hurt, but Unit–01 is certainly in pain. My ass is killing me."

"What was that attack anyway?" Shinji muttered. "It was really strong. If Heero hadn't intervened… I'd probably be writhing in pain instead of complaining about a stupid bump on the head." Shinji fiddled with the comms. "Heero, Milliardo, are you alright?" Shinji got nothing but static. "Damn it, why isn't it working?" Shinji sighed and tried to contact NERV itself. "Misato, are you there? Can you hear me?" More static. "Great… so that's broken now." Shinji looked outside and saw Burning Gundam standing back up. "Oh… shit." Shinji started hitting the comm button repeatedly.

"Anyone… I could use a little help! It's getting back up!"

Burning Gundam got up again and hovered in the air, level with Unit–01’s chest. Shinji reacted and deployed both his Prog Knives to counter whatever attack as coming. Burning Gundam's right hand
was glowing again as it charged and Shinji met that hand with one of the Prog Knives, blocking the attack, but Unit–01 was still pushed back several feet by the sheer power of the attack colliding with it.

"You might be strong!" Shinji shouted as Unit–01 sent its other Prog Knife in a jabbing thrust towards Burning Gundam, which forced the attack to stop in order to dodge. "But I'm not letting you beat me this easily!"

Burning Gundam charged again, but stopped as beam blast passed between the Gundam and Unit–01. Shinji looked over and saw that Wing Zero was back up and aiming its rifle at Burning Gundam. "Heero!" Shinji said happily. "Oh, wait, the comms are still down."

Shinji watched as Wing Zero started rapid firing it's Buster Rifle at Burning Gundam, only for each shot to miss, but still come successively closer to hitting their mark, when Burning Gundam turned sharply, its hand glowing, and flew right at Wing Zero. "Look out!" Shinji cried as Unit–01 leapt forward and Wing Zero quickly dropped its Buster Rifle and pulled out its beam sabre, and was just able to block the attack in time. Unit–01 ploughed into Burning Gundam, knocking it to the ground and making it a two–on–one fight.

"Get away from him!" Shinji shouted. "You're gonna have to beat both of us if you want to attack the city!"

Wing Zero retrieved is Twin Buster Rifle and flew back up so it was level with Unit–01's head. The Gundam nodded at Shinji, as Burning Gundam charged once more, with both its beam sabres held firmly in its hands. Unit–01 brought up its Prog Knives, and Wing Zero circled around from behind to try and catch Burning Gundam off guard. Wing Zero fired at Burning Gundam with a volley of shot that it dodged, but lead it into a tight spot where it was too close to Unit–01, and received a head butt from the Evangelion. Unit–01 followed up with a Prog Knife attack as Burning Gundam fell away. It was blocked by Burning Gundam's beam sabre as Wing Zero charged in, and clashed with its other beam sabre

"We've got you now!" Shinji shouted.

Just then, Burning Gundam emitted a shockwave, pushing both Wing Zero and Unit–01 away from it. Then it split into nine different Gundams, all poised to attack.

"Oh… this isn't good…" Shinji muttered. "Is it… an illusion?"

"BURNING SHADOW!" Domon cried. "Now try and figure out which one is the real me!"

The illusion copies of Burning Gundam moved in perfect sync with real one as they all charged towards Wing Zero. Wing Zero began firing quickly at all of them, but Domon moved Burning Gundam in such a way that made each copy dodge whatever blast was coming at it. Burning Gundam got in close for one more strike.

"Take this!" Domon shouted. "ERUPTING… BURNING… FINGER!"

Wing Zero anticipated the attack, and had blocked with its own shield, which was holding up to the attack well enough, but Unit–01 interfered again, sending Burning Gundam tumbling away from Wing Zero and forcing its clones to disappear.

"I need to find a way to make this a fair fight again…" Domon said as he looked at both his enemies. "Maybe… this would work…" Burning Gundam drew both of its beam sabres again, and prepared
to strike. "Try this on for size!" Domon cried. "BURNING SLASH TYPHOON!" Burning Gundam began spinning around at high speed, creating a whirling vortex. Wing Zero fired at it, but the shots were deflected by the fast moving beam sabres. The vortex started to move towards Wing Zero, which dodged, but the vortex continued to follow it. When the vortex finally made contact with Wing Zero, Wing Zero was sent to the ground below and Burning Gundam stopped spinning ad stowed its beam sabres back on its hips. It took up its midair fighting stance and faced down Unit–01.

"ONE MORE TIME!" Domon roared. "ERUPTING… BURNING… FINGER!"

Burning Gundam charged right at Unit–01 once again, but once again, Unit–01 blocked the fierce attack with its Prog Knives. However, this time, Domon had a plan.

"I've had enough of you!" Domon shouted. "BURNING FIELD DASH!" Burning Gundam's mandala lit up brightly, and created a swirling energy vortex. The vortex gave Burning Gundam more force to put behind it's attack and it began to push Unit–01 along the ground. Unit–01 tried digging its feet in, but its arms were struggling, and it lost its footing under the immense strength Burning Gundam was displaying. Unit–01 fell to the ground, flat on its back as Domon stopped his attack.

"I've won!" Domon shouted. "I've slayed the Dark Gundam once again!"

However, even though he had taken them both down, they were both getting back up.

"Fine… then we'll continue fighting till we have a clear victor!" Domon shouted, taking up a fighting stance once again. "AND I DON'T INTEND ON GIVING UP!"

While the battle between the boys raged on, Rain was working on restoring communications with Domon. She had opened several panels inside her cockpit to try and find the issue, but she was distracted. Every so often, she'd look up from her task and look over at Domon and two of the other three machines getting knocked around. However, it worried her that the third enemy has disappeared.

"When will Domon learn that fists aren't the best way to introduce yourself to someone." Rain muttered as she fiddled with the communications system. "But he's so set in his ways, and his friends don't help, always appearing and sparring with him with their Gundams… oh well, I'm not dumb, I should be able to figure out how to convince him to not react so volatilely when he sees something as a threat."

The panel she was working on sparked and came back online, and s Rain was finally able to

"Oh… here's the problem. That explosion wiped the comm processors… it can't calculate the frequencies to communicate on anymore." Rain sighed as she set to work resetting the comm system. "When we get back, I'll have to shield these better to avoid this from happening again." Rain continued to try resetting the system to no avail. "I don't have the right equipment to fix this, unless I just transmit on every frequency simultaneously… but then Domon can't hear me… oh, but the emergency transponder still works, maybe I can transmit on that, cause tis circuit is separate from the rest."

As Rain attempted to try her fix, an alarm went off in her cockpit warning of an approaching enemy followed by Shining Gundam being struck by a whip like object, sending Rain and the Gundam to the ground.
"I was wondering when that maroon thing would show back up..." Rain said as she rubbed her head. "Activate Mobile Trace System."

Shining Gundam resynced with Rain's fighting suit, and it responded to her movements. Rain eased herself up and faced down Epyon as it activated its massive beam sabre.

"I can't block that." Rain said. "Unless..."

Rain raised her right arm and thought of one thing as Epyon charged forward. "Here goes!" Rain cried as the face mask opened, shoulder pauldrons slid up revealing golden plating behind them, the arms and legs extended themselves a bit, making the Gundam taller, the outside of the calves popped open, revealing golden thrusters, and finally, the right arm reached out as Shining Gundam charged at Epyon. The guard on the right forearm raised itself off the main arm, and the right hand extended itself at each articulating joint, with a rush of green plasma exploding from the joints. "SHINING... FINGER!" The beam sabre and Shining Finger collided, sending out a powerful shockwave that even surprised Rain.

"Domon made this look so easy during the Gundam fight..." Rain muttered as her right arm tensed up as she felt the feedback in the Mobile Trace System. "Domon never mentioned how much concentration it takes to keep this attack up!"

The entire right arm of Rain's fighting suit was glowing green, showing that it was under a lot of strain. "I can't keep this up forever... and neither can the Gundam... I need to end this somehow..." Rain suddenly had thought. "Domon did two of these once..." Rain concentrated and attacked. "SHINING FINGER!"

Shining Gundam's left hand collided with Epyon, sending it flying off to the right, and Rain followed up the attack with a roundhouse kick the Epyon's chest, sending Epyon flying motionless into the ground.

Rain breathed a sigh of relief. "I need to pay more attention when he explains things, if I'd remembered that sooner, my arm wouldn't hurt so much." Rain sighed again. "I think he tries harder when I explain things to him, which really isn't fair..." Rain said as she resumed her work on the comm system. "Maybe if I can just contact him..." Rain looked over and saw the fight between the others still raging on.

While Epyon laid on the ground, Rain was finally successful in getting the comm system to send and receive on all frequencies simultaneously, and she overheard a transmission clearly intended for someone else from a very irate sounding girl.

"I swear to god, baka, if you don't answer me, I'm going to kick your ass when you get back here!" Asuka shouted. "We can see you fighting that new thing, so take a second and answer me!"

Rain cocked her head to the side at Asuka's comments. "Fighting... is this the enemy?" Rain muttered.

"Baka, stop beating that thing and answer me! Heero can handle it for a second!" Asuka shouted irately.

"You better do it, puppy, her face is redder than her hair." Mari purred.

Rain hit a button to activate the transmitter. "Hello, may I ask who I'm speaking to?" Rain asked politely.

"Does Shinji have a woman in the Entry plug with him?" Relena asked.
"Who is this?" Misato asked.

"Yeah, you're interrupting my tirade!" Asuka fumed.

"Asuka, not now!" Misato said. "Sorry about that, but why are you on this channel?"

"My name is Rain Mikamura." Rain said. "I believe I am one of the two Gundams you're currently engaged in combat with. May I ask your name?"

"My name is Misato Katsuragi." Misato said. "And which Gundam are you?"

"The Gundam not currently hitting anything." Rain replied.

"Oh, well, what are you doing here?" Misato asked.

"And how are you contacting us?" Ritsuko asked.

"I can answer how I'm contacting you, but knot how we got here." Rain said. "At least, I can only explain it to you if we can end the fighting."

"And why would you ask that?" Misato asked. "You're outnumbered."

"That may be the case, but we didn't come here to fight." Rain explained. "And my… companion viewed the purple thing as a threat. It looks similar to something he's fought before. It's just a very complicated misunderstanding."

"You bet it's a big misunderstanding." Misato said. "How do I know you're not evil or something? I can't exactly trust you based on your unprovoked attack."

"If me and my companion surrender to your custody, would that be acceptable?" Rain asked. "Then if you believe us, you can let us go, and if not, we'll be at your mercy."

"If you can stop the fight and explain how you contacted us, it's a deal." Misato said.

"I will do my best." Rain said. "Now, how I'm contacting you is simple. The explosion caused by that rifle fried our communications equipment, and based on that girl's shouting, your equipment is also disabled. The computer can no longer discern different frequencies, so I'm transmitting on all of them at once."

"Quite brilliant." Ritsuko said.

"Thank you." Rain said. "Now, do we have a deal?"

"Stop the fight and then you can surrender into our custody." Misato said.

"Thank you." Rain said as she shut off the comm. "Ok, now how do I accomplish this…"

Rain moved Shining Gundam over to where Epyon was lying. The Gundam moved into a kneeling position next to it and Rain opened the cockpit. She climbed out and looked for the access panel on Epyon's chest and pressed the button. When the hatch opened, Rain saw an injured Milliardo lying there looking at her confusedly.

"Who are you?" Milliardo asked.

"My name is Rain Mikamura." Rain said. "I was asked to stop this fight by a Misato Katsuragi and the surrender into your custody."
"That's an odd bargain to make." Milliardo said.

"Well, because of him, I didn't really have a choice." Rain said, pointing at Burning Gundam as it charged Unit–01 from behind. "So, will you help me?"

"I probably should." Milliardo said. "Although my comms are down, so how were you able to contact anyone?"

"I fixed it so I could transmit and receive all channels simultaneously." Rain replied.

"Sounds like a legitimate reason." Milliardo said. "So, how do you plan to get anything across to them? Get their attention and wave our arms at them?"

"Or, they'll just come over here and see what's happening themselves." Rain said in amazement.

"Is that really your plan? Hope they notice in the heat of battle?" Milliardo asked.

"No, I mean that's what's happening." Rain said. "I guess the noticed I landed next to you. They're coming over now."

"Then we should greet them together." Milliardo said as he unbuckled his restraints. "Would you give me a bit of assistance, Miss Mikamura?"

Rain extended her hand. "Sure. But I didn't catch your name."

"Milliardo Peacecraft." Milliardo said calmly as Rain helped him up. "Pleasure to meet you, Miss Mikamura."

The two of them clamored out of the cockpit and stood on Epyon waiting for the others to land. Unit–01 knelt down next to them while Wing Zero and Burning Gundam landed behind Epyon. Heero and Domon stepped out of their cockpits and looked down at the two of them, while Shinji activated his external speakers so he could speak without emptying the LCL in the Entry Plug.

"Milliardo, what's going on?" Shinji asked.

"Rain, why are with that man?!" Domon shouted.

"I'll let this kind woman explain." Milliardo said. "Miss Mikamura, if you please."

"Domon, we're surrendering." Rain said. "They aren't the enemy."

"Then why is that thing talking?!" Domon shouted as he pointed to Unit–01.

"There's a pilot in there you simpleton." Heero said loudly.

"What did you call me?!!" Domon shouted. "You want to continue our fight?!!"

"Gladly." Heero said.

"No one is fighting anyone!" Rain shouted. "Domon, we're following them back to their base, and we're going to explain why you attacked them without provocation! If they believe our story about how we got here, then we'll be released!"

"Who's going to believe that some kind of wormhole brought us here?!" Domon called back. "It's stupid!"
"Oh, you'd be surprised." Shinji said. "Miss, who did you talk to?"

"A Misato." Rain called to him.

"Well, if Misato said it's ok, then we'll lead you back." Shinji said. "How will you be surrendering to us?"

"Can you carry our Gundams?" Rain asked.

"Most likely." Shinji said. "But then how will you get back?"

"Can someone carry us?" Rain asked.

"Rain, no one is carrying my Burning Gundam!" Domon shouted.

"Domon, stop it already!" Rain shouted. "You caused this, you'll deal with the consequences!"

"Fine, but I don't have to like it!" Domon shouted.

"I will carry the both of you back." Milliardo said. "We'll keep you safe."

"Thank you, Mr. Peacecraft." Rain said. "Domon, get down here so we can leave!"

"Fine!" Domon said gruffly as he leapt down from the cockpit to the ground without a second thought.

"He is so stubborn." Rain muttered.

"Proud warriors can be like that." Milliardo said. "It's simply in their nature;"

"How do you know?" Rain asked.

"I'm one of them." Milliardo replied.

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After a brief walk back, the new arrivals were standing in the Cage surrounded by everyone. Misato wanted an explanation for why there were there as soon as they arrived so they could decide what to do right away, so after some brief introductions, and without much prompting, Rain began explaining their odd circumstances.

"So, we were in space investigating an interesting phenomenon not far from our colony, Neo Japan." Rain said. "When we got within range, it appeared that we were looking at an actual wormhole. It was putting out a strong gravity well, and Domon warned me not to get too close, but as I was investigating it, I needed to get a bit closer to get some more readings, and that's when I got trapped in the gravity well. Domon did best to try and save me, and he got caught too. Then we got pulled through and ended up here."

"So why did you attack us?" Misato asked.

"Domon was jumpy after we arrived here." Rain explained. "Your purple machine…"

"It's called an Evangelion." Kaji said.

"Your Evangelion looked like an enemy that we faced once, or at least similar enough that made Domon attack without thinking." Rain finished as she glared at Domon. "We simply want to get
back to where we're from, that's all we're asking."

"How do you know you're on a different world?" Kaji asked.

"This world is very different from our own." Rain said. "You have no indications of advanced technology, and your world, while a damaged landscape, is vastly different from the battered wasteland of our own Earth."

"Wasteland?" Shinji asked. "Why is your Earth a wasteland?"

"We evacuated our Earth and formed space colonies. Then the people who stayed behind warred on the planet. The colonies stepped in and ended the war, but then they used the planet to test their weapons, and also to fight the battles that decide who runs the planet for four year terms. Our Earth is a desolate battle ground, used in 13 separate Gundam Fights and endless weapon's tests, yours is more like the victim of a sad tragedy compounded by the human condition."

"Well that makes sense, I guess." Misato said. "But that still doesn't excuse the unprovoked attack ya know."

"Yeah, about that…" Rain said as she glared Domon again. "I can only apologize so much for actions that are not my own."

"Yes, I… apologize…" Domon said with Rain's less than subtle prompt as he bowed his head in shame. "I shouldn't have done that… and Rain warned me not to. Please accept my sincerest apologizes for my hasty actions."

"I think you're only saying it because she's making you." Misato said. "Which would lead me to believe you're lying."

"Look, I'm sorry if I hurt anyone, but I was only trying to protect my wife!" Domon said forcibly. "But after what we've been through you'd have made the same choice!"

"What have you been through?" Kaji asked.

"Does it matter?" Misato asked.

"Finding the reason behind one's actions can lead to a better understanding." Trowa said.

"Yes, perhaps hearing them out would be beneficial." Lady Une said.

"Sure… so why did you react to our Evangelion the way you did?" Misato asked.

"It looked like an emery we faced over two years ago." Domon explained. "It was called the Dark Gundam, but originally it was named the Ultimate Gundam. It was designed by my father, Dr. Raizo Kasshu, and my brother Kyoji. It was designed to restore the Earth to its former beauty and repair the damage we humans caused to it. However two men wished to use it for their own advancement…"

"It's ok Domon." Rain said. "My father was one of them."

"Right." Domon said. "Rain's father and Major Ulube Ishikawa framed my father and brother to try and take the Ultimate Gundam for themselves. During the raid, my mother was murdered by the soldiers and my father arrested. My brother escaped with the Ultimate Gundam, but when it crash landed on Earth, its programming was corrupted. I was asked by Neo Japan to participate in the 13th Gundam on the condition I found and destroyed what then had become the Dark Gundam and also
my brother. If I were to do this, my father would be freed. Once I won the Gundam Fight, my father still had not been freed. Ulube betrayed us, kidnapped Rain, and then he offered her up to the Dark Gundam as its Core Life Unit."

"How does that work exactly?" Ritsuko asked.

"The Dark Gundam had three abilities given to it by my father and brother through the use of nanotechnology, Self–evolution, self–replication, and self–regeneration." Domon continued. "With these abilities, Ulube realized the best way to enhance its abilities was by using a woman's reproductive system. After fighting to get Rain back from that beast and killing it with her, I just didn't want to see her get absorbed by another monster. I couldn't lose her again."

"So you reacted out of love?" Shinji asked.

"Shinji, it's a lot more complex than that." Misato said.

"Not really." Shinji said. "Look at all the stuff I've done out of love. The Twelfth Angel, the Fourteenth Angel, and defiantly the Fifteenth Angel. Love makes you do dangerous and reckless things. If they react out of love, then I think we can trust them."

"Sometimes I'm astonished at what comes out of his mouth." Kaji said. "Are we sure he's not more mature than the rest of us?"

"No, but he does make an excellent point." Milliardo said. "Love is a powerful motivator and certainly explains his tenacity on the battlefield."

"There is certainly nothing wrong than living life by your emotions." Heero added.

"Colonel, I believe you're on the losing end of this argument." Fuyutsuki said.

"I believe I am, sir." Misato said. "Looks like we've got some new allies after all."

"Thank you very much, miss." Domon said as he bowed. "I promise to not make a fool of myself again." Domon lifted his head back up and looked at the group. "So which of you were the two I fought against?"

"I was one of them." Heero said, stepping forward. "I was piloting the white Gundam."

"You fought very well." Domon said. "You were a worthy opponent."

"As were you." Heero said. "Your attacks were quite… different than what I'm used to."

"Where I come from, we fight up close without the aid of beam weapons." Domon said. "It's far more enjoyable during a fight."

"Where I come from fights are less about joy and more about survival." Heero said. "We don't have the luxury of using hand–to–hand tactics in that way."

"Shame… war is an ugly thing." Domon muttered. "So, who was the other brave warrior in the giant purple monster?"

"I… I was…" Shinji muttered.

"You were a strong opponent." Domon said. "I thought you were going to kill me at one point."

"Funny, I felt the same thing when you attacked me with that ball of light." Shinji said. "What was
"My ultimate attack." Domon said. "The Sekiha Tenkyoken."

"Your ultimate attack?" Mari asked. "What are you a super sentai anime character?"

"No, I'm a martial artist." Domon retorted. "I'm not some campy anime character."

"Sure, whatever you say." Mari quipped.

"Anyway, whatever it was, it was strong." Shinji said.

"Not strong enough to break your forcefield." Domon quipped.

"It was close." Shinji said. "If Heero hadn't shot it, I'd be in the hospital right now instead of talking to you."

"Well, I didn't know there was a person in there…" Domon said.

"That's understandable." Shinji said. "And it's not a monster… Unit–01, it's saved me far too many times to be some kind of monster."

"I realize that now. The Dark Gundam is dead, Rain and I destroyed it." Domon said. "I was overreacting, and I'm very sorry."

"I understand that too." Shinji said. "I've done a lot of stupid and reckless things for love."

"Then we're more alike than different." Domon said. "Perhaps we could get along."

"Probably." Shinji said. "I like making new friends."

"Wait I got a question before we start the friendship ball rolling." Duo said. "If she's your wife, why don't you both have the same last name?"

"She doesn't need to give up her last name just to prove she loves me." Domon said. "Love is deeper than one's surname."

"But Domon, I told you I wanted your name." Rain said. "It just sounds better."

"Rain, it's not a prerequisite for marriage." Domon said. "And we shouldn't be discussing this now."

"Oh, by all means, go ahead." Mari said. "I like dinner theatre."

"Mari, shut up." Asuka said. "You're being annoying again."

"Actually, she's always like this." Quatre said. "It's quite… endearing."

"Awww… thanks blondie." Mari said. "You're cute too."

"Well, anyway…" Kaji said. "If you'd rather go somewhere else, we understand, but if you want to stay, we can find you somewhere to crash until we can get you home."

"I wouldn't mind staying for a while, they seem nice enough." Domon said. "What do you think, Rain?"

"I think it's the best option." Rain said. "But do you have any theories on how to reopen the wormhole and send us back?"
"That is a good question." Milliardo added. "We'd also like to know of any progress."

"They are only theories at this point in time." Ritsuko said. "But we're all working on it, as is your friend Howard."

"Do you mind if I assist?" Rain asked. "I think I could be of some help."

"Additional hands would be very much appreciated." Ritsuko said.

"Then it's settled." Misato said. "We'll find you somewhere to stay, and Ms. Mikamura here can help with the Stargate their building."

"What's a Stargate?" Domon asked.

"Don't worry, we'll explain everything later." Mari said.

"Explain what later?" Rain asked.

"Oh, about our Earth and what goes on here." Mari said. "But we expect a more detailed explanation of your world too."

"I think we can handle that, right Domon?" Rain asked.

"Yeah, I think so." Domon said. "I'll do my best explaining everything. I'm more accustomed to fighting, not talking."

"Alright, let's go!" Mari said. "I wanna nap, let's go home!"

As the group started to disperse, Asuka grabbed Shinji by the shoulder and poked his head several times. "Are you forgetting something?" Asuka asked.

"What?" Shinji said with a confused look on his face.

"My sync clips." Asuka said, putting her other hand out. "I'd like to put my hair back up."

"Oh, right." Shinji said as he took them out of his hair and handed them back. "But your hair looks so much better down than up."

Asuka looked at Shinji funny and blushed. "Well… thank you baka, that's very sweet." Asuka kissed him lightly on the cheek. "You really know how to compliment a girl, baka."

"I was only telling the truth." Shinji said. "You just look… prettier that way."

November 1, 2016 – Comfort 17 Apartments

Domon woke up in the morning sunlight. He looked around the still somewhat unsettling surroundings. He went through the past few days in his head. He and Rain were brought to an upscale apartment complex, and they joined everyone in Misato's apartment for a dinner of sorts. He and Rain explained everything about their world, and Shinji, Mari, Asuka, and Kaji explained about theirs. Heero, Quatre, Milliardo, Lady Une, and Noin explained everything about their reality as well. Domon had found out the previous night that he'd be going to school today as a cover while Rain worked with the other scientists at NERV. Domon rolled over on his side and saw Rain sleeping sounding beside him and smiled.

"Well some things never change." Domon said. "She was never one to wake up early."
"No, I just don't think rising at the crack of dawn is the most practical thing in the world." Rain muttered. "And you always wake me up when you toss around in the morning."

"I thought you liked tossing around in the morning." Domon joked.

"You know, when I fell in love with you, I didn't know you were a secret pervert." Rain joked.

"Rain, it's a joke." Domon said. "Don't be such a prude."

"We've been married over a year, Domon." Rain said. "You know I'm not a prude." Rain chuckled. "Don't you know that I was kidding?"

"Well, it's always good to check." Domon joked. "You're so serious all the time."

"Says the guy who yells "Gundam Fight… Ready? GO!" Every time he meets someone." Rain said.

"Ok, ok." Domon said. "Let's be a bit more serious now, are you ready for today?"

"Of course." Rain said. "If I can help find us a way home, it's all for the best." Rain sighed. "What about you, are you ready for school?"

"Not really." Domon said. "I've never been to school before. You know Master trained me since I was 10. And before that my father taught me everything. You know that."

"I never really noticed, Domon." Rain said. "Because our fathers were friends we were always spending time together, with Kyoji being our babysitter…"

"Yeah… Kyoji…" Domon muttered.

"You miss him don't you?" Rain asked.

"Of course." Domon said sullenly. "He was my brother… and then he was my enemy… and then he was Schwarz Bruder… and then he was gone again… I had to kill him to save him…"

"Hey, don't worry about that now." Rain said. "He was proud of you. You saved him, remember?"

"Yeah, I remember." Domon said. "I freed him from the Dark Gundam." Domon rolled over and looked back at the ceiling sullenly. "And it helps to know all he meant to do was save the planet."

"I know, Domon…" Rain said. "Just try and relax, then we should go get ready."

"I really don't want to get ready." Domon said. "I'm too old for junior high school."

"So, you can at least try to have fun." Rain said. "Try and get to know everyone else better. Besides, from how everyone described it, you're not gonna be doing much learning anyway."

"Still, I don't want to wear the uniform." Domon said. "It looks tight and uncomfortable."

"Domon, don't be such a baby." Rain said as she slid out of bed, revealing she wasn't wearing anything. "You'll be fine, it's no tighter than our fighting suit."

"Yes, but that is comfortable!" Domon complained as he stood up, also wearing absolutely nothing. "It's not exactly designed to fight in either."

"Who would you be fighting, Domon?" Rain asked. "It's a school, not another Battle Royale…"
"Rain, I always like being ready." Domon said. "You never when you may need to fight."

"You're so hopeless…" Rain said as she walked towards the bathroom. "So, are you going to join me… or what?"

"Right behind you!" Domon said, rushing to the bathroom.

Domon was sitting almost catatonic at his desk. He had been listening to Nebukawa no Sensei drone about absolutely nothing in particular. He looked around the room at the disinterest and catatonic states of almost everyone in the room and sighed.

"If this is school, I didn't miss much growing up." Domon muttered to himself as he glared at Nebukawa no Sensei. "I wonder… if I hit him, will he stop droning on needlessly?"

**Ding dong ding ding… ding dong ding ding**

"Oh, that must mean the day is over…" Domon said happily.

"No muscles." Mari said. "Lunch time."

"Rise… Bow… Sit!" Hikari said commandingly.

As he class followed her directions, Domon turned to Mari. "How much longer must we suffer after lunch?" Domon asked.

"Four more hours, muscles." Mari said. "You'll get used to it."

"I doubt it." Domon said.

"Hey, Domon, do you want to eat with us?" Shinji asked. "We're going to eat in here."

Domon eyed Shinji's sincere smile for a moment. "No, I want to walk around, I'm tired of sitting."

"You sure?" Asuka asked. "Are you hungry?"

"No, I had a large breakfast." Domon said. "Don't worry, I'll blend in."

"Yeah, you'll blend in…" Duo said sarcastically.

"And what's that supposed to mean, priest?" Domon asked angrily.

"Just your big unhappy scowl doesn't exactly say "blending in" does it?" Duo said. "That and how you look so much older than the rest of us."

"I'm 22!" Domon said loudly. "I'm a lot older than you!"

"Will you quiet down?!" Milliardo said. "We're trying to blend in, Duo, not cause a problem!"

"Yeah, Duo, who cars where he goes?" Noin added.

"Fine, I'll leave the big guy alone…" Duo said.

"Just be careful, Domon." Milliardo said.

"I'll be fine." Domon said as he wandered out of the room into the hallway.
Domon walked around the school, getting odd stares from the other students that had not yet evacuated. Domon shrugged this off as he wandered around, going by classrooms and glancing in, he saw the routines of everyone, enjoying lunch, fooling around, and having fun.

"I guess I didn't have a typical childhood." Domon said as he looked at the crest on the back of his right hand. "But something good came of it. The King of Hearts and the responsibility that comes with it… and Rain… Rain loves me, so my life isn't all that bad."

Domon kept walking until he got to the lunchroom. He'd never really eaten in a cafeteria before, generally he ate from a campfire growing up, and now he only ate home cooked food that either he or Rain had made.

"Huh, processed food." Domon said as he saw the line of people and the pre-wrapped or reheated food they were getting on their trays. "I wonder what that tastes like…"

Domon walked into the cafeteria and looked around. He saw a few dozen kids in line, and another dozen or so sitting down. However, a pair of students standing not far from the door caught his attention. One student was against the wall, scared and unable to escape while the other looked to be intimidating the scared student. Domon's fist clenched, as he walked closer to the pair so he could hear them.

"Where is it?" The angry boy asked.

"I… I don't have any!" The scared boy replied.

"I think you're lying to me!" The angry boy said when he grabbed the scared boy by the shoulders. "Give me your lunch money, you little bitch!"

"I said I don't have any!" The scared boy said. "Just leave me alone!"

"Nah, I think I'll beat the money out of you." The angry boy said. "I can't let some little bitch show me up."

Domon shook uncontrollably as the crest on his hand glowed a fiery red. "HEY, YOU!" Domon shouted. "LET HIM GO!"

"Hey, fuck off buddy, I'm busy here." The angry boy said.

Domon decked the angry boy with a strong right hook, knocking the angry boy to the ground, to the surprise of everyone in the room. "I don't think you heard me right." Domon said. "I told you to let him go."

"The fuck did you hit me for?" The angry boy shouted as he staggered back to his feet. "You're gonna pay for that!" The angry boy threw his right fist at Domon's face, which Domon caught in his right hand. Domon followed this up with a swift uppercut to the boy's jaw, knocking him to the ground, unconscious.

"Who are you?" The scared boy asked.

"My name is Domon Kasshu." Domon said. "I'm the new transfer student." Domon helped the boy up. "Are you ok?" The other boy nodded silently. "Is this the first time that's happened?" Domon asked and the boy shook his head. "Do they all just watch?" Domon said as he pointed to the rest of the lunchroom.

"Yeah…" The scared boy said.
Domon turned to the crowd. "YOU ALL JUST WATCH!" Domon shouted. "You let this jerk take this boy's lunch money every single day, and do nothing?!"

The crowd looked shocked at being called out and only one person was brave enough to respond. "There isn't anything we can do." The girl bemoaned. "He'd just steal our lunch money if we tried to stop him."

"Are you sure about that?!!" Domon asked angrily. "All fifty of you are powerless against one person?! Stand up to him! Stop him!"

"Even if we do that, what stops him from doing anything else to the rest of us?" The girl asked.

"Working together and showing him you no longer fear him will keep him in line." Domon said. "Even if I'm not here to help, you can help yourselves." Domon turned to leave. "I think you can handle that."

"We can try." The girl said. "But can we ask you a question?"

"Go ahead…" Domon said.

"Why did you help him?" The girl asked.

"It was the right thing to do." Domon said as he left. When he walked out of the cafeteria, he saw two of Shinji's friends, Toji and Kensuke, standing there.

"Nice, pal." Toji said. "I thought Shinji said you guys were going to blend in?"

"I was simply helping the boy…" Domon muttered.

"Hey, I'm fucking with you." Toji said. "It's nice to see someone else take on the bullying epidemic here."

"You're uh… Domon, right?" Kensuke asked.

"Yeah." Domon said. "And you're…. uh… Kenny?" Domon pointed to Kensuke. "And you're… um… Toji."

"Yeah, Toji Suzuhara." Toji replied.

"No, Kensuke." Kensuke replied. "It's ok though."

"No, I should remember your names." Domon said. "I'm not going anywhere for a while."

"It's fine." Toji said. "So, you fight pretty well, did you train to fight or something?"

"Yes, I'm a martial artist." Domon said. "I fight for a living."

"That's so cool…" Kensuke said. "So, what's your Gundam like?"

"How do you two know about Gundams?" Domon asked.

"Shinji tells us." Kensuke said. "We're friends."

"Well, how about I tell you about my Burning Gundam over lunch." Domon said.

"Oh, that sounds awesome!" Kensuke said happily. "Let me buy your lunch, Mr. Domon!"
"Just some tea, Kensuke." Domon said.

"Hey, you're a pretty great guy." Toji said. "If you keep this stuff up, you'll be a bonafide hero."

"That wasn't my intention." Domon said.

"Intentions mean shit, Domon." Toji said. "Actions speak louder than words. And you knocked that fucking asshole out."

"I know all too well…" Domon said as Toji walked off to get lunch.

Ritsuko was in her office working hard on her, for lack of a better term, Stargate. With her were Maya, Howard, and Rain. They were all reviewing the preliminary plans and the extensive data Ritsuko had collected, plus what had been retrieved from the Shining Gundam's sensor logs.

"You've got a lot of data from these wormholes, Dr. Akagi." Rain said. "It's all very extensive."

"I'm only working with what I've got." Ritsuko said. "Which I still think is barely enough."

"No, it's enough." Howard said. "Power output, phase variances, stabilization data, particle densities, and even more stuff I can't decipher. You know how these wormholes operate, and with Ms. Mikamura's data… we have an even clearer picture."

"So, will the device work?" Maya asked. "The…"

"We're not calling it a Stargate, Maya." Ritsuko grumped. "I think I made myself clear."

"I don't care what you think about the name, Misato's right." Maya said. "You're literally building a Stargate."

"What's a Stargate exactly?" Rain asked.

"It's a fictional device." Ritsuko said. "From some overrated, halfcocked, shit science sci–fi show. Don't pay any attention to it."

"Hey, it's a great show!" Maya said angrily.

"No… all sci–fi shows are useless, Maya." Ritsuko said coldly. "And you call yourself a scientist."

"So… what does the Stargate do in the show?" Rain asked, trying to change the subject.

"It's a big, round device that creates artificial wormholes that have proven to travel not only through space, but time and dimensions as well." Maya said. "It's kinda cool."

"Well, then I second the name Stargate for what we're building." Rain said.

"Sounds good to me." Howard said.

"I'm not liking this…" Ritsuko muttered.

"Too bad, we picked a name." Maya said. "So, will it work? At least in your opinions."

"Of course it will…" Ritsuko said.

"Not you, Akagi." Maya said with an eye roll. "Their opinions."
"Well… let's see." Rain said. "How were the wormholes started? It's not mentioned in here."

"Ah…” Ritsuko said. "Well, Shinji had an outburst in Unit–01 and it fired a beam into the air, which matches the energy signature of the wormholes."

"Was this the fallout that led the other pilot to be isolated in the hospital by chance?" Howard asked.

"Yes, that pilot." Ritsuko said. "He thought she had died and responded…"

"The way any person would." Maya said. "He was heartbroken."

"But why did the Evangelion react the way it did?" Rain asked. "Are they connected somehow?"

"The way the pilot interfaces with the Evangelion, they are linked." Ritsuko said.

"Aren't they mechanical in nature?" Rain asked.

"No, biological." Ritsuko said. "A beast with no soul. The pilot lends their soul and gains control of the Evangelion through their sync ratio."

"So, it fired the beam." Rain said. "Does Shinji know?"

"No." Maya said quickly. "He gets distracted by things like this, he'd blame himself for causing all this trouble… its best he doesn't know."

"You'll gave to tell him at some point." Howard said. "He'll need to know."

"Yes, just not until we're clear of the White Zodiac." Ritsuko said.

"Fair enough." Howard replied.

"So, back to the plan." Rain said as she flipped though some rough sketches and notes on Ritsuko's Stargate. "You want to use an externally powered Positron Rifle used against the… Fifth Angel." Rain looked up. "The octahedron?"

"Yeah, that one." Maya said. "How did you know?"

"Mari showed us the footage the other day." Rain said. "Some of those battles were… intense."

"Well, of course they were." Ritsuko said. "Angels are no laughing matter."

"No they're not." Rain said passively. "So, Positron Rifle… modify its emitter to focus the energy like the wormhole's, directing them back to our respective realities. The modified rifle would keep the wormholes open until safe passage has been confirmed, and then it would be closed. Then using the same device you would fire a beam at the inverse frequency of Unit–01's original blast to seal the dimensional rift and stop random stuff for appearing here."

"Correct." Ritsuko said. "So, what do you think?"

"Well, we can use trigonometric functions to try and extrapolate the frequency of Unit–01's beam, and then try and adjust the rifle to somehow to match it in intensity."

"We can calculate the power output by using the data from Unit–01's data telemetry." Howard said. "Get a best estimate from the best available data."

"What about the device itself?" Ritsuko asked.
"Well… your idea has a lot of merit, but it needs work." Rain said. "Your energy calculations are too rough. That and we need to refine how everything works with your device. We'll need a better superconductor than copper."

"I concur." Howard said. "Maybe an experimental superconductor?"

"Well, those cloaking devices that we recovered from the downed enemy Mobile Dolls uses some kind of highly resilient superconductor alloy."

"Well, maybe we can synthesize it." Maya said.

"Yes… but…" Rain said. "You said cloaking devices?"

"Yes… why?" Ritsuko asked.

"Well, they have a well defended base of operations from what Colonel Katsuragi explained, correct?" Rai asked.

"Yeah…" Ritsuko said.

"Well, do these devices still work?" Rain asked.

"Some of them do." Ritsuko said. "We recovered several hundred of them."

"So, why not plan an attack on them the same way they attacked you?" Rain asked.

"Why would you bring that up now?" Ritsuko asked.

"My husband must be rubbing off on me a bit." Rain said. "But would it work? A surprise strike on them could eliminate your problems."

"She has a good point." Howard said.

"Yes, but this isn't our department." Ritsuko said. "We're here to work on getting you all home, not some damn attack."

"Doesn't matter, Akagi. It's a good idea to attack them for once." Maya said forcibly. "I'll call Misato, Kaji, and the Sub–Commander. Howard, can you call Lady Une?"

"Sure, I think she'd want to help plan this out." Howard said. "Teach those fools a lesson they won't soon forget."

"How does planning an attack help anyone?" Ritsuko asked.

"If we can defeat your enemy, we can focus our time and effort on getting us all home rather than defending ourselves." Rain said. "Wow… Domon is rubbing off on me…"

"Right, then let's get to work." Maya said as she pulled some data up on the cloaking devices. "So, Ms. Mikamura, do you have any ideas?"

"Yeah… a few." Rain said as the group set to work.

——

Domon was very glad to be out of the classroom. After his heroic actions during lunch, kids began looking at him with looks of awe on their faces, which disturbed him a bit. Domon viewed what he
did as the right thing to do, not some heroic act to be put on a pedestal for. He was also glad to be out of there so that Nebukawa no Sensei couldn't put him to sleep anymore. On his walk, Shinji, Mari and Asuka had decided to show him around Tokyo-3, as he hadn't really gone anywhere besides the apartment or NERV since he'd arrived. Heero and Milliardo decide to tag along to give the group some additional protection. Shinji decided to also make the walk into the nightly take out run, just out of convenience.

"So, it's been an eventful day, hasn't it?" Milliardo asked.

"You mean me beating that guy up, don't you?" Domon said.

"Yes, that made it far more interesting than the usual droning on by the teacher." Milliardo said. "But was it the smartest thing to do when we're trying to blend in?"

"No, it was more about doing the right thing," Domon said. "That's all."

"That's an acceptable reason to me." Heero said.

"So, how badly did you fuck him up?" Asuka asked. "Did you go full Kung Fu on his ass?"

"No, I just him." Domon said. "No special techniques needed."

"Do we have to keep talking about this?" Shinji asked. "I think we've covered it."

"I'd rather not dwell on the past." Domon said.

"Fine, we can talk about something else." Mari said. "How about you tell us more about this Dark Gundam of yours."

"There isn't much more to tell you besides what I already have." Domon said. "It was meant to help the world, and it ended up trying to destroy it."

"What about the Gundam Fights?" Asuka asked. "Why do you have to fight every four years? Seems kinda silly."

"No, it's meant to keep the colonies and the countries on Earth from warring with each other." Domon explained. "Each colony sends a Mobile Fighter like myself to the battleground on Earth. We fight until we're either disqualified by having our Gundam's head destroyed or we go on to the finals and fight however the ruling country decides. When only one Gundam remains, that country gets to rule all the other countries for the next four years and its Earth side counterpart gets to host the finals of the next Gundam Fight. It's as simple as that."

"How did you win?" Shinji asked.

"Well… luck and skill I suppose." Domon replied. "It was a hard fight to get to the finals, but, I was able to win in the end. I had to fight my former master, and I learned his reason why he was siding with the Dark Gundam. When I defeated him… he died in my arms."

"Did you… " Milliardo asked.

"No, he had cancer," Domon said. "He died from that. I didn't kill him, even if I wanted to… I don't like killing. It's senseless unless they are so evil, they can't be left to their own devices." Domon sighed. "Although, considering your reality is rife with war, I'm guessing you've killed more than your share of people."
"Not us." Mari said. "We kill Angels, not people."

"No, I meant them." Domon replied, pointing at Heero and Milliardo. "They live in a war torn reality, right?"

"It's less war torn than it was." Milliardo said. "But tens of millions died during the war, civilians and soldiers alike. But your world at least found a way to avoid the costly side effects of war."

"The Gundam Fight might be a smart idea, but your reality seems to have found a way to avoid the horrors of war as well." Domon said. "Those Mobile Dolls you were talking about."

"Those aren't a way to avoid the horrors of war, they're used to justify war." Milliardo said. "When human lives no longer need to be sacrificed to fight for what they believe in, war has no greater meaning, it's simply a show of strength and a way to cause mass amounts of destruction to prove a point."

"So, they're used to justify war?" Domon asked.

"When you have a way to tell your citizens that none of their sons or daughters will have to fight, war can be far more readily used as a response to other countries actions." Milliardo said. "When you take the cost of human lives out of war, like I said, war becomes a meaningless conflict fought by cold, emotionless, machines."

"So, how do you win against a machine like that?" Domon asked.

"That's how we're able to destroy the Mobile Dolls so quickly and effectively, they can't think or anticipate, because they're only machines." Heero explained. "On their own, they are machines with a set amount of responses, and even when augmented by using a system similar to ZERO, with a person exerting direct control, it's still only one person splitting their focus across thousands of units, lowering their overall combat effectiveness against small or even large groups of enemies. The human spirit will always defeat the machine with it propensity for innovation and quick thinking."

"But doesn't your ZERO System remove emotions from your thought process?" Domon asked.

"The ZERO System cannot be utilized by a simple A.I. computer. It still requires a human mind to operate and process the large quantities of data the ZERO System collects. ZERO needs the most powerful computer known to exist, the human mind." Heero explained. "The downside to this is the immense strain it places on the pilot, which can lead to psychosis among other things, which is why the system is not as widespread as it could be. It's too dangerous for... causal use."

"Psychosis?" Domon asked.

"It's a long story, don't bother asking." Asuka said.

"How do you know?" Domon asked. "I thought you were an Evangelion pilot?"

"I piloted the Epyon in the last battle, and Shinji piloted the Wing Zero." Asuka explained. "Simply put, it makes you see things that aren't here until you can gain control of it and use the system properly. Shinji and I tried to kill each other under its effects."

"Yeah..." Shinji said glumly. "It's true."

"How..." Domon said. "You're in love."

"Well, we have..." Asuka started.
"A long and complicated history." Shinji finished. "It would take several long stories to explain."

"It can't be that complicated." Domon said. "I rescued Rain from an evil monster trying to destroy humanity by professing my love to her, and then we killed it with the power of love… that's complicated."

"No, ours is wayyyyy more complicated." Asuka said. "Trust me."

"Yeah, it's super fucked up." Mari added. "They were almost like… retarded puppies." Mari smirked. "Yeah, that's about right…"

"MARI!" Shinji shouted. "How is that appropriate?!"

"What, it's descriptive and drives the point home." "I'm being… colorfully descriptive."

"No, it's more like you're being an idiot." Asuka muttered.

"Oh, shut up princess." Mari said. "You know it's true. You and Shinji were retarded puppies up until he shouted to everyone how much he loved you."

"Well, you're a…" Asuka stammered. "Just shut up, four eyes! You're being a huge pain in my ass!"

"No, that's a puppy's job!" Mari purred. "He's supposed to bury his bone in your ass!"

"Are they always like this?" Domon asked.

"Apparently they used to be worse." Heero said. "Although I find that almost impossible…"

"Trust me, this is an improvement." Shinji said. "The sex jokes ever change though."

"So… by puppy's bone…" Domon said.

"She calls me puppy." Shinji said. "And I'm Asuka's boyfriend."

"I thought that's what it meant…" Domon said. "She has a real foul mouth."

"Wait till you piss her off." Milliardo said. "Then you'll really be surprised."

"Pervert!" Asuka screamed.

"Prude!" Mari shouted back.

"And we've devolved to this again…" Shinji muttered. "Enough you two! Neutral corners, NOW!"

"But…" Asuka said.

"She was…" Mari started.

"What did you two promise?" Shinji asked. "No more fighting… I know we're all stressed and you two seem to get off on this, but you need to stop!"

"Fine." Asuka said curtly while Mari gave Shinji a pouty face.

"Good, now can we finish walking without you two shouting at each other?" Shinji asked.

"I guess." Asuka said. "As long as she keeps her huge mouth shut."
"Mari?" Shinji asked.

"Yeah, fine." Mari said. "I won't say anything else mean to the puppy's little princess."

"Good, now let's go, we have a lot of food to pick up from the restaurant." Shinji said. "And we don't want it to get cold."

As they kept walking, and Asuka and Mari were both in soul moods, Domon and Heero walked next to Shinji. Shinji turned to Heero and sighed.

"Hey, Heero, can I ask you something?" Shinji asked.

"Go ahead." Heero replied.

"How did you get Unit–01 to do the explosion thingy?" Shinji asked. "It seemed… odd that you could do it."

Heero looked at Shinji intently for a moment before replying, keeping his answer as vague as he could while hiding Yui's secret. "I believe Unit–01 was responding to you saying we have to finish these guys off. You're very heavily bonded to your machine, as you're well aware."

Shinji stared blankly at Heero before realizing what he meant. "So, Unit–01 reacted to me without me being in the Entry Plug?"

"That's my belief anyway." Heero said. "I'm not sure why it's possible… but you should be glad Unit–01 is on your side."

"How were able to pilot though…" Shinji asked. "When Asuka tried to, I had to, uh, tell Unit–01 to let her pilot."

Heero thought for a moment. "I believe Unit–01 knew why I was there and allowed me to."

"Did you… talk to Unit–01?" Shinji asked.

"Yes," Heero said. "It responded by allowing me to pilot."

"How do you communicate with a… machine?" Domon asked.

"Well, it's not purely mechanical." Shinji said. "It's alive, I guess, and needs a soul to pilot it or something… Maya or Dr. Akagi would be way better at explaining it than me."

"I guess I'll ask one of them, or maybe Rain, she'll probably have asked the same question." Domon said before he leaned down to whisper something to Shinji.

"How do you deal with them all the time?" Domon asked indicating Asuka and Mari. "Them fighting and all that. It seems… endless."

"Lots of patience." Shinji said as the group continued meandering through the city. "That and I love them both so much, Mari's my best friend, and I love Asuka, and I just want them to get along, so if I need to shout sometimes so they see how dumb they're being its fine, because in the end, we're all great friends."

"That's how you keep it all in perspective?" Domon asked. "They're friends on some level?"

"Well, yeah." Shinji said. "They may argue, but I know they both care about each other. They're just too damn stubborn to admit it."
"Sounds like how I was with Rain." Domon said.

"And what made you realize you cared about Rain?" Shinji asked.

"Almost losing her." Domon said. "It forced me to admit it to myself."

"Well, I hope it doesn't come to that for them..." Shinji said. "But the way our lives are, it may be the only way for them not to act all..."

"Childish?" Domon asked.

"No, idiotic." Shinji said with a grin as Asuka glared at him from behind.

"I am not idiotic!" Asuka snarled.

"You are with Mari." Shinji said.

"No I'm..." Asuka started. "Damn it, I hate when you're right..."

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November 8, 2016 – NERV HQ

Everyone had been awoken early for an emergency meeting at NERV. Several of those present were still half asleep, namely Mari, with others being frustrated they had been called in without any enemies to fight. As they sat and waited for the presentation, Mari started to fall back asleep until she was awoken by Shinji poking he shoulder, which made her fall out of her seat.

"Hey!" Mari said. "What was that for?!"

"I was only trying to wake you up." Shinji said. "It's not my fault you were up so late playing videogames or something."

"I wasn't playing videogames." Mari said.

"Then what were you doing?" Relena asked. "There's really no reason to be up so late for no reason."

"There is a good reason, it's just none of your business." Mari said with a grin.

"She was touching herself." Asuka said bluntly. "Don't let her make it all mysterious, she's got some kind of addiction."

"There are worse addictions, princess." Mari said. "It's not drugs or anything."

"Why are we talking about this?" Milliardo asked. "It seems inappropriate for public conversations."

"Well, that's Mari in a nutshell, isn't it. All she says is inappropriate things."

"It's not inappropriate, people just don't like hearing it." Mari said. "What's wrong with masturbating?"

"I don't see an issue with it." Domon said.

"Domon!" Rain said as she walked in with Howard, Ritsuko, Maya, and Kaji.

"Ha, someone's in trouble!" Mari said.
"As tantalizing as this conversation is, perhaps you could all refocus on the reason we're here in the first place." Ritsuko said snidely.

"It's not tantalizing, it's erotic." Mari quipped.

"Mari, be quiet." Shinji said.

"Yeah, Akagi, why are we here?" Asuka asked.

"It wasn't vague." Ritsuko said. "I said to get here because we had a plan."

"What kind of plan?" Mari asked.

"A plan to take out the White Zodiac." Misato said.

"We can't take them out." Milliardo said. "Even with a surprise attack, there would be too many, we lose our defensive advantage."

"We'd also lose whatever weapons' protections Tokyo–3 offers if we attack them directly." Trowa added. "And the Evangelions, they aren't exactly portable."

"The Evangelions can be transported, but it requires a lot of prep." Misato said.

"Yes, but how would we get there undetected?" Wufei asked. "Only Deathscythe has that ability, and as good of a pilot Duo is, no one's that good."

"We've found a way around all that." Ritsuko said.

"Actually, Rain found a way around all that." Misato said. "Didn't you?"

"Yes, I did." Rain said. "At least, I hope so."

"Well, are you going to tell us the plan, or make us sit in here in suspense?" Duo asked.

"Well, it's your plan, Ms. Mikamura." Ritsuko said begrudgingly. "Why don't you explain it to everyone."

"Alright." Rain said. "Maya, would you mind doing the slides for me?"

"Not at all." Maya replied as she turned on the projector.

"Alright, so while working on a plan to get us back home, we were looking at the recovered cloaking devices from the last enemy attack. I had the idea to use them to mask our own attack force to destroy." Rain explained. "Ritsuko explained to me about the N2 Mines and their electromagnetic pulse aftereffects, and Misato explained how they're deployed from large bomber aircraft. I came up with the idea to use the cloaking devices on the 10 bombers currently stationed in the city to assault the base directly."

"What about the civilians?" Relena asked. "There are hundreds of innocent people out there! They'd be injured in that kind of attack!"

"No, they wouldn't." Rain replied. "I've been shown the N2 Mines, and I can modify them to only release an electromagnetic pulse, an even more powerful one. The explosions would be localized to about 100 meters in diameter. As long as the bombs are dropped only on the base, the civilians would be fine."
"What happens when the fusion reactors on those things overload?" Quatre asked. "Those chain reactions would be just as devastating."

"No, they wouldn't be as devastating, those explosions only have a range of about 10 meters, and they wouldn't harm the populace." Lady Une said. "Unless I'm mistaken."

"No, you're absolutely right, the explosions would be confined to the base. The transport ships would be the dangerous part, they could be far more explosive." Rain said. "But the N2 Mines would be aimed at the ships to maximize the damage to the stored Virgos."

"So, you have a bunch of planes with bombs, that's not exactly a plan." Duo said.

"Well, that's where I come in." Misato said. "The plan is, using a cloaked Archangel squadron to bomb them back to the stone age, and four cloaked Evangelion transports to move Unit–01, Unit–02, and all the Gundams to their base in Russia to mop up the survivors and wipe them out once and for all."

"How will Unit–02 be able to operate without a power source?" Asuka asked.

"And who's gonna pilot Wing Gundam?" Noin asked.

"Wing Gundam will be piloted by Mari." Lady Une said.

"And Unit–02 will have additional batteries equipped to last for 45 minutes." Ritsuko said.

"I get to pilot another Gundam?" Mari asked.

"Yes, just try not to break it or anything, I just finished fixing it." Howard said.

"No promises." Mari said.

"So, we're going to bomb the shit out of them, then deploy the Gundams and Evangelions to wipe them out once and for all?" Duo asked.

"That's what they just said." Heero said. "I know you're not stupid, Duo, but you pull off the act quite convincingly."

"I was just making sure that's the plan!" Duo said. "Cause it sounds pretty awesome!"

"Of course it does, but it's certainly a risky plan." Trowa said. "We have to assume that they aren't going to attack us first, and pull off the attack before they can attack us."

"It's a risk we're going to have to take." Lady Une said. "It's the only way to do this without this fine city being leveled with our conflict."

"How long before we can attack?" Heero asked.

"A day or two." Kaji said. "Right, Ms. Mikamura?"

"No more than two days." Rain said. "It won't take that long to integrate the cloaking devices into the planes."

"And the modifications to carry the Gundams in the Evangelions transports shouldn't be that hard either." Maya said.

"Ok, so that plan is all well and good, but what about getting us home?" Domon asked. "I thought
that was the reason for you to be meeting."

"Well, we have a plan for that as well." Ritsuko said.

"Well, don't leave us sitting here in suspense, Dr. Akagi." Noin said. "Tell us."

"We're modifying an advanced Positron Rifle to create wormholes to send you home." Ritsuko explained. "We'll also use it to close up the rift that was created as well."

"So does that mean you know what caused all this shit?" Mari asked.

"Yes, but... that'll be explained in greater detail after we wipe out those assholes." Misato said. "That's our main focus right now."

"Well, can you at least tell us how long until we can return home?" Wufei asked.

"The device will take two to three weeks to complete, depending on how well things go." Rain said. "So you guys go out there and fight, and we'll stay here and focus on this."

"Three weeks, and then we can return home..." Quatre said. "It seems almost unreal."

"I can promise you that it's quite real." Howard said. "Just let us work our magic and we'll be heading back to our corner of reality soon enough."

"So, is that a definite time frame?" Milliado asked. "Three weeks and we can return home?"

"Barring any unforeseen circumstances, yes." Ritsuko said.

"And what could those be?"

"No idea, but if you live here long enough you get a sense that things could go wrong at any moment." Kaji said.

"You mean the Angels, right?" Domon asked.

"Yeah them, or more surprises through another damn wormhole." Misato said.

"I think we've had enough surprises to last us a lifetime." Asuka said.

"That doesn't mean more surprises won't arrive on our doorstep." Mari said. "Weirdness is the norm for our lives, so I'd expect nothing short of more shit to pop into our laps at some point."

"I hope you're wrong." Misato said.

"Well, considering all of us are here, I think Mari's correct to assume that more will arrive through." Heero said. "I just hope that you can finish your device and send us home before that happens."

"I think we're all hoping for that, soldier boy." Mari said.

"Well, then, let's get started." Misato said. "We've got two days, so get some rest, cause we don't need any of you falling asleep in the cockpit." Misato glared at Mari.

"I never fall asleep in there!" Mari said angrily. "I'm too excited to fall asleep when there's fighting to do! I get all tingly!"

"I did not need to know that." Misato said. "Regardless of how alert any of you think you are in a
battle, we're not taking any chances. Go home, get some sleep, and no school for the rest of week. That's an order."

"No school and we get to nap all day?" Mari said. "You don't have to tell me twice!"

Trente was pacing around his office, his hand still bandaged from his violent outburst the week before. After his second defeat at the hands of everyone holed up in Tokyo–3, he was livid. His full-frontal assault was stopped, and his surprise attack was also thwarted by the quick reactions of the Gundam and Evangelion pilots.

"I still don't understand how I could have lost to those children!" Trente shouted at a wall. "I am the most brilliant tactician in history, I can't be stopped by some backwater rabble!"

Trente continued to pace around in an increasingly erratic fashion, muttering nonsense to himself. "I need to finish this fight once and for all and conquer this fucking planet so I can harvest its people and resources to the backbone of my empire!" Trent slammed his uninjured fist into the intercom on his desk. "Major, get in here!" Trente shouted into the intercom. "And bring the Colonel!"

Moments later, The Major and the Colonel walked hurriedly into Trente's office and saluted their usual way.

"Yes, Supreme Commander?" The Major asked.

"What is left of our attack force, Major?" Trente asked.

"90,000 Virgos remain, Supreme Commander." The Major replied. "All of them are on standby, and can be readied on your command. All of their flying units can be equipped within a 12 hours."

"Good, and Colonel, the disposition of our base defenses?" Trente asked.

"5,000 Aries and 20,000 Leos are on standby in their ships, awaiting your orders." The Colonel replied. "The missile batteries and point–defense beam cannons are deployed strategically around our position."

"Muster all our forces to active standby." Trente said. "And ready 80,000 Virgos to launch an all–out assault on that citadel city. Have them equipped with missile pods and heavy weapons."

"Sir, that will slow their approach considerably." The Major said. "Perhaps, just a standard…"

"No!" Trente screamed. "We are not going to go easy on them this time! We are sending one massive wave of Virgos, 80,000 of them to attack and level that fucking city and make them regret the day they rebuffed Trente Khushrenada! It will be an example to this planet that they are defenseless against my mighty Empire!"

"What about the other 10,000 Virgos, Supreme Commander?" The Major asked.

"Have them prepped for base defense until further notice, and have the pilots of the other Mobile Suits ready to deploy on my orders, is that understood?" Trente ordered.

"Supreme Commander, if I may, the Mobile Doll Control system is still not function properly…" The Colonel began.

"I did not ask for your opinion on my orders, Colonel! The Mobile Dolls will be attack and destroy
that city without fail! We cannot lose with an attack this size!" Trente shouted. "Carry out my orders immediately, and without question! I want to attack within 48 hours!"

"Yes, Supreme Commander!" The Major replied.

"Understood, Supreme Commander!" The Colonel added.

"Now, get out of my sight!" Trente shouted.

"Hail Trente!" The Major and Colonel said in unison with a stiff salute before they left. "Glory to Trente's Empire! May it live for 10,000 years!"

To Be Continued

A/N: I do not own Evangelion or any of the characters, GAINAX and the other distributors of NGE related material do. I am simply using them as a backdrop for my fanfic. I also do not own Gundam Wing or G Gundam, Sunrise does, as do their licensed distributors.

Sync Score Rankings!
Shinji – 95.0% (+0.8%)
Rei – 75.0% (No Change)
Asuka – 47.8% (No Change)
Mari – 42.0% (No Change)

And now an addition to Mari's nicknames, Gundam Pilots Edition III:
Domon – muscles
Rain – smarty

This chapter's title comes from the second Gundam Wing OP, "Rhythm Emotion" by Two–Mix. It's a fairly catchy tune, and it felt like pretty good title.

Now it's time to welcome the super sentai of Gundam franchises (literally and metaphorically), Mobile Fighter G Gundam! I've always loved this series for it outlandish but impressive Gundam designs (Gundam Rocky Balboa… I mean Gundam Maxter), the heavy use of energy based attacks like the Shining Finger and Erupting Burning Finger. Anyway, I felt that with a Gundam crossover, a Dynasty Warriors feel could be established by bringing in a secondary Gundam franchise to the top billed one. Now, I'm not going full Dynasty Warriors here, two is it, as there are already a cavalcade of characters loitering around, but that doesn't mean I won't have some fun with the G Gundam characters being here.

As for the events of the previous chapter dealing with Heero in Unit–01, this reaction is explained above as Yui reacting to Shinji's call to wipe out all the enemies over the intercom. This is showing the growing bond between Evangelion/mother and pilot/son. This plot point will become more important in the forthcoming Episode VI, where Third Impact is set to occur for the (insert astronomical number here) time. So the massive shockwave had little to do with Heero being the pilot, as Yui was the one that executed the attack on Shinji's command.

Also, with regards to the Virgos, while they do have Planet Defensors, they are only energy dispersing shields, capable of stopping beam weapons comprised of only energy (except of course for the Wing Zero's Twin Buster Rifle), however, in the anime, they prove incapable of blocking particle based attacks from laser weapons, or bullets from Heavyarms, and seeing as the AIS and Evangelion used projectile weapons that explode, the Virgos stand little chance, making them somewhat of a paper enemy to wipe out en masse.
Now, as to why the Shining Gundam is there. It was recovered from the Guyana Highlands by Rain and Domon shortly after the end of the 13th Gundam fight. In the two years since that time, it has been restored to proper working order, and has become Rain's Gundam so that she can assist Domon with his training. In addition to that, in the two years since the end of the 13th Gundam Fight, Domon and Rain have married, because if you've seen the show's ending, you know that was an inevitability.

I used the attack and Gundam names from the English translation, like the Erupting Burning Finger being known as the Bakunetsu God Finger in Japanese, or the Burning Gundam instead of God Gundam due to us Westerners being "sensitive" about God/Christian/Catholic–esque imagery in media… and yet Neon Genesis Evangelicals, sorry Evangelion was aired… and there are references to Catholicism/Christianity coming out of every hole in that show that my fic is based on.

*COUGH* Angels *COUGH*

Going forward, the story will be picking up its pace, with only five chapters to go until the conclusion of Gundam Invasion. Some of the chapters will be exceedingly short (5,000–ish words or less), with the final chapter probably being closer to 15,000 words in total.

Finally, with the EMP plan. Considering that the After Colony MS use ultra–compact fusion reactors, a massive EMP will knock out any sort of power regulation to the reactor, causing it to overload, and destroy the MS, and when you chain reaction those explosions, the Virgos should be all but destroyed, allowing the Gundams to wipe up the remainder of the forces with ease.

As I said before, and will always say at the end of chapter, please leave comments, as I would like to try to improve the story going forward any way I can. And, hell, constructive criticism is a good thing.

つづく
Chapter 11 – Death of a Revolution
November 10, 2016 – Outside Kozyrevsk, Kamchatka Krai, Russia

Trente was pacing around his office once again. He was becoming more unraveled as the launch of his beloved Virgos approached. His uniform was no longer perfectly neat, but it was disheveled and dirty. His hair was no longer combed either, it was messy and gnarled. The bandages had been removed from his right hand, and his hand and forearm were scarred quite badly.

"I can't believe I allowed this to happen." Trente muttered. "I let inexperienced children force me into a corner, force me to attack in such a stupid way! But it's the only way, I should have used my preferred method of fighting from the beginning, strike like lightning and never let up, I outnumbered them, and now I need to press my only advantage, my large attack force. I will make them scurry out of their city while I burn it to the ground. I won't allow the Mobile Dolls to take all this glory though, I must also make an appearance as well..."

Trente walked quickly out of his office, storming by everyone in the command center, disregarding everyone who snapped to attention and saluted him. The Major saw him rushing through and decided to follow him. Trente walked outside and moved even faster towards a single Mobile Suit Carrier that was smaller than the rest. He walked inside, and the Major followed. There was a single object inside, under a large tarp. Trente was muttering to himself and undoing the ties on the tarp.

"Supreme Commander, are you alright?" The Major asked. "Shouldn't you be readying yourself to command the Mobile Dolls?"

"No, Major, the Mobile Dolls onboard computers will guide them in this fight." Trente said.

"Then what are you doing, Supreme Commander?" The Major asked.

"I'm preparing myself to join the battle." Trente said.

"Supreme Commander, you cannot go into the field, you're far too important to our cause!" The Major said. "You are our cause!"

"Major, I personally want to help level that city, and I brought along the one thing that will help me accomplish that." Trente finished untieing the last rope on the tarp and began pulling it off, revealing a massive Mobile Suit, some 23 meters in height. It was colored a deep red with burnt orange highlights. "I will walk into that city and slaughter those Gundams pilots myself with my ultimate Mobile Suit."

"Supreme Commander, what is that thing?" The Major asked. "It's... massive."

"This is the OZ–16MSX–D, better known as Mobile Suit Scorpio." Trente explained. "This is the final Mobile Suit commissioned to be built by OZ during the war against the colonies. I designed it myself to be the brutal powerhouse of the Mobile Doll forces."

"Is it a prototype?" The Major asked.
"Yes, it's the only one that could be built before those fools surrendered like weak little children."
Trente said. "When that cunt, Lady Une, surrendered to the colonies, I had to quickly hide it before those weak fools destroyed my work. I just wish I had been present during that battle about Earth, we would never have surrendered, and we would have won with ease." Trente smiled maniacally.
"So I removed its Mobile Doll framework and equipped it with a standard cockpit, and armed it with 20 micro–missile launchers, a beam bayonet, and an A.S. Planet Defensor."

"With what, Supreme Commander?" The Major asked.

"Why do you ask so many questions?!" Trente shouted. "The beam bayonet is a combination of a beam rifle and beam sabre, and the A.S. Planet Defensor is meant to be a massive beam shield, completely impenetrable to any beam based weapon! It's the ultimate Mobile Suit capable of destroying anything that comes at it!"

"Supreme Commander, are you sure this is the wisest course of action?" The Major asked.

Trente rushed the Major and backhanded him across the face, knocking him to the ground. "Are you questioning my combat abilities, Major?!" Trente shouted.

"No Supreme Commander… I was just…" The Major started.

"Then inform the Colonel he will be in command of this base until my triumphant return!" Trente shouted. "Have the flight equipment for this Mobile Suit attached immediately, we leave in 30 minutes, and I will to be the spearhead of this operation!"

"Supreme Commander, would it not be more practical to just use this Mobile Suit Carrier?" The Major asked while he rubbed his face and got back to his feet.

"Because then this glorious Mobile Suit will be hidden away." Trente said. "I want the enemy to know I'm coming to crush them personally."

"Understood, Supreme Commander." The Major replied. "Will there be anything else, Supreme Commander?"

"Yes, fetch my flight suit." Trente said. "I wish to dress the part like a true soldier would."

"Yes, Supreme Commander." The Major said. "And good luck."

"I don't need luck, Major." Trente said proudly as he stroked the armor of the Scorpio. "My skill and superior Mobile Suit will win me this day. I'll be sending all those fuckers straight to hell with my Empire being built over their rotting corpses! No one defies Trente Khushrenada and lives to tell about it!"

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Misato was standing nervously behind Maya as she, Hyuga, and Aoba were monitoring the launch of their assault forces. Behind her, leaning against the base of the command platform where Gendo and Fuyutsuki were sitting, was smirking as he saw Unit–01 and Unit–02 take off and then have their planes cloak moments after takeoff. Ritsuko was standing off to the side, looking at some additional calculations for the attack, and updating the flight plans accordingly so the cloaks wouldn't be effected. On the command platform, Gendo had his hands in front of his mouth like usual, and if one looked close enough, you could see the edges of his grin while Fuyutsuki stood stoically behind him.

"Colonel Katsuragi, what is the status of the assault forces?" Gendo asked.
"Commander, Both Evangelion transports are in the air in a holding pattern, and the three transports hauling the Gundams are taking off now." Misato said. "Archangel Squadron is launching in two minutes."

"How long until our forces reach their base once everyone is in the air?" Fuyutsuki asked.

"Just over three hours." Kaji replied. "If they stay at altitude and stay cloaked."

"Which they will be able to do." Ritsuko said. "Without fail."

"Very well." Gendo said. "Proceed with the mission."

"That may be a problem Commander." Maya said. "OBSAT–10 is passing over their base, and we're picking up a lot of movement… a whole lot of movement."

"How much movement?" Misato asked.

"Most of their Virgo force is launching," Maya said. "I'm detecting roughly 80,000 launching along with a… unique Mobile Suit."

"Can you transmit those images to me please, Lieutenant Ibuki." Lady Une asked. "I'd like to see this monstrosity for myself."

"Sending them now." Maya said.

"This is impossible… it can't be…" Lady Une muttered. "This thing was confirmed destroyed after the surrender. All that was left were… scraps."

"Just like how I tricked OZ into thinking I'd destroyed Wing Gundam?" Milliardo asked. "It's not that hard to trick some lazy fools."

"Well, Lady Une, what is it, exactly?" Misato asked. "You're worrying me."

"Miso, we have 80,000–ish enemies launching towards us, and this is worrying you?" Mari asked.

"Yes, this is worrying me, they've never sent anything but Virgos at us, why change now?" Misato said. "So, Lady Une, can you identify it?"

"Yes, I can… it's the OZ–16MSX–D Scorpio." Lady Une said. "It was designed and partially built by Trente Khushrenada just before the war ended. After the surrender while we were destroying all of the Mobile Dolls, we found his research base and destroyed the prototype inside… clearly it was only a decoy, that bastard."

"So are you telling us that your Hitler–lite is leading the attack himself?" Kaji asked.

"That's my assumption." Lady Une said. "He must've gotten tired of watching from the sidelines. He has an awful temper and does hate to lose."

"So what, we pissed in his cornflakes and now he wants to fight us directly?" Asuka asked.

"No, we shit on his Cheerios and he wants revenge." Mari said. "Get it right princess."

"Well, you're both right, as crass as your statements were." Lady Une said. "He will be leading the attack force. So, what should we do, Colonel? We can't send everyone to the base with the incoming enemies."
"Well, we can't attack them halfway, then they'd be able to alert their base..." Misato said. "We'll have to split everything up and wait for their force to arrive here, and attack the assault force and their base simultaneously." Misato sighed. "What's the altitude limit for those Virgos?"

"50,000 ft and no faster than subsonic speed." Trowa replied. "But with that many Virgos they will probably fill up most of the sky."

"Hyuga, what do the MAGI predict their course will be?" Misato asked.

"Calculating now, ma'am." Hyuga replied. "MAGI predict a 97.85% probability of the same course being used again."

"Alright... then the assault force will have to divert course to avoid colliding with them." Misato said. "Ritsuko, how fast can the aircraft go while under cloak?"

"As fast as they need to, but the altitude limit is over 60,000 ft." Ritsuko replied. "They could just fly over them."

"Yeah, but I don't want any possibility of our team colliding with those Mobile Dolls." Misato replied. "Lady Une, you're going to divert eastward to avoid any issues, and you're going to push top speed to make up the lost time."

"What about our attack force?" Lady Une asked. "How are we splitting them up?"

"Ok... Archangels 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, and 10 will continue towards their Russian base all the Gundams, and we'll launch Unit–01 and Unit–02 to defend the city..." Misato started.

"If Trente is coming to attack the city, I will stay behind and stop assist Shinji and Asuka." Heero said.

"And if the puppy and the princess are staying, I'm staying too." Mari said. "Me and Wing Gundam."

"Rain and I will also stay." Domon said. "As long as she agrees."

"I think we'd be better off here than fighting somewhere else." Rain said. "I think my limited fighting skills would be put to better use here."

"Fine..." Misato said gruffly. "Unless someone else wants to stay behind, Archangels 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, and 10 and the three transport planes carrying Deathscythe, Heavyarms, Sandrock, Tallgeese, Epyon and Altron. That group will assault the base as planned and wipe out their forces. Lady Une will be in direct command of those forces. Once outside the city limits, all assault aircraft will maintain radio silence until their base is destroyed."

"Alright, so what about the rest of us?" Asuka asked. "Are we just going to loiter here like assholes or something?"

"No, Asuka, you, Unit–01, and the remaining Gundams will set up a defensive along the northern edge of the city and wait for them. We'll deploy weapons for your EVAs shortly." Misato explained. "Archangels 1, 4, 6, and 9 will stay in a wide holding pattern outside the city limits and surprise them on their final approach."

"How long until the attacks take place?" Fuyutsuki asked.

"Based on weather patterns and the speeds the planes will be pushing, they attack in Russia will
happen before their Virgos arrive here." Hyuga explained. "It looks like that new Mobile Suit... the Scorpio, flies slower than the others, so the MAGI are now predicting that the enemy will arrive in four and half hours, and our forces will arrive in four hours."

"Won't they turn back when the attack on their base begins?" Shinji asked.

"No." Rain said. "The electromagnetic pulses will knock out their communications immediately, they wouldn't be able to end a distress signal."

"And they would be too far away to assist anyway." Lady Une said. "Just worry about defending the city, we'll deal with the ones that stayed behind."

"Shame we lost both Gundams with massive beam rifles though." Duo said. "Other than Heavyarms, we're kinda light on the ranged weaponry."

"Hey Duo, did you forget that Tallgeese has a beam rifle?" Noin asked.

"Oh, yeah, kinda." Duo said. "Whoops."

"Well, the Gundam transports are in the air, so how are the Gundams getting out?" Kaji asked.

"We'll simply deploy." Heero said. "Open the hatch, I will close it when I leave."

"Yep, I'll do the same I guess." Mari said. "So, how well does this sucker fly anyway?"

"It has wings and it's called Wing Gundam..." Milliardo said. "What do you think?"

"Pretty well then I guess..." Mari said.

"What about us, Misato?" Shinji asked. "Can we launch or what?"

"Once the Gundams are clear." Misato said. "Maya, prepare the alarm, set Level–1 battle stations, activate the AIS, and set the city to battle configuration in two hours, that'll give the civilians enough time to get to shelter." Misato ordered.

"Understood, Colonel." Maya said.

"Hyuga, inform the civilians of our new state of emergency." Misato said. "Just a general warning... after almost two years, they should know the drill."

"Understood ma'am." Hyuga replied.

"Great! Now, is everyone clear on the plan?" Misato asked.

"Quite clear." Lady Une replied.

"Roger." Duo said.

"Ready." Asuka said.

"Yep." Mari said.

"Let's go." Domon said.

"Sure." Shinji added.

"Mission accepted." Heero replied.
"Right… then mobilize." Misato said. "We got a war to win."

It was lunchtime and Hikari was sitting in class looking at the empty seats of her friends, wondering if they were alright. Toji was happily chowing down on what Hikari had made for him, eating so fast he barely had time to breathe. Kensuke was eating quietly, occasionally glancing at Toji to make sure he was still breathing.

"Toji will you slow down?" Hikari asked. "Can you even taste what I made?"

"That's why I'm eating so fast, babe…" Toji said with a mouthful of curry. "It so damn good, I wish there was more!"

"You know, you could at least slow down and enjoy lunch." Hikari said. "Maybe even talk to the rest of us."

"I could, but then I wouldn't have time to eat." Toji said as he took another helping of food.

"God you're idiot…" Hikari said as she shook her head. "Are you even worried about our friends?"

"Not really. I'm sure they'll be fine, whatever they're doing." Toji said

"Toji, that's so insensitive!" Hikari said angrily. "They could be in danger!"

"That's kind of their job." Kensuke said. "They pilot Evangelions, Hikari."

"I know that, but they're missing from class again!" Hikari said. "Something must be up!"

"Again, that's when they disappear." Kensuke said. "They're probably on a mission with the transfer students."

"Yeah, plus, they all know what they're doing." Toji said between bites. "Plus, I bet the alarm will go off any time now telling us to get to the shelter."

"Why would you say that?" Hikari asked.

"Always happens." Toji said as the alarms started to sound. "See? Look at that, almost like I'm psychic."

"I bet the message is some generic bullshit." Kensuke said as a high–pitched tone came over the school's intercom system.

"This is the Tokyo–3 Emergency Broadcast System… A state of emergency has been declared for the Tokai Region. We request at this time for all civilians to evacuate to the closest emergency shelter in a quick, calm, and orderly fashion for their safety. Failure to do so could result in injury from hazardous conditions. We repeat… this is the Tokyo–3 Emergency Broadcast System… a state of emergency has been declared for the Tokai Region…"

"See, same generic bullshit." Kensuke said.

"How have you two gotten so used to this?" Hikari asked.

"No idea… kinda just happened." Toji said.

"Hey, instead of going right to the shelters, let's go to the roof." Kensuke said. "We can go and see
"what's going on."

"Sure, why not?" Toji said.

Hikari glared at both of them for a moment and then her look softened. "Fine, but let's try not to get caught, shall we?"

The trio grabbed their bags and walked calmly, being sure to not be seen sneaking away from everyone else. When they got to the roof, they saw two planes decloak and fly over them, carrying Unit–01 and Unit–02 respectively.

"See, there they are!" Toji said. "They look fine!"

"Yeah, but why are they mounted on planes?" Hikari asked. "I thought they were launched differently."

"Maybe whatever plans Misato had were interrupted." Kensuke said. "Those planes are designed for long range transport."

As the planes made it to the northern edge of the city, both Evangelions were released from the aircraft and fell gracefully to the ground.

"Think they'll be ok?" Hikari asked as Wing Zero, Wing Gundam, Shining and Burning Gundam flew past the school after the planes.

"Yeah, they even have back up." Toji said.

"But where's everyone else?" Kensuke asked. "There should be more Gundams."

"Maybe they didn't need everyone out here." Toji said. "And does it really matter? We'll just ask Mari or Shinji when we see them and they'll tell us."

"Yeah, you're right." Kensuke said.

"Look…" Hikari said as she pointed to the city. "I've never really the city do that before."

The buildings in the central black gracefully slid below the surface of Tokyo–3, leaving a flat, heavily armored slab behind as the AIS buildings around the city opened, revealing their weapons.

"Yeah, it's kinda cool." Toji said. "But if they're doing that, it must be serious."

"So, should we go?" Hikari asked. "I'd rather to get to the shelter than get caught in another attack like last time."

"Hey, when those nuts attacked the last time, it was a surprise." Toji said. "This time it looks like we know they're coming, so Shinji and Asuka are gonna go kick their ass."

"Nah, I don't want to use the school's shelter." Toji said. "Let's go to the one near Misato's apartment, not many people live on that side of town."

"Fine, but call your sister so she can meet us there." Hikari said.

"Aren't you going to argue about staying with the class?" Kensuke asked.

"No, I'm too tired to care." Hikari said. "Besides, I'd rather it just be the four of us hiding somewhere then having to be cramped up with some of the jerks we go to school with."
"Cool." Toji said. "I texted her, she'll sneak away and meet us at the front gate here."

"Thankfully it's a short walk." Kensuke said.

"How long should we wait?" Hikari asked. "We could still get caught leaving the school."

"We could go right now…" Toji caught Hikari's glare. "Fine, we'll go in a few minutes." Toji said. "Everyone should be in there by now, it's not rocket science or anything."

"That's better." Hikari said. "I don't care if they think we're missing, I just don't want to actually get caught breaking the rules."

"Man, babe, you really love to live dangerously, don't you?" Toji joked.

"No, I just don't like getting in trouble." Hikari replied.

All though no one could see it, there were nine cloaked aircraft flying high above the ground. Inside was a compliment of 12 modified N2 Mines spread between six bombers, meant to only create an electromagnetic pulse to disrupt the super–compact fusion reactors of the enemy Mobile Dolls. On the other three planes were a total of six Gundams (Deathscythe, Heavyarms, Sandrock, Tallgeese, Epyon and Altron), lying in wait to deploy after the EMPs dissipated so they could wipe up the remaining enemy forces. On the lead transport aircraft were Lady Une and Relena. Relena had insisted she accompany the attack force to support her friends, but was visibly downtrodden when Heero decided to stay behind in Tokyo–3.

They had left Tokyo–3 more than three hours ago, and were nearing the end of their trip. They had seen the massive force of Mobile Dolls descending towards Tokyo–3 while they flew stealthily towards the enemy's base. And now, Lady Une looked patiently out one of the observation windows on her cloaked aircraft. She could see the ocean being replaced by rolling hills.

"How close are we to the target?" Lady Une asked.

"Just a few minutes, ma'am." The pilot replied.

"Alright, prep us for our attack run." Lady Une said. "Send the coded signal for the bombers to spread into the modified attack formation."

"Roger." The pilot replied.

"And set the red launch lights for the Gundams." Lady Une added. "They need to be prepared."

"Understood." The pilot replied.

Lady Une walked over to one of the technicians on deck. "Can you tell me the disposition of the enemy forces?"

"Yes, ma'am." The technician said. "It appears that the majority of their Mobile Suit forces are on standby with their remaining Mobile Dolls being docked inside their ships. Mobile anti–aircraft cannons and missile launchers are deployed in a wide fashion around the base. They cannot detect us."

"Let's keep it that way." Lady Une said. "How are the bombers?"

"In formation and ready to attack." The pilot replied. "We're slowing to attack speed now."
"Range to target?" Lady Une asked.

"27 km and closing." The pilot replied. "Three minutes until drop zone."

"Be ready for full throttle once the bombs drop." Lady Une said. "Are the bombers returning to Tokyo–3 right away?"

"Yes, ma'am." The pilot said. "Those orders never changed. We'll continue flying away from the operations' area to avoid the crossfire. We'll return for them when the all clear is given by the pilots."

"Good." Lady Une said. "Relena, are you alright?"

"Yes…” Relena said absentmindedly. "I just wanted to watch the fight."

"For a pacifist, you sure do see our fair share of battle." Lady Une said. "Or was there another reason you wanted to tag along?"

"No reason…” Relena said.

"Sure there wasn't." Lady Une said. "Perhaps your crush on the boy is just a figment of my imagination."

"What boy?" Relena asked.

"Relena, why are being difficult?" Lady Une asked. "I just wish to… help."

"There isn't anything to help with." Relena said. "I just wish that Heero was still here… I'd feel safer knowing Wing Zero was here."

"You do know there are plenty of other pilots here that are more than capable of protecting us, right?" Lady Une asked.

"Of course." Relena replied. "But…"

"Heero means something to you." Lady Une said, but before Relena could respond, they were interrupted.

"30 seconds to drop zone." The pilot announced.

"We'll finish this later." Lady Une said. "Prepare for surface bombardment."

"Roger." The pilot said. "Brace for potential turbulence."

"Launch the Gundams 10 seconds after the detonation." Lady Une ordered. "Then get us the hell out of here."

"Roger." The pilot said. "Drop zone reached… bombs are away."

The 12 N2 Mines dropped from 50,000 feet and whistled towards the ground. Just a few hundred feet above the ground, the N2 Mines exploded into a compact fireball, but the real damage of the weapon was the massive blue, shimmering electromagnetic shockwave expanding outward from the epicenters of every explosion. Each blue shockwave intersected with the others, forming an even more massive shockwave that reached towards the cloaked planes, just barely enveloping them. The lights on Lady Une's aircraft flickered for a moment, and then the explosions on the ground started. The ultra-compact fusion reactors of several hundred Mobile Suits had destabilized. As they exploded, the Mobile Suits next to them also exploded, creating a devastating chain reaction of
explosions which turned the makeshift base, its defensive weapons, Mobile Suits, Mobile Dolls and all its transport craft into a massive crucible.

As the fires intensified the Gundams launched, seemingly appearing out of thin air, flying out from within the cloaked transport containers. Only a few hundred Leos and Aries were still intact, yet they were not manned. Deathscythe, Sandrock, Altron, and Epyon headed right for these inactive Mobile Suits and destroyed them before they could be brought online. Heavyarms and Tallgeese flew towards several of the enemy's remaining structures and opened fire, taking out the soldiers before they could mount any sort of defense. It only took a few minutes before the firestorm around the base subsided and all that remained were the six Gundams and the ashes around them.

"Lady Une, we're ready for extraction." Milliardo said. "The base has been completely annihilated."

"Are there any survivors?" Lady Une asked.

"Not that we can tell, ma'am." Noin said. "There isn't anything left near us at all."

"Do a thorough sweep before clearing it." Lady Une said. "We don't want any surprises later on if we missed something. We'll enter a holding pattern above your position until you're sure and decloak when you're ready to depart."

"Understood." Milliardo said as the six Gundams fanned out and began an extensive search of the base.

"I'm more curious to know if they were able to get any messages out." Trowa said.

"I doubt it." Duo said. "The battle was fast, and I'm pretty sure the EMP would have knocked out their comm equipment."

"Duo, I wouldn't call this a battle." Quatre said. "It was a surprise attack at most. It only lasted a few minutes..."

"Maybe five in total." Wufei said. "They didn't put up much of a fight."

"That just means the element of surprise was on our side." Noin said. "And we didn't take any damage either."

"Hey, are you guys finding anything?" Quatre asked. "All I'm finding are... charred bodies and melted metal."

"I have found nothing as well." Trowa added.

"No, I think we're clear." Duo said. "My scanners aren't picking up any movement besides us."

"Neither is Epyon." Milliardo said. "Lady Une, we've verified our assessment. There are no survivors. We're ready for extraction."

The three transport aircraft shimmered into existence above the battle zone, doing a wide elliptical pattern above the Gundams at just above stall speed. They began to descend towards the Gundams as they de–cloaked.

"Then get on–board and let's head back." Lady Une said. "The battle in Tokyo–3 should be starting soon."

"Shame we're gonna miss it." Duo said.
"Not really." Wufei said. "I doubt it'll be any more exciting than what we did here."

Domon stood impatiently inside of Burning Gundam waiting for the White Zodiac's assault force to arrive. Burning Gundam and the others were standing just outside of Tokyo–3, well out of range of the EMP blasts. The four bombers were flying cloaked in a tight circle several kilometers out, waiting to strike the unsuspecting attack force.

"How much longer do we have to wait?" Domon said impatiently. "I'd like to get this started."

"Muscles you gotta be patient." Mari said as Wing Gundam pointed its rifle at Burning Gundam. "Otherwise you're gonna end up fighting one of us to take the edge off."

"Can I do that?" Domon asked.

"No, Domon, you may not." Rain said. "Save your energy for the actual fight."

"But…" Domon pleaded.

"No." Rain said bluntly.

"Fine…" Domon said.

"Well, you don't have to wait much longer." Misato said. "The main attack force is only a few minutes out from bomber range. Once the EMP dissipates, then you guys can move in at your leisure. Asuka, just keep an eye on your battery power. We don't want to have to airlift Unit–02 back to base, alright?"

"I'm not an idiot, Misato." Asuka said sarcastically. "I'd rather not have that happen either."

"So… how long, Misato?" Shinji asked.

"Look for yourself." Misato said. "The bombs should be dropping now."

As Misato mentioned it, Domon noticed 8 large objects falling towards the ground. They each exploded into small fireballs with a massive blue, shimmering electromagnetic shockwave expanding out from each explosion. Each of the eight shockwaves intersected with the others, creating a nearly identical massive shockwave that knocked out power to almost all of the attacking Virgos. The Virgos then began falling out of the sky, exploding before they hit the ground. Domon watched as tens of thousands of explosions filled the sky with bright flashes of red and orange light filtered through the remains of the blue EMP shockwave as it finally dissipated.

"There are so many pretty colors!" Mari said happily.

"Yeah, and each flash is one more we don't have to fight." Rain said.

"Maya how many are left?" Misato asked.

"Less than 2,000…" Maya replied.

"Seriously?" Asuka asked. "That seems almost easy compared to the last few times they came calling."

"Trente is still alive though." Shinji said with Unit–01 pointing to his red Mobile Suit.
"YOU’LL PAY FOR THIS YOU INSOLENT BASTARDS!" Trente screamed. "I WILL NOT BE DEFEATED BY A BUNCH OF FUCKING IMPURE MONGRELS!"

"Why don't we fix that problem?" Mari asked. "His voice is irritating."

"I second that." Asuka said.

"Mission accepted..." Heero said.

"GUNDAM FIGHT, READY...?!!" Domon asked no one in particular.

"What are you on about?" Mari asked.

"GO!" Domon cried as Burning Gundam charged forward towards the remaining Virgos, fists clenched.

"Oh... never mind then..." Mari said.

Burning Gundam charged at several of the approaching Virgos, pulling his twin beam sabres out from his hips. In a fluid, spinning motion, he cut through four Virgos, causing them to explode.

"What, is that it?!!" Domon said angrily. "They explode that easily?!!"

"Yeah, kinda ironic." Mari said as Wing Gundam fired a full powered shot at a group of approaching Virgos, vaporizing about a dozen of them. "They're almost like paper soldiers."

"Why are you complaining about that?" Asuka asked as Unit–02 fired its Gatling Gun towards the approaching Virgos. "Just makes our lives easier."

"Shining Finger!" Rain cried as Shining Gundam cut through three different Virgo's heads. "I know, even I can fight them well enough." Rain said. "And I'm not a great fighter."

"She's not, but she tries." Domon said. "I was just expecting them to be... more menacing. At least from how you described them."

"Sorry to disappoint you." Shinji said as Unit–01 charged at a Virgo. "I think they're more annoying than anything else."

"I would have to agree with you!" Domon shouted as he stowed Burning Gundams beam sabres. "ERUPTING... BURNING... FINGER!" The attack connected with a Virgo and split it in half at its waist, and continued onto the next four in the same fashion.

"This it too easy!" Domon shouted. "I need a real challenge!"

"Perhaps you'll soon get one." Heero said. "He's approaching. ZERO can't predict his movements either... which means he's gone insane."

"How exactly does that work?" Asuka asked. "I thought it was supposed to predict everything?"

"Only when the opponent is in the right frame of mind." Heero said. "Constant illogical movements will make any predictions from ZERO null and void."

"Which means?" Mari asked.

"Prepare for a fight." Heero said as Wing Zero raised its Twin Buster Rifle and aimed it at Trente's approaching Scorpio. "This won't be as easy as it looks."
Heero fired a full powered shot at Trente, only for him to dodge it and counter by firing several shots from his beam bayonet, causing everyone to scatter.

"I WILL DESTROY YOU!" Trente screamed.

"Not likely!" Domon shouted as he charged Trente's Mobile Suit, and attacked him with a flurry of fists. "Fight back you coward!"

"If I must!" Trente shouted as his Scorpio fired off all of its missiles at Domon, causing Burning Gundam to fly backwards, only to get hit by a flurry of missile explosions.

"BASTARD!" Domon shouted. "You're going to pay for that!"

"Not if I destroy your friends first!" Trente shouted as he charged Unit–02 with its beam bayonet, landing a deep jab to its chest.

"Motherfucker!" Asuka screamed as she swung her right fist at him. "Oh, I want to kill you!"

Scorpio then moved quickly towards Wing Gundam, slamming it in the back, and sending Mari tumbling to the ground.

"Fucker!" Mari shouted. "I will castrate you with a blunt rock!"

Trente moved on Heero from below, catching the ace pilot off guard, and shooting Shining Gundam, catching it in the chest.

"He's moving too fast!" Asuka shouted.

"We need a plan..." Rain said.

"We attack him together." Domon said. "Just warn whoever he's going for, and then we strike."

"We're gonna combo hit him to death?" Mari asked. "Like a pinball machine?"

"Yes." Domon said.

"Awesome!" Asuka said.

"Shinji, he's heading for you!" Mari shouted as she stopped Wing Gundam's fall.

"I got it!" Shinji shouted. "Hey guys, get ready!"

"YOU CAN'T STOP ME!" Trente screamed. "I AM UNBEATABLE!"

Scorpio recklessly charged Unit–01, only to be swatted aside towards Unit–02 which combo hit it with a well–placed roundhouse kick towards Wing Gundam. Mari fired a shot at the reckless Mobile Suit, partially destroying its right arm below the elbow. Wing Zero charged in and cleaved off its left arm near the shoulder. However, Trente, unable to accept his impending defeat tried to activate his self–destruct so he could try and take his enemies with him.

"I will not let you defeat me!" Trente screamed. "If I'm about to die, I'm taking you all with me! SEE YOU HELL YOU BASTARDS!" After a pause nothing happened. "NOOOOOO! Why didn't it work!?"

"Someone has difficulty performing under pressure!" Mari said mockingly.
"No wonder he's such an impotent ruler..." Asuka said venomously.

"Are dick jokes really appropriate right now?" Shinji asked.

"YES!" Mari and Asuka shouted in unison.

Domon stared down the psychotic ruler's Mobile Suit and glared at him. "You want to die, do you?!" Domon shouted. "MAYBE I CAN HELP YOU WITH THAT!" Domon held his right fist up near his face, the mark of the King of Hearts burning brightly on its back. "THIS HAND OF MINE IS BURNING RED!" Domon roared as he charged Scorpio. "ITS LOUD ROAR TELLS ME TO GRASP VICTORY!"

The particle collectors on the back of Burning Gundam opened up, creating a red and orange mandala within them, and then the chest plate opened up to reveal a particle accelerator that flashed the emblem of the King of Hearts and then glowed a deep red after it came online.

"ERUPTING!" The blue gantlet around the right hand slid down, armoring the hand with it and morphing it into a three fingered piercing weapon. The golden claws on the forearm armor also popped out and made the attack look all the more menacing.

"BURNING!" The right hand began glowing with a tremendous orange light.

"FINGER!" Domon drove the glowing hand right through Scorpio's torso, just above cockpit causing Trente to scream in agony.

"YAAAAHHHHH!" Trente screamed.

"AND NOW!" Domon cried. "HEAT END!"

Scorpio exploded in a brilliant flash of fire and light as the mandala on Burning Gundam's back dissipated and its particle collectors folded back down and its chest plate closed back up. The right hand returned to normal, its armor folding back where it usually was a some steam came off of it.

"The fuck was that?!" Mari asked.

"The final part of my Erupting Burning Finger." Domon said nonchalantly. "It blows the excess plasma into the enemy, causing a chain reaction or something... Rain knows how it works. It just makes them explode, or damages them a whole lot."

"You didn't tell us about this before?!" Mari asked.

"Well, I didn't think it was important." Domon said.

"Would you have done that to Shinji?!" Asuka asked angrily.

"Do you want the honest answer...?" Domon asked.

"No, I want you to fucking lie!" Asuka shouted. "Of course I want the truth!"

"Well... probably." Domon said. "It's just what I do?"

"How much like a character from Mortal Kombat of Soulcalibur are you?" Mari asked.

"What are those exactly?" Domon asked.

"Oh goodie..." Mari said. "Muscles, when we get back, I have some things to show you."
"Mari we can focus on that later." Shinji said. "There are still enemies to deal with."

"Puppy, the princess is rubbing off on you." Mari said as Wing Gundam took aim at an approaching group of Virgos. "You're killing all the fun."

"Whatever." Shinji said as a group of Virgos fired on Unit–01, hitting its chest with several shots. "Let's finish this before any of us get seriously hurt by these things.."

"What does he mean by that?" Domon asked as a familiar blue field began shimmering around Unit–01. "They can't really hurt us. They just sort of explode."

"Oh, you're about to find out." Asuka said. "Do it baka."

"Right..." Shinji muttered as one of the Virgos came in close and aimed right at Unit–01's head. "Go away, and take your friends with you!"

The blast wave emanated from Unit–01 like it had done before, disintegrating the few hundred remaining Virgos, starting with the one mere feet from Unit–01's face. Domon stared in awe as he witnessed the enemy Mobile Dolls disappear into nothingness.

"What the hell was that?" Domon asked. "Where the hell did they all go?"

"That was the puppy doing his thing." Mari said proudly. "He's not someone you should piss off..."

"He could have done that to me... or to Rain..." Domon muttered. "We're very lucky..."

"See Domon, this is what happens when you act recklessly!" Rain said. "He could have... uh... disintegrated us."

"I know!" Domon said. "And I already apologized!"

"Oh, get a room you two." Mari said.

"Mari, stop." Shinji said halfheartedly. "Why don't we make sure there aren't any more before we celebrate."

"See, puppy, I was right..." Mari said. "You're killing all the fun."

"Shut up, four eyes." Asuka said. "He's just being responsible... something you're wholly incapable of."

"HEY!" Mari shouted. "I'm responsible!"

"Sure..." Asuka muttered. "That's what you like to think..."

Everyone was standing in stunned silence in the Command Center. Misato stared in shock at the screen, while Maya, Hyuga, and Aoba stared blankly at the radar screen.

"All clear..." Maya muttered. "Again...

"How does he keep doing that?" Hyuga asked. "They're just gone..."

"Who cares?" Kaji said. "As long as they aren't a threat anymore, it doesn't matter how they were eliminated."
"Doesn't it?" Maya asked. "I mean, Unit–01 is stored here… on this base… and it can do that at will…"

"But Shinji appears to be in control of it." Kaji said. "Better than before anyway…"

"That's beside the point." Misato said. "We'll have the good doctor look into that, won't you Ritsuko…" Misato glared at Ritsuko as though Unit–01's actions were her fault.

"Yeah, whatever." Ritsuko said hatefully. "I'll add it to my to–do list."

"Enough you two." Fuyutsuki said before they began arguing again. "Let's focus on getting everyone back here."

"And perhaps we should check on the assault force as well." Gendo said calmly. "It would be wise to know if we have had a total victory here today."

"Right…" Misato said. "Maya, break radio silence and contact Lady Une."

"Understood, ma'am." Maya said. "Breaker, breaker… Aquila this is Jackdaw… do you copy, over? We are clear for radio traffic."

"Copy that Jackdaw, this is Aquila." Lady Une replied. "We read you 5–by–5, we're clear for radio traffic."

"Ok, enough with the callsigns." Misato said. "Is the line secure?"

"It is on our end." Maya said.

"It's secure on our end too." Lady Une replied.

"Good. Then I'll cut to the chase… has your operation zone been cleared of all enemy hostiles?" Misato asked.

"Nothing left but ash and smoke." Lady Une said. "We searched the area and found no survivors."

"None?" Misato asked. "And the Gundams?"

"They're boarding the planes now." Lady Une said. "Are we cleared to return to base?"

"Yes, everything's been cleared out here. Nothing but some debris here." Misato replied. "You're clear to return to base."

"And Trente?" Lady Une asked.

"Deader than Elvis." Misato said.

"Who?" Lady Une asked.

"Never mind… he's just really, really, dead…" Misato said.

"Good we'll see you in a few hours." Lady Une said. "Aquila, out."

"Good, now tell everyone here to get back to base." Misato said.

"Sure thing, Colonel." Hyuga said.

"And shut off the comms, too." Misato said, noticing Kaji was eyeing her.
"Sure thing." Hyuga replied.

"So, when are we explaining everything to them?" Kaji asked.

"Saturday." Misato said. "Gives them a day to rest."

"And what about Shinji?" Maya asked.

"I'm sure Asuka or Mari will talk him off the cliff." Kaji said. "He's a natural worrier, but we can't keep the truth back any longer. Everyone needs to know why they're here."

"Still, shouldn't we be concerned about Shinji?" Misato asked.

"He's a big boy, he can handle it." Kaji said. "And it's not like he meant for this to happen, it just… happened."

"I'm glad you have so much faith in him." Misato said. "I'm still guessing he'll be a complete wreck."

"He'll get over it." Gendo said from above. "He has no choice. Just inform every one of the reason they are here and the plan to return them home again."

"Understood Commander." Misato said as Gendo left. "I just hope Shinji won't be as despondent as he was after Rei got hurt."

November 12, 2016 – NERV HQ

It was early morning once again, however compared to the last time they were dragged in early, everyone was in better spirits. With Trente and his Neo–Nazis gone, things had become a lot brighter, especially with the prospect of everyone going home soon. So the group waited for Ritsuko to explain everything.

When Ritsuko walked in with Misato, Maya, and Kaji, all eyes were focused on Ritsuko, and before she could even say anything, she already had a question to answer.

"Can you actually tell us how we got here?" Milliardo asked.

"Yes I can, but wouldn't you rather hear how you're getting home?" Ritsuko asked.

"You told us it was some kind of rifle that you're modifying to open up a return wormhole, right?" Relena said.

"And if you've figured that out, you know how we got here." Heero said.

"Well, yes." Ritsuko said. "But I wanted to discuss the mechanics of getting you back."

"The only mechanics I'm concerned with is making sure we don't end back here." Milliardo said.

"But I would rather you'd tell us how this happened."

"Well… the reason for all this is slightly complex." Maya said.

"No, it's not that complex, we've known for some time." Ritsuko said. "But it was thought the reason wasn't important, but rather unimportant."

"How is the reason for us being trapped here unimportant?" Wufei asked.

"It was thought it would be a distraction." Ritsuko said.
"Why would it be a distraction?" Mari asked.

"Because…" Maya started.

"Maya, we can't hide it anymore." Ritsuko said coolly. "Shinji is the reason you're all here. His outburst in Unit–01 over Rei's… supposed death. The blast Unit–01 shot into the air was what opened up these wormholes."

"So, why couldn't you tell us that before?!" Asuka shouted. "Why keep it secret."

"So that Shinji would still fight." Misato said. "The Commander made that decision."

"My father made that decision?!" Shinji shouted. "He decided we shouldn't know I fucked up again?!!"

"Shinji, calm down." Misato said. "It was for the best."

"WHY?!" Shinji shouted.

"So that you wouldn't be distracted and you would be able to fight." Ritsuko said. "You do have a record of refusing to fight, remember?"

"And there's also a record of you holding me back from fighting!" Shinji shouted. "Or did you forget that one?!"

"That was one time," Ritsuko said. "You're far more unlikely to fight."

"That's not the point!" Shinji shouted as he stood up. "If I caused this, I should have known! What if every time I wiped out those Virgos, I drew more shit here! That shockwave, what if it's like that blast you mentioned?! What if my fighting has made this worse?! Whenever I fight I just make things worse!"

"There is no evidence…" Ritsuko started.

"I don't believe you!" Shinji said. "It's not the first time you've lied!" Shinji turned to leave. "I'm done listening to this, I have other things to do."

"Shinji, get back here!" Misato shouted as Shinji disappeared. "That's an order!"

"You know that's not gonna work." Asuka said. "But we should go after him."

"Right, princess, let's go." Mari said as the pair of them stood up.

"You two aren't going anywhere." Misato said. "You've got to stay for this."

"No, we don't." Asuka said. "Shinji's more important."

"We'll come with you." Milliardo said as he and Heero stood up.

"You don't have to." Asuka said. "We've dealt with this before."

"Yes, but this involves realities beyond your own." Heero said. "If we tell him directly that we don't blame him, that could help."

"Then I'll go too." Domon said. "I don't blame him for coming here, it just… happened." Domon looked at Rain. "You should come too… just in case we need to explain that… sciencey stuff…"
"Sure, why not." Rain said.

"Wow, this is almost like a party!"

"Well, then let's go after him before we can't find him." Asuka said.

"What about the rest of us?!" Duo asked.

"Enjoy the PowerPoint presentation." Mari said as the group left.

They saw Shinji walking angrily down the hallway towards an elevator.

"Shinji, stop!" Asuka shouted. "Come talk to us!"

Shinji ignored them and walked into the elevator.

"Damn him..." Asuka muttered as they ran to the elevator to only see a set of closed doors.

"Great, now where's he's going?" Domon asked.

"Well... the elevator is going down..." Mari said as she looked at the floor indicator above the elevator door. "That's not taking him home... the surface exits are levels above here."

"So why would he be going down?" Heero asked.

"I think I know why..." Asuka said as the elevator appeared to stop. ""

"How do you know?" Domon asked.

"Cause... we're in love." Asuka said as she called the elevator. "He's feeling guilty, and there's only one place he can go."

The group exited the elevator in the Medical Wing, much to everyone's confusion. Asuka led them out of the elevator and down the hall towards the ICU.

"Wait... he came down here to visit her?" Mari asked.

"Who else would he visit?" Asuka said. "That idiot still feels guilty for letting Rei get hurt."

"Who's Rei?" Domon asked.

"The other Evangelion pilot." Asuka said. "She got hurt really badly just before this all started happening. Shinji watched her blow her Evangelion up to save us... he still thinks he could have done something to help."

"Even though he probably couldn't have..." Mari said.

"Why not?" Heero asked.

"Well, I know we didn't explain this... but that last Angel we fought put the two of us into a coma, and left Rei an inch from death. Shinji got off easy, he wasn't really hurt that badly."

"Didn't he have the power he's got now?" Milliardo asked.

"No... he didn't..." Asuka said. "But I think that's why he's blaming himself."
"Well, let's find him..." Mari said as they turned down the hallway to see Shinji slumped on the ground, crying, with his back to the window that showed Rei floating serenely in a tank LCL.

"So that's Rei..." Domon said.

"Yeah..." Mari said.

"So, what do we do?" Rain asked.

"Talk to him." Asuka said. "Baka..." Asuka said gently as she knelt down in front of him. "Why are you crying?"

"It's all my fault..." Shinji said despondently. "I caused all this... if only I was able to save Rei... none of this would have happened..."

"Baka, it's not your fault." Asuka said kindly. "So stop blaming yourself for everything."

"I can't!" Shinji shouted as he stood up. "I watched Rei try and kill herself to save us... and then I drew all these people here! I brought more danger to our reality! And the worst part is, I could've used all this power to save Rei and kill that Angel! I FUCKED UP!"

"Shinji, stop being like this." Asuka said. "You didn't do anything wrong!"

"Yes I did!" Shinji implored. "I should have used the power I had before! Rei is like this because of me!"

"No, she isn't." Asuka said. "She's like this because she saved us."

"But I could have stopped her!" Shinji shouted. "She wouldn't be in here if I was smart enough to realize what I could do!"

"Shinji, enough!" Mari shouted as she moved forward.

"NO!" Shinji shouted.

SLAP

Shinji staggered backwards into the glass separating them from Rei, causing it to rattle.

"MARI!" Asuka shouted. "What the shit?!"

"We don't have time for Shinji to have a shame and pity spiral right now," Mari said. "And Shinji, you need to snap out of it, right now. Thinking about things from the past isn't going to change them, so suck it up."

"But..." Shinji said as he rubbed his face.

"Shinji, did you mean for this to happen?" Heero asked.

"No, I was upset when Rei got hurt." Shinji said. "I thought she died."

"Then you didn't cause this." Heero said. "Your actions did not have the intent to cause our realities to collide."

"How does that even make sense?" Shinji asked.
"Without the intent to cause harm, you can't be blamed for what happened." Milliardo said. "Sure, it's inconvenient we're here, but you haven't caused any lasting harm."

"And your attacks on the Virgos are completely different than what caused all this." Rain said. "So anything you've done since then has only been to help people."

"Are you sure?" Shinji said. "Because…"

"Shinji, Mari is right." Domon said forcibly. "This isn't your fault, and crying about it won't change things. We've defeated our enemies, and you should be proud of your accomplishments."

"But…” Shinji stammered.

"No," Domon said. "You shouldn't feel shame for lamenting the loss of someone you care about. It just shows that you're human."

"So, do you believe us now?" Asuka asked. "Or are you going to keep being an idiot?"

"I… I guess…” Shinji said. "I guess I understand what you're all telling me. But it doesn't mean I'm going to believe you."

"Well, it's a start." Asuka said.

"So, should we leave?" Milliardo asked.

"I don't see why not." Asuka said. "As long as my baka is done having a meltdown that is."

"I wasn't having…” Shinji started.

"Yes… yes you were." Asuka said. "Now, do you want to go? I'm sure you're yelling isn't helping Rei get any better."

"She has a point." Mari said. "Negative vibes like that don't help healing."

"Yeah… I guess." Shinji said. "Let's go home."

"Sounds like a plan." Asuka said.

"Perhaps a slow walk back will help things too." Rain suggested.

"With dinner on the way?" Domon asked.

"I don't see why not." Shinji said. "We can call and let everyone else know where we're going."

"Where are we going?" Milliardo asked.

"Karaoke bar?" Mari suggested. "Might be fun."

"Seriously?" Heero asked.

"Yeah, might be just what we need." Mari said.

"Sure, let's go." Domon said as everyone but Mari turned to leave.

"Hey, Mari, are you coming?" Shinji asked.

"Yeah, in a minute." Mari said.
Shinji smiled slightly. "Alright… if we don't see you before you leave, you know where we'll be."

"I know, puppy." Mari said as she stared through the glass towards Rei's still figure. "I just need a minute."

"Ok." Shinji said as he left, leaving Mari alone.

"Hey there beautiful." Mari said. "Did you miss me?" Mari smiled, knowing that Rei couldn't answer her. "I know it's been a few weeks since I came down here to visit, but we've been busy. That doesn't mean I haven't thought about you every single day." Mari sighed. "I can't wait until I can you all about what you're missing. But I guess I just have to be patient… but I'm not very patient, so it'll be kinda tough." Mari smiled. "I still love you, blueberry…" Mari said as she turned to leave. "Don't forget that."

November 18, 2016 – Outside Tokyo–3

It was a peaceful day around Tokyo–3. The sky was clear with not a cloud to be seen. That changed when a rip in the sky opened up ad blossomed into a shimmering, swirling blue portal. A small hovercraft came through, smoking from several blast marks on its hull. The craft slammed into the ground at high speed with Tokyo–3 barely visible in the distance.

The cockpit canopy shattered, leaving its lone occupant barely conscious. She had aqua colored hair, and wore a pink denim vest with a blue, sleeveless jumpsuit. She was bleeding quite severely from her wounds inflicted on her both in the attack on her craft, and the crash itself. She was barely able to utter a single word before passing out. "Domon…"

At the same time that the teenaged girl was crashing near Tokyo–3, a second wormhole opened over China. Out of it flew several aircraft, some smaller vehicles, and a single Gundam… the Gundam was violet and black with red highlights, and had massive horns on its head. There were two massive red pods with yellow highlights mounted on its back.

As the Gundam and its escorts landed, a shadowy figure exited the Gundam, and looked out on the remnants of Hong Kong in the distance as one of his companions walked up behind him.

"This was once a proud city." The shadowy figure said. "That is if we're near Hong Kong."

"It is Hong Kong, sir… or what's left of it anyway." The man said. "This planet appears far different from our own."

"Well… is this planet uninhabited?" The shadowy figure asked. "It would make our plans far easier."

"No, it's not." The man said. "From what we can tell, the planet suffered a cataclysm that melted the ice in Antarctica. We assume the population is under 3 billion, if not less."

"So, will our plan still work here?" The shadowy figure asked.

"Yes, it will work as well as it would have on our Earth." The man replied.

"And our cargo?" The shadowy figure asked. "The trip didn't damage them, did they?"

"No, sir… everything is intact." The man replied.
"What about our test subject?" The shadowy figure asked. "Were we able to catch her?"

"Her craft was damaged but exited a different aperture than we did." The man said. "We're searching for her signal now… but there is another signal you may be interested in."

"What signal?" The shadowy figure asked.

"The signal from Burning Gundam." The man said. "I believe I know why we lost track of Domon Kasshu… he's come here."

"So… Domon is here?" The shadowy figure said. "Miss Mikamura must be with him as well…"

"That would be a safe assumption considering they were last seen together." The man replied.

"Excellent…" The shadowy figure said. "Now I can go teach my former pupil a lesson he won't soon forget."

To Be Continued

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A/N: I do not own Evangelion or any of the characters, GAINAX and the other distributors of NGE related material do. I am simply using them as a backdrop for my fanfic. I also do not own Gundam Wing or G Gundam, Sunrise does, as do their licensed distributors.

Sync Score Rankings!
Shinji – 97.5% (+2.5%)
Rei – 75.0% (No Change)
Asuka – 52.3% (+4.5%)
Mari – 42.0% (No Change)

So, everything depicted here does move rather quickly. The Virgos are destroyed quickly with Rain's quick thinking, and even Domon mentioned how quickly they get wiped out. And with Trente having lost his fucking mind, his death was unceremonious, yet hilarious to write. The After Colony folks still have his twin spawns to deal with when they go home.

The Emergency Broadcast System I used in the Hikari/Toji/Kensuke segment is the former name of the US Public Warning System, before it was renamed the Emergency Alert System in 1997, which itself replaced the CONELRAD system in use during the Cold War. While Kensuke's comment about "generic bullshit" for Tokyo–3 may be accurate, in actuality, any Public Warning System is meant to give accurate information to its citizens so they can act accordingly.

Also, Shinji's reaction to causing all this is about par for the course. He blames himself for causing all this, and then he apologizes for causing everything, even though everyone tells him it's not his fault. Mari slapping him was totally out of character, but it worked, and snapped Shinji out of his depression spiral.

Finally, the new arrivals… I think I gave enough hints without actually telling you who's arrived. And you'll just have to read the rest of the fic if you want to see how this all works out.

As I said before, and will always say at the end of chapter, please leave comments, as I would like to try to improve the story going forward any way I can. And, hell, constructive criticism is a good thing.

つづく
Chapter 12 – Flying in the Sky
November 18, 2016 – Comfort 17 Apartments

Asuka was sleeping soundly in Shinji's room. It was early morning, long before Asuka preferred to get out of bed. She could feel the warmth of Shinji's body next to her, and snuggled closer to him. Even though it was a Friday and they had school, Asuka was hoping they could just skip school and stay home to cuddle.

However, that was interrupted when Misato burst into the room shouting at the pair of them.

"Wake up!" Misato shouted.

"Ughhh…" Asuka muttered. "Why? The alarm hasn't even gone off yet…"

"New wormholes!" Misato said frantically. "Get up, we need everyone on base right now!"

"Just great…" Asuka muttered. "We finish off the bad guys and more are showing up."

"Why is Shinji not waking up?" Misato asked.

"He's tired." Asuka said as she poked Shinji's face several times. "Wake up, baka!"

"You deal with this, I'm gonna go wake up Mari." Misato said as she left.

"Five more minutes…" Shinji said. "You're so comfy…"

"Baka, now!" Asuka shouted. "There's an emergency!"

"Again…" Shinji muttered. "Can't the world stay safe for more than a week."

"Doubtful." Asuka said as she got up revealing the long t-shirt she was wearing. "Come on, before Misato decides to act like an adult again and scold us."

"Fine…" Shinji said. "At least you got your wish to not go to school."

"Yeah, but still…" Asuka said. "I'd rather spend the day with you, alone."

"Well, we're not that lucky." Shinji said as he pulled his pants on. "And I hate getting dressed just to go get in a plugsuit."

"I know what you mean." Asuka said as Mari staggered in wearing nothing but a lacy thong. "Oh, what the fuck…"

"Need clothes…" Mari muttered groggily. "Where clean laundry… puppy…"

" Seriously, you don't know?" Asuka asked as she looked at Shinji to see his eyes tightly shut. "Baka, where is the idiot's laundry?"
"In the dryer." Shinji said nervously. "I was too tied to deal with it last night."

"Thank you…" Mari said quietly as she left.

"She's gone baka, you can open your eyes." Asuka said.

"Oh, good." Shinji said. "I'm sorry I looked."

"It wasn't really your fault, baka." Asuka said. "Besides, I can show you just as much if I wanted to…"

"Would you really?" Shinji asked.

Asuka pulled off her t-shirt, revealing her supple breasts and blue panties causing Shinji to blush profusely. "To be fair… I've seen you naked before." Asuka then glared at Shinji. "And tell anyone you saw me like this, and you're dead."

"I don't intend on sharing this with anyone Asuka." Shinji said shyly. "I'd like to live to see you like this again."

Asuka blushed. "So does that mean you like seeing me like this?"

"I… uh… of course…" Shinji stammered.

"You're such a pervert." Asuka retorted. "But I guess you're my pervert." Asuka kissed him on the cheek as she put on her bra. "Get a shirt on so we can go."

"I know." Shinji said. "But I really don't want to."

"Oh, stop whining." Asuka said. "You're probably gonna get sent out to do recon or whatever while I sit and wait with my thumbs shoved up my ass."

"Asuka, stop it." Shinji said. "I don't know why they keep sending me out. Would you rather go? Cause I don't mind, you can have fun."

"No… I just…" Asuka said. "I don't like watching you do all the fun stuff, that's all."

"I get it." Shinji said as he pulled a t-shirt on. "I guess we should go get Mari though."

"Yeah, you're probably right." Asuka said. "If we let her try and get dressed, she's not going to look that… what the fuck…"

Asuka and Shinji looked at Mari, who was still half asleep. She had but her t-shirt on backwards and inside out, and was wearing flip flops and the same thong she started with.

"I'm ready…" Mari said groggily. "Let's go now…"

"No… no you're not." Asuka said. "You're such a complete idiot… you can't go out like this. You look retarded."

"I not… retarded princess…” Mari stammered. "I look fine…"

"Sure you're not." Asuka said. "Baka… just wait here while I put the animal in some clothes."

"Sure…” Shinji said. "I don't mind waiting a few minutes longer."
"Figured you wouldn't..." Asuka said as she guided Mari back to the laundry room. "Come on you, you can sing while you get dressed or something..."

"You're the best Kyoko..." Mari muttered absentmindedly.

"Kyoko?" Asuka muttered. "Whatever... you're just being stupid."

"Hey, Asuka?" Shinji asked before she disappeared from view.

"What, baka?" Asuka asked. "I'm kinda busy."

"You'll make a good mother someday..." Shinji said shyly.

Asuka blushed profusely at Shinji's words, something that Shinji couldn't see. "Thanks, baka..."

Misato ran into the Command Center several minutes later than she wanted to. After trying unsuccessfully to get everyone out of the house, she had leave Asuka and Mari behind to drag Shinji to NERV in her car on her own, with Domon and Rina hitching a ride with her so they wouldn't have to walk.

Shinji, Domon, and Rain walked calmly in behind as Misato surveyed the situation. Gendo and Fuyutsuki were looking down at the main monitor with bemusement, and Kaji was leaning causally on the wall as though he had expected something like this to happen while everyone else around him, including Ritsuko, was frantic about the newest developments. Alarms were going off with locations of two wormholes being displayed on the main monitor. One was very close by not too far from the city, and the other was located over what remained of Hong Kong.

"Situation report." Misato said.

"We've got multiple contacts and multiple wormholes." Hyuga said.

"Where are the wormholes?" Misato asked.

"One is located about 30km outside the city." Aoba said. "The other is south of the remains of Old Hong Kong."

"Are you getting any readings?" Misato asked. "How many enemies?"

"Potential enemies." Shinji reminded her.

"Right, what Shinji said." Misato replied. "How many of them are there?"

"Well, it appears we can't really see how many are near Old Hong Kong." Aoba said. "Some sort of electromagnetic interference."

"What about the one close to us?" Kaji asked.

"Seems to be one small craft, heavily damaged." Hyuga said. "It appears to have crash landed as well."

"Well, why don't we go investigate the one then." Misato said. "Send a drone to see what we can find out about Old Hong Kong."

"I'll contact the Hong Kong branch with the details." Hyuga said.
"But who are we sending out to investigate the crash site near us?" Maya asked.

"Yes, Colonel." Gendo said. "You've only arrived with three pilots."

"I'll go alone." Domon said. "I won't need any help for some simple reconnaissance against a single enemy."

"I'd rather you not go alone." Rain said. "I could go."

"Rain, I require your assistance." Ritsuko said. "I would prefer you to stay if at all possible."

"I guess that only leaves me." Shinji said. "I'll go get my plugsuit on…"

"Shinji, there's no need for you to take your Evangelion." Domon said. "You can take the Shining Gundam!"

"Domon, is that wise?" Rain asked.

"I don't see why not." Domon said.

"Perhaps he could take Wing Gundam instead?" Howard asked as he walked in.

"The one without the ZERO system?" Misato asked.

"Yes, the one that Mari girl piloted last time around." Howard said. "It's prepped and ready if you want it, kid."

"Sure!" Shinji said happily. "I love Unit–01… but I don't feel like dealing with LCL this morning."

"Alright, well, follow me then." Howard said. "It handles similarly enough to Wing ZERO, so you should be able to pilot it without a problem."

"Then let's go." Domon said.

"Right." Shinji said. "Uh, Misato?"

"Yeah, Shinji?" Misato asked.

"Asuka might be mad you sent me out… so uh… be ready for that." Shinji said.

"I always am." Misato said. "No go, you're wasting time."

"Right." Shinji replied as he followed Howard and Domon down to the Evangelion Cage where the Gundams were being stored. "Wasting time…"

Shinji was sitting calmly inside Wing Gundam as it and Burning Gundam launched. He saw the cityscape emerge around him on the monitors. He looked next to him to see Burning Gundam give him a signal.

"Ready kid?" Domon asked.

"Yeah… I guess." Shinji said. "I just need to remember how to activate the thrusters…" Shinji hit the throttle too hard and Wing Gundam shot into the air. It took him a second to get control again, and leveled off at several hundred feet off the ground.
"You ok?" Domon asked.

"Yeah, I'm fine." Shinji replied. "Didn't realize it would do that."

"I thought you were a professional pilot, Shinji." Domon said.

"I'm not really a professional." Shinji replied. "You know that. I haven't received any official training or anything like I the movies."

"Still, it was kinda funny." Domon said. "But I'm concerned you're not going to be able to fly that thing."

"I can fly it just fine, thank you." Shinji said as he stabilized Wing Gundam. "See, no problems here."

"So, are you two done chatting?" Misato asked.

"Not quite, Misato." Shinji said.

"Well, can you wrap it up?" Misato asked. "Cause you two have an actual job to do."

"Oh, right… the wormhole and the wreckage." Domon said.

"Yeah, the wreckage." Misato said sarcastically.

"Cause a wrecked bunch of metal is a big threat to us." Shinji joked. "I thought you guys said it was just rubble."

"Even if it is, you still need to check it out. It could have explosives or something."

"That's kinda weak, Misato." Shinji replied.

"Oh, just shut up and go." Misato grumbled. "We'll figure out the logistics later."

"Right." Shinji said sarcastically. "Cause that hasn't bitten us in the ass before."

"This isn't about Rei is it?" Misato asked.

"No, it's basically every time we go against an Angel." Shinji retorted. "We never have the full picture."

"Hey, wait for me!" Domon shouted as Burning Gundam took to the sky and flew after him. "We're out here together, aren't we?"

"Yeah, but maybe we can race." Shinji joked as Wing Gundam jetted off.

"This is not the time for a race." Misato said sternly.

"Fine, you're on!" Domon shouted. "But you're cheating!"

"I know how fast your Gundam can move, you'll be able to catch up!" Shinji joked as the two of them raced towards the wreckage.

Wing Gundam may have had a few seconds' lead, but Burning Gundam caught up without a problem, flying just behind Shinji. They began to swirl around each other trying to get to their goal faster, but in their haste, they were quickly approaching the crash site, but were completely unaware
"Hey, enough games you two, you're almost on top of the target!" Misato said angrily.

"Oh, right!" Shinji said as he pulled the throttle hard back and stopped directly over the wreckage.

"Shit!" Domon overshot the goal a bit, and did a quick 180, coming to a rough stop over Wing Gundam as it was landing gently on the ground. Burning Gundam followed suit and landed next to Wing Gundam, as they began to survey the crash site.

"What do you see?" Misato asked. "What's there?"

"A very wrecked vehicle of some kind." Shinji said. "There's a lot of smoke too."

"It's a hovercraft." Domon said. "And it's been shot to hell."

"How can you tell?" Misato asked.

"Blast marks from some kind of rifle I think. They're not like the burn marks from the crash." Domon said. "And I think there's someone inside!"

"What?" Misato shouted. "Can you confirm that?"

"Domon, run a thermal check!" Rain said.

"Right!" Domon said. "Confirming one heat signature."

"Get out there and check!" Misato said.

"Right." Shinji said.

"Yeah, I'm going." Domon said.

"Not both of you!" Misato said.

"Yes, both of us. The person may need more than one person to pull them out." Shinji said. "Send a medical team too, that way no one else has to come close to death."

"Shinji, will you stop." Misato said. "Anyone who gets hurt like this is not Rei…"

"Well, I don't want it to happen again!" Shinji shouted as he unbuckled himself and opened the cockpit. "Come on Domon, before this person gets hurt."

"Take the comms with you!" Misato said.

"Right!" Domon said as Burning Gundam knelt down as he opened his cockpit hatch and jumped to the ground.

As the two of them approached the wreckage, Domon stuck out his hand. "We need to be careful. We could get burned by this fire."

"I know." Shinji said. "This isn't the first time I've done this. Let's just try and get to the cockpit."

The two of them climbed carefully towards the cockpit and saw the aqua haired girl lying unconscious in the wreckage, her face resting on the damaged console in front of her.

"Rei…?" Shinji muttered. "It can't be…"
"Shinji, Rei's in the hospital, it's not her." Misato said.

"Yeah, but the blue hair…" Shinji muttered.

"No, it's not blue… it's aqua…" Domon said. "Allenby?" Domon gently lifted her head to see it really was her. "Allenby!"

"It's who?!" Rain asked.

"It's Allenby!" Domon shouted as he shook her. "Allenby, wake up!"

"Domon, don't shake her like that, you could hurt her more!" Shinji said.

"But I can't tell if she's alive!" Domon said.

"Domon, are you sure it's her?" Rain asked.

"Yes, it's her, Rain!" Domon said. "She might be covered in blood, but I know it's her!"

"Domon, just relax, the medical teams are en route." Rain said. "Just check her pulse and get her out of that wreckage!"

"We'll try, Ms. Mikamura." Shinji said. "Domon, we have to move her."

"I know, I just don't want her to get hurt any more than she already is." Domon said.

"Why don't you grab her legs, and I'll grab her shoulders and we can get her out of here." Shinji suggested.

"We can try that." Domon said.

"Don't forget to support her neck, Shinji." Rain said. "If she has any neck injuries, letting her head flop around could make it worse."

"I'll do my best." Shinji said. "Ready, Domon?"

"Yeah." Domon replied.

Shinji gently grabbed Allenby by the shoulders, sing his forearms to support her head, and Domon gently lifted Allenby from her knees, letting her legs dangle below her. The two of them navigated carefully out of the wreckage and placed Allenby gently on the ground without too much difficulty.

"Domon, are you ok?" Shinji asked.

"No, my friend got hurt." Domon said. "And I don't know if she'll be ok. I'm not even sure why she's here. Who was shooting at her, and what made her crash?"

"Domon, we'll figure all that out when they get your friend and that wreckage back here." Misato said. "Just sit tight, the medical team is almost there."

"How long, Misato?" Shinji asked.

"You should be able to see them now." Misato replied.

Shinji looked towards Tokyo–3 and saw several VTOLs flying towards them. "Yeah, I see them."

"Good." Misato said. "Once she's safely aboard, one of you escort the medivac back to base."
"I'll do that." Domon said.

"Figures..." Rain muttered.

"What?" Domon said. "I'm escorting her back."

"Anyway..." Misato continued. "That means Shinji, you get to stay with the recovery teams until they clean up the site and gather up all the wreckage."

"Understood, Misato." Shinji said as the VTOLs came in for a landing. "Tell Asuka when she gets in I'll be here a while."

Back at NERV after Allenby had returned, everyone else had finally arrived. They all gathered in the Command Center for a briefing about the current situation. Wing Gundam had just returned with the recovery team, and as Shinji walked in, he noticed he hadn't changed clothes, so he was still covered in Allenby's blood, something Asuka noticed as he walked in.

"Why are you covered in blood?!" Asuka asked.

"The girl we rescued from the wreckage was bleeding." Shinji said. "I haven't had time to change yet."

"Is she gonna be ok?" Quatre asked.

"Most likely." Rain said. "She's in a coma."

"Ok, back up a second." Duo said. "So, people came through the wormhole, right?"

"Actually there were two wormholes." Maya said.

"Why are there more of them?" Asuka asked.

"And did they come from a new reality?" Milliardo inquired.

"We'll get to that in a minute if you let us." Ritsuko said incredulously.

"Ok, then why don't you explain all this new stuff, from the beginning, seeing as we missed all the important bits?" Mari asked. "Can you handle that, Akagi?"

Ritsuko glared at her, but ignored the jibe and began. "Alright, about an hour and a half ago, two Pattern Violets were detected. One was just outside the city, and the other was over Old Hong Kong." Ritsuko explained. "We detected a single, damaged craft coming through the wormhole closest to us, and we have yet to detect anything from the second landing site, as they appear to be blocking our ability to scan them."

"Then we sent Domon and Shinji out to investigate the wreck near us, and they pulled a girl out of the wreckage." Misato explained. "She was badly injured, and in Domon's inspection of the crash site, he says the craft was shot at."

"Most likely prior to entering the wormhole, or as it did." Rain said.

"So, that girl's in a coma, right?" Asuka asked.

"Allenby..." Domon said.
"What was that, pal?" Duo asked.

"Her name is Allenby Beardsley." Domon said.

"How do you know that?" Relena asked.

"She's from his reality, Relena." Wufei said. "Or am I wrong?"

"No, you're right." Domon said. "She's... a friend."

"Getting back to the point." Rain said through gritted teeth.

"So she... Allenby... can't tell us who shot at her." Asuka continued.

"No, but the wreckage might." Ritsuko said. "We'll begin analyzing it as soon as it's unloaded."

"So, the other wormhole." Trowa said. "Is it possible this Allenby's pursuers are the ones who came through the other wormhole?"

"That's the working theory." Kaji said.

"So, how long until we see the other landing site?" Milliardo asked.

"Yeah, we need to figure out a defense strategy, don't we?" Noin asked.

"We're moving an OBSAT into place now so we can monitor things." Misato said. "Or at least try to monitor things."

"It's coming into range, now ma'am." Hyuga said. "Visual on main screen."

The main screen displayed a decimated city scape off China's mainland. The buildings that weren't destroyed by Second Impact stood as twisted wrecks, missing windows, and in some cases walls, with several sticking out from the flooded areas of the old city. Nestled in a flattened area of the city that may have once been residential housing, were two massive crates, several aircraft, and some smaller vehicles. There was also something else hidden inside one of the damage larger building around them that could not be identified.

"So, that our enemy?" Wufei asked. "Some cargo crates, a few panes, and some other little things?"

"Yeah, why don't we go and attack it now?" Duo asked. "Crush them before they become some kind of pain in our collective asses."

"I don't think that's such a good idea." Shinji said.

"Why not?" Duo asked. "The sooner we wipe these guys out, the better off we'll be."

"It's a bad idea to go into something we don't know about." Shinji said. "We don't even know what's in those crates."

"Hyuga, multispectral scan." Misato ordered.

"I did that already, ma'am." Hyuga replied. "Those crates are shielded, as is that building. Whatever shadow is being cast, we can't tell what it is."

"So, they're hiding something." Kaji said. "Shinji's right, it's a bad idea to attack blindly."
"I agree." Heero said. "We may have a numerical advantage, but we may be severely disadvantaged without more information."

"We do not need to needlessly die before we are afforded the chance to return home either." Milliardo said. "Perhaps it is prudent to wait and see what happens."

"But we have 10 Gundams!" Wufei said. "Plus those two Evangelions! We have enough power to conquer the planet if we wanted to. We can take them out with ease!"

"I'd rather not risk all our lives just for a quick ending." Asuka said. "I'm all for waiting."

"So am I." Mari said. "We've been in these situations before, and it can go tits up pretty fucking quick when you're caught off guard."

"As much as it's against my better judgement… I'd rather wait as well." Domon said. "After fighting Shinji and Heero, I think it would be best to take our time before attacking."

"I agree as well." Gendo said from above. "Patience in this case is crucial. We must not needlessly waste resources when we can investigate and see what we're up against."

"Perhaps once we have the data from that crashed vehicle we can have a better handle on what we're up against." Fuyutsuki added.

"Sub–Commander, perhaps we should wait for this Allenby to wake up." Kaji said. "She was presumably being chased by these individuals, she may know their disposition."

"Very well." Gendo said. "Until the girl awakens, we wait. Keep us at Level–2 battle stations, have the AIS on standby so we're not caught by surprise again."

"Understood, Commander."

"What about us?" Noin asked. "Should we be ready to fight?"

"Yeah, and try to get here in under and hour next time." Misato said. "We may need to deploy faster next time."

"And how long until we can send everyone back?" Fuyutsuki asked.

"A little over a week, sir." Ritsuko said. "It may be delayed by a day or so at this point to investigate the wreckage, but we should be able to manage. Howard can head the project while Rain and I will inspect what was recovered."

"Understood." Gendo said.

"So, what, we just go back to the apartment?" Mari asked.

"Yeah, I don't see why not." Misato said. "We don't know anything else, and no one's attacking."

"Alright then." Duo said as he stretched. "Back to bed it is."

"Yeah, same here." Asuka said as she pointed at Shinji. "But you, you need to clean up and get that blood off you before we leave."

"No, I'd rather deal with it when we get home." Shinji said. "I don't have any extra clothes here to change into here."
"Fine, but if we get weird stares on the train, I'm telling them I don't know you." Asuka said.
"Actually, I'm not sitting next to you, it'll be easier."

"Fine, princess, I'll sit next to him." Mari said.

"That's because you're weird." Asuka retorted.

"Enough, can we just go?" Shinji said.

"Yeah, why not." Asuka said.

"I'll go with them." Kaji said as the group of pilots began filing out. "Make sure they get home safely."

"Why?" Misato asked.

"Cause, for some reason… I got a really bad feeling about this." Kaji replied as he followed suit and left.

November 19, 2016 – Ruins of Old Hong Kong

The shadowy figure was standing on the edge of a hill next to his base camp and looking over the ruins of Old Hong Kong again. He watched the sun slowly rise over the remains of the city, and sighed deeply as his advisor came up behind him to give him the latest report.

"Well, have you any news of our new home?" The shadowy figure asked.

"Well, Master…" The advisor started.

"Do not call me that." The shadowy figure said. "That man is dead, and he is never coming back."

"I know we've gone over this, but I refuse to call you by your name, it shows a lack of respect." The advisor said.

"My name was good enough for the 7th Gundam fight." The shadowy figure said. "And I will be Shuuji Kurosu until I meet the King of Hearts once more."

"Well then, sir…" The advisor said. "This world did indeed suffer a cataclysm, not brought on by humanity. Apparently a meteor of some kind struck Antarctica at an incredible speed and vaporized it causing a massive tsunami that wiped out a third of the planet's population, and ignited a war that killed off another sixth."

"That sounds like propaganda." Shuuji said. "Improbable propaganda for the idiotic masses of this world."

"Well, sir they apparently believe it." The advisor said.

"So, have you investigated any further?" Shuuji asked.

"Yes, there appears to be some organization running things here… something called NERV." The advisor explained. "It's headquartered in the same city that the Burning Gundam is located in."

"And what about the girl?" Shuuji asked.

"Which one?" The advisor asked.
"Both, actually." Shuuji said.

"The woman is still in stasis." The advisor replied. "As for girl, she was recovered by Burning Gundam, and some other kind of Mobile Fighter."

"What did it look like?" Shuuji asked.

"It had a large rifle, and a shield." The advisor described. "It also had a large pair of wings as well."

"Interesting." Shuuji said. "It appears we're in some kind of alternate reality. Yet, Mobile Fighters still exist."

"It would appear that way with all the evidence we've gathered." The advisor said.

"Have you prepared any kind of reconnaissance of this city you mentioned?" Shuuji asked.

"Yes, we have ten shimmering drones ready for deployment." The advisor said. "We will deploy them on your order."

"Good." Shuuji said. "Deploy them at once. And once that's done, send some of our spies to the nearest city to get some further information into this NERV you spoke of."

"Why is that sir?" The advisor asked.

"Well, our little project still needs a test subject." Shuuji said. "Perhaps one of these Mobile Fighter pilots can assist us with that. Once we have information on this NERV, we should be able to find a way to use it to our advantage."

"Understood, sir." The advisor said. "Is there anything else before I go?"

"Yes, just one more thing." Shuuji asked. "Is our little project intact?"

"Of course, sir." The advisor replied. "Nothing was damaged in transit."

"Good." Shuuji said. "It's a shame I won't be able to enact my plan on our own Earth, but this desolated rock should do just as well."

"Should we begin defrosting the woman then?" The advisor asked.

"Yes, she will need time." Shuuji said. "Begin the preparations for our little experiment too. We need to be ready."

Rain was just waking up, and realized that the lump she expected to be next to her was missing. She knew that Domon had stayed late at the hospital, but had expected to wake up next to his muscular form like she always had after he'd rescued her from the Dark Gundam and professed his love to her.

"I cannot believe he's still with her!" Rain muttered angrily as she got up.

She took a shower and began to get ready to leave, as she had work to do. The longer Domon was gone, the angrier she got, and as Rain was just about ready to leave, she heard the door open.

Rain got up to greet Domon at the door. When Domon saw her, he smiled. "Morning, beautiful, you look..." However, his words were met with a steely gaze instead of the warm hello he was expecting.
"Where have you been all night?!" Rain asked angrily.

"At the hospital." Domon said. "You knew I was there."

"Yes, but you were supposed to come home, Domon!" Rain said loudly.

"I know that, but I didn't want to leave her alone in an unfamiliar place." Domon said. "She's my friend."

"Domon, do you even realize what you're saying?" Rain asked.

"That I was caring for my friend." Domon said. "She shouldn't be alone in her condition."

"That's not the point!" Rain said. "What about me? I was here all alone!"

"Everyone we know here is next door, I knew you were safe." Domon said. "I don't see what the problem is."

"The problem is you still love her, don't you?!" Rain said as her eyes began to tear up. "You're still in love with Allenby, even after all this time!"

"Rain, I told you, I never loved her, I always loved you…" Domon said.

"Yes, but you hated me when I let those men take her during the Gundam Fight!" Rain shouted.

"Rain, we went over this so long ago." Domon said. "I said I was sorry."

"God, you're an idiot sometimes!" Rain shouted. "Will you even admit to yourself that she loved you?!"

"She didn't love me." Domon said. "We're just really good friends. Now, can we please stop arguing about this?"

"No, we're done talking about this!" Rain said angrily. "You don't even realize what you did wrong!"

"Because I didn't do anything wrong. Looking after a friend in need is what people do." Domon said plainly. "And will you stop yelling, we can't talk like this."

"You're right, Domon." Rina said through gritted teeth. "We can't talk when you're being stubborn like this."

"Stubborn?" Domon asked as Rain grabbed her purse. "Hey, where are you going?"

"Like you care…" Rain said. "Why don't you go check in on Allenby, and stop worrying about me. I'll be just fine."

"Rain, wait." Domon said.

"Leave me alone, Domon!" Rain said loudly as she headed for the front door.

"Rain… wait!" Domon shouted as Rain ran out the front door and shut it. By the time he got the door open again, he didn't see Rain at all. He looked down to the parking lot to see her walking towards the train station.

"RAIN… COME BACK!" Domon shouted, but she ignored him and continued on her way to
Domon sighed deeply and went back inside. He laid in bed this time without Rain and shook his head. "I don't know what I did wrong… I was just watching over a friend…"

Rain arrived to NERV HQ in a huff. She was still furious with Domon about spending all night with Allenby in the hospital, and just didn't want to think about it. However, the entire train ride to NERV, that's all she could think about. As she was going in through the security checkpoint, she saw Asuka, Mari, and Shinji leaving. Shinji looked at her and walked over with a kind smile on his face.

"Hi Rain, how are you?" Shinji asked.

"I'm doing alright, Shinji." Rain lied. "What are you three doing here?"

"Early morning sync tests courtesy of your new friend." Mari said. "So here we are at the ass crack of dawn doing shit we don't to do."

"It can't be that bad." Rain said.

"Trust us, it is." Asuka replied.

"Rain, are you sure you're ok?" Shinji interjected.

"Yeah, I'm sure Shinji." Rain said.

"Well, you have puffy eyes." Shinji said. "Like you've been crying."

Rain stared at Shinji, dumbstruck. "How could you tell?"

"I've cried a lot, I know what it looks like." Shinji said. "Did something happen with Domon?"

"I… yes." Rain said. "He stayed with Allenby all night, he chose her over of me."

"But isn't she his friend?" Shinji asked.

"Yes, but she's in love with him." Rain replied.

"So?" Mari asked. "I love the puppy, but the princess doesn't hate it when we spend time together."

"That's different, you're all friends." Rain said.

"Aren't you friends with Allenby?" Shinji asked.

"Not really, she's Domon's… friend." Rain replied.

"Why don't you like her?" Shinji asked.

"Because she loves Domon." Rain said. "And I think he loves her too."

"Wait, you guys got in an argument cause he stayed with her all night?" Asuka asked.

"Yes, he wasn't supposed to stay that long." Rain said. "But he forgot about me because he…"

"Because he was worried about his friend." Mari said. "He didn't want to leave her alone right?
Wanted to make sure she was ok?"

"Yeah…" Rain replied in confusion.

"He's just a concerned friend." Shinji said. "We've all done it." Shinji gestured to Asuka and Mari. "When your friend is in a coma, you tend to worry a lot."

"I'm sure muscles didn't forget about you." Mari said.

"He said he'd knew I'd be safe." Rain said. "But I don't believe him."

"Why don't you believe him?" Asuka asked. "She's in a coma, and I doubt he did anything to her. Only fucked up people do that, and he isn't fucked up."

"What?" Rain asked.

"Asuka means that all he did was sit with her so she wouldn't be alone." Shinji said. "He didn't mean to leave you alone, he's allowed to be worried about his friends, Rain."

"We're married." Rain said.

"So?" Asuka said. "You can't tell him who his friends are or who to care about? He loves you, doesn't he?"

"He says he does." Rain said. "But when she's involved, I just can't trust him."

"Did they ever do anything together?" Mari asked.

"What do you mean?" Rain asked.

"Did they ever bang?" Mari asked.

"No…" Rain replied.

"Then there isn't anything between them than a very close friendship." Mari said.

"What do you mean?" Rain asked.

"Sometimes friends look like they're close, but they're only friends." Asuka said. "I thought those two were banging for a long time, till Shinji set me straight. You're just imagining things."

"No… I'm not."

"Rain, you are." Shinji said. "Don't you trust Domon's judgement?"

"You remember he fought you without provocation, right?" Rain asked.

"I meant, do you trust his judgment when it comes to love?" Shinji said. "I've seen the way he looks at you, he loves you more than anything."

"Do you really think so?" Rain asked.

"I've seen his look too, it's the same one Shinji has for me." Asuka said. "You should cut him a bit more slack when it comes to Allenby."

"Because he loves me?" Rain said. "But she's so…"
"She's beautiful, but he only has eyes for you." Shinji said as he gave Rain a hug. "Don't be so mad at him."

"I guess." Rain said. "You guys have been very convincing."

"We try." Mari said. "Anyway, we have school, so we'll see you later."

"And don't forget what we said." Shinji said.

"I won't." Rain replied. "See you guys later."

"Good luck with that wreckage." Shinji said. "Hopefully you'll figure out who did this."

"I hope so too." Rain said. "That way we get our full focus on getting everyone home…"

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Milliardo and Heero were sitting in Lady Une's room. Everyone else was still sleeping before they had to leave for school, and the three of them were discussing something important, their eventual return home.

"So, what is going to happen when we return home?" Heero asked. "Will the White Zodiac still be a major threat?"

"Yes." Lady Une said. "Trente has children, a little older than you I believe. They would have been left in command in his absence."

"He has children?" Heero asked. "That is quite disturbing."

"Those children are even more disturbing than Trente was." Milliardo said. "They are just as unstable as Trente, and ten times more volatile and fanatical than he ever could hope to be."

"You've met them?" Heero asked.

"Unfortunately we both have." Lady Une said. "They're a set of twins, Vingt, the boy, is a sadistic little bastard. He once killed a servant for serving him hot chocolate to him that was too hot, killed him with a sharpened crayon…"

"That is… disturbing." Heero replied.

"And the girl… Cinquante… she loves violence." Milliardo said.

"So does Dorothy Catalonia." Heero replied nonchalantly.

"No, she doesn't." Milliardo said. "Not like Cinquante. This girl once watched her brother kill a man… and… got off to it. The more violent the act, the more she enjoys it. She and her brother have a very… close relationship."

"Relationship…?" Heero asked.

"Because he kills indiscriminately… she enjoys watching him murder, and then they enjoy… each other's company…" Milliardo said with a shudder.

"That is disgusting." Heero said. "If they are as dangerous as you say they are, they need to be stopped, so peace can be restored."

"That and they're a disgusting pair of incestuous bastards." Lady Une said.
"Will the White Zodiac fall if we tell them Trente is dead?" Heero asked.

"Even when we show them his charred body, they probably won't believe us," Lady Une said.
"We'll need to kill them as well to make sure the organization falls apart. Without a Khushrenada to helm it, no one will be able to lead what's left of Treize's loyal followers."

"There was a body?" Heero asked. "His Mobile Suit exploded, there shouldn't be much left."

"Cockpit was heavily shielded with Gundanium." Milliardo said. "His body was badly charred, but Howard said there should be viable DNA that can be tested."

"Interesting…" Heero said.

"So, when do we tell the others about those two… miscreants?" Milliardo asked.

"When we get back home." Lady Une said. "We need to focus on whatever just came through that wormhole, we can deal with those children when he return home."

"Right." Milliardo said.

"We should probably wake the others for school if they aren't up already." Heero said. "We shouldn't be late."

"If you'll excuse us Lady Une." Milliardo said.

"Of course." Lady Une said as they left.

Rain and Ritsuko were hard at work going through the wreckage. They had recovered the black boxes and were analyzing the data on them. The hover craft had several camera mounted on its hull that were constantly recovering in flight. The data on the black boxes was slightly corrupted, but Rain and Ritsuko had devised a program to clean up the data enough to recover it. However, it was very time consuming, and required a great deal of monitoring from the both them. They had been working on it all morning, and had made a great deal of progress, but the data had been corrupted in such a way that all the frames were out of order.

"Have you been able to get time stamps restored yet?" Ritsuko asked.

"No, I think that data is lost." Rain said. "We'll just have to look through all the data to find what we're looking for."

"What about the video recompiler to put this shit back in order?" Ritsuko asked.

"It's doing its best, but without the time stamp, we'll need to find some other metadata to exploit to put the video back in order." Rain said. "Any ideas?"

"Maybe if we use the MAGI, they can recorder the footage for us." Ritsuko suggested. "It can figure out the best way to put the frames in order."

"Are they ever wrong?" Rain asked.

"They use consensus decision making for the most logical solution." Ritsuko said. "They're never wrong."

"Well, then let's send what we've recovered to them." Rain said. "I think we've got most of the data
"I believe so." Ritsuko said. "I'm transferring the data to the MAGI now." Ritsuko clicked a few buttons on her keyboard and the data moved to the MAGI's systems.

The MAGI took the data and quickly processed it, returning a video shortly thereafter, damaged frames and all.

"They did that exceedingly fast." Rain said.

"I told you they worked fast." Ritsuko said. "Looks like they reordered everything properly."

"Roll the video to the last few minutes before the crash." Rain said.

"Right." Ritsuko said as the video began playing. It showed Allenby's hovercraft dodging weapons fire from several pursuers, taking several hits in the process, and in the final moments before the camera cut out, something large entered the frame.

"Put that back." Rain said.

"Why?" Ritsuko said.

"I think I saw who this is… but I can't believe it." Rain said. "Put it back a second and play it frame by frame."

"Right." Ritsuko said.

Ritsuko put the video back just before the feed cut out, and in the last usable frames before that happened, appeared a Gundam. It was violet and black with red highlights, and had massive horns on its head. There were two massive red pods with yellow highlights mounted on its back.

"Is that a Gundam?" Ritsuko asked.

"The Master Gundam…” Rain muttered. "It's impossible. It's been destroyed… Domon burned it when he cremated Master Asia…”

"Who?" Ritsuko asked.

"Domon's teacher." Rain said. "He died just before I was taken by the Dark Gundam… but this just isn't possible. That Gundam shouldn't be here."

"Then how do you explain it?" Ritsuko asked. "It's clearly here, it's in the wormhole."

"Yes, but it shouldn't be." Rain said. "We need Allenby to wake up soon, because I think we're in a great deal of trouble."

"Why?" Ritsuko asked.

"The only thing capable of recreating a Gundam like that is the Dark Gundam." Rain said.

——

School was over, and everyone was walking home. It had been an easy day, as Nebukawa no Sensei was out sick, and it had been left to Milliardo and Noin as "teacher's assistants" to run the class, which consisted of having the class do nothing all day but relax, as there weren't any lesson plans to follow. Everyone was in a good mood from that except Shinji and Domon. Domon from the fight he
and Rain had had earlier, and Shinji from something else entirely.

"Hey, baka, why do you look so depressed?" Asuka asked. "We have Sundays off, so we don't have to suffer though that school again until Monday."

"It's nothing, Asuka." Shinji said.

"Shinji, when you say nothing's wrong, it means something's wrong." Trowa said.

"So what is it?" Mari asked.

"I feel… like we're being watched…" Shinji said. "Like we're being followed or something…"

"Stop being so paranoid, baka." Asuka said. "You're probably just thinking about those Section 2 nutcases that follow us everywhere."

"No this is different…" Shinji said. "I know they're there… but this just feels… wrong."

"How can you tell?" Noin asked. "That it feels wrong."

"I can't explain it… it's just a sixth sense." Shinji said. "Like something is about to go very wrong…"

"I agree with Shinji." Domon said. "Something feels off, but I'm just not sure what it is."

"You're both crazy." Duo said. "No one's watching us, people don't even know who most of us are."

"Yeah, they don't know we pilot Gundams." Quatre said. "I think we're perfectly safe."

"I don't think Shinji's being paranoid." Milliardo said. "Those new arrivals could be monitoring us. It's not unheard of to gather intelligence on an enemy."

"I think you're being a bit paranoid." Mari said. "And a bit retarded."

"Just because someone's paranoid doesn't mean someone isn't after them." Heero said. "We should be extra vigilant at least until this new threat has been dealt with."

"Or what, ninjas will come and abduct us?" Asuka said.

"No, but someone could if you're not paying attention." Heero said.

"Fine, whatever." Asuka said. "I can handle myself."

"Why ninjas?" Duo asked.


Shuuji was watching the group of pilots leave school. He saw them all walking and talking, and overheard Shinji's worries about being watched, which made Shuuji smile.

"So, it appears one of them realizes they're being watched." Shuuji said. "He's quite aware of his environment… and Domon… always so attentive."

Shuuji smiled. "And they all pilot Gundams, do they?" Shuuji asked himself. "So, I can use one of them for my plans, and I think I know which one I want."
"You do, sir?" The advisor asked as he walked in behind him.

"Yes…" Shuuji said. "Set up a recovery team to get that one." Shuuji pointed at the screen towards one of the pilots.

"That girl there?" The advisor asked.

"Yes, her." Shuuji said. "She'll be perfect for our little distraction."

"Are you sure she can pilot?" The advisor asked.

"They said they were Gundam pilots, so she should be able to." Shuuji said. "Have the team sent there tonight in one of the shimmering hovercraft. Have them shadow them day and night and take her at the earliest opportunity."

"Understood, sir." The advisor said. "Will there be anything else?"

"Yes, how are our power syphoning plans going?" Shuuji asked.

"We're almost connected to the power grid, sir." The advisor replied. "We should be able to execute our plan in the next few hours."

"Good, then as soon as we've captured that girl, we'll be able to begin." Shuuji said. "You've done good work."

"Thank you, sir." The advisor replied. "I try my best."

"Well then, get to work." Shuuji said. "We have a lot to accomplish, and the quicker we begin, the better for us all."

November 20, 2016 – Outside Comfort 17 Apartments

"How did I get stuck going to the store for groceries?" Asuka muttered. "Oh, that's right… Shinji loves me, and he gave me a kiss." Asuka sighed. "Damn him, he knows I can't refuse him when he gives me that kind of attention. I hate being like this… but I love him too so it can't be that bad, and baka promised to make my favorite sausages after all."

Asuka continued towards the store, glancing around her from any unusual stuff. "I can't wait to tell Shinji that I was able to walk all alone to the store without getting attacked by ninjas or whatever."

Just then, a hovercraft decloaked next to Asuka and five men jumped out to grab Asuka.

"What the fuck, get away from me!" Asuka screamed as she roundhouse kicked one of the guys in the face, kicking to the ground. The other four men rushed her, with Asuka punching as kicking as best she could trying to keep them from grabbing her. She kneed another of them in the balls, putting him on his knees, and a third man that she jabbed in the eye with her middle finger, causing him to scream in pain.

Several Section 2 agents came running towards her as she was fighting, but two men in the hovercraft opened fire with heavy weapons, slaughtering them all.

"What the fuck?!" Asuka shouted as the fourth man shot her in the back with a tranquillizer dart and she collapsed on the ground.

"This fucking little bitch!" The man holding his bleeding eye said. "I wanna fuck her up good and
show her whose boss."

"We can't, were under orders you fucking idiot." The man clutching the tranquilizer gun said. "She's a highly trained Gundam pilot, did you think she'd go without a fight?"

"Of course I did." The man holding his bleeding eye said. "She's a teenager, we can handle her."

"Enough, get her onboard, and get those two morons up here as well." The fifth, uninjured man said. "She'll be dealt with according by her friends when the attack beings."

Domon and Rain were both sitting in Allenby's room. After her talk with Shinji, Asuka, and Mari, and a night of apologizing, Rain and Domon had made up. She had told him about what she saw on the video she recovered, but Domon didn't believe her. So, they decided that they would both sit with Allenby until she woke up, so that hopefully she could tell them what she knew.

"Domon, are you still worried about her?" Rain asked.

"A bit more than before now that you mentioned Master Gundam." Domon said as Allenby started stirring in front of them. "I just hope it's not as bad as we think it is."

"You mean the Dark Gundam?" Rain asked.

"I told you it wasn't gone." Domon said. "Something of it must have survived… or someone built another one. But it doesn't matter… something tells me this is as bad as we think it is… and only Allenby will be able to tell us what happened."

"Unfortunately now all we can do is wait." Rain as Allenby's vitals began spiking and she began thrashing. "Her brain activity is picking up."

"AAAAHHHHH!" Allenby screamed as she trashed in bed. "No, I won't get back in that thing, I refuse! I'll never use the Berserker System again!"

Domon knelt beside Allenby's bed. "Allenby, you're safe. You're safe right here."

"Domon, she's having a night terror, she can't hear you." Rain said.

"It doesn't mean I can't try and get through to her." Domon said. "Allenby, answer me! You're safe!

"None of us are safe!" Allenby screamed. "The darkness will get us all! I have to warn Domon, he's the only one that can save us from the darkness!"

"Allenby, I'm right here!" Domon cried. "What darkness, tell me!"

However, before Allenby could try to respond in her delirium, Rain injected her with a sedative. "Rain, what the hell are you doing?!!"

"Keeping her from hurting herself further." Rain said. "The way she was thrashing, she was liable to open up her wounds."

"Do you think she'll be ok?" Domon asked.

"I don't know." Rain said. "But at least she's not in a coma anymore."

"Yeah, but what she was muttering about… the Berserker System, and that darkness, it's all very
concerning." Domon said. "Could they have created another Berserker System?"

"It's possible, Domon, it's very possible." Rain said. "But the darkness thing concerns me even more."

"I think it can only be one thing." Domon said.

"The Dark Gundam?" Rain asked as she shuttered.

"Yeah… the Dark Gundam." Domon replied as he held Rain close. "Don't worry, I won't let that thing take you away from me ever again…"

Shinji was sitting in the apartment waiting for Asuka to return from the store. He had asked her to go out to the store to get some groceries for dinner and she had been gone over an hour. Shinji knew she didn't like to go to the store, but she would never not call, and it shouldn't have taken her more than half an hour to go and come back.

"I should call her and see if everything's ok." Shinji said.

"What was that, puppy?" Mari said from the sofa.

"Asuka's been gone a while, I'm going to call her." Shinji replied.

"Tell her to get me a Snickers if she's still at the store." Mari asked.

"Ok, Mari." Shinji replied as he began dialing Asuka's number.

"You're the best, puppy." Mari replied happily.

Shinji finished dialing his phone and sighed.

Brrring… brrring… brrring…

"Hello?" Kaji said.

"Kaji?" Shinji asked as he looked at his cell phone to see Asuka's picture. "This isn't your phone… why do you have Asuka's phone."

"Shinji… I've got to tell you something, and I want you to stay calm, ok?" Kaji said.

"What's wrong, where's Asuka?" Shinji asked. "Kaji, why do you have her phone?"

"Shinji, she's been taken." Kaji said. "Someone took her..."

"Who took her?!" Shinji shouted as Mari walked into the kitchen. "Tell me Kaji!"

"We don't know, Shinji." Kaji said. "We don't know who took her, but we think it's the newest arrivals who took her."

"WHAT?!" Shinji shouted. "How the hell did they grab her?! Wasn't Section 2 watching her like they always watch us?!"

"Shinji, what's wrong?" Mari asked as she walked over to Shinji.

"Shinji, they were... all the agents were slaughtered trying to help her." Kaji said. "We're sending
armored vehicles to pick you guys up... grab some stuff and get ready, ok? We'll discuss it more when we get you to base."

"Fine, I'll let everyone know." Shinji said gruffly. "Kaji, promise me something... let me help."

"I'll do my best, Shinji, just like always." Kaji said before he hung up the phone. "Just hang tight, and I'll convince the powers that be to let you help."

"Thanks, Kaji." Shinji said as he hung up the phone and threw his Nokia against the wall.

"Shinji, why were you yelling?!" Mari shouted at him. "Why do you look so angry."

"Someone took Asuka... they grabbed her off the street." Shinji said as he shook with rage. "I knew I should have gone with her..."

"Shinji, if you went, you could have been captured too." Mari replied. "And the men in black?"

"Slaughter according to Kaji." Shinji said coldly. "And we need to get ready, they're sending armored cars to take us to NERV. Grab some clothes and stuff... ok?"

"Shinji, are you going to be alright?" Mari asked.

"I'm not going to be alright until we find Asuka." Shinji said as he picked up his undamaged cell phone. "I'll feel much better after we find the guys that took her."

"Why not after you have Asuka back?" Mari asked.

"Until I make them pay for they just did, I won't be alright." Shinji said. "Cause when I find them, they're going to regret taking Asuka from me."

"What are you going to do, Shinji?" Mari asked worriedly.

"Slaughter them all." Shinji said darkly.

To Be Continued

A/N: I do not own Evangelion or any of the characters, GAINAX and the other distributors of NGE related material do. I am simply using them as a backdrop for my fanfic. I also do not own Gundam Wing or G Gundam, Sunrise does, as do their licensed distributors.

Sync Score Rankings!
Shinji – 97.5% (No Change)
Rei – 75.0% (No Change)
Asuka – 52.3% (No Change)
Mari – 42.0% (No Change)

The title of this chapter comes from the first G Gundam OP. It's a pretty lively opening theme, and well, it's a perfect name for a chapter where things end up in the air as it were.

So, the story continues onto focusing more towards G Gundam's characters now that the White Zodiac have been dealt with. There are only three chapters left before this story concludes and everyone is sent home with the mcguffin I came up with to send them back. With this new shift, we have a new semi–mysterious figure, and a kidnapped Asuka who is about to be turned against those that love her. Also, there is a great deal of secrecy about what Shuuji Kurosu is actually doing, and you'll just have to continue reading to find out. Expect a few surprises in the next chapter, which will
mainly deal with a battle, and will be a bit shorter than usual, as its won't have the slice of life filler I like adding in.

As for the new arrivals, the reason there were two wormholes is that there was only one to begin with, and due to the weapons fire in the matter stream, it pushed Allenby out sooner than the others, landing her near Tokyo–3, while the rest of them headed for Old Hong Kong. I got the idea from both Stargate where shooting the gate causes the wormhole to jump to the next closest gate, and from the visual of the Vengeance shooting the Enterprise out of Warp in ST: Into Darkness.

As I said before, and will always say at the end of chapter, please leave comments, as I would like to try to improve the story going forward any way I can. And, hell, constructive criticism is a good thing.
Dark Gundam Reborn

Neon Genesis Evangelion: Legacy – Gundam Invasion
A Mobile Suit Gundam Wing and Mobile Fighter G Gundam Crossover

Chapter 13 – Dark Gundam Reborn
November 20, 2016 – Ruins of Old Hong Kong

Asuka was tied to a chair, struggling against the ropes she restrained with. She had blood all over her face from the ride back from Tokyo–3. She had awoken during the trip back to Old Hong Kong and had to be knocked out again with another tranquilizer dart after having bitten one of the men's ears off as she tried to get away. She was still a bit groggy after the second tranq dart, but it didn't keep her from being pissed off.

"Where am I you motherfucking assholes?!!" Asuka screamed. "I swear to whatever being you believe in, I'll make you regret kidnapping me!"

"I highly doubt you could do that, girl." Shuuji said as he came out of the shadows laughing. "It's very noble that you're struggling so much, but it won't help you in the long run. The more you resist, the worse things will get for you."

"Yeah, cause I'm supposed to be afraid of a man in a ponytail down to his ass." Asuka scoffed. "You better just let me go now, otherwise it'll get worse for you."

"I don't see how that's possible." Shuuji said. "It was very easy to abduct you, and those guards you had shadowing you were little more than pin cushions."

"Please, your guys were just as fucking weak. How many did I take out? Three I think? Plus that asshole's ear." Asuka spat. "Whole bunch of weak ass pussies who need drugs to knock out a girl… fucking pathetic."

"Yes, it's taking a lot of restraint on my part not to let them take revenge on you for taking that poor boy's ear." Shuuji said. "And for blinding that other man's eye."

"They got what they deserved for grabbing me." Asuka scoffed. "And I doubt I'd even notice their micro penises."

"Well, fortunately, I need you in peak physical condition for I need you to do." Shuuji said. "Otherwise, that's what you'd have to deal with."

"Well fuck you, you creepy ass pedophile." Asuka sneered. "I don't intend on helping you with whatever stupid, crazy, dumbass bullshit you have planned."

Shuuji's temple twitched as Asuka said the word pedophile, but ignored it when he spoke. "Well, girl, I don't plan on giving you a choice."

"What, you're gonna rape me or something?" Asuka asked. "Guess I was right calling you a pedophile…"

SLAP

Shuuji had backhanded Asuka's face, drawing blood from her cheek with the strike. "You will show
me some respect girl, otherwise I'll make this far more difficult on you than it needs to be."

''Funny, I thought with the whole kidnapping and slapping the girl that's tied up that it was already pretty bad.' Asuka said coldly. ''And it takes a pretty weak man to hit someone who can't defend themselves.' Asuka spit some of the blood out her mouth. ''So I don't think you deserve any respect considering you're just a bitch."

SLAP

Shuuji slapped Asuka so hard, she was knocked over onto the floor, still attached to the chair. Asuka smirked as she lay there, and then she started laughing.

''Can't take criticism well, can't you, bitch?'' Asuka cackled.

''Enough out of you, girl!' Shuuji shouted. ''I will not take your lip!''

''Yeah, well, I have no idea why you took me, but it was a big fucking mistake.' Asuka said. ''When my boyfriend breaks me out of here, he's going to fucking murder you."

''I highly doubt a teenager could do much damage to me.' Shuuji said.

''Well, he's got a fucking temper.' Asuka said. ''He'd destroy the world to protect me, so you're pretty much fucking dead."

''Well… then perhaps my plan will work better than I thought…'' Shuuji said. He whipped Asuka's chair back to its feet, giving Asuka some minor whiplash.

''What the fuck are you on about?!'' Asuka asked. ''Your plan won't work, I guarantee it. I'm not helping some psychotic pedophile."

''Your consent for this activity isn't needed.' Shuuji said. ''You won't have any choice in the matter, girl."

''It's nice that you think that, but as soon as you let me out of these ropes, I swear I'm going to fucking kill you.' Asuka spat.

''I doubt that.' Shuuji said. ''You might have spirit, but you don't have the skill."

''You wanna test that theory, asshole?'' Asuka shouted. ''Come on, let me out of here so we can have a fight. I'll fuck you up!''

Shuuji laughed. ''I could kill you without any effort, girl.' Shuuji said. ''You're meaningless challenge is wasted on me."

''Afraid to fight a girl, old man?!'' Asuka shouted. ''Stop being such a pussy!"

''ENOUGH!'' Shuuji roared.

SLAP

Shuuji had backhanded Asuka again, only to get another smirk in response.

''Go ahead, keep hitting me.' Asuka sneered. ''I've handled way worse than some bitch like you can dish out. But you better make it count… the moment my boyfriend sees me like this, he's gonna slaughter you.'
"I still doubt that very much." Shuuji said.

"Yeah, talk to the last thing that tried to hurt me, or the one before that." Asuka sneered. "Oh that's right, they're dead because of him." Asuka smirked. "So, tough guy, why don't you tell me your name so my boyfriend slaughters the right fucking asshole."

"You can call me Dark Asia, girl." Shuuji, or rather, Dark Asia said as he injected Asuka with another dose of tranquilizer. "And it's time for you to get ready for my little experiment..." Dark Asia laughed. "I doubt very much you'll live through it..."

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Shinji stormed into the Command Center with Mari hot on his heels. He was absolutely enraged, and it showed in his eyes, which had a red hue similar to what happens when he taps into Unit–01’s hidden power. He walked right up to Misato and grabbed her by the jacket and shook her somewhat violently.

"WHERE IS SHE?!" Shinji shouted as the base shook around him. "DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE THEY TOOK HER?!"

"Shinji, we're working on it." Misato said nervously. "And I can't work on it unless you let go of me..."

"Shinji, remember what I said about staying calm in the car?" Mari asked nervously. "Let miso go and hold my hand... ok?"

Shinji shoved Misato back towards the console and glared at her. "How did she get taken?! Aren't those Section 2 goons supposed be prepared for this kind of shit?!"

"Shinji, these kinds of things are unpredictable." Misato said. "I wish it were different, but it's not. We're doing our best to find her, but that craft they used had cloaking abilities... which makes things... difficult."

"I DON'T WANT YOUR FLIMSY EXCUSES, MISATO!" Shinji roared as the base shook again. "YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO PROTECT US, AND YOU KEEP LETTING US DOWN! HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO TRUST WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS TRUE?!"

"Shinji... I'm sorry..." Misato stammered. "I... I didn't think we were in any danger... none of us did..."

"THAT DOESN'T MATTER ANYMORE, BECAUSE NOW ASUKA'S BEEN TAKEN AND SHE'S IN TROUBLE!" Shinji shouted. "JUST TELL ME WHERE THEY ARE SO I CAN GO SLAUGHTER EVERY LAST FUCKING ONE OF THOSE MOTHERFUCKING COCKSUCKERS! I'LL GO TO HONG KONG ALONE IF I HAVE TO RESUCE HER AND WIPE THEM OFF THE FACE OF THE FUCKING PLANET!"

"What about waiting until we have more info, Shinji?" Mari asked worriedly.

"THEY HAVE ASUKA, THEY'RE A THREAT!" Shinji roared as the base once shook again. "I'M DONE WAITING, THEY NEED TO FUCKING DIE!"

"Shinji... please... calm down." Mari said as she squeezed his hand as the base shook around them. "If you keep this up, Unit–01’s gonna go nuts..." Mari looked at Maya and Misato. "Unless I'm wrong, of course."
"No… you're right." Maya said anxiously. "Unit–01 activated a short time ago, and Mr. Kaji confirmed the time coincides with Shinji learning the news about Asuka…"

"See, Shinji, if you don't stop, you're gonna cause another wormhole, or kill us all." Mari said. "Do you want that?"

"NO, I WANT TO FIND ASUKA AND KILL THESE BASTARDS!" Shinji screamed.

"Very passionate speech, Shinji." Milliardo said. "But you won't have to go alone. We'll help too."

"But please calm down first." Mari said. "We'll get Asuka back, and we'll let you slaughter all the bad guys you want. I bet Unit–01 could swallow them and shit them out or something…"

"I'm not going to calm down until I know she's safe!" Shinji shouted. "Why doesn't anyone understand that?!"

"Shinji, we have to think about everyone's safety, not just Asuka's." Misato said.

"She knows I'd risk my life to save her, and if you're worried about everyone else's safety, don't be!" Shinji shouted. "I told you, I'd go alone!"

"Shinji, you're not going alone." Domon said as he and Rain walked in. "It's too dangerous."

"How do you know it's dangerous, exactly?" Kaji asked.

"Allenby woke up and started muttering things." Domon said. "Disturbing things."

"Well, what are these disturbing things?" Shinji asked. "They can't be that awful, you don't even look worried."

"She didn't say anything definite." Rain said. "It was all heavily veiled."

"Can you explain this veiled stuff?" Duo asked. "Or…"

"Or are you gonna keep cock teasing us with all this shit." Mari finished.

Domon sighed. "She mentioned something about the Berserker System." Domon said.

"And that is?" Lady Une asked.

"It's a fighting enhancement system that boosts a Mobile Fighter pilot's abilities to 120% but the side effects are that the person's mental faculties are pushed well beyond the limit, and the upgraded system was even worse." Rain explained.

"Let me guess…" Milliardo said. "Every time the system tries to improve the fighter's output, the mental stability of the pilot is put in even more danger."

"Exactly." Rain said. "So if they brought that system with them with the Gundam we know they have, then we'd be in very big trouble."

"Rain, that wasn't the Master Gundam." Domon said. "I know you showed it to me, but the Master Gundam was destroyed. Its pilot is dead."

"It was Domon, but other people could pilot it." Rain retorted.

"So, who are you talking about?" Mari asked.
"My former master, Master Asia." Domon said. "He died in my arms, so that Gundam can't be here, it's gone, just like him."

"What else did Allenby tell you?" Heero said.

"Yeah, I feel like we're getting off subject." Misato said.

"Allenby told us about some kind of darkness." Domon said. "Which I think can only mean one thing… the Dark Gundam."

"Domon, it can't be the Dark Gundam." Rain said. "We've disintegrated every single last piece of that thing, it's totally gone."

"Still, what other darkness could she be talking about?" Domon asked.

"Perhaps it's some sort of unseen threat." Trowa suggested.

"Can we focus on the definite things we know?!" Shinji shouted as the base started to shake again. "Asuka's missing and those fucking assholes have her! Can we come up with some kind of plan to save her, or are we just going to keep screwing around?!"

"Shinji, we can't do anything until we get eyes on that base of theirs." Kaji said. "It's going to take a few hours."

"I don't care, let's just go and attack them before they try to attack us!" Shinji shouted "I'm tired of always waiting, someone's life is at stake."

"Shinji, we will get her back." Mari said. "They just need a few hours."

"I don't care!" Shinji said. "We never take time to come up with plans, but now we decide to?! We almost get killed every time we fought an Angel, Rei almost died because of that bullshit, and with those crazy assholes with the Mobile Suits, we had 3 hours to plan, but now, Asuka's been kidnapped, so we're gonna waste our time and come up with one now?! Fucking seriously?!!"

"Shinji we…" Misato started.

"I DON'T CARE ANYMORE!" Shinji shouted. "I'll go launch Unit–01 myself and bring her back here without anyone's fucking help!"

Shinji stormed off, and Mari ran after him.

"Shinji, wait!" Mari shouted. "You can't just run away like this!"

"I'm not running away!" Shinji shouted back. "Seeing as no one else is going to deal with this, I'll go rescue her myself!"

"Someone should probably go after him." Kaji said as Shinji ran off.

"I'll go." Mari said as she ran after him. "I think I can talk him down before he does something too drastic."

"Funny, and we used to be concerned about him running away from trouble." Ritsuko said. "Now he's running right for it."

"Yeah, and he's risking our only deep strike Evangelion." Misato said.
"You guys really need to choose how to react to Shinji better." Kaji said. "You don't sound happy that he's taking the initiative. I'm proud of him for that."

"You shouldn't be, he's just going to save that damn fool Asuka." Ritsuko said angrily. "He's being an insolent and stubborn child only thinking about what he wants."

"Oh, for fuck's sake." Kaji said. "Can we just let him go? He's so pissed off, he's just going to go and wipe them all out, so what's the harm?"

"That our Evangelion could get damaged in the process!" Ritsuko retorted.

"You're a single minded idiot, you know that?" Kaji shouted back.

"I'm not sure why you're arguing about this." Heero said. "The only way to live a good life is act on your emotions, and Shinji's doing just that. You can't fault him for wanting to protect those he cares about."

"I can when the decision is selfish." Ritsuko retorted.

"Asuka's in danger, and she's one of your pilots." Trowa said. "How is that selfish? She needs to be rescued, and Shinji has the best motivation to do that. Heero is correct, you cannot fault him for that."

"Protecting the people you care about is what you're supposed to do." Domon said. "But he's risking himself by going alone when there are people that can help him. It took Rain being taken from me to realize working with others is better than working alone."

"Yeah, but you're not a hormonal teenager that has a god–like machine that can wipe things from existence." Misato said. "He does."

"God Gundam sounds like a cool name though." Duo said.

"It does…" Domon muttered before he caught himself. "But that's beside the point. If Shinji's going to attack, we should assist him any way we can instead of stopping him."

"I thought you said that things were too dangerous now." Misato said.

"I did." Domon said. "And they are."

"So why the change of heart?" Ritsuko asked.

"Love triumphs all." Domon said as Ritsuko scoffed loudly.

"Sounds like an anime troupe to me." Ritsuko said. "Idealistic crap."

"Tell that to the Dark Gundam." Domon said as he stood up. "I think I'll go help Mari with Shinji, if he's half as stubborn as I can be, she'll need all the help she can get."

"In any case, I'm putting a guard around Unit–01." Ritsuko said as she rushed off. "I'm not letting him steal it and destroy it in some sort of Ahab–esque crusade."

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Dark Asia was standing in one of the gutted buildings, his Master Gundam standing tall next to him. In front of him was a Gundam that resembled the manga character, Sailor V. It had feet shaped like high heeled shoes, and a large heat sink on the back of its head that looked like a flowing mane of blonde hair.
"Is that girl ready yet?" Dark Asia asked as he looked over the second Gundam.

"She's still unconscious." The advisor replied.

"That's probably for the best." Dark Asia replied. "Load her in and lock out the controls until she's in the drop zone."

"Understood, sir." The advisor replied. "And the Mobile Trace System?"

"Activate while she's unconscious and lock it out somehow." Dark Asia said. "I don't need her going berserk before she goes Berserk."

"Very well, sir." The advisor replied. "Is there anything else?"

"Is the transmitter ready?" Dark Asia asked.

"It's set up and ready to transmit the activation signal on your command." The advisor replied. "It should work well enough, even at the range we're pushing it to."

"Good, then my plan is coming together." Dark Asia said proudly. "With this distraction, we should be able to gain a powerful foothold here. How is it doing?"

"Well, the new Core Life Unit is working out well, but it's still growing." The advisor said.

"Has the little devil spawned yet?" Dark Asia asked.

"Yes, there are 50,000 standard units standing by, hiding in the bay, out of sight." The advisor said. "But we have a problem."

"How can we have a problem?" Dark Asia asked.

"There isn't enough power here to help it… grow… I guess." The advisor said.

"What do you mean?" Dark Asia asked. "It can self–evolve, self–replicate, and self–regenerate."

"Yes, with enough power to sustain it." The advisor said. "Right now, we've drained a lot of power from what's left of the power grid here, but it's just not enough. It's barely stable as it is, there isn't enough for it to complete its growth cycle to become fully operational."

"Where would be enough?" Dark Asia asked.

"Perhaps if we use your attack as a diversion we can move it closer to a more powerful power source." The advisor suggested.

"And where would that be?" Dark Asia asked.

"There is a very high voltage trunk line near that massive city, it has plenty of power that this assist in the growth, by our calculations, and it should just barely be enough."

"How long would this take?" Dark Asia asked. "We've already prodded the sleeping dragon, we do not have the luxury of time."

"Well, if my calculations are correct, two weeks before all capabilities are operational." The advisor said. "It will be able to span soldiers, but its DG Cells will have minimal regenerative and replication capabilities, and no evolution capabilities to speak of. We'll have the Dark Army to protect us, but they won't be as formidable as the last time."
"Can they replicate or regenerate enough to make a difference?" Dark Asia asked.

"No, they can't regenerate more than absolutely minor damage, and can split into four units upon destruction, but those units will not have the ability to regenerate or duplicate after that." The advisor said. "They would be little more than cannon fodder."

"What about the Dark Gundam?" Dark Asia asked.

"It can't heal from it wounds until it's completely grown. Until then, it's as vulnerable as any other Gundam." The advisor said. "With enough damage, it will be completely destroyed."

"Will the Dark Gundam be able to survive the flight to this… place?" Dark Asia asked.

"Yes, it should be able to with minimal degradation." The advisor said. "And I believe the location is south of something Ashinoko… it's about 15 kilometers away from that city."

"Very well…" Dark Asia said. "We will move the Dark Gundam once the attack commences. Send all the Dark Army grunts with the Nobel Gundam… have them walk along the sea floor to get there undetected. It should only take them a few hours if they run fast enough, Nobel Gundam can catch up."

"Yes, sir." The advisor said. "Right away."

"One final question." Dark Asia said. "Is the transmitter mobile?"

"Yes, sir, it is." The advisor said. "I… planned ahead in case we needed to execute this while moving the Dark Gundam."

"I'm glad you thought ahead." Dark Asia said as the advisor hurried off.

Dark Asia then left that building and walked causally to another with a hulking form sitting inside it. The massive form had massive holes in its structure, some of which you could see right through. It was in pretty bad shape, as even its head was only half formed, with the rest being a tangle of dark green tentacle–like cables. Dark Asia looked up at the half–alive Dark Gundam, its chest wide open. He could see the new Life Core Unit sitting inside a mess of wires, an older woman. She had brown hair, a kind face that was extremely pale, and was wearing a hospital gown.

"Ahhh… Mikino Kasshu… how nice to see you again…" Dark Asia said snidely. "Shame you can't hear me, but I'm sure your son will love to see you again. From what I remember, he misses you very much…"

Mari was still searching for Shinji. With a heavy guard around Unit–01, he had disappeared into the base, unable to be found. Mari, with Domon's help had searched the most likely places that Shinji may be holed up, so Mari decided it was time to look in the unlikely places. Mari wandered in and out of people's offices, even venturing warily into Ritsuko's office to see if he was there.

"Mari, how long are we going to keep looking?" Domon asked. "We've already been at this for over two hours and we haven't heard him trying to steal Unit–01 yet."

"Until we find him." Mari said. "Although… the only places we haven't really checked are the entire command staff level, the EVA Cages, and the… oh shit… I know where he is."

"Where?" Domon asked.
"The Cages." Mari said. "He'll hide there till he can sneak up and take Unit–01."

"So, its guarded, he can't get through, right?" Domon asked.

"If Shinji gets pissed enough, he'll just rush them or Unit–01 will activate and then it'll just be a bloodbath." Mari explained. "Come on, let's go."

Mari and Domon ran to the elevators and made straight for the Cages when the doors opened again. When they got to the Cage they saw the hundred or so Section 2 agents mulling around the Evangelions and Gundams. Unit–01's eyes were glowing brightly, but it was completely still. The guards tensed up when they noticed the two of them. Their fingers subtly moved over the triggers of their guns rather than holding them to the side.

"Mari… we should move." Domon said quietly. "They're ready to shoot."

"No they're not." Mari said. "Guns are still down, they're not aiming. Come on, he'll be around here somewhere."

Mari looked around, searching high and low for Shinji with Domon tagging not far behind, and finally found him hiding on the upper levels near Unit–02.

"Well… look what we have here." Mari quipped.

"Yeah, it's a wonder why Section 2 got slaughtered by those kidnappers when they can't even find me hiding here." Shinji said sullenly.

"So, why are you waiting here?" Domon asked.

"Well, I heard the guards come in and sweep the place." Shinji said. "I heard their radios say to keep me away from Unit–01, so I hid on Unit–02 until they took their positions."

"And they didn't find you at all?" Mari asked.

"Nope." Shinji muttered. "Completely incompetent. I'm just waiting for an opening to get to Unit–01 and go get Asuka."

"Shinji, you need to stop acting so irrationally." Mari said. "You can't go alone, you're gonna need help."

"No I won't." Shinji said angrily. "I don't want to put anyone else in danger, and I can handle it. I took on four Gundams myself and Asuka saved me from them, and I can do the same for her."

"Shinji, you love her and that's blinding you to the danger." Domon said. "You need the help and support of your friends to be able to save her and not kill the both of you in the process. Do you really want to recklessly risk her life and yours to prove a point?"

"No, but there isn't that much danger." Shinji said, his voice shaking. "One Gundam really isn't a threat, they don't even have other Mobile Suits. I can handle this."

"Shinji, they could have more things we don't even know about." Mari said calmly. "What happened to all your talk about being careful? You're starting to sound like Captain Ahab, on a crusade that'll get you killed."

"Asuka wasn't in danger then!" Shinji shouted, his voice echoing throughout the Cage, with Section 2 raising their weapons, looking for the source of the sound.
"Shinji, will you calm down." Mari implored. "They'll probably shoot us!"

"I DON'T GIVE A SHIT!" Shinji shouted. "I JUST WANT ASUKA BACK!"

Before Mari could respond, the alarm klaxon went off signaling something was happening one again with a new message from Maya coming over the intercom. "Level–2 battle stations, we have an incoming unidentified contact, potentially hostile. All pilots report to the Command Center for emergency briefing."

"See, Shinji?" Mari quipped. "If you had gone all Ahab, we'd be fairly defenseless without Unit–01."

"If I had gone sooner, I could have stopped the attack before it happened!" Shinji shouted.

"Enough, we should go see what's attacking us and figure out what to do next." Domon said. "The longer we wait, the closer whatever it is gets to the city."

"Fine, let's go." Shinji said. "The sooner we deal with this, the sooner I can get Asuka."

"See, everything's working out, puppy." Mari said happily.

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In the several hours since Shinji had stormed off, the Command Center had emptied out to only contain those who actually worked in there, but now that a new threat was looming, the Command Center had just become a bustle of activity once again. The main display was showing a single Mobile Suit on the move towards the city, with a mass of unidentified somethings in the water heading towards the same point Sachiel came ashore over a year and a half before.

Shinji, Mari, and Domon ran into the Command Center at the same time Heero, Milliardo, Duo, Trowa, and Wufei did to see what the commotion was. Kaji was leaning against the wall like usual, nonplussed by what was going on.

"What is it this time?" Duo asked.

"Just what's on the screen." Misato said. "One Gundam, and a mass of unidentified material coming ashore over here."

"Can you zoom in on the Gundam?" Domon asked. "Maybe I can identify it."

"Sure." Hyuga said. "Zooming to max magnification."

When the image depixelated from the zooming, a single Gundam was shown walking, its hair spread very far out and a red aura enveloping the whole thing.

"But that's Nobel Gundam…" Domon said. "It's hair… the Berserker System… Allenby was right. I've got a bad feeling about this…"

"Yeah, but who's piloting it?" Milliardo asked. "How many people do they have working for them?"

"Something tells me we already know who's piloting it." Kaji said nonchalantly.

"What, you think Asuka's in that thing?!" Shinji shouted. "She would never do that!"

"She may not have had a choice, Shinji." Heero said. "They were willing to kidnap her, we have no idea what else they may have done."
"Heero… way to be tactful buddy…" Duo muttered.

"Heero's right, Shinji." Kaji said. "She may not have had a choice. She could have been drugged."

"That's if it's her at all." Shinji said defiantly.

"Domon, do you know that Gundam's transmitter frequency?" Hyuga asked.

"No… but Rain does." Domon replied.

"What do I know?" Rain asked as she walked in.

"Nobel Gundam's transmission frequency." Domon said.

"Why?" Rain asked.

Domon pointed at the screen. "That's why." He said sternly. "Just put it in so we can listen to the audio."

"Alright." Rain said as she walked over to Hyuga's console and entered in the frequency which garnered some static mixed with heavy breathing.

"So, who's gonna talk to the mouth breather." Mari quipped.

"I will." Misato said. "It's my job after all…" Misato sighed. "Unidentified Mobile Suit, stop your approach at once or we'll be forced to defend ourselves."

"NOOOOO!" Asuka screamed. "WHERE'S SHINJI?! WHERE'S MOMMA?! GIVE ME MOMMA!"

"Asuka, what are you talking about?" Shinji asked.

"SHINJI, GIVE ME MOMMA!" Asuka shouted.

"Asuka, your mother is dead." Misato said.

"For fuck's sake, Misato…" Kaji said. "Way to be sensitive."

"MOMMA'S ALIVE!" Asuka screamed. "GIVE ME MOMMA!"

"Asuka, we don't have your mother…" Misato replied.

"YOU'RE LYING, JUST LIKE YOU ALWAYS DO!" Asuka screamed. "IF YOU WON'T GIVE HER TO ME, I GET HER MYSELF!"

"Asuka…" Misato started.

"Misato, shut up." Mari said. "You're not helping. Puppy, you talk to her."

"I'm not sure what to say." Shinji said. "She doesn't seem like herself…"

"She's not." Domon said. "The Berserker System has taken over her mind. She's not thinking clearly, especially if her mother is dead and believes she's alive…"

"Yeah, that entirely insane…" Mari said whimsically.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Ritsuko asked.
"Nothing." Mari said.

'Well, according to my mother, Asuka's mother is in Unit–02…' Shinji thought. 'Maybe she subconsciously knows she's in there…'

"Shinji, what are you thinking?" Milliardo asked.

"That I have to go save her before she…” Shinji started as another alert activated. "Before that I guess."

"What is it now?" Trowa asked.

"A whole load of whatever those things are." Aoba said. "Putting them on screen."

A mass of one–eyed, tan Mobile Suits matched out of the ocean, each holding a spiked club like a rifle as they moved swiftly towards Tokyo–3.

"It's the Dark Army." Domon said. "Which means… the Dark Gundam is somewhere…"

"Wait, that thing you said you completely destroyed?" Duo asked. "It's here?"

"That's the only possible explanation." Domon said. "The Dark Army is created by the Dark Gundam… it has to be here…"

"Which is a large problem, right?" Wufei asked.

"Yes, the Dark Gundam will want to destroy everything." Rain said. "It has to be destroyed."

"But how?" Mari asked. "We don't even know where it is."

"I don't care about something we can't find." Shinji said. "I need to go get Asuka, and if I have to go alone I will. I can take out… how many are there?"

"50,000… or so." Maya said. "It's like the last time all over again…"

"Yeah, I can take them myself in Unit–01." Shinji said.

"You're not taking Unit–01." Domon said. "You're taking Burning Gundam."

"Wait, what?" Shinji said. "But Unit–01 can do that thing…"

"Yeah, Domon, what he said." Rain said sharply. "Are you insane?"

"No, Unit–01 and Nobel Gundam are mismatched in size." Domon said. "Burning Gundam will put you on the same level, and with your piloting skills you should be able to effectively use my Gundam without any issues. You'll be able to save Asuka without hurting her too severely."

"Wait, really?" Shinji said. "Are you sure…"

"It's basic fight mechanics Shinji." Domon said. "Equal footing and all."

"What about me?" Mari asked.

"You can take Shining Gundam." Domon said. "Someone will have to back Shinji up."

"You'll do no such thing!" Rain shouted. "Domon, you're being crazy."
"No I'm not." Domon said. "The Dark Army won't be easily beaten by large Evangelions. They need an advantage. I can sit this one out and let Shinji rescue the girl he loves."

"But why the Shining Gundam?" Rain asked.

"Mari's an excellent pilot, and she should be able to help her friends." Domon said. "I don't see the Evangelions being very useful in this situation."

"Domon… I don't like this." Rain said. "What happens if…"

"Nothing is going to happen except Asuka getting rescued." Domon said.

"Well, then can you tell us how your Gundams work?" Shinji asked.

"First we need a plan." Misato said. "Even if Shinji and Mari are Burning Gundam and Shining Gundam, there are still 50,000 of these things."

"And they can replicate." Domon said. "They're really hard to kill."

"Then we mobilize everyone." Misato said sternly.

"No." Domon said. "Only those designed for hand to hand combat."

"That leaves out Noin, Heero, Trowa, and whoever would be piloting Wing Gundam." Milliardo said. "The rest of have melee weapons only."

"So, then those other four would be in reserve." Misato said. "Fine, as long as Domon's sure Shinji and Mari can handle those Gundams of his."

"I'm very sure." Domon said. "Otherwise I wouldn't have suggested it."

"Fine, now that we have a plan, can we go?" Shinji asked. "Asuka and those things are storming towards us, and I'd like to save her before she gets hurt… again."

"Yeah, go." Misato said gruffly.

"Alright." Shinji said. "Domon, you'll tell us how everything works, right?"

"Yeah, we'll go over it on the way down." Domon said.

"I'll go get everyone else and tell them the plan." Heero said. "We should be able to deploy shortly."

"Shinji and Mari will deploy first." Domon said. "They'll be ready sooner."

"Fine, just get going." Misato said sternly as they left.

"So how does that Mobile trace System of yours work, muscles?" Mari asked as they left.

"Misato, don't sound so hurt." Kaji said as soon as Shinji and Mari were out of earshot.

"I'm not hurt." Misato said. "It just seems like the kids don't really trust me."

"Can you blame them?" Kaji asked. "We tell them we'll keep them safe, and they're the ones getting into comas and almost dying every other week. We're not exactly holding up our end of the bargain."

"Oh, shut up." Misato said. "Maya, get them ready to deploy."
"Still can't handle the truth, eh, Misato?" Kaji joked.

"Didn't I tell you to shut up?" Misato asked.

"You know I don't listen that well when you're avoiding the truth." Kaji said.

"You are really annoying at times." Misato muttered.

"It's part of my charm." Kaji said coyly.

"Maya, have you informed the Cage yet?" Misato said loudly.

"I sent the instructions down already, ma'am." Maya said.

"Good." Misato said loudly to drown out whatever quip Kaji had. "Tell me when Shinji and Mari are ready for launch."

"Understood, ma'am." Maya replied.

Mari was standing inside the cockpit of the Shining Gundam. When she had activated the Mobile Trace System, her body was enveloped in a tight, form fitting, fighting suit that would mimic her movements and apply them to the Gundam. Hers was very similar to Domon's, with a colored heart in the middle, which had the same exact color of Rei's hair, and the main body of the suit was pink like her plugsuit.

"This fighting suit is fucking awesome!" Mari said as she bounced her boobs up and down for fun. "My tits look absolutely amazing in this thing, so bouncy and perfectly round, like they were drawn on or something! And my pussy feels like it's being gently caressed by the hands of god!"

"Mari, is that really appropriate?" Misato asked.

"If you were wearing this, you'd feel the same way." Mari said excitedly. "I'm literally flooding my basement right now!"

"Mari, can you focus?" Shinji asked tiredly as Burning Gundam walked past her towards the launch elevator. "I'd like to rescue Asuka and deal with all this as quickly as possible."

"So impatient, puppy." Mari said. "Maybe when you get Asuka back she can take care of that obvious tension you have…"

"MARI!" Shinji shouted. "Get ready to launch!"

"Fine… if you'll stop being so grumpy and killing this erotic buzz…" Mari muttered as she moved the Shining Gundam to the launch pad.

"Burning Gundam, ready to launch!" Shinji said angrily.

"And you Mari?" Misato asked.

"Shining Gundam ready." Mari said. "Let's go get our angry German back."

"Wait a second, where is everyone else?" Shinji asked.

"Don't worry." Lady Une said. "Milliardo should be along very shortly with Duo, Quatre, and Wufei
"And if we need more help out there?" Mari asked. "Cause 50,000 to 2 aren’t exactly what I’d call the best odds in the world."

"We’ll be fine, Mari." Shinji said. "Remember when I said they’d regret taking her?"

"Yeah, you were a little dark." Mari said. "Like Dark Side dark."

"Well, once I rescue Asuka, I’ll make the regret taking her by destroying all their shitty little machines." Shinji said coldly. "So let’s go."

"You guys sure this time?" Misato asked impatiently. "Cause they’re moving in quickly, from the west…” Misato paused. "But they were approaching from the south!"

"They took a path to intercept the Nobel Gundam." Maya reported. "They're backing it up, and I've confirmed precisely 50,000 of them, plus Asuka."

"Wonderful…” Mari muttered. "Yeah, we're ready, miso, let it rip."

The two Gundams slammed to the surface when the elevator stopped abruptly at the end of its run. They exited the elevator on the western edge of Tokyo–3, looking ahead to see a large mass not that far from them. Shinji was trying to stay calm, but had some difficulty considering what he had to do. His fighting suit was an exact duplicate of Domon's, right down the red circle symbolizing Japan emblazoned on his chest. He began moving forward very cautiously when he heard Misato swear loudly over the radio.

"Motherfucker!" Misato shouted.

"What's wrong Misato?" Shinji asked.

"The launch systems are down!" Misato shouted. "You two are on your own for the time being until we can fix this."

"You've got to be fucking kidding me!" Mari shouted. "Are all the elevators busted?"

"The entire system shut down once you got the surface." Misato replied. "It literally broke down…"

"What's wrong with it?!!" Mari asked angrily.

"The electromagnetic systems been depolarized or some shit." Misato said. "Don't worry about it though, it's our problem."

"No, it's our problem too, Misato!" Mari shouted. "We're the assholes out here with no fucking backup to speak of!"

"Mari, I told you we won't need backup, I can handle this." Shinji said calmly.

"Puppy, you're not in Unit–01, there is no magical solution to this!" Mari shouted. "We're in big trouble!"

"I don't care." Shinji said coldly as Burning Gundam took an offensive stance. "I'm not letting anything get in the way of rescuing Asuka. Just follow my lead and keep those fucking things off my back till I've got her back safe and sound."
"Fuck me sideways you're more stubborn than she is..." Mari muttered. "But I guess if we work together..."

"No, we split up." Shinji said. "Less of a chance of us accidentally hitting each other with our attacks."

"Puppy that is literally the worst fucking idea ever!" Mari said angrily.

"Mari, its way safer, and I don't want to accidentally hurt you in my rage." Shinji said as he gripped the twin beam sabres tightly.

"Fine, whatever makes you happy, puppy." Mari said.

"Good, let's go!" Shinji shouted as Burning Gundam flew off towards the approaching Dark Army. As he got closer, he ignited his beam sabres and struck the first two he saw, slicing them in half and causing them to explode. But then they reformed into eight more.

"Wait, what?!" Shinji shouted. "I just destroyed you! GO BACK TO HELL WHERE YOU FUCKING BELONG!"

Burning Gundam charge them again and cut them to pieces again with a bit of difficulty due to their crowding of him, but once they exploded a second time, they didn't reform again. However, a large group of several hundred were bearing down on Shinji, which worried him greatly.

"Huh... they only reformed once." Shinji said. "I guess that's good."

"That must mean that the Dark Gundam is still weak." Rain said.

"Still... how many did they reform into when they blew up?" Misato asked.

"Four each." Shinji replied.

"That means they have an effective force of 250,000 attacking us, not 50,000." Misato said. "We need to get those elevators fixed."

"Yeah, we're aware miso." Mari quipped as Shining Gundam flew away from Shinji towards the other end of the enemy line. "Puppy, I'm breaking right. I'll take the 25,000 of these fuckers on that side."

"Fine, I'll deal with Asuka and the rest." Shinji said.

"Good luck puppy, may the Force be with you." Mari said jokingly. "Alright you fuckers, let's get it on!"

"Right." Shinji said sternly as he faced the oncoming Dark Army soldiers raising the beam sabres once more. "Let's finish this!"

Burning Gundam charged at the approaching Dark Army soldiers and sliced through several dozen of them. Shinji then turned around with the Machine Cannons opening and taking aim at the reforming Mobile Suits, cutting through them with ease before charging the rest with the extended beam sabres, cutting through the remaining ones near him just as even more of them showed up.

"Shit, there are a lot of these stupid things." Shinji said. "Mari, how are you doing?"

"Not that great!" Mari shouted. "Too many of these things to kill! FUCKING DIE YOU BASTARDS! SHINING FINGER!" Shinji heard several explosions before Mari spoke again. "How are you doing puppy?"
"Still looking for Asuka while trying to deal with all these things!" Shinji said as a dozen Dark Army soldiers charged at him, that he cut up and then had to deal with those that reformed. "Their reforming ability is really fucking annoying!"

"I know, right?" Mari shouted. "Almost seemed like cheating!"

"Misato, how long till the elevators are fixed?!" Shinji asked while cutting through and shooting several Dark Army soldiers.

"We are working on it!" Misato said angrily. "Just hold on!"

"Yeah, hold on... great advice, miso..." Mari said sarcastically. "We'll just get on that... get the fuck away from me you MOTHERFUCKERS."

"Yeah, Misato, any time would be great." Shinji said. "I can't find Asuka while I'm dealing with all these fucking things!"

"What happened to you can handle it yourself." Misato said sarcastically.

"Misato, now's not the time to be a bitch." Kaji said. "Shinji, I'll go kick Ritsuko in the ass and see if she can hurry this along, ok?"

"Thanks Kaji." Shinji said. "Now back to work!" Shinji shouted as he charged even more Dark Army soldiers cutting through them again.

Misato was angrily looking at Kaji. She slammed the button on the comm to shut it off and went off on Kaji.

"What did you call me?!” Misato shouted.

"A bitch." Kaji said. "It's really not the time to be going off on Shinji."

"After all the shit he's shouted at me today? And I have to be nice to him?!” Misato shouted at him. "Seriously?!

"Yeah, Misato, it's called being an adult." Kaji said nonchalantly. "You're the adult, you can't be acting like them. They're just kids in a difficult situation, and you're the person of authority. It's time to act like it and ignore what Shinji said."

"How can I ignore it?!” Misato asked angrily.

"Because he'll probably apologize as soon as Asuka is back safe and sound." Kaji said. "So just wait for it and accept it when it happens. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to go try and get Ritsuko to fix this faster so they don't die or something."

"Fine, whatever, just let me know how long it'll take." Misato said gruffly. "How are they doing, Maya?"

"Not well, Shinji still can't find Asuka, and it looks like she's looking for someone... maybe she knows Shinji is out there." Maya reported.

"What about Mari?" Rain asked.

"Well, she's fighting just fine, but both of their adrenaline levels are fairly high." Maya said. "I don't
"They'll be fine." Domon said. "You just have to believe in them."

"What are you talking about?" Heero asked. "They're in trouble."

"No, they're not that far for unlocking some serious power increases with those Gundams." Domon said. "Just wait, once they reach that threshold, those Dark Army soldiers are finished."

"You're almost insane..." Misato muttered.

"Or just overconfident." Hyuga said.

"No, just optimistic." Domon replied. "You gotta have faith after all..."

Shinji was valiantly trying to fight off the Dark Army soldiers around him, but he was getting winded. Without any backup to deal with the overwhelming amount of bad guys currently replicating around him, Shinji couldn't find Asuka anywhere. That's all he wanted, to find Asuka.

"Come on, get out of my WAY!" Shinji shouted as he cut through more Dark Army grunts. "Asuka, where are you?!"

"Shinji, shouting isn't going to find her!" Mari said angrily. "Try not doing that."

"The hell it won't!" Shinji shouted back.

"I mean unless you put it over an open channel, she can't find you, dummy!" Mari replied. "I sometimes worry about you, puppy."

"Well, right now focus on yourself." Shinji relied as he punched through one of the Dark Army grunts. "I'll be fine for a little while longer... wait... there she is!" Shinji's face lit up as he activated his comms. "Asuka, Asuka its... oof..."

Shinji's moment of distraction cost him. The Dark Army grunts took advantage of his distraction and swarmed him, beating him to the ground. Nobel Gundam pulled out its beam ribbon and sliced through the Dark Army grunts around Shinji destroying them all, and Shinji couldn't be happier to see her. Burning Gundam got unsteadily to its feet, with Shinji beaming from ear to ear.

"Asuka, I'm so glad you're back to... WAHHHHHHH!" Shinji said as Nobel Gundam sent him flying backwards. "Asuka... why are you doing this...?"

"YOU KNOW WHERE MY MOMMA IS!" Asuka screamed. "GIVE HER TO ME OR YOU DIE!"

"Asuka, I don't know where your momma..." Shinji started before he was picked up off the ground and tossed by Nobel Gundam several hundred yards.

"Asuka, please stop this." Shinji said. "You're not yourself."

"GIVE ME MY MOMMA, NOW!" Asuka screamed. "I WILL KILL YOU IF YOU DON'T GIVE HER TO ME NOW!"

Shinji pulled himself and Burning Gundam to its feet. "Asuka, I have no idea where your momma is, just stop this, please..."
"NOOOOOO!" Asuka screamed as she charged Shinji. "GIVE ME MOMMA!"

"Shinji, you can't reason with her." Domon said as Shinji dodged. "You have to attack her before she actually kills you."

"He's right, Shinji." Heero said. "You need to fight back, she will kill you."

"I can't attack her, it's not her fault!" Shinji pleaded as he dodged another attack from Asuka. "What if I hurt her… or… or kill her?"

"Shinji, love is about risks, and you have an attack that can handle this without killing her." Domon said. "You need to do this Shinji, I know you can do this."

"How?" Shinji asked angrily as he got grazed by one of Asuka's furious attacks. "Where do I aim or whatever."

"Right below the cockpit." Rain said. "It's where the control systems for everything are. Damage that and Nobel Gundam will shut down."

"You just have to be spot on with the aim because it is right below the cockpit." Domon said encouragingly. "Just believe in yourself and do it, Shinji."

"But… I could kill her if I miss…" Shinji stammered. "I don't want to lose her! I CAN'T LOSE HER!"

"Shinji, use the attack, it's the only way!" Domon shouted. "YOU CAN'T HOLD BACK ANYMORE! JUST DO IT AND SAVE HER BEFORE SHE KILLS YOU!"

"FINE!" Shinji replied. "If it's the only way!"

"It is the only way, Shinji." Domon said calmly. "You can save her. Now attack!"

"Do I have to say the line though?" Shinji asked. "It seems kinda corny…"

"Of course you do!" Domon said emphatically. "It's the only…"

"If you do not stop, I will kill you." Heero said in an annoyed tone. "Shinji, as ridiculous as it may sound, you must." Heero said calmly. "To use the attack, you must believe in it, and to believe in it means you have to focus, and that ludicrous line does just that. Remember what I told you, Shinji, remember what ZERO showed you… live your life by your emotions, Shinji, you know why you're out there, accomplish your mission."

"Right!" Shinji said facing down Nobel Gundam once again. "Asuka, please, I don't want to hurt you!"

"MOMMA!" Asuka screamed back. "WHERE IS MOMMA?! SHINJI WHERE IS MY MOMMA?! GIVE HER TO ME!"

"Fine this is the only way…" Shinji said with tears in his eyes. "I'm sorry… Asuka… please understand why I had to do this…"

"THIS HAND OF MINE IS BURNING RED!" Shinji roared as Nobel Gundam charged once again. "ITS LOUD ROAR TELLS ME TO GRASP VICTORY!"

"HERE I GO!" Nobel Gundam leaped toward Burning Gundam as the particle collectors on the back of Burning Gundam opened up, creating a red and orange mandala within them, and the chest
of Burning Gundam opened up to reveal a particle accelerator which glowed red as it activated.

"ERUPTING!" The blue gantlet around the right hand slid down, armoring the hand with it and morphing it into a three fingered piercing weapon. The golden claws on the forearm armor also popped out and made the attack look all the more menacing.

"BURNING!" The right hand began glowing with a tremendous orange light.

"FINGER!" Shinji drove the glowing hand into the waist, just below the cockpit to short out and destroy the Berserker System.

"AAAAAHHHHHHHHHHH!" Asuka screamed. The attack worked as it should, as the Nobel Gundam returned to its normal state and shut down, the Berserker System utterly destroyed, but, Shinji was worried he may have injured Asuka in the attack.

"ASUKA!" Shinji screamed as the cockpit viewer focused on the now open Nobel Gundam cockpit. He saw Asuka laying on the ground, unconscious from the attack, but otherwise unscathed.

"Shinji, you have multiple incoming, get out of there!" Misato said. "Come on, get moving!"

"For fuck's sake, miso, we know there are incoming!" Mari shouted sarcastically. "They're like fucking herpes, they just won't go the fuck AWAY!"

"And I'm not leaving Asuka!" Shinji shouted. "She's unconscious, I have to stay and defend her! I'm not leaving her to DIE! I REFUSE TO LET HER DIE!"

With those last words, Burning Gundam exploded into a shining beacon of light, with every system on board showing a massive power increase, and the mandala on the Gundam's back glowed even brighter. Shinji was even bathed in a golden glow, and his demeanor changed significantly.

Rain was shocked. "He's activated Burning Gundam's Hyper Mode!"

"So then he does truly love her." Domon said. "Shinji, do you remember the other technique I told you about?"

"YES!" Shinji said loudly.

"Use it to protect the woman you love, and blow those guys straight back to hell!" Domon said loudly. "The School of the Undefeated of the East, Ultimate Secret Technique!"

"RIGHT!" Shinji shouted. "YAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!" The ground around Burning Gundam fractured and compressed under the power being pumped out from its golden form.

"Domon he can't use that!" Rain exclaimed. "It's too much for him!"

"THIS HAND OF MINE BURNS AND ROARS!" Shinji roared. "ITS LOUD CRY TELLS ME TO DEFEAT YOU!"

"If he can activate the Hyper Mode, he can use this without a problem." Domon said confidently. "He's more than strong enough. I knew he could do it."

"He also successfully conquered the ZERO System." Trowa said. "Anyone who can do that can certainly master just about anything."

"If you think so..." Rain said.
"I do… finish them Shinji, destroy the Dark Army!" Domon said. "Attack now!"

Both of Burning Gundam's hands began to glow brightly, as energy crackled around them. "HERE I GO!" The energy began to form into a great ball of light that brimmed with power and crackled with electrical discharges.

"SEKIHA..." Burning Gundam drew its hands down and turned to the right, crouching and preparing to throw the attack. "…TENKYOKEN!"

The great ball of fire was thrown forwards, obliterating any Dark Army soldiers it came near, causing them to disappear into thin air. The attack dissipated, and left a large gap in the enemy forces, however it didn't last long, as even more took their place.

"Oh my god… how many of them are still active?" Misato asked.

"Too many… because they keep replicating, we can't pin down an exact number!" Maya reported. "They're both in danger..."

"Shinji, hold them off as long as you can, I'm coming to get you!" Domon said.

"Fine, I can do that!" Shinji said loudly. "Domon, use Unit–01! You can carry Asuka to safety that way! I'll hold them off as long as I can!"

"Alright, Shinji!" Domon said. "But what about the launch elevators?!

"Still offline!" Misato replied. "Just get to the Cage and prep for immediate launch when they're online!"

"Shinji doesn't have that kind of time!" Domon shouted.

"Don't worry about me!" Shinji shouted. "I have an idea!" Shinji drew his hands back again. "SEKIHA…TENKYOKEN!"

"Shinji, don't overuse that!" Domon said sternly. "You could die!"

"I don't care, I'm going to protect Asuka, no matter the cost! It's the only thing I can do to slow these fucking things down!" Shinji shouted. "Bring it on you bastards! SEKIHA TENKYOKEN!" Shinji cried, firing another blast and destroying a bunch more enemies. "SEKIHA TENKYOKEN! SEKIHA TENKYOKEN! SEKIHA TENKYOKEN!" Shinji fired repeated blasts, to no avail, the Dark Army kept advancing, and Shinji was near powerless to stop them. It did however, keep them a safe distance away, so Shinji continued his strategy of spamming attacks. "SEKIHA TENKYOKEN!"

"Domon, get going already!" Rain cried.

"I know, I know." Domon said.

"Domon's right though… Shinji won't last long like this though." Rain said. "He needs backup right now."

"You're right, his heart rate is topping out, and his blood pressure is way too high." Maya said. "Colonel, he needs help, like now!"

"Mari, we need you now!" Misato said.

"Sorry, Miso, I'm busy at the moment!" Mari exclaimed. "I'm being overrun too! There are too
fucking many of them to kill! Where is our fucking backup though?! I feel like the forgotten redhead step child over here!"

"Shit!" Misato exclaimed. "We're still working on it! Give us some more time!"

"That is something we don't have a lot of!" Mari shouted.

"Yes we do!" Shinji shouted as another wave of Dark Army Mobile Suits charged towards him and Asuka. "Take this… SEKIHA TENKYOKEN!"

Mari was getting exceedingly tired. The amount of enemies she was dealing with was well past overwhelming. As good as her stamina was, she had her limits, and was very close to reaching them.

"Hold on Shinji, I'm coming to help!" Mari shouted. "If I could just get away from these fucking guys!" Mari raised her right hand. "SHINING… FINGER!"

She took out a few more Dark Army soldiers, just for some of them to reform and swarm her again and knock her to the ground with a flurry of club strikes and beam blasts.

"SON OF A FUCKING COCK SUCKING WHORE! WHY WON'T YOU FUCKING THINGS JUST DIE LIKE YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO!?" Mari roared. "GET THE FUCK OUT OF MY WAY SO I CAN GO HELP MY FUCKING FRIENDS!"

The Shining Gundam began to glow and sparkle with a golden aura, the Gundam turned gold, and its shoulders, the face mask opened, shoulder pauldrons slid up revealing golden plating behind them, the arms and legs extended themselves a bit, making the Gundam taller, the outside of the calves popped open, revealing golden thrusters, and Mari took a fighting stance. Mari herself erupted in a red glow, her eyes filled with fury as she looked around her.

"Mari, you've activated the Super Mode… perhaps it's time to use the other move Domon most likely told you about." Rain said. ""

"Oh, right… THIS HAND OF MINE GLOWS WITH AN AWESOME POWER!" Mari screamed as she drew out one of the beam sabres on Shining Gundam's hip. "ITS BURNING GRIP TELLS ME TO DEFEAT YOU!" Mari ignited the beam sabre and it glowed and crackled as Mari raised it in the air, it exploded with energy, extending farm beyond its normal length, and the color of the beam sabre changed from bright red to Shining Finger green. "TAKE THIS…! MY LOVE… MY ANGER… AND ALL OF MY SORROW! SHINING… FINGER… SWORD!"

Mari swung the massive sword around her several times, taking out the Dark Army grunts and many of their duplicates, but because there were so many of them, as soon as Mari ended the attack, she was quickly surrounded once more.

"Motherfucker! Even with this I won't be able to make it in time!" Mari shouted as she heard Shinji continue his barrage of attacks. "Hold on Shinji, I'll figure something out! That is if we don't die first…"

"Mari, stop exaggerating." Misato said. "You're not going to die."

"Easy for you to say!" Mari shouted as more Dark Army soldiers advanced on her menacingly. "If we don't get some kind of miracle soon, not even Shinji's good luck streak can save our sorry asses now…"
Sync Score Rankings!
Shinji – 97.5% (No Change)
Rei – 75.0% (No Change)
Asuka – 52.3% (No Change)
Mari – 42.0% (No Change)

The Devil Gundam, sorry, for this fic, Dark Gundam, has returned, yet it isn't quite what it seems. The final chapter of this fic will detail how something like this is possible considering that the Colony Dark Gundam was wiped out at the end of G Gundam. Also, Dark Asia is a manifest of the Dark Gundam similar to the Dark Army and Gundam Heads, but is not dependent on the Dark Gundam to be given life, making him independent and an evil reincarnation of the true Master Asia, hence the name change. Again, this will be further explained in the final chapter of this fic. However, the part about the Dark Gundam needing to regenerate and not having its full range of deadly and annoying abilities means that while it is massive and dangerous, it is not as formidable as it could be.

So, Asuka's outburst about wanting her mother isn't too out of the realm. Shinji knows his mother is in Unit–01, as he explained, and Shinji's mother told him that Asuka's mother Kyoko is in Unit–02. Asuka may not consciously know that her mother guides her as the resident soul of Unit–02, but subconsciously, Asuka knows her mother is there, and wants her back. So in her Berserk System induced rage, this is her focus, other than Shinji, who she loves so much, yet has a compulsion to prove she's better than, similar to the ZERO System incident where they both tried to kill each other.

Finally, as for the battle itself, having Shinji go toe to toe with Asuka in the Nobel Gundam with the Burning Gundam seemed fitting and allowed for Shinji to go all out with Domon's signature attacks in epic fashion. Mari also does her part, using the Shining Gundam to its fullest, activating its true Super Mode in trying to get to Shinji and using the epic Shining Finger Sword attack. Now, the attacks aren't exclusive to Domon, but exclusive to his Gundams, so anyone with a bit of training, or a simple explanation on how to do things will be more than capable of using the attacks. So that's how I justify all that.

As I said before, and will always say at the end of chapter, please leave comments, as I would like to try to improve the story going forward any way I can. And, hell, constructive criticism is a good thing.
Chapter 14 – Trust You Forever
November 20, 2016 – 20km West of Tokyo–3

Shinji was sweating bullets from continually firing the Sekihha Tenkycoken. However, even though he was close to exhaustion, he refused to give up protecting the unconscious Asuka and the disabled Nobel Gundam. Burning Gundam stood its ground, its Hyper Mode still online, casting a golden glow around the area Shinji was protecting so vehemently.

"We're not done for yet!" Shinji screamed tiredly. "SEKIHA TENKYOKEN!"

"Shinji, you need to stop, your blood pressure is topping out from all the strain!" Maya said.
"Please, switch to something else!"

"This is the only thing keeping them at bay! If I stop, I die!" Shinji shouted. "SEKIHA TENKYOKEN!"

"Maybe if you sent us some backup, he'd stop!" Mari quipped. "Or if you kept the maintenance up on the critical shit we use all the time this wouldn't be happening."

"Well, which one is it?" Misato said sarcastically.

"Pick one!" Shinji shouted. "SEKIHA TENKYOKEN!"

"Shinji, the elevators are almost fixed." Kaji said from the Cage. "Ritsuko's been convinced to skip the safety in the repairs and patch this thing with some bypasses and duct tape."

"How long?!" Shinji asked angrily. "SEKIHA TENKYOKEN!"

"Five, ten minutes tops." Kaji said.

"And we'll send everyone out, including Domon in Unit–01." Misato added.

"Great, just get it fucking done!" Mari shouted.

"Yeah, before there isn't anything left of us to save!" Shinji shouted. "SEKIHA TENKYOKEN!"

Dark Asia was flying calmly beside the transports carrying his precious Dark Gundam in his Master Gundam. He could see the battle in the distance, and yearned for a fight.

"How goes the battle?" Dark Asia asked. "Have they been defeated yet?"

"No, but they are thoroughly distracted." The advisor replied from the main transport plane.
"However, we are no longer receiving a signal from the Nobel Gundam. It appears to have been disabled."

"How?" Dark Asia asked angrily.
"The Burning Gundam." The advisor replied. "He disabled the control system using that damned Erupting Burning Finger."

"Well then, I guess it's time for me to intervene." Dark Asia said. "Is that girl of his on the field?"

"Shining Gundam has been detected if that's what you mean." The advisor replied. "It's fighting separately from Burning Gundam."

"Well, then I'll attack her to draw Domon to me." Dark Asia said. "And I believe it will be safe without my presence."

"I do not presume anything sir." The advisor replied. "But with you as an added distraction, they will undoubtedly not notice us."

"Very well…" Dark Asia said. "Looks like I'll be seeing Domon sooner than I anticipated."

Master Gundam broke off from the cloaked planes and flew off towards the battlefield, straight at Shining Gundam.

"Get ready, Domon!" Dark Asia shouted. "I'm coming for you!"

Domon had arrived in the Cage with everyone else. As everyone clamored to get into their Gundams, Domon ran up the ramps to Unit–01's Entry Plug. When he got there he stared blankly at Unit–01's impressive size and wondered if he would be capable of piloting it.

"Wow… I can't believe I never asked Shinji how they worked these things." Domon muttered. "And it looks so… alive…"

Domon looked puzzledly at Unit–01's eyes and could have sworn the Evangelion was staring back at him. He heard the metal pylons holding the it place start to creak a bit

"Domon, do need assistance?" Maya asked over the intercom.

"Yeah, how do I get the Entry Plug inside?" Domon asked.

"Well, it's easy, but… Unit–01 is already online." Maya said.

"Wait… I thought that they needed a pilot to be on." Domon said.

"Unit–01 is unique." Kaji said as he casually walked up behind Domon. "It responds to Shinji's emotional state, and seeing as he's in distress she's reacting accordingly."

"She?" Domon asked.

"Oh, right." Kaji said knowingly. "The Evangelions are more flesh than metal, and considering how it reacts to Shinji, calling it a "she" just makes sense to me."

"So, are you ready, Domon?" Maya asked.

"Yeah, do I just get in the seat thingy?" Domon asked.

"Yep." Maya said. "Just sit down and we'll handle the rest."

"Yeah, I'll get the Entry Plug in place so you can head out." Kaji said. "Ritsuko's almost got the
elevators back online, so you'll need to be ready to deploy right away."

"That won't be a problem at all." Domon said as he climbed cautiously into the seat.

Kaji walked up to him and handed him a set of sync clips. "Here, put these in your hair, they help sync you with the EVA."

"Sure..." Domon said as he attached them in a fashion similar to Asuka's usual look. "How's this?"

"It'll do." Kaji said kindly as he went to the control panel and moved the pilot seat to the open Entry Plug sticking out of Unit–01. Domon looked around him as the crane released him just as the main hatch slammed shut leaving him in absolute darkness.

"Uh... is this supposed to be happening?" Domon asked.

"Yes, but... not this quickly." Maya said worriedly. "Unit–01 is in control now."

"You make it sound like that's a bad thing." Domon replied.

"Well, it depends..." Kaji said calmly. "Just stay calm and everything should work out fine."

"That doesn't sound very reassuring." Rain said.

"No, but it's kinda fun!" Domon said happily. "I get to fight in something completely different!"

Rain's response was drowned out by the whooshing sound of the LCL flooding the Entry Plug. He felt the warmth of the LCL hit his feet as it rushed up his body and covered his face. He calmly held his breath till he heard Maya give him more instructions.

"Domon, you can safely inhale the LCL, it will help you to connect to Unit–01." Maya said as Domon took a deep breath of the orange liquid.

"That is disgusting..." Domon said. "Why does it taste like blood?"

"We still have absolutely no idea." Maya said. "Or at least I don't."

"So, is this thing still on?" Domon asked as the Entry Plug lit up in a dazzling array of colors, then it was lit up further by a brilliant flash of light, followed by a rainbow of swirling color, then more colors flashed on the walls around Domon until he could see the inside of the Cage displayed all around him. The control panel in front of him lit up and showed that it was ready for use. "Neat."

"Primary connections established... S2 Engine online and stable... secondary connections activating... just like last time..." Maya muttered.

"Wonders never cease." Kaji said.

"Wait... last time?" Domon asked.

"When Heero piloted Unit–01." Maya said. "It shouldn't be possible, but it is."

"At this point, we're not even going to bother trying to understand the Evangelions anymore and just accept that they do what they do for reasons beyond our comprehension." Kaji said.

"Exactly." Maya said.

"Isn't that kind of thinking a bit cavalier?" Rain asked. "Especially with a giant war machine like
"Not when you're dealing with a biological machine." Kaji said. "This isn't some Gundam that requires a pilot to do everything. All of these EVAs have done something really strange or magnificent at some point or another, especially Unit–01. They don't fit the confines of what we consider machines anymore, they've gone beyond that."

"Sounds legit to me." Domon said. "Almost like they have the heart of a warrior."

"Domon, why does everything have to be about fighting?" Rain asked.

"Because that's who I am Rain, that's who you married." Domon said plainly as he felt a warmth envelop him. The Entry Plug's surroundings disappeared in a bright flash and he was standing a white void with a slender figure of a woman in front of him.

"This is becoming interesting." The figure said. "I don't usually get so many visitors."

"Huh?" Domon asked.

"Shinji is in danger, isn't he?" The figure asked.

"Yes, he's trapped in my Gundam protecting Asuka." Domon said. "I want to help him."

"Very well." The figure said. "But are you not interested in who I am?"

"I'm guessing you're buried soul inside Unit–01." Domon said. "The one that protects Shinji and helps him when he needs it."

"Well, you're much closer than the last one that was in here." Yui said. "I am Shinji's mother, Yui Ikari."

"Wait… you're his mother?" Domon asked. "Why are you in here?"

"It was my own doing. I became the resident soul of the Evangelion in order to protect Shinji knowing that he would need me in here when the time came for this fight."

"Does he know…?" Domon asked.

"Yes, he found out some months ago." Yui said. "He took it far better than I had hoped, and it has been nice to see him grow so much lately, protecting those who need his help, even if he barely knows them."

"He's one of the kindest people I've ever met." Domon said. "And the only way I know how to thank him is to go and replay his kindness the best way I know how."

"By fighting." Yui said. "Because you have a warrior's heart."

"Exactly." Domon said. "But can I ask you a question first?"

"Besides the one you just asked?" Yui asked.

"Yes." Domon said.

"Go ahead." Yui said.

"Why did you leave Shinji behind?" Domon asked. "How did you know you'd be able to protect
him? That seems like a big chance to take."

"It was, but I knew that only Shinji could pilot Unit–01." Yui said. "I knew my being in here would mean he'd have the power to save the world... the kind of power that can only be given to those not seeking it out... and Shinji is that person. He has a power he does not want nor did he ever ask for..."

"So, you think he's capable of saving the world?" Domon asked.

"I do." Yui said. "Don't you?"

"Well, he certainly seems the type." Domon said. "Quiet and unassuming..."

"I think you understand then." Yui said. "Otherwise you would not have trusted him with your prized Gundam."

"Yeah, I guess..." Domon said. "I didn't really think too much about it, I just wanted him to be able to save Asuka."

"You're a bit like Shinji." Yui said. "I don't know why, but you have some of the same sadness inside you..."

"I don't know, Shinji's a far better person than I am." Domon said. "He doesn't have the dive to fight, but he does to protect those he loves. I fight because that's how I communicate... and I've caused more problems that way... I won't admit it to Rain..."

"Because you just want her to truly understand you." Yui said. "There are some things people just can't understand about one another, there is always a barrier in the way, but love makes those barriers their weakest."

"Yeah, she does try to understand, but she just doesn't get it." Domon said. "Just like I don't get a lot of the stuff she does, I at least try."

"That's all you can do, Domon." Yui said.

"Thanks, miss Ikari." Domon said before he looked at her puzzledly. "I don't remember telling you my name."

"You didn't." Yui replied.

"Then how...?" Domon asked.

"I listen, and I can see inside Shinji's mind when he's in here." Yui said. "Just thoughts on the surface of his mind. As his mother it's hard to ignore such a doorway to his life." Yui smiled. "Well, I can look inside anyone's mind who steps in here." Yui frowned. "Do think I'm a bad mother for being in here?"

"No... I don't think you're a bad mother." Domon said.

"You thought it." Yui said.

"I get why you thought being here was a good idea, but why didn't you stay out there to help him?" Domon asked. "No one should be without their mother."

"Sometimes things just happen, and I thought that Shinji would be safe with Gendo, but I underestimated what would happen." Yui said. "I only regret that Shinji has suffered much without
me there, just as you have suffered with the tragic loss of your mother."

"I haven't suffered… I just wish I could have said goodbye." Domon said.

"I know that Shinji feels the same way." Yui said. "But you're a survivor, and you have found true happiness. Your mother would be proud of you."

"I hope so." Domon said.

"Now, are you ready to fight? Because I believe you are being called." Yui said.

"Yeah." Domon said. "I'm ready when you are."

"Very well." Yui said calmly. "Now, I know Shinji has kept my presence here a secret from everyone, and I wish that you would do the same."

"I know how to keep a secret." Domon said. "I know things about Rain she wouldn't like other people knowing."

"I know, you're a lucky man with a woman willing to do so much for you." Yui said coyly. "Good luck, Domon Kasshu, bring Shinji and Asuka safely."

"I will." Domon said as another bright light flashed around him.

"Domon, are you there?!" Rain shouted.

"Yes, sorry." Domon stammered. "I couldn't hear you."

"Seriously?" Rain asked.

"Rain, it's not a big deal." Kaji said. "The radios go out sometimes. It happens."

"Well it doesn't matter." Maya said. "Secondary connections are online… A10 connections established… nerve connections are on standby… synchronization rate is at 40%… he's ready to go."

"Excellent." Domon said.

"So, are you ready to launch?" Misato asked.

"As long as the elevators are ready." Domon replied.

"Two minutes till those are online." Kaji said. "Ritsuko keeps running into problems."

"Whatever, I just want to get out there already." Domon said impatiently. "We don't have a lot of time left."

"We know Domon, we're working on it." Misato said impatiently as the transmission was cut short.

Maya switched off the intercom and turned worriedly to Misato. "Uh, ma'am, we've got a new problem." Maya said, her voice shaking slightly.

"What could it possibly be now?" Misato asked sarcastically. "Do the enemies have more reinforcements or something?"
"Unknown, Colonel." Hyuga said. "It's a Pattern Violet opening not far from here. I killed the alarm so we don't cause any more panic."

"How many contacts?" Misato asked.

"Four that we can identify," Aoba said. "They're moving at high speed towards battle zone."

"Can the MAGI predict their course?" Gendo asked from his high sitting command chair.

"MAGI calculate a 99.7% course directly to the Burning Gundam." Maya said. "They will meet up with Burning Gundam in 45 seconds."

"We also have a fifth possible contact coming from a separate direction." Aoba said. "Origin unknown."

"Wonderful…" Misato muttered. "How long till we can actually assist anyone?"

"Sixty plus seconds." Maya said. "We won't be able to intercept the new contacts in time."

"Then we'll just have to hope these new ones are on our side." Misato said. "Otherwise we're in a shitload more trouble than we were a few minutes ago."

Shinji was still being swarmed by the Dark Army. Even though he'd done a pretty good job of holding them back, and even with their weakened ability to multiply, they were still overwhelming him. He was getting tired from the repeated use of the Sekiha Tenkyoken, but he didn't care, he wasn't going to let Asuka get hurt any more than she already had been.

"Misato where the hell is our backup?!" Shinji shouted as several dozen Dark Army soldiers swarmed him. "SEKIHA TENKYOKEN!"

"Misato, are you still there?!" Shinji shouted. "Mari, can you get ahold of Misato?!!"

"Sorry, puppy, no go." Mari said. "I guess we're on our own... and there's just so fucking many of these things... I'm getting fucking tired! SHINING FINGER SWORD!"

"We just need to hold on, Mari. We have to… SURVIVE!" Shinji shouted as several dozen more Dark Army soldiers charged at him. "SEKIHA TENKYOKEN!" That one took the breath from Shinji and he, and by proxy the Burning Gundam, fell to its knees.

"I'm loving the optimism, but you're gotten it at the wrong time." Mari said. "We're fucked from all sides and in every hole."

"I'm trying not to think like that, Mari!" Shinji shouted as he struggled to get up as the Dark Army began to swallow up him and Asuka with their overwhelming numbers. "I know we're going to be ok! I promised I'd protect Asuka, and I… intend… to do just… THAT!" Shinji momentarily got to his feet, just long enough to put out one more blast. "SEKIHA… TENKYOKEN!" Shinji collapsed again, and the Burning Gundam's golden hue lost some of its luster.

"I can't… I think I'm running out of energy." Shinji muttered as the Hyper Mode disengaged, returning Burning Gundam to its primarily white color scheme. "But I need to get up… I need to protect… Asuka…"

Just as the overwhelming number of Dark Army soldiers closed in around Shinji and Asuka, Shinji
heard something over the comm, voices he didn't recognize, shouting things he didn't understand.

"ROSE HURRICANE!"

"BURNING… MACHINE GUN… PUNCH!"

"SHIN! RYUUSEI! KOCHOUKEN!"

"BURSTING GAIA CRUSHER!"

In an instant the enemies surrounding Shinji and Asuka disappeared in several different flashed of light. Shinji looked up to see only four new Gundams hovering over him and landing gracefully around him.

"Domon are you alright?!" One of the voices asked.

"Yeah, Neo Japan, you gonna make it or what?" Another of the voices chimed in.

"Come on bro, get up, we got fighting to do!" A third voice said.

"Or do we have to clean up this mess on our own?" The fourth voice asked.

"Who the hell are you guys…" Shinji asked as he struggled to his feet.

"And who the hell are you?" One of the voices asked while A Gundam wearing what looked like boxing gloves shook its fist at him. "Why are you in Domon's Gundam?!"

"He let me use it." Shinji said defensively. "But you still haven't answered my question, who are you guys and how do you know Domon?"

"We asked first, pal." The voice in the boxing Gundam said angrily.

"Isn't that Nobel Gundam?" The third voice asked.

"Yes, it is." The fourth voice said as the bulky Gundam popped a massive ball off it shoulder and attached it to a beam chain. "Explain yourself, thief."

"We're not answering any questions until you tell us where Domon is, and what you did to poor Allenby there, you scoundrel." The first voice said as the Napoleonic looking Gundam drew its beam sabre and assumed a fencing stance. "Now tell us where he is, or face my blade."

Shinji readied himself for a fight, spreading himself to cover as much of Asuka. "I don't have time for this, either get out of my way, or I'll make you move." Shinji said coolly. "I've got more important things to worry about than some new weirdos with no manners."

"Fine, bro, you're on." The voice inside the Gundam adorned with dragon fists said, drawing two poles from its back.

"Bring it on." Shinji said.

—

Domon was standing impatiently on the launch elevator, his blood pressure through the roof, waiting to be allowed to launch. "Are the elevators online yet?!" Domon asked impatiently.

"Fifteen seconds." Kaji said.
"Every moment we waste is another moment that those two are fending for themselves." Milliardo said.

"When everything's clear, the Gundams will launch straight up and fly to the battle zone." Misato said. "Unit–01 will be shot up as close to the battle zone as possible and will have to run the rest of the way."

"Elevators are online!" Kaji shouted.

"Launch paths set and clear!" Maya reported.

"All available combat units report ready for launch!" Hyuga reported.

"Gundams… Unit–01… LAUNCHING!" Misato shouted.

"It's about time!" Domon shouted as the elevator shot up towards the surface.

Unit–01 emerged from an elevator facing the battle zone and Domon saw the sea of Dark Army soldiers in the distance. "Alright… how do I move this thing…"

As soon as Domon thought about moving the Evangelion lurched forward, walking slowly towards the action as the Gundams all flew off ahead of him.

"Shit, come on… let's go faster!" Domon said as he slammed the control yokes forward and the Evangelion responded and charged at the battle zone.

"Rain, where's Shinji?" Domon asked.

"He's 13km, dead ahead!" Rain said.

"Alright, I'm going for him!" Domon said.

"Well you're it, everyone else is waist deep in those Dark Army bastards." Misato said. "You're the only one that can get to Shinji and Asuka!"

"What about Mari?" Domon asked.

"Once you get Asuka clear of the danger you can worry about Mari." Misato said. "But Shinji needs you now, there are four unidentified contacts surrounding Shinji and Asuka, get there now!"

"I'm on it!" Domon shouted. "Come on, let's go!" Unit–01 moved faster kicking up a cloud of dust behind it, leaving impact craters in the ground as it ran. As Domon got closer, he recognized the Gundams circling Shinji, all poised to attack.

"No, wait!" Domon shouted. "George, Chibodee, Sai, Argo, don't attack Shinji!" Unit–01 skidded to a halt in between Burning Gundam and the others, kicking them back several feet due Unit–01’s immense size.

"Bro…?" Sai Saici asked. "Are you the one in the large purple thingy?"

"Yes, it's me." Domon said. "Why are you guys attacking Shinji here?"

"Well, he is in your Gundam, Domon." George de Sand said. "We assumed the worst."

"That's not exactly the best reason to try and attack him." Domon said. "Trust me, he's more than a match for the four of you."
"What, did he beat you up or something, Domon?" Chibodee Crocket said sarcastically. "I thought you were better than that?"

"Well, would you like to fight something this size that's as maneuverable as a Gundam?" Domon joked.

"No, it looks quite challenging to fight." Argo Gulskii said.

"Uh, Domon, who are these guys?" Shinji asked. "Are they on our side?"

"Yeah they are, Shinji." Domon said. "Meet the Shuffle Alliance."

"Wait, these are your friends?" Shinji asked. "I can see why you guys get along so well."

"And what is that supposed to mean?" Chibodee said incredulously.

"That you guys are as impulsive as Domon is, fighting without trying to talk things out first." Shinji said. "Now, are we done with all the threatening, because I have other things to deal with right now."

"Like what?" Chibodee asked.

"Getting my girlfriend somewhere safe." Shinji said as Burning Gundam pointed at the damaged Nobel Gundam behind him.

"Who?" Sai Saici asked.

"Look, it's not important." Domon said. "Shinji, Mari's got no backup. I'll take Asuka back with me, you go help Mari, she's boxed in."

"Where's everyone else?" Shinji asked.

"Tied up with the Dark Army." Domon said.

"So, it's true… the Dark Gundam has returned…" George said.

"This is quite worrisome." Argo said.

"Is there anything we can do, Domon?" Chibodee asked.

"Cover me while I bring Nobel Gundam and Asuka in." Domon said.

"What about Mari, I'll need some cover too." Shinji said. "I'm a bit tired from firing all those blasts off."

"George, Chibodee, go with him." Domon said.

"Domon, I'd rather not." Chibodee said. "I don't know this kid."

"Look, I trust him, isn't that enough?" Domon said.

"It is for me." George said. "Shinji, lead the way."

"Right." Shinji said.

Domon reached down and lifted Nobel Gundam off the ground, cradling it in Unit–01's arms. Domon looked inside and saw an unconscious Asuka lying on the back wall of the partially
exposed cockpit.

"Well, she looks ok." Domon said. "Alright, let's go!" Unit-01 ran off back towards Tokyo-3, with Bolt and Dragon Gundam following him, while Burning Gundam split off with Gundam Maxter and Gundam Rose following Shinji's course towards Mari.

Mari was still surrounded by Dark Army grunts. Every time she attacked the group surrounding her, they came back, stronger than ever. The Super Mode had given out on her from the repeated use of the Shining Finger Sword, and she, like Shinji, was exhausted. This didn't keep her from fighting however, as she refused to let the enemy win, and stubbornly continued to attack until someone came to help her.

"Motherfucker… WHERE IS MY BACKUP!" Mari screamed. "MISATO, WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU PLAYING AT! I NEED SOME FUCKING HELP OUT HERE!"

"We're working on it Mari." Misato said. "Shinji's on his way."

"I don't have a lot of time!" Mari shouted. "SHINING FINGER SWORD!" Mari cleared out a mess of enemies around her, but didn't notice the blur coming at her from behind, knocking her down to the ground, and throwing her face first into the front of the cockpit.

"MOTHERFUCKER!" Mari screamed. "YOU ARE SO GONNA PAY FOR THAT!"

"Somehow I doubt that, Rain Mikamura." Dark Asia said as Master Gundam stood tall above Shining Gundam and leered at it. "Can't you fight me?"

"Sorry asshole." Mari sneered. "I'm not Rain, but if it's a fight you want, you picked the wrong person to FUCK WITH!" Shining Gundam charged at Master Gundam with a solid looking right hook, only for Master Gundam to dodge it, causing Mari to stumble and spin around to recover before falling.

"I doubt with your sloppy, and unrefined technique you could take me on, girl." Dark Asia sneered. "Perhaps you should let the real warriors fight."

"That's it!" Mari shouted. "You're going down!" Mari threw her right arm out to her side. "THIS HAND OF MINE GLOWS WITH AN AWESOME POWER!" Mari cried as the face mask opened, shoulder pauldrons slid up revealing golden plating behind them, the arms and legs extended themselves a bit, making the Gundam taller, the outside of the calves popped open, revealing golden thrusters. "ITS BURNING GRIP TELLS ME TO DEFEAT YOU!" Finally, the right arm reached out as Shining Gundam charged Master Gundam. The guard on the right forearm raised itself off the main arm, and the right hand extended itself at each articulating joint, with a rush of green plasma exploding from the joints. "SHINING… FINGER!"

"How weak…" Dark Asia muttered as he countered weakly with his right hand. "DARKNESS FINGER!"

The green Shining Finger and the purple Darkness Finger collided with a powerful explosion of pure energy. Pain shot down Mari's arm, causing her to scream out in pain. Dark Asia used his strength to lift Shining Gundam off its feet and throw it to the ground a short distance away.

"Absolutely pathetic." Dark Asia said. "You're not even a challenge."

"I'LL SHOW YOU A FUCKING CHALLENGE!" Mari shouted as Shining Gundam got back up
and charged Master Gundam once more. "SHINING FINGER!"

Dark Asia countered with his Master Cloth, tying it around the charging Shining Gundam, and whipping Mari around and slamming her and her Gundam right into the ground.

"You are far too easy to hit." Dark Asia sneered. "You leave yourself wide open to attack, and you have no idea how to dodge."

"Look asshole." Mari said as she got Shining Gundam back to its feet again. "I didn't ask for your fucking advice, so take your snide remarks and shove them UP YOUR ASS!"

The Shining Gundam began to glow and sparkle with a golden aura, the Gundam turned gold, and its shoulders, the face mask opened, shoulder pauldrons slid up revealing golden plating behind them, the arms and legs extended themselves a bit, making the Gundam taller, the outside of the calves popped open, revealing golden thrusters, and Mari took a fighting stance. Mari herself erupted in a red glow, her eyes filled with fury as she looked around her. "YOU'RE FINISHED, MOTHERFucker!"

"THIS HAND OF MINE GLOWS WITH AN AWESOME POWER!" Mari screamed as she drew out one of the beam sabres on Shining Gundam's hip. "IT'S BURNING GRIP TELLS ME TO DEFEAT YOU!" Mari ignited the beam sabre and it glowed and crackled as Mari raised it in the air, it exploded with energy, extending farm beyond its normal length, and the color of the beam sabre changed from bright red to Shining Finger green. "TAKE THIS…! MY LOVE… MY ANGER… AND ALL OF MY SORROW! SHINING… FINGER… SWORD!"

"Still not strong enough! The School of the Undefeated of the East! Ultimate Secret Technique!" Dark Asia shouted. "SEKIHA… TENKYOKEN!"

Dark Asia countered Mari with a massive energy blast that exploded on her Shining Finger Sword and sent her flying backwards and slamming into the ground.

"Son of a bitch!" Mari shouted. "You're not gonna stop me! I WILL FUCKING KILL YOU!" Shining Gundam stood back up and Mari defiantly charged another attack.

"Know your place girl." Dark Asia said. "Stay down where you BELONG!" The Master Cloth shot out once again and slammed Shining Gundam back into the ground and held it there. "Why don't you wait for a real fighter to come face me, girl."

"GO TO HELL!" Mari screamed as she writhed in agony.

Shinji was moving as fast as he could through the sea of Dark Army grunts with George and Chibodee behind him. As they cut through the roving hoards, Shinji could hear Mari screaming in pain over the comm.

"Mari, what's wrong?!" Shinji asked worriedly as Mari didn't respond and just kept screaming. "Mari, answer me!"

"Is that your friend screaming?" Chibodee asked.

"Chibodee, why do you always have to ask the obvious?" George asked. "Do we know how far away she is from us?"

"Misato, where is she?!" Shinji asked.
"She's 2km from you, turn hard left, heading two–seven–six." Misato said.

"Got it!" Shinji said as he did a hairpin turn, slamming against several Dark Army grunts in the process. "Mari, just hold on!"

As the trio moved towards Mari's position, the reason for Mari's difficulty became abundantly clear. The Master Gundam was holding her down,

"Is that..." Chibodee muttered.

"Master Gundam..." George said.

"So that's the Gundam Domon was so worried about..." Shinji said.

"Yeah, and he's got your friend trapped." Chibodee quipped.

"Not for long!" Shinji shouted as Burning Gundam's wings unfolded and its thrusters ignited. "Get away from her!" Burning Gundam charged Master Gundam and body slammed it, sending it away from Mari's partially disabled Gundam.

"Well, you're not Domon." Dark Asia said. "But at least you can fight better than that useless fool."

"Don't call her a fool!" Shinji shouted. "Because you're about to regret what you did to her any my girlfriend!"

"I'd like to see you try, boy." Dark Asia said.

"Fine..." Shinji snarled. "You asked for it!"

"Shinji, I don't really know you that well, but this is a bad idea." George said.

"Yeah, you could die." Chibodee added.

"I don't care!" Shinji snarled. "I'm going to protect Mari, even if it kills me! So either help me out or get the hell out of my way!"

"Shinji, it's just a little unwise..." George muttered.

"I don't care!" Shinji shouted. "These horrible people keep appearing here, and I'm the one that caused this, so now I have to FINISH THIS!"

With those last words, Burning Gundam exploded into a shining beacon of light, with every system on board showing a massive power increase, and the mandala on the Gundam's back glowed even brighter than usual. Shinji was even bathed in a golden glow, and his demeanor changed significantly once again. "THIS HAND OF MINE IS BURNING RED!" Shinji cried.

"Excellent!" Dark Asia shouted as Master Gundam also turned gold. "Now it's a fight!"

"ITS LOUD ROAR TELLS ME TO GRASP VICTORY!" Shinji roared as he charged Master Gundam charged once again.

"EXPLODING... SHADOW... FINGER!" Dark Asia shouted as Master Gundam charged Burning Gundam, its clawed right hand engulfed in a burning purple and violet flame with Shinji retaliating in kind.

"ERUPTING... BURNING... FINGER!" Shinji cried sending his orange and red glowing hand
towards Dark Asia's attack. The two attacks collided, causing a massive shockwave to expand outward, sending Shining Gundam, Gundam Maxter, and Gundam Rose flying backwards and creating a shallow crater where the two Gundams were locked in a struggle.

Both Gundams were pressing their attack hands against each other, the armor on their respective arms glowing from the massive, sustained energy output from their respective attacks.

"Give up boy, you're not strong enough to defeat me!" Dark Asia shouted.

"NEVER!" Shinji screamed. "YOU'LL HAVE TO KILL ME FIRST!"

"It shouldn't be that hard!" Dark Asia shouted as he drew his other hand back. "SEKIHA…"

"NOOOOOO!" Domon shouted as Unit–01 appeared out of nowhere. "Get away from him!" Unit–01 kicked Master Gundam in the face sending it flying away from Shinji, knocking the wind out of Dark Asia at the same time.

"Domon, where the hell did you come from?" Shinji asked.

"I dropped Asuka off and rushed back here." Domon said. "I couldn't just leave you alone to fight some freak in the Master Gundam."

"So, Domon, it is you..." Dark Asia said. "I didn't expect you so soon."

"Who are you?" Domon asked.

"Don't you recognize my voice, Domon?" Dark Asia said. "You grew up under my tutelage, you called me "master", and you looked up to me."

"You're not him." Domon said. "He died in my arms!"

"Really, Domon, did I teach you nothing?" Dark Asia said. "Once you eliminate the possible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth."

"No, you're not him!" Domon shouted. "I defeated you and you died! You cannot be him!"

"Domon, you're such a fool to think this isn't possible." Dark Asia said as he noticed the number of Dark Army soldiers was thinning into the triple digits. "But we'll save this conversation for a later time. I don't wish to take on all your friends all at once."

Dark Asia took off in his damaged Master Gundam just as some of the other Gundams showed up to see what was going on. Shining Gundam wearily got up off the ground and looked dejected.

"I can see why the princess is always frustrated when you save her, puppy." Mari said.

"Well, enlighten m, Mari." Shinji said. "I'd like to know."

"Because we should be able to it ourselves... without your help." Mari said.

"Mari, you couldn't have beaten him." Rain said over the comm. "You were attacking too erratically to cause any lasting damage. Master Asia..."

"IT WASN'T HIM!" Domon shouted. "Master Asia is dead! That is just some cheap imitation of him, nothing more!"

"Domon, you have to admit, it fought and sounded like him." George said.
"Yeah, Neo Japan, you're just being stupid." Chibodee said. "It clearly was him, and he's just playing the same old mind games with you."

"No one can fake their death like that and then let the body get burned." Domon said. "It's just not possible."

"Well, perhaps you guys could discuss this later and make sure all those ugly things have been cleaned up." Misato said.

"It has been dealt with." Heero said. "Mission complete."

"He's right, ma'am." Maya said. "No enemy contacts detected."

"So, what about the four new Gundams?" Misato asked.

"They're allies." Domon said. "They came here to help... right?"

"Of course." George said.

"So, does that mean we can come back in?" Shinji asked.

"Yeah, as long as nothing else pops out of nowhere in the next few minutes, you're all clear to return to base." Misato said.

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As all the Gundams and Unit–01 returned to NERV HQ, there was a great deal of silence from Domon. He was deep in thought about hearing what he believed was Master Asia's voice, even though Domon saw Master Asia die, he still couldn't bring himself to believe that he could be alive now, let alone be capable of attacking with the Dark Gundam's Dark Army.

As Unit–01 was locked in place, and the other Gundams found room around the Cage to shut down so they could be inspected, repaired, and rearmed. Everyone got out of their cockpits with a bit of gloom hovering over them, yet another enemy had surfaced, one that sounded quite dangerous to be dealing with.

As Shinji exited Burning Gundam, he saw Mari looking quite upset as she exited Shining Gundam, and went over to her.

"Mari, are you ok?" Shinji asked kindly.

"Yeah, puppy, I'm fine." Mari said. "I just wish I could have fought him better, or had at least been able to help you or something..."

"Mari, you did fine." Shinji said. "Even if you had fought him, I doubt I could have done anything to help. He was just too strong."

"So, you think I could have taken him?" Mari asked.

"Yeah, if you focused a bit..." Shinji said quietly.

"What's that supposed to mean?" Mari asked.

"You just attack erratically." Shinji said. "It may work against angels... but we can't just rush in to fight like that, otherwise we could get hurt... you almost did get hurt... I don't want to lose you, Mari, you're my best friend... can you promise me to be more careful?"
"Well, I can try puppy." Mari said as she stood up and kissed Shinji on the cheek. "I want to be mad at you for criticizing me, but I can't be mad at you… especially when you might have a point… just don't tell the princess I said that, ok?"

"I promise." Shinji said. "So… do you want to meet the new arrivals?"

"Not really…" Mari said. "I just want to go visit Rei and go home."

"Ok, I guess I'll see you at home." Shinji said.

"Yeah…" Mari said as she walked away.

As Mari walked towards the door, Chibodee and George were descending from their Gundams. Chibodee caught sight of Mari and swooned.

"Hey George, look at that ten piece…" Chibodee said. "I think I'm in love…"

"Just like every other time you say that." George said as he shook his head. "Americans can be such crass people…"

"I think she came out of the Shining Gundam… so that would make her that girl that was screaming, right?" Chibodee asked.

"Chibodee, be a gentleman and just leave it alone." George said.

"Nope, I have my pickup line." Chibodee said as he called out to Mari. "Hey there beautiful, I heard you're the screamer…" Chibodee said seductively. "How you doin'?"

"Back off fuck boy." Mari said harshly as she walked past him without a look. "I don't think you could ever get me to scream that loud… doesn't look like you have it in you."

"Wha…?" Chibodee said in a stunned tone.

"Wow… that was harsh coming from her…" Kaji said.

"See, Chibodee, I told you this would happen." George said in an I–told–you–so tone. "Not every girl wants to be with you, no matter how hard you try."

"But, look at me…" Chibodee said. "I'm irresistible!"

"Well, clearly, you are not, considering that flat out rejection." Argo said.

"And she made it sound as though you had a small…" Sai Saici started, but stopped after receiving a heavy death glare from Chibodee. "Well you know."

"Wait, Chibodee has a small penis?" Domon asked as he walked over.

"What, no I don't!" Chibodee shouted.

"Don't sound so defensive, buddy." Domon said. "It almost sounds like its true…"

"Domon, this really isn't the time for that." Rain said as she walked down to meet them all. "You can joke around again when we get home."

"Yeah, so what about getting home?" Chibodee asked hurriedly changing the subject. "Are we stuck here?"
"Only for the short term." Rain said. "But we can explain that later."

"Why later?" George asked. "Why not now?"

"Well, it's been a long day, and you have a lot of people to meet before we can head home." Domon said. "Although, you guys have already met Shinji."

"More like we almost accosted the boy." George said. "I'm George de Sand, I was in the fabulous Gundam Rose, and I do apologize for our earlier misunderstanding. I hope you can find it in your heart to forgive us for that."

"Oh, well, it wasn't that bad." Shinji said. "I can understand why you guys reacted that way, no hard feelings."

"Thank you, Shinji." George said as he pointed to Chibodee. "This is Chibodee Crockett, he was…"

"The other guy Domon told to cover me?" Shinji asked. "Nice to meet you."

"Likewise." Chibodee said quietly.

"So, is he upset Mari turned him down?" Shinji asked.

"Her name was Mari, was it?" George asked. "She went by so fast we didn't catch a name."

"Is she always so… direct?" Argo asked.

"No, she's usually in a much friendlier mood." Shinji said. "And you are?"

"Argo Gulskii." Argo replied. "You are a strong fighter, Shinji…"

"Oh, Shinji Ikari." Shinji replied.

"From what I saw when we arrived, you certainly have a gift for fighting." Argo continued. "How long have you been piloting a Gundam?"

"Oh, I don't pilot a Gundam." Shinji said as he pointed at Unit–01. "I pilot an Evangelion."

"A what?" Sai Saici asked.

"It's a long story." Domon said.

"How long of a story?" Chibodee asked.

"The kind that takes a while to explain." Misato said as she walked up with Maya and Hyuga close behind her.

"Hello there." Chibodee said as suavely as possible.

"Give it a rest, bro." Sai Saici said.

"Yeah, pal, she's spoken for." Kaji said angrily.

"Kaji, I can handle this myself." Misato said. "I'm Lieutenant Colonel Misato Katsuragi, Chief of Operations. Domon, can you vouch for these guys?"

"Yes, ma'am." Domon said. "They're the rest of the Shuffle Alliance."
"Alright." Misato said. "Once we've debriefed everyone, you'll be free to go."

"Go where?" Argo asked.

"I own an apartment building outside the city center. Everyone that's arrived is being housed there till we can send everyone home." Misato replied.

"So we can get home?" Chibodee asked. "Cause that seemed like one hell of a one way trip."

"That will be part of the debriefing." Misato replied. "But the short answer is yes, you will be going home."

"So, please, lead the way." George said. "The sooner the debriefing is over, the sooner we can go get some rest."

"Please follow me." Misato said. "And that means everyone."

"Yeah, we've got one hell of a full house here now." Kaji said. "It's like we're the Grand Central Station of the cosmos."

"That's not my concern right now." Misato said. "That Dark Gundam is."

"Well, for us that's just another typical day at the office." Kaji joked as all the pilots followed them to the conference room.

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November 23, 2016 – Comfort 17 Apartments

The sun was just starting to crest above the horizon, and after a long night of being debriefed by Misato, moving into a small apartment, and then having as much as could be explained told to them by Shinji, Domon, Rain, Heero, Duo and Lady Une, George, Chibodee, Argo, and Sai Saici were exhausted. They hadn't slept in over 36 hours, and now that everyone had left except for Domon and Rain, they were finally able to express their true shock at everything they had been told, and also openly worry about the return of the Dark Gundam and Master Asia after both had been dead.

"Domon, with all this, you haven't told us how you're feeling." George said. "Are you ok?"

"No, the Dark Gundam was destroyed, and yet the Dark Army just attacked in force." Domon said. "And now we've got someone that sounds and fight like Master… but Master is dead, he can't be here."

"Domon, as much as you want to ignore this, I saw that guy fight Shinji." Chibodee said. "He used that energy whip thing just like him, and moved just like he did. It has to be him, even if you don't want to see it, Domon, Master Asia is alive, and he's working with the Dark Gundam."

"Look, it may sound like him, but it's not him!" Domon shouted. "I burned his body! He's dead! It's just some cheap trick and we're falling for it!"

"Domon, calm down." Rain said.

"Don't tell me to calm down!" Domon said. "This is serious! We're more worried about Master Asia being back than the fact the Dark Gundam is hiding out there somewhere!"

"Domon, we know that." George said. "We followed you here because we suspected this was the case, and there has been strange activity the past few weeks."
"Like what?" Rain asked. "I thought you covered everything in the briefing."

"Well, we're not sure of anything, which is why we needed you back." Argo said.

"What's going on?" Domon asked.

"There have been weird power readings from around the world." Chibodee said. "Like they have the Dark Gundam hooked up to three different power grids around the world."

"Three?!" Domon shouted. "And that was after we came here?!"

"That was after Allenby disappeared, yes." George said. "There were three large spikes in power consumption. The grid in Neo Italy crashed because of the power draw."

"Why didn't you investigate?" Rain asked.

"We couldn't." Sai Saici said. "We knew the power was being sucked out somewhere in the countries, but without Rain, we couldn't figure any of the specifics."

"So that's why you needed us?" Rain asked.

"Well that and you'd been missing since finding that… what was it?" Chibodee asked.

"A wormhole." Argo said.

"Yeah the wormhole." Chibodee finished. "So we found one and ended up appearing right near your little battle."

"It wasn't quite little." Domon said. "It reminded me of Shinjuku and the Guyana Highlands. There were just too many of them."

"Well, we just have to destroy it right?" George said. "Before it tries to kill us all or something."

"And avoid what happened last time." Sai Saici quipped.

"Well, someone already got kidnapped." Domon said. "Thankfully, she's not seriously injured."

"The girl in the Nobel Gundam?" Chibodee asked.

"Yeah, Shinji's girlfriend." Rain said. "That's why he was out in Burning Gundam."

"I must have missed that part of the debriefing." Sai Saici moaned. "It was just so long…"

"No, they left out the personal stuff to make it shorter." Domon said. "But there was still a lot to cover."

"Like the fact we can go home soon?" Chibodee asked.

"As soon as the machine has been tested for safety." Rain said.

"And as soon as we kill the Dark Gundam again." Domon added.

"Do you think we can?" Argo said. "It was very difficult the last time."

"So, how do we find it?" Sai Saici asked.

"I started a search for large draws of power on the world power grid." Rain said. "Because the draw
from Hong Kong disappeared, so they must have moved."

"Yes, but to where?" George asked.

"We don't know." Rain said. "But in the next few days, we will."

"Why would it take a few days?" Chibodee asked. "TV shows make it out that this stuff is easy and only takes a few hours."

"Or minutes." Argo added.

"TV doesn't know shit." Rain said angrily.

"You had to mention TV…" Domon said.

"What's wrong with TV science?" Chibodee asked.

"It doesn't know its ass from its elbow. The real world takes time to get things done." Rain said angrily. "And if they have anyone who knows about power grids, they'll be making the draws look less obvious, especially if it's off a very high voltage line, large power draws are harder to detect, so the data collection takes time."

"Ok, ok, TV science is bullshit." Chibodee said.

"You bet your ass its bullshit." Rain said.

"So what do we do now?" Argo asked.

"We wait until we know more." Rain replied.

"So until then, let's get some sleep." Domon said as he and Rain got up. "Night all."

"But… its morning." Chibodee protested.

"Well, you'll need your sleep." Rain said. "Otherwise when the final battle comes, you won't be ready."

"Well, we don't need that." George said.

"No, there's too much at stake to leave up to chance." Domon said as he left. "And too many questions that need answers to be tired on the battlefield."

Allenby was strolling happily through the halls of Medical Wing. She had just been released with a clean bill of health. As she was skipping down the clean white halls as the sunlight filtered through the windows, she happened across Mari, who was just leaving Rei's secluded area.

"Hello!" Allenby said brightly. "Who are you?"

"Oh, I'm Mari." Mari replied. "You're that Allenby girl, right?"

"Yep, that's me!" Allenby replied.

"Look like you recovered well enough." Mari said.

"Yeah, I guess my injuries weren't that bad after all." Allenby said. "So, are you one the people that
saved me?"

"No, not me." Mari said. "Your friend Domon was one, and my friend Shinji was the other."

"Oh?" Allenby asked. "And is this Shinji… single?"

"Nope, he's got the girl of his dreams."

"Oh, bummer…" Allenby said. "Can I meet him though? I'd like to thank him."

"Sure, I don't see why not." Mari said. "He's with his girlfriend down the hall. Follow me."

"Wait, why is she here?" Allenby asked.

"Well, some nut job kidnapped her and put her in some Gundam that looks like some anime character with long ass hair." Mari said. "And then Shinji had to save her using Domon's Gundam."

"Oh… so he did grab someone else…" Allenby said. "I guess that's my fault for escaping."

"Wait, is that your Gundam?" Mari asked.

"Yeah, it is." Allenby said. "Although, I guess if I hadn't have escaped, I would have been the one to attack the city."

"Well, Asuka will be fine." Mari said. "We've all been through a lot worse."

"How much worse?" Allenby asked.

"Well, that's a long story." Mari said.

"Tell me." Allenby said. "I like stories."

"Well, let's meet Shinji first." Mari said as they got to a closed door that Mari swung open to see Shinji sleeping in his chair.

"Hey, puppy, you've got a visitor!" Mari said loudly.

"Huh, what?!" Shinji shouted as he jumped. "Mari, what is it?!"

"Visitor." Mari said. "I think you've met her before, but I think she was bleeding last time you saw her."

"Allenby?" Shinji asked.

"Yep!" Allenby said happily as she walked over to him and kissed him on the cheek. "Thanks for pulling my ass out of the fire."

"Literally." Shinji replied. "And it was no problem. I'm just glad you're ok."

"Yeah, well, it could have been worse." Allenby said as she looked sadly at Asuka. "I could have ended up worse than her."

"Who, Asuka?" Shinji asked. "She'll be fine. The doctors said it was a mild coma and that she'll be awake in a few days. She'll be here for a couple weeks because of the electrical current she received when I attacked her, but otherwise she'll live. She'll be pissed, but she'll be fine."

"Do you think she'll get a free ice cream somewhere if we tell them she's had three different comas?"
Mari asked innocently. "Or maybe it can get us all free ice cream?"

"Mari, be quiet." Shinji said exasperatedly.

"Right–o!" Mari said cheerfully.

"You must love her a lot to think she'll be ok." Allenby said.

"No, we've just been through this enough, you know when things are fine, and when things are about to hit the fan." Shinji replied.

"What do you mean?" Allenby said. "Domon really didn't explain much, and then I heard all these alarms the other day."

"Oh, the Dark Army attacked." Shinji said. "But we took care of it."

"Who took care of it?" Allenby asked. "Just the four of you?"

"No, there are a lot more than four of us." Shinji said. "It's a bit complicated actually."

"How complicated?" Allenby asked.

"Well, you better get comfy, it's a long, drawn out story." Mari said.

Misato and Kaji were lying in bed, trying to forget another long and confusing day at NERV. Misato hadn't talked to Kaji at all when they got back to Misato's apartment, and she slept angrily on her side, looking away from him the entire night. Kaji knew why she was mad, he had told her she was being stupid several times the previous day, and figured she'd be upset with him. Kaji rolled over and looked at Misato's back trying to think of what to say.

"Misato, I'm sorry." Kaji said bluntly.

"Really…" Misato muttered. "Cause you don't sound sorry."

"Misato, I am sorry I was so harsh yesterday." Kaji said.

"Just yesterday?" Misato asked. "Cause you've been on me the last few weeks."

"Misato, you've been kind of erratic the past few weeks." Kaji replied.

"And that gives you the right to give me shit?" Misato asked.

"No, but it gives me the right to be as blunt with you as possible." Kaji said. "You and I both know it's the only way to get through to you, especially when you're being stubborn."

"It is not!" Misato said angrily. "You're just a jerk."

"I know you don't believe that." Kaji said. "And I know why you're mad, because like those kids you look after, you don't like hearing the truth."

"What are you talking about?" Misato said. "I can handle anything!"

"No you can't Misato." Kaji said. "You don't like being told you're wrong."

"I… oh shut up and leave me alone." Misato said sullenly. "I don't even know why I let you come
home with me."

"Because you love me and don't like being alone," Kaji said.

"No I don't." Misato said stubbornly.

"What, you don't love me, or you like being alone?"

"Yeah, whatever." Misato said.

"Misato, you have to stop doing this." Kaji said. "I was only trying to help. You have to know I only did it because I love you."

"How does that even make sense?" Misato asked as she turned over and faced Kaji with rage and tears in her eyes. "You made me look like an idiot when you yelled at me, like you're the one in charge in our relationship! You made me look like an idiot!"

"Misato, you're not an idiot, you're just a hothead." Kaji said. "And that's part of what I love about you."

"You don't mean that." Misato said. "You treat me like a child."

"Only when you act like one." Kaji said. "Everyone has their moments, and sometimes, yours happen at work."

"And what, you're the only one that can talk sense into me?" Misato asked.

"Short answer, yes." Kaji said. "Just like how Asuka can calm Shinji down, and Rei has some sort of effect on Mari, I do the same thing for you, whether you realize it or not."

"I…" Misato said as she thought back to everything they had gone through together. "I guess you're… right."

"See, was that so hard?" Kaji asked.

"Yes, it actually was kinda difficult." Misato said.

"Well, that's an improvement." Kaji said. "So, can you find it in your heart to forgive me for trying to help?"

"I can try." Misato said.

"So, does that mean we can cuddle now?" Kaji said. "Or are you going to go back to giving me the cold shoulder."

"Really, just cuddle?" Misato asked. "You know what we do after a fight…"

"Well, I didn't want to push my luck." Kaji joked.

"Oh, just shut up and fuck me, stupid." Misato said as she solved Kaji and got on top of him. "You always do this."

"Do what?" Kaji asked coyly.

"Make me wait." Misato said as she pulled off her top.
November 26, 2016 – Outside Tagata, Japan

Dark Asia was standing looking towards the mountain range that kept Tokyo–3 out of view. It was a clear day, and even though the view was clear and beautiful, he was worried. Things had not gone exactly to plan. The Dark Army had been decimated, his own Gundam had been damaged, and they had lost the advantage of the Nobel Gundam and its Berserk System. The only thing that had gone right was the transport of the Dark Gundam itself. Dark Asia had been told that there was more power to draw from here, but that the move degraded the Dark Gundam more than they thought, meaning it was even weaker than before.

"This is not a good situation." Dark Asia muttered to himself. "We're at a disadvantage here, even if the Dark Gundam is turning out as many units as it can, they don't have any special abilities, and the Dark Gundam itself can't do a thing other than make useless soldiers. It's certainly not as powerful as it once was."

Dark Asia turned around and went to a makeshift hangar inside the mountain and looked at his Master Gundam. Technicians had disassembled its right arm after the damage it had received and were rebuilding it.

"How was that boy so strong?" Dark Asia asked himself. "He shouldn't have been able to withstand my attack, and yet, he did. And then Domon assisted him… he interrupted a fight, he would never do that, he was trained better than that." Dark Asia sighed. "He's a true fighter, he should have left me to fight that child like a true warrior!"

Dark Asia glared at his Gundam. "And now, because of them, we can't do anything but wait until the Dark Gundam gets stronger and then… we strike."

Dark Asia walked out of the mountain hangar, towards a different one housing the Dark Gundam. Its armor was in pretty bad shape, with large chunks of it missing, it's body immobile. However, surrounding it were a legion of Dark Army soldiers, tens of thousands of them lined up around it, protecting it. Their eyes were not glowing, but it felt as though every single one was watching him as he walked in.

Dark Asia's gaze however, shifted to the Dark Gundam again, to its open chest, which had Mikino Kasshu ensnared within it in a web of heavy cables.

"Well, Mikino…" Dark Asia said. "Your on has changed quite a bit, and it's a shame you can't really talk to him anymore. So, I guess its left to me to set him straight and take back the pride I lost in my last fight with him… the last fight in my previous life."

The Command Center was quiet. Only Kaji, Misato, Hyuga, Aoba, and Maya were present. The MAGI were still running Rain's algorithm trying to find the Dark Gundam. It had been several days, and they were still searching through terabytes of data to find what they were looking for.

"It's been over four days…" Aoba moaned. "How long is this going to take?"

"As long as it needs to." Misato said. "That's how this works."

"Yeah, but the MAGI are the most powerful computers on the planet." Hyuga added. "It should go faster."

"From what Rain said, whatever they're trying to calculate is complex, Ritsuko could barely understand the formula." Maya said. "I guess it's just going to take…"
"What, why did you pause?" Misato asked.

"Time's up, we know where they are." Maya said. "Roughly 15 kilometers south of us, outside of Tagata."

"Seriously, out in an abandoned suburb?" Kaji asked.

"Yeah, it runs a trunk line all the way to Okinawa from there." Aoba said as he pulled up the schematics. "They reworked that to provides us access to more power in case another Angel popped up with a similar profile to the Fifth Angel."

"So there's a great big, relatively untapped, power line that it's drawing from?" Misato asked.

"Yeah, but they aren't drawing that much." Hyuga said. "Ms. Mikamura was right, they don't want to draw attention to themselves. They're drawing just enough to stay under the radar, but whatever this program did took two days to pinpoint that's where they were based on historical data."

"So, now what do we do, ma'am?" Maya asked.

"We call one last meeting." Gendo commanded. "Colonel Katsuragi, send a recon team to scout the area and draw up an appropriate tactical plan to finish this threat off."

"Yes, Commander." Misato said.

"I'll let Howard know to step up the repairs on the Gundams." Kaji said. "They'll need to be ready."

"I can help with the tactical plan, ma'am." Maya said.

"Good, can you coordinate the recon team?" Misato asked. "We need as much intel as possible before we send in a team."

"Understood, ma'am." Maya said.

"So, are we taking the fight to them?" Hyuga asked.

"That's the general plan." Misato said. "It'll be nice to destroy another part of the countryside for once."

Allenby, Mari, and Shinji were sitting in Asuka's hospital room, waiting patiently for Asuka to wake up. Shinji, to his credit, had not left Asuka's side since he got there, with Allenby and Mari showing up only during the day.

Allenby cuddled up to Shinji when she was there, in a similar manner to Mari, joking around with one of her saviors, as Domon had only talked to Allenby once since she got out of the hospital. She was quietly upset by this, but understood he was trying to keep his distance, but she did miss her friend a great deal.

"So, Shinji, are you doing alright today?" Allenby asked as she poked Shinji's face.

"Yeah, I guess." Shinji said. "It's just been a few days, and now I'm getting worried Asuka's worse off than they thought."

"Don't worry, puppy." Mari said as she also poked Shinji's face. "She's a tough, stubborn, German cookie, she'll be just fine."
"I know, but can you two stop poking me?" Shinji asked. "It was ok when there was just Mari, but now there's two of you…"

"Sorry, puppy." Mari said.

"But you're just so cute!" Allenby finished.

"God, what have you two been doing?" Shinji asked. "You're acting awfully… in sync."

"Get your mind out of the gutter, puppy." Mari said. "Allenby and I are only friends. And Rei is the only peach I'm waiting to take a bite out of."

"I didn't think that, Mari." Shinji groaned. "I just thought you two were hanging out way too much."

"Well, Allenby's friends have been busty lately working on their Gundams." Mari said. "So, I offered to show her around and keep her company."

"How nice of you." Shinji said. "I'm guessing you took her to karaoke?"

"Yeah, it was kinda awesome!" Allenby said.

"Sill, you look kind of, unsettled." Shinji said. "Are you ok, Allenby? I mean, I did tell you that this wasn't your fault."

"Yeah, it's not this." Allenby said. "I'm just… thinking about something private."

"Well, it's clearly bothering you." Shinji said. "Otherwise you wouldn't be trying so hard to be happy."

"How can you tell?" Allenby asked.

"I was like that for a long time." Shinji said. "How did you not notice it, Mari?"

"I guess I was just happy to have some female company." Mari said. "You know, cause almost everyone who's come here has been a guy."

"Fair enough." Shinji said. "So, Allenby, what's the problem?"

"I… I don't like talking about it." Allenby said. "I thought that… that after Domon got married, my feelings would disappear, but they didn't."

"So, you love Domon?" Shinji asked.

"Well… yeah…" Allenby said. "He's the only guy I know that liked me because I could fight… he didn't think any less of me cause I was a woman. He treated me… nice… but he loved Rain, but I thought for a minute there that he might… like me…"

"I can understand that feeling." Mari said. "But sometimes things aren't meant to be."

"Did the same thing happen to you?" Allenby asked.

"Yeah… a long time ago…" Mari said sullenly. "I fell in love with someone but they fell in love with someone else before I told her how I felt. It hurt a lot, but you'll find someone eventually."

"Yeah, but how do you get over it?" Allenby asked.
"You just sort of deal with." Mari said. "And if you really love Domon, you'll be glad that he's happy with Rain."

"I know, I just wish…" Allenby started.

"That he was happy with you?" Shinji asked.

"Yeah…" Allenby said. "Is that too much to ask for?"

"No, not really." Asuka said wearily. "Everyone should be happy at some point… unless you've got a massive headache that is."

"ASUKA!" Shinji shouted happily.

"Baka, stop screaming!" Asuka said angrily. "I just told you I have a headache!" Asuka glared at him. "Besides, it looks like you don't need me anymore with your harem all crowded around you."

"Asuka, it's not like that, they were just being nice and keeping me company." Shinji said hurriedly.

"I don't know, you're all awfully cozy over there." Asuka said. "I didn't figure you for an exhibitionist, baka. And all in front of the girl you supposedly love…"

"But he does love you, Asuka." Allenby said. "He hasn't left this room since you got here, and every time he mentions your name he gets a twinkle in his eye."

"So I'm not being replaced by the cute girl with the huge tits." Asuka joked. "I'm glad you love me enough to do that, baka."

"You make me sound like a pervert saying it that way." Shinji muttered.

"Well, you are a pervert, baka." Asuka said as she smiled. "But you're my pervert."

November 28, 2016 – NERV HQ

Everyone was once again present in the Command Center, facing the main view screen. Misato, Maya, and Kaji were all standing near the control console, while everyone else faced them. High above the pilots, Gendo and Fuyutsuki were monitoring the meeting from their usual perch. As the last few pilots wandered in, Misato called everyone to attention so that the presentation could begin.

"So, you know where the Dark Gundam is, right?" Domon asked bluntly before Misato could speak. "Is that why we're here?"

"Good guess, kid." Kaji said. "But it's more than that."

"Learning from past mistakes." Misato said. "We've located and scouted the area and have come up with a plan that should take care of this problem once and for all. It's not too far from here, so it'll be a quick journey to get there."

"But it's going to need all of you." Kaji said. "And every Gundam and Evangelion we have at our disposal."

"How many is that?" Milliardo asked.

"To be fair, we've lost track." Misato said. "People just keep… appearing."
"There are fifteen now." Trowa said. "Not including Shinji and Mari."

"Seriously?" Maya said. "I didn't think it was that high."

"It sounds right." Misato said. "Now that I actually think about many people are here… anyway… we have a plan. We're going to attack them directly."

"That seems like a bad idea." Duo said.

"No, it's the best idea." Kaji said. "It's a nice, wide open space, lots of room for fighting, and no civilians to speak of. You can level the area, and no one would care."

"Wait, we can use our weapons without holding back?" Wufei asked.

"There's no risk to anyone but your allies, and your enemies." Misato replied. "But there is a problem."

"What kind of resistance are we looking at?" George asked.

"Over 50,000 Dark Army units were detected guarding this." Misato said as Maya brought up an image of the Dark Gundam surrounded by its hoard.

"It looks…" Chibodee muttered.

"Dead." Argo finished.

"Or at least dying." Rain said. "Which is good for us."

"That's good for us?" Misato asked.

"Yes, at that level of deterioration, it won't have any special abilities, it's just a plain old Gundam that shouldn't be too hard to destroy." Rain explained. "And it even looks like it has a Core Life Unit. Can you zoom in on that?"

Maya zoomed the image in and focused on the open chest of the Gundam. As the image cleared itself up, Domon and Rain both audibly gasped at what they saw.

"It can't be." Rain said.

"Mother…" Domon muttered. "But… she's dead… this can't be happening… just like… Kyoji…"

"Domon, that's your mother?" Trowa asked. "Why is she attached to the Dark Gundam?"

"She's what powering it, she's been made the power source." Domon said. "But Ulube said she died… she was shot… she can't still be alive…"

"Domon, if she's been reanimated…" Rain said.

"She can't have been reanimated, otherwise she wouldn't be the power source, that means she was barely alive… and that she's been infected by the DG Cells." Domon said. "Just like Kyoji…"

"So, this is going to complicate things…" Misato said.

"No, it won't… I can't save her… she's too far gone." Domon said. "Look at her skin, if she was barely alive before, she's basically being kept alive by the DG Cells."
"Domon, if you can save her, you should, even if you only try." Shinji said. "Even if you just get to say goodbye, at least you'll have… closure."

"I guess." Domon said. "Rain, is there any chance she's ok? Do you think we could save her?"

"Domon, I don't want to get your hopes up, but she could die the second you take her out of there." Rain said. "Or she could survive and heal… we won't know till you get her."

"So, it looks like we'll need to change the plan up a bit." Misato said. "But we're still attacking directly."

"So, do you have any ideas?" Noin asked.

"Shining Gundam and Burning Gundam will be heading straight for the Dark Gundam. All other units will be supporting them and dealing with the enemy units, including Unit–01 and Unit–02."

"But Asuka's still in the hospital." Shinji said. "Who's piloting Unit–02?"

"Mari." Misato said.

"Oh, I don't think the princess would like that very much." Ari said. "Maybe I could take a Gundam out for a spin."

"No, everyone is taking out their own Gundam this time." Misato said.

"So who's going to pilot Wing Gundam?" Quatre asked.

"I will." Lady Une replied. "It's all hands on deck."

"What about air support?" Milliardo asked. "Or support beyond just fifteen Gundams and two Evangelions."

"The JSSDF and the UN military forces can be called up to support the attack with precision missile strikes to soften their defenses. But that blows your element of surprise."

"We'll need the support once we attack then." Heero said. "It's the most effective way to attack that many enemies in a small space."

"What about Unit–02?" Shinji asked. "It doesn't have an S2 Engine."

"Unit–02 will be attached to Unit–01 via a tether, drawing power directly from Unit–01's S2 Engine." Maya said. "But you'll have to stay within 250 meters of each other in order for that to work."

"Oh boy." Shinji said.

"What about our specific roles?" George asked.

"There are no specific roles." Misato said. "You're attacking and keep attacking until every enemy unit has been wiped out, including the Dark Gundam."

"If we take out the Dark Gundam, the Dark Army will shut down." Rain said.

"So… there goes my entire plan… an entire night wasted…" Misato muttered. "Is there anything else you guys need to tell me?"
"I need to pee." Mari said.

"Anything important?" Misato said angrily.

"Don't think so." Chibodee said.

"Fine, new plan." Misato said gruffly. "Primary objective is to destroy the Dark Gundam. Shinji, Mari, Domon, Rain, Heero, and Milliardo will be in charge of that, everyone else will be on support duty. Secondary objectives are to rescue Domon's mom, and wipe out all of the enemies in that area, including the nut job with the Gundam." Misato sighed. "Everyone got that?"

There was a general murmur of agreement to the plan and Misato breathed a sigh of relief.

"So, now we can go over some of the details of what we found." Kaji said.

"Well, actually, Misato, Mari and I should probably go break the news to Asuka." Shinji said. "Otherwise she'll be more pissed if we did this without telling her."

"Unit–02 isn't her personal toy." Misato said.

"Try telling her that." Mari said. "And why do we need to go over the rest of the stuff. There are enemies, and there are hills. We go in there, find the Dark Gundam, and blow it up after grabbing Domon's mom? Why do we need a dissertation to do that?"

"That's a pretty solid argument, Misato." Kaji said. "How about we make the materials available to anyone who wants it, ok Misato?"

"It'll have to be." Misato said gruffly.

"One question before we go though." Trowa asked.

"What?" Misato replied.

"When does the attack start?" Trowa asked.

"Well, if you'd listened to the "dissertation" you'd know we launch in 36 hours." Misato said. "We'll catch them in the early morning and wipe them out."

"One more question." Relena asked. "When will be allowed to go home?"

"As soon as the Dark Gundam has been destroyed, and everything's been taken care of, you'll be sent home." Misato replied. "So, within the next week."

"Fair enough." Duo said. "One more fight before we head home seems nice."

"So, can we go?" Mari asked.

"Yeah, class dismissed." Misato said. "Get some rest and be ready to go."

"Great." Mari said. "Come on puppy, let's go give the princess some pretty shitty news."

"How much you want to bet she's going to want to kill you?" Shinji asked as they walked out.

"A bet, seriously?" Mari asked. "That's a foregone conclusion… she's gonna have an aneurism when she finds out."
"That's a bit of an exaggeration." George said. "Right?"

"Well, you haven't met her, so you wouldn't know." Shinji said. "She's very attached to Unit–02. She doesn't like other people piloting it."

"Well, I can understand that." Chibodee said. "Good luck, then."

"Thanks." Shinji said. "We'll need it."

Shinji and Mari had gone straight to Asuka's room after the meeting ended to let her know about the plan, and gently break the news that Mari was going to be using her cherished Unit–02 in combat. The look on Asuka's face while Shinji calmly and slowly explained everything went from utter confusion to unyielding rage.

"What did you just fucking say?!" Asuka shouted. "She is not using Unit–02! She breaks shit, I don't want her wrecking my EVA!"

"Asuka, it's not your decision to make." Shinji said calmly. "We just wanted to tell you before it happened."

"It's not happening!" Asuka shouted. "Baka, take me to Misato! I will beat some sense into her and show her I'm fit to go and fight!"

Asuka tried to stand up, but as she did, her legs gave out and she fell, with Shinji just barely being able to catch her.

"Don't you even say anything, baka." Asuka muttered.

"I won't." Shinji said.

"Fine, I will then." Mari said. "Princess, you can't fight, and we need Unit–02 to pull this thing off. Would you rather me not be fighting and leave Shinji all alone?"

"Stop asking me stupid question, four eyes!" Asuka said angrily as Shinji put her back in bed. "Of course I don't want him all alone… I just want to be out there with him."

"I get that, but we're literally going to be tethered to each other." Mari said. "I promise to keep him out of trouble."

"Fine." Asuka said gruffly. "I don't like it, but I guess I'm stuck here."

"See, that wasn't so hard, was it, princess." Mari said.

"Mari, leave it alone." Shinji said. "Do you need anything, Asuka?"

"Just to be left alone for a while." Asuka said. "To mope and everything. Just promise me something, Mari. Please don't wreck Unit–02."

"Don't worry, princess." Mari said. "I promise to bring Unit–02 back in one piece, with all its arms, legs, and eyes still attached."

"That's not very comforting, four eyes." Asuka said angrily.

"Just trust me, princess." Mari said. "I don't want anything to happen to your EVA."
"You better not wreck it, otherwise any damage you do to it, I'll duplicate on you." Asuka said. "Even if I have to hobble and find you, I will kick your ass."

"No need to make threats, princess." Mari said. "I know how important Unit–02 is to you, and I promise to keep her safe."

To Be Continued

A/N: I do not own Evangelion or any of the characters, GAINAX and the other distributors of NGE related material do. I am simply using them as a backdrop for my fanfic. I also do not own Gundam Wing or G Gundam, Sunrise does, as do their licensed distributors.

Sync Score Rankings!
Shinji – 97.5% (No Change)
Rei – 75.0% (No Change)
Asuka – 52.3% (No Change)
Mari – 42.0% (No Change)

This week's title comes from G Gundam's second OP. It's also a fairly catchy song, but a lot more subdued than the first OP of the series.

Not much to say about this chapter, other than to welcome the Shuffle Alliance and their Gundams to the fold, and that the next chapter of this fic will be the final chapter. I'm sorry this took so long to complete, but with real life unfortunately taking precedence over writing fics, it was unavoidable.

As I said before, and will always say at the end of chapter, please leave comments, as I would like to try to improve the story going forward any way I can. And, hell, constructive criticism is a good thing.

つづく
Shinji was just waking up. He had slept in Asuka's room again so he could sleep as long as possible. As he opened his eyes, the early morning sunlight blinded him briefly until his eyes adjusted, and he saw Asuka staring at him.

"Wow, baka, I didn't think you were going to wake up." Asuka said jokingly. "Not that I mind the company or anything."

"What time is it?" Shinji asked.

"Quarter after seven." Asuka replied. "I think you should get ready, don't you?"

"Yeah, I guess." Shinji said. "I just want everyone to get home so they can get back to their lives…"

"Well, go kick this Dark Gundam's ass, and then murder that asshole who kidnapped me." Asuka said. "Forget what Misato tells you, just go do that."

"You know I'm literally going to be attached to Mari, right?" Shinji asked.

"So?" Asuka said. "She'll go on any adventure if you bait her hard enough." Asuka said. "Just promise me you'll pay that asshole back for me, ok?"

"I know Asuka, you told me." Shinji said.

"And promise that you'll keep Mari from wrecking my Unit–02!" Asuka said angrily.

"I told you I'll keep her from doing any major damage." Shinji said. "I can only do so much, you know."

"Just try your best, baka." Asuka said. "And can you promise me something else?"

"Asuka, I'm promising an awful lot." Shinji said as he got up and stretched.

"So?" Asuka asked. "Why does it matter?"

"I don't know…" Shinji said. "What's in it for me?"

"You're making me happy, isn't that enough for you?" Asuka asked.

"This feels like a trap…" Shinji muttered. "It is Asuka… it was a stupid question."

"Yeah it was." Asuka said. "But seeing as you need more motivation…" Asuka eased herself up and pulled down her hospital gown, revealing her supple breasts. "If you do that stuff for me, you can feel them up when you get back safe and sound."

Shinji blushed a bright shade of red. "Asuka… you… you don't have to do that…" Shinji
"What, are my breasts not good enough for you now?" Asuka asked. "Would you rather have Allenby's?"

"Asuka… I…" Shinji stammered. "I'm sorry…"

"This is why I like you, baka." Asuka said as she covered herself up and beckoned Shinji to sit on the bed next to her. "You get so flustered so easily, it's kind of adorable."

"I'm sorry…" Shinji muttered. "Why do you have to tease me like that though… it gets very confusing."

"Oh, deal with it." Asuka said as she kissed him on the cheek. "That's just how I am."

"I know." Shinji said. "And I promise to keep Unit–02 safe… but what was the other thing you wanted to ask me?"

"Well… don't tell the four eyed idiot this, but… keep her safe too. I don't want her thinking I care about her and stuff, she's too annoying."

"Asuka, that's really sweet." Shinji said.

"Yeah, but you can't tell anyone." Asuka said. "Got it?"

"I know Asuka, I know better than that." Shinji replied.

"Good." Asuka said. "So, when you come back, you can feel my breasts as a reward for a job well done."

Shinji shook his head. "I'm lucky to have an odd girl like you."

"I'm not the odd one in this relationship, baka." Asuka quipped. "But that's what I like about you, Shinji… you're different, and you make me feel happy."

"Asuka, are you ok? You're acting a bit out of character." Shinji asked. "Did you get a concussion?"

"No… I'm just expressing my feelings for you, you idiot!" Asuka shouted.

"I know… but you usually, you know, don't talk about your feelings." Shinji said.

"Yeah, well, I just want you to know, you know…" Asuka muttered. "If anything happens and I'm not there to protect you."

Shinji looked at Asuka, and saw a single tear roll down her face. "Asuka, I told you, everything will be fine. Everyone is going out there to fight, but I'm stuck here."

"I know the feeling, Asuka." Shinji said. "You'll be back in Unit–02 in no time."

"Yeah, yeah, now get going!" Asuka said. "But let me give you another kiss before you leave… for uh… luck or whatever."

"Good luck, baka." Asuka said as she kissed him on the cheek. "And don't you dare get hurt, otherwise you'll be in big trouble."

"I know Asuka, you're the only one allowed to kick my ass." Shinji said.
"You bet your ass I am." Asuka said as Shinji got up. "And don't you forget it."

"I won't Asuka." Shinji said as she left. "I'll see you in a few hours."

Shinji walked into the Cage after having changed into his plugsuit. He saw everyone getting ready to head out. He saw Unit–01 restrained in the back, looking calm and relaxed, but everyone else was in a hurry getting their respective Gundams prepped for launch. Shinji looked over and saw Rain prepping Shining and Burning Gundam herself, and was surprised that Domon wasn't helping her.

As Shinji walked up to Unit–01, he saw Mari mulling around near Unit–02, getting her pink plugsuit adjusted, and bouncing her boobs around for what Shinji assumed to be just for shits and giggles. Mari waved to him as he walked towards Unit–01.

As he got to the bottom of Unit–01 scaffolding, Shinji saw Domon waiting for him.

"Hey, Domon, what's up?" Shinji asked.

"I wanted to ask you something." Domon said.

"Is it about your mother?" Shinji asked.

"No, it's about your mother." Domon said.

"Did she talk to you when you used Unit–01?" Shinji asked.

"Yeah… but I thought you said your mother was dead." Domon said. "Was that really her?"

"Yeah, it was her." Shinji said.

"How long have you known about her?" Domon asked.

"A few months." Shinji said. "It's a bit complicated."

"No, I get it." Domon said. "And I'm guessing that you're the only one that knows?"

"Yeah, as far as I know I am." Shinji replied.

"Does being close to her all the time make a difference?" Domon asked.

"Yeah, it does." Shinji said. "I know she's there, and I know she's protecting me. It's kinda nice to know she's at least… around."

"Is that why you think rescuing your mother is a good idea?" Domon asked.

"Yeah, at worst you get some closure, and at best you get to have your mom back." Shinji said. "How long's it been since you saw your mom?"

"A long time." Domon said. "When I went off to train with Master Asia, I left everything behind, including my family. I never really got to say goodbye to her. By the time I was conscripted into the Gundam Fight, she was already dead."

"So, are you worried you won't get to talk to her again?" Shinji asked.

"I'm worried if we mess this up, she'll end up dying because of me." Domon said. "I don't want that
to happen."

"She won't die because of you." Shinji said reassuringly. "She'll be saved from whatever that thing is because of you."

"You think so?" Domon asked. "Because… I just want her to be ok. I mean, she was still shot when Major Ulube came to steal the Dark Gundam, but, I'm not sure how she survived, my father said he was dead."

"Well, I don't know if she'll be ok." Shinji said. "But I know that we won't know for sure until we try."

"I guess you're right." Domon said. "Thanks, Shinji."

"Twenty minutes until launch." Aoba said over the intercom.

"Guess we better get going." Domon said.

"Yeah." Shinji said as Domon walked away. "And don't worry, everything will work out."

"I know." Domon said. "Thanks for the pep talk buddy, I really needed it."

Mari was sitting in front of Unit–02. She was a little apprehensive of going inside Asuka's Evangelion, more so because she knew Asuka's mother resided within its Core. Mari sighed deeply before she walked towards the awaiting Entry Plug.

"Sorry, Kyoko." Mari muttered. "This wasn't my choice."

Mari climbed inside the Entry Plug and waited as it was hoisted into place and locked into Unit–02. Everything came on like normal, and the LCL flooded the Entry Plug, and everything felt perfectly normal.

"Mari, your sync rate is steady at 42%." Maya said. "All systems normal, you're synced with Unit–02."

"Ok, I'm ready." Mari replied as she saw a bright flash of light and was left standing in a bright, white room, facing an old friend.

"Kyoko..." Mari muttered.

"Hey there cutie." Kyoko said. "I wasn't expecting you to end up in here... what happened to my Asuka."

"She's fine, mild concussion, some bruised organs, a mild kidnapping... nothing too serious." Mari said sheepishly.

"She was kidnapped?!" Kyoko shouted. "What the hell, Mari?!!"

"Not our fault." Mari said. "In case you haven't noticed, we've had some weird shit going down. She got grabbed after she offered to go to the store for Shinji."

"And..." Kyoko prodded.

"She got put in a Gundam, and Shinji disabled the Gundam, but injured her a bit in the process. He
did his best, and protected her, and almost died doing it." Mari explained.

"So, you're in here because she's injured?" Kyoko asked.

"Yeah, it's all hands on deck, and seeing as she's out, and I'm without an EVA, I was a match made in heaven." Mari said. "And my EVA is all busted up from that last, lovely fucking tentacle rapey Angel we faced."

"Ok, so, Asuka's going to be ok?" Kyoko asked.

"Yeah, the princess awake and everything." Mari said. "Shinji spent the night wither in the hospital to keep her company."

"Are they…?" Kyoko asked.

"Nope, the puppy's too scared and the princess is a bit shy when it comes to intimacy." Mari said. "Although, I'd bet they would make cute babies."

"Well, Yui was right about them." Kyoko said. "They are kind of perfect for each other."

"Well, they have their issues." Mari said. "You know, tough childhoods and all…"

"I've seen Asuka's mind… during that Angel's invasion into her mind… it was not pretty… I didn't... I dint realize my mind had fractured as badly as it did. And Oscar… that bastard made her feel like nothing… my special little girl…"

"I know… I've seen her file." Mari said. "It's not pretty…"

"After finding all that out… I almost regret being trapped in here." Kyoko said. "She was all alone, and it's my fault."

"Hey, some things are unavoidable." Mari said. "And despite everything that Asuka's been through, she survived it, and she found someone to love her. And I'm there too, so it's not all up to Shinji."

"I know you're there… way out of your element I might add." Kyoko said.

"I'm doing just fine, Kyoko." Mari said defensively. "Shinji and Asuka have helped me a adapt in their own way. And Fuyutsuki gave me a lot of advice."

"So, you're doing ok, kid?" Kyoko asked. "It must be weird to be around our kids instead of us…"

"It was at first, but after a while, it got easier." Mari said. "That's all thanks to Shinji."

"Well, I'm glad you're doing ok." Kyoko said. "How's the uh… love life?"

"Better than it was." Mari said sheepishly. "There's this girl I met… she looks a lot like Yui, and we're kinda dating…"

"That Rei girl Asuka's always upset at?" Kyoko asked. "Good for you."

"Thanks…" Mari said.

"What's wrong?" Kyoko asked.

"I still love Yui." Mari said.
"Well, that's not gonna change overnight, Mari." Kyoko said. "You'll always love her as long as she's still around, even if is in a giant monster like thingy."

"Yeah, I guess…" Mari said. "You know, I've missed you guys a lot."

"I've missed you too, Mari." Kyoko said. "I've only got Yui to talk to on occasion, but other than that, it's kinda lonely."

"Well, you still have Asuka." Mari said. "Even if she doesn't know, she will eventually. She's not… you know… that dense."

"Well, if she's anything like me, she is that stubborn." Kyoko said.

"She's not so bad." Mari said. "Shinji tones her down quite a bit."

"I'm glad to hear it." Kyoko said. "But don't you have a battle to get to?"

"Yeah, I do, but I don't really want to go." Mari said. "I'd rather just relax and not have to run every time there's an attack."

"What, are you quitting on us?" Kyoko asked.

"No, I'm just tired." Mari said. "All this fighting is fucking exhausting."

"It's one more battle, kid." Kyoko said. "Just one more time and everyone goes home. Do it for Shinji… do it for Asuka… do it for your girl Rei. Whatever your motivation, you'll be fine. You survived that last fight, and you'll survive this too."

"Yeah, I know." Mari said. "Stop with the pep talk already… I'm going."

"Good luck Mari." Kyoko said. "I'll be right here to help you… in case you need it."

Mari was faced with another bright flash of light and found herself back in the Entry Plug. She sighed briefly and looked over to see Unit–01's Entry Plug locking into place.

"Ten minutes until launch." Aoba said over the intercom.

"Well, almost time…" Mari muttered. "Time to get psyched."

Mari clicked a few buttons on her control yokes and pulled up a hacked music player she installed awhile back and started playing her "Pump It Up" playlist.

♫ It's early morning, the sun comes out  
Last night was shaking and pretty loud  
My cat is purring, it scratches my skin  
So what is wrong with another sin?  

The bitch is hungry, she needs to tell  
So give her inches and feed her well  
More days to come, new places to go  
I've got to leave, it's time for a show  

Here I am  
Rock you like a hurricane  
Here I am
"Yeah… that's more like it…" Mari muttered. "Time to kick some ass."

Misato was standing anxiously behind Maya. The main view screen was covered in various camera angles of the enemy's mountain encampment, and several different angles of the Cage.

"How's everything going?" Misato asked.

"Looks like everyone's ready," Maya replied. "Unit–01 and Unit–02 are online, and Mari's sync level is holding steady."

"Glad they're on time." Misato said. "And the power situation for them?"

"The power share cable is attached to Unit–01." Maya said. "All Mari needs to do is plug it in, and it'll link Unit–02 directly with Unit–01's S2 Engine."

"How?" Misato asked.

"It's a one way plug, one end takes power and the other gives it out." Ritsuko said. "As long as Mari doesn't snap it, it'll be fine."

"And why would she do that?" Kaji asked.

"Her idiotic tendency to break things." Ritsuko replied.

"She'll be fine." Misato said. "And Shinji?"

"Perfect as always." Maya replied. "He's holding at 99.2%, which I think is a personal best for him."

"Excellent." Kaji said. "He's really gotten pretty good at this."

"I'm more surprised Unit–02 synced with Mari." Aoba said.

"Which means you owe me ¥12,500." Maya said.

"Sucker." Hyuga joked.

"Why are you calling him a sucker?" Maya asked. "You owe me ¥12,500."

"Why would bet against Maya?" Kaji asked. "She knows the synchrographs like the back of her hand… nice job Maya."

"Thanks, Mr. Kaji." Maya replied.

"What about the elevators?" Misato asked. "Are they actually going to work today?"

"Yes, they've been fully repaired." Ritsuko replied. "I'm not sure how it got damaged, but it may just be the excessive use over the last few months."

"Really, because we've used them they broke?" Misato asked. "I call bullshit then. What does maintenance do with them, look at them and figure they won't ever break down, or are they just hourly?"

"I… I'm not in charge of maintenance!" Ritsuko said angrily.
"Could have fooled us." Kaji muttered.

"Excuse me?" Ritsuko asked incredulously.

"You heard me, Ritsuko." Kaji said. "You're dense, not deaf."

"Enough." Gendo said from above. "Akagi, save your petty squabbles for later, there is important work to do."

"Commander, perhaps it would best if Dr. Akagi were to monitor the Evangelions from her lab. Her lack of tactical knowledge may impede Colonel Katsuragi's ability to think." Fuyutsuki said.

"Perhaps that is best." Gendo said. "Dr. Akagi, if you please."

"Fine." Ritsuko said as she stormed out.

"Perhaps now you can focus, Colonel Katsuragi." Gendo said.

"Yes, Commander." Misato replied. "Ok, how long till launch?"

"Five minutes." Hyuga replied.

"Ok, everyone looks like they're in their Gundams, so set up the launch path and move the launch elevators into place." Misato ordered.

"What about our alert status?" Hyuga asked.

"Set us at Level–3 battle stations." Misato said. "And have the AIS on cold standby. No need to deploy the heavy guns and worry the civvies unless we need them."

"So the city stays in its normal position as well?" Aoba asked.

"Yes, the threat is 15 kilometers away." Misato said. "If something happens, we have time to react."

"Alright, turn on the comms, it's time to get this show on the road." Misato said.

"Roger that, ma'am." Maya said. "You're online."

"Alright, everyone." Misato said. "We have some new intel…"

"How bad is it?" Milliardo asked.

"Well… there are a lot of enemies." Kaji said. "Like 250,000 of them or so."

"Or so?" Allenby asked.

"What's the over under on that?" Mari asked.

"50,000" Kaji replied.

"That's not an over under, that's just insane!" Duo shouted.

"Well, with the caves, it's difficult to get a solid read on the numbers." Kaji said.

"That problem aside, we know that killing the Dark Gundam will shut those things down." Misato said. "So the objective is that everyone needs to keep the grunts away from Domon and Rain, and they will need some backup."
"Me and Mari will be doing close in support." Shinji replied.

"So will I." Allenby said.

"Allenby, I think we'll be fine with Shinji and Mari as backup."

"Actually, we could use some more help." Shinji said.

"Alright, Allenby, you'll be backing them up." Misato said. "Now, we've got two minutes till final launch. Everybody, confirm you're ready to launch." Misato asked.

"Ready and raring to go, miso." Mari said.

"Same here!" Allenby added.

"I'm ready, Ms. Misato." Quatre said.

"Sure, let's go do this." Chibodee said.

"Let's get this show on the road." Duo quipped.

"I'm ready, miss." Sai Saici said.

"Let's do this." Noin said.

"Nataku and I are ready." Wufei replied.

"Ready." Argo said.

"Wing Gundam, ready." Lady Une said.

"Epyon, ready." Milliardo said.

"Shining Gundam ready." Rain added.

"I am ready, Colonel." Trowa replied.

"As am I." George added.

"Mission accepted." Heero replied.

"I'm ready, Misato." Shinji said.

"Gundam Fight… Ready?!" Domon asked.

"Don't..." Rain muttered.

"GOOOO!" Domon shouted.

"Alright then… Gundams… Evangelions… LAUNCH!" Misato ordered as Unit–01 and Unit–02 shot up towards the surface and the Gundams flew up into the air.

"Good luck everyone…” Misato said. "Something tells me you're going to need it."

As Domon got to the surface he saw the two Evangelions unlock from their launch elevators. Unit–
02 took and unraveled a cord attached to Unit–01's back and plugged it in, tethering the two of them together.

"Is that normal?" Domon asked.

"No, it's not." Shinji replied. "We're going to be too far from a power source, so Unit–02 needs a constant source of power."

"That way I can kick some ass." Mari said. "Hey, miso, are we going to have weapons drops?"

"Well, is everyone clear?" Misato asked.

"Yeah, we're clear." Domon said.

"Alright, stay low." Misato said. "Try to mask your approach using the terrain."

"Understood." Heero said.

"Let's go." Domon said as he pulled up a private channel with Rain as the group flew off. Wing Zero and Epyon transformed into their Mobile Armor configurations and flew just meters from the ground ahead of the rest of the group. Unit–01 and Unit–02 moved gracefully next to each other, crouching low to the ground. The rest of the Gundams flew in some form of another, in a spread out, low flight level, with Domon flying near the back.

"Rain, are you there?" Domon asked as the moved along at high speed.

"Domon, don't worry so much." Rain said.

"How did you…?" Domon asked.

"I can hear it in your voice." Rain said. "And I know you're worried about your mother, but you'll see her one way or another. We'll do our best to save her, ok?"

"Yeah…" Domon said. "I just hope we can."

"Domon, a positive attitude will help us more than your current mood." Rain said.

"I'm trying, Rain." Domon said. "But it's difficult when I'm trying not to think what could happen if we screw up."

"Domon, just focus on the mission and everything will be fine." Rain said.

"I will…" Domon said as they approached. "But that could be difficult."

"What do you…?" Rain said as she saw the sight in front of them. "Oh my god…"

As everyone got close to the enemy camp, all they saw was a sea of Dark Army grunts. They swarmed towards the approaching Gundams, trying to stop their advancer towards the Dark Gundam's cave.

"This looks difficult…" Quatre said. "There are far more than we anticipated."

"Nah, this looks like fun!" Mari said. "Miso, where are my weapons!"

"On the way Mari." Misato replied.
"So, I guess I'll go left." Duo said.

"Then I will take the right." Trowa replied.

"I don't think any direction we go in will have much of an effect on how many enemies we run into."
George said sarcastically.

"What are you waiting for?!" Milliardo shouted. "Clear the way for Domon!"

Once Milliardo shouted at everyone, the Gundams all flew headlong into the enemy formation, drawing their various weapons and opening fire. However, Domon stayed where he was and flew above the fray.

"Domon, what are you doing?" Rain asked.

"Looking for Master Gundam." Domon said. "It's something I need to do."

"Domon, we have to deal with the Dark Gundam first!" Rain shouted.

"No, I need to deal with him first!" Domon shouted back. "I need to know!"

"Domon, if you head for the Dark Gundam, he will most likely find you." Shinji said. "So, let's head there together."

"We'll be right there with you." Allenby added.

"Fine, but I'm clearing a path for us!" Domon shouted. "SEKIHA… TENKYOKEN!"

The massive ball of energy flew down from the sky and ripped through several hundred Dark Army grunts vaporizing them and leaving nothing but a smoking burn mark on the.

"Nice." Mari said.

"I'm not done yet! Get the hell out of my way!" Domon shouted as he flew Burning Gundam towards the ground at high speed. "TAKE THIS!" Domon shouted as Burning Gundam's hand erupted in a bright orange light, and clenched into a fist. "ERUPTING… BURNING… SEKIHA TENKYOKEN!"

Burning Gundam's fist impacted the ground, sending out a massive shockwave, and vaporizing all the Dark Army grunts within several hundred meters.

"Wow, that's some Shinji level stuff right there." Mari quipped.

"Where do we go from here?" Shinji sighed.

"The Dark Gundam cave is this way." Domon said.

"We'll do our best to clear the way." Shinji said.

"Well, the good news is they aren't replicating." Rain said. "So, it's one and done."

"That explains why there are so damn many of them!" Duo shouted.

"Alright then, let's move." Domon said.

—
The ZERO System was straining. There were so many enemies, it was having trouble keeping focus on any one of them. Heero however was nonetheless doing his best to focus on everything he could, and wipe out as many enemies as he could. Wing Zero had its beam sabre out in the same hand as its shield was attached to while the left hand held its Twin Buster Rifle. As a group of enemies descending on him, Heero let out a single, powerful, charged blast and destroyed several hundred Dark Army soldiers.

"This is quite taxing."

"Come on, buddy, it could be worse."

"An extra dimension of movement allows for infinitely more possibilities to deal with enemy combatants."

"Hey, those were my kills!"

"They don't count until you actually kill them."

"Is that sarcasm?!"

"Heero, watch out!"

"I'm aware of that Zechs." Heero said as he fired a heavy beam shot on another approaching group of Dark Army grunts. "Perhaps you should heed your own warnings."

"Touché, Heero."

"Again with the sarcasm…"

"The five of them are moving towards the cave, but its slow work." Misato replied. "Just keep up what you're doing and this will be over soon."

"Can't Shinji just do his thing with the explosion?"

"I don't think it works like that."

"There needs to be a need, and no one at risk." Kaji said. "And Domon's other is there attached to the enemy. So, that option is out for now."

"So, we just keep fighting?"

"Yep, just keep fighting." Misato replied.

"Mission accepted." Heero replied. "Perhaps we should split up. Being this close together will not
assist us in destroying the enemy."

"I agree, we’ll do better separated by a few thousand enemies." Milliardo said.

"Very well." Heero said as Wing Zero jetted off towards the Dark Gundam cave. "I'll move closer to our objective and assist Domon and the others."

Mari was getting aggravated. Every time she moved to attack with her twin Gatling Guns, or did much of anything, she was restrained by the power tether that attached her to Unit–01’s S2 Engine. They were surrounded by enemies, and even with their four heavy weapons, they could barely cut through them fast enough before more swarmed in and stopped their path.

"Fuck me, when is this shit going to be over with!" Mari shouted. "I want to run off an attack like I usually do!"

"Mari, you're not going to do that." Shinji said. "You'll damage Unit–02, and then Asuka's going to kill both of us."

"Why would she kill you, puppy?" Mari asked.

"Really?" Shinji asked. "Mari, you're not stupid."

"No but I am annoyed." Mari grumbled as she aimed her guns at more approaching Dark Army soldiers. "That there are endless supplies of these fucking things around here!"

"We know, Mari." Rain said.

"Yeah, but she's right." Allenby said angrily. "As much as I like fighting, there is such a thing as too much."

"Puppy, can't you do your thing with the explosion that destroys all the baddies?" Mari asked. "Help us out here…"

"I don't think I can." Shinji said. "I… I can't risk trying that and hurting Domon's mother… so we have to do this the old fashioned way." Shinji sighed. "And I don't want to open another wormhole when we're almost done mopping up the problems we have now."

"Damn it, puppy." Mari said. "Well, what about muscles, can you do anything to help us out, muscles?"

"Well, I can try something else." Domon said as Burning Gundam activated its Hyper Mode. "BURNING SHADOW!" Burning Gundam made four copies of itself, lined up in an arrowhead formation, with the real Burning Gundam standing at the head.

"Oh, I forgot about that…" Mari muttered.

"Domon, what are you doing?" Rain asked.

"Clearing a path!" Domon cried.

"Domon, wait!" Rain shouted.

"Now… TAKE THIS!" Domon shouted as he charged an energy ball in his Gundam's burning hands. "SEKIHA… TENKYOKEN!"
The five Burning Gundams fired their five attacks, which merged into one great big Sekiha Tenkyoken, ripped through the enemy lines, clearing a path directly to the Dark Gundam's cave, leaving nothing but a smoking trench when the attack cleared.

"Wow…" Mari said. "Impressive."

"Well, let's go." Shinji said. "I don't think we've got a lot of time before the enemy becomes overwhelming."

"We're already there, Shinji." George replied. "There are too many of them."

"Then, let's go." Shinji said. "And we have to hurry."

"Obviously, puppy." Mari said. "Otherwise, we're all gonna be in deep shit."

---

George was in the middle of a large group of enemies. Even with his best effort, he was having trouble cutting enough of them down to be of any help.

"How many thousands of these things have we killed?" Chibodee muttered angrily.

"Probably ten or fifteen thousand." George mused.

"Really, that many?" Chibodee asked. "It doesn't seem like we've made a dent!"

"Well, perhaps if you stop talking and start fighting, you can do something about that, Chibodee…" George said.

"Shut up!" Chibodee shouted. "CYCLONE PUNCH!"

"Did that do anything?" George asked as he prepared his own attack. "ROSE SCREAMER!" George cried as several Rose Bits emerged from the cloak on Gundam Rose's left shoulder and created a small, swirling rose colored vortex around a small group of Dark Army soldiers. The vortex ripped the Mobile Suits apart, leaving not more than scrap metal behind.

"Nope…" Chibodee said. "Maybe this'll work better! BURNING… MACHINE GUN… PUNCH!"

"Still not enough eh…" George muttered. "Perhaps I should try a little harder too."

"ROSE HURRICANE!" George shouted as Gundam Rose's Rose Bits emerged behind its cloak and spun in a wild motion, creating a large, magenta, hurricane, with the rose bits firing in every direction and cutting up every enemy within their death cloud. When the Rose Bits receded, there was nothing left but smoking debris and brush fires.

"Well, that's more like it." George said as more Dark Army soldiers moved in to take their fallen comrades place. "Or… not…"

"Well, let's hope Domon gets his shit together and deals with all this!" Chibodee shouted.

"Don't we all…" George muttered as he readied for another attack but felt his Shuffle Alliance mark burning on his hand.

"Hey, guys, I could use your help!" Domon shouted. "One big attack!"
Domon was getting anxious. He could see the cave they were going for less than a 100 meters in front of them, and even after his amazing attack had cleared the way in front of them, but with so many Dark Army soldiers around them, it was difficult to move any closer, so he had come up with an idea.

"Did you guys hear me?" Domon asked. "One big attack!"

"What was that Domon?" George asked.

"Yeah, bro, are you serious?" Sai Saici asked.

"Yeah, there are just too many of them," Domon said. "Try and draw as many with you as you can."

"Seriously, bring the hoard with us is your plan?" Chibodee asked.

"Yeah…" Domon replied. "We can draw them together so we can get rid of as many as possible."

"We'll do our best, Domon." Argo replied.

"You heard him everyone!" Misato ordered. "All units move towards the cave and draw the attention of as many enemy units as you can!"

"Copy that." Trowa said.

"Sounds like fun…" Duo said.

"Let's go, Nataku!" Wufei cried.

"I'm in." Milliardo said. "What about you, Heero?!

"Mission accepted." Heero replied. "Wing Zero engaging."

"Very well." Lady Une said. "We'll draw the whole crowd."

"This is the best plan we have?" Noin asked.

"It's better than fighting them alone." Quatre said. "Mutual backup is best."

"Domon, you're crazy if you think that could work." Rain said.

"It's worth trying, isn't it?" Domon asked.

"Hey!" Mari shouted. "What's the big deal with you calling the others for help?! Are we not good enough now?!

"No, it's just that we can do a very powerful attack together." Domon said. "It's the best way to clear some of this out so we can get to the Dark Gundam."

"I still feel insulted…" Mari said.

"Mari, now isn't the time." Shinji bemoaned. "Domon, we should get behind you, right?"

"Yeah, that would be best."

"Gentleman and ladies…" Milliardo said.

"We're bringing the party with us!" Duo shouted.
A massive force of Dark Army soldiers was flying behind all the Gundams as they approached Domon's position. The formation was so large that they looked like a menacing cloud. Domon took a ready stance and Unit–01 and Unit–02 moved behind the Burning Gundam and provided cover fire as everyone moved towards them. Gundam Rose, Gundam Maxter, Bolt Gundam and Dragon Gundam broke formation and landed next to Burning Gundam as the rest landed behind them.

"Let's go guys!" Domon cried. "Let's finish these guys off!"

"Right!" The other four replied in unison as all five Gundams erupted in a golden glow and the particle collectors on the back of Burning Gundam opened up, creating a red and orange mandala within them, and then the chest plate opened up to reveal a particle accelerator that flashed the emblem of the King of Hearts and then glowed a deep red after it came online.

"OUR SPIRITS ARE AFLAME!" Chibodee cried as Gundam Maxter clenched its right hand and the Queen the Spade emblem glowed on its chest.

"IF WE FEEL THE FIRE…!" George cried as Gundam Rose stuck out its right fist and the Jack in Diamond emblem glowed on its chest.

"...THERE IS NOTHING…!" Sai Saici cried as Dragon Gundam thrust its fist outwards and the Club Ace emblem glowed brightly on its chest.

"...WE CANNOT DEFEAT!" Argo cried as Bolt Gundam's fist began glow with in unison with the others and the Black Joker emblem glowed brightly on its chest.

The energy from the five Gundam's hands began collecting into large spheres and crackling with electrical discharges. The more they focused, the bigger the attack got.

"THESE HANDS OF OURS…!" Argo roared.

"...ARE BURNING RED!" Sai Saici roared.

"THEIR LOUD ROARS TELL US…!" George roared.

"TO GRASP VICTORY!" Chibodee finished.

"ERUPTING…!" Domon roared.

"SHUFFLE ALLIANCE…!" The other four roared in unison as their five energy balls fired off towards the advancing Dark Army swarm.

"ATTACK!" Domon roared as the five balls of light grew larger and larger as they moved farther away from their point of origin. The balls of energy combined into one giant sphere just ahead of them swarm and engulfed them in a dazzling array of fire and light. Dust, wind and smoke were flung everywhere as the attack exploded, blinding everyone and everything from what was going on. Everyone braced themselves as the shockwave moved towards them, knocking everyone down when it made contact.

"What the shit!" Mari shouted. "I'm fucking blind!"

"Mari, be quiet!" Shinji shouted. "You're not the only one!"

As the dust settled and the wind died down, everyone looked up to that the swarm had been largely eliminated, leaving a massive crater in the ground where there was just moments ago lush, grassy hillside.
"Well, that worked out well." Mari said. "So shy didn't you guys think of this sooner!"

"You never go all out in the beginning of a fight." Domon said. "That way you can use your ultimate attack once you have no other choice."

"Otherwise the fight wouldn't be any fin." Chibodee added.

"That is both the dumbest and smartest thing I've ever heard..." Mari said. "Don't be a Goku, that's just stupid."

"A what?" Argo asked.

"Anime character, always holds back until the last minute, nearly gets people killed out of sheer stupidity." Mari explained. "Don't be like that, end the fight quick, there aren't any spectators, this shit is life and death."

"We'll remember that, Mari." Domon said halfheartedly.

"You better." Mari said threateningly.

"So what do we do now?" Shinji asked.

"Hold them off while we go into that cave." Rain said. "Looks like there are still several thousand left."

"Over 9,000 actually." Maya said.

"Still enough to be a threat, even if you did a pretty good job of wiping these things out." Misato said.

"Better than 250,000 thousand plus or minus 50,000..." Shinji sighed.

"Well, I think we should focus on something else..." Allenby said worriedly.

"What could be more important than dealing with the Dark Army?" Rain asked.

"I believe she's talking about me!" Dark Asia shouted.

The Master Gundam landed directly in front of the cave, directly across from Burning Gundam, blocking their path. "I don't think you could have forgotten about me... Domon..."

"You are not my Master!" Domon shouted. "You do not get to use my name!"

"What are you going to do to stop me, Domon?" Dark Asia asked.

"He's not going to do anything, you son of a bitch." Allenby said angrily as Nobel Gundam stepped between the two.

"Allenby, what are you doing?!!" Domon asked.

——

"I'm settling a score, Domon." Allenby said defiantly. "Go deal with the Dark Gundam, I can handle this jerk myself."

"It's insulting you think that you can handle me." Dark Asia said.
"Shut up and fight asshole." Allenby said. "You're not stopping Domon, so get ready!"

"To fight you?" Dark Asia asked. "I'd rather just wait until Domon isn't busy anymore."

"Shut up!" Allenby roared. "You're going to pay for kidnapping me!" Nobel Gundam activated its thrusters and charged at Master Gundam at high speed.

"Allenby!" Domon shouted.

"Just go Domon!" Allenby shouted. "I'll be fine! I upgraded the Nobel Gundam to do THIS!" Nobel Gundam's hair fanned out again, and its right hand erupted in a bright orange glow.

"ERUPTING… BURNING…!" Allenby cried as she closed in on Master Gundam.

"EXPLODING… SHADOW… FINGER!" Dark Asia cried to try and counter Allenby's fierce attack.

"FINGER…!" Allenby roared as the two attacks collided, pushing Master Gundam back several meters, digging its heels into the ground.

"Well, get going, Domon!" Allenby shouted. "Go save your mother!"

"Thank you Allenby…" Domon murmured.

"You don't have to thank me Domon…" Allenby muttered. "Just do what you came here to do…"

"Right." Domon said as Burning Gundam and Shining Gundam moved towards the cave.

Master Gundam tried to break free of Allenby's attack, but couldn't risk the attack connection when the connection was broken. "Where are you going?!" Dark Asia shouted. "Come back and fight me!"

"Why is everyone standing around?" Misato asked. "This isn't an exhibition match, there's work to do!"

"We know, Misato." Shinji said. "Mari and I will guard the cave entrance from any interference."

"Yeah, give us an ammo drop, miso." Mari said happily. "We're gonna need it."

Burning and Shining Gundam walked into the cave unaccompanied by anyone else. They were all outside keeping the rest of the enemies away. As they walked inside, they could see a large, hulking form not far from them. As they got closer, they saw that it was the Dark Gundam, and that it was in bad shape. It had a mottled appearance, its armor appeared to be in even worse condition than the recon photos they'd been shown. Domon looked at it in shock, as he was expecting something far more horrific to be in front of him.

"It… it looks like its dying…" Domon muttered.

"It is." Rain said. "That means the Core Life Unit isn't…"

"Rain, just say it." Domon snapped. "I hate when you try to spare my feelings from something. I'm an adult, I can handle the truth."

"It means the Core Life Unit is dying." Rain said.
"My mother is… dying…” Domon repeated as he looked over the Dark Gundam and saw where his mother was trussed up by the various cables and conduits holding her graying body in place.

Domon turned on his exterior speakers. "Mother!" Domon shouted.

The Dark Gundam's eyes lit up and seemed to look straight at Burning Gundam. "D… Domon…?" Mikino Kasshu said wearily.

"Yes, mother, it's me, Domon!" Domon shouted.

"Oh, my sweet boy…why are you here son..." Mikino said.

"I'm here to… I'm here to save you!" Domon cried.

"Domon… I am dying…" Mikino said. "I am beyond help… why did you come here truly?"

"To… to destroy the Dark Gundam!" Domon said.

"But you did not know I was the one inside this Ultimate Gundam…” Mikino replied. "Call it the Ultimate Gundam, Domon..."

"Mother, it stopped being Kyoji and father's creation the moment it decided the human race needed to be wiped out!" Domon said. "It almost destroyed the world the last time it was released, it has to be stopped. Once I knew you were here, I knew I needed to try and save you first!"

"I appreciate the sentiment my dear boy..." Mikino said. "But it is lost on me..."

"Mother…!" Domon shouted.

"Do not argue with me, Domon." Mikino said. "Otherwise it will be even harder to ask this favor of you..."

"Anything!" Domon said as tears started to fill his eyes.

"Let me see you when I ask you this..." Mikino said.

"Domon..." Rain started.

"Rain, leave it alone." Domon said. "I have to do this."

Domon opened his cockpit and climbed up and out and stood in front of Burning Gundam's neck. "I'm right here mother!" Domon shouted. "Can you see me!"

"Yes Domon…" Mikino said. "You've gotten so big… I never knew how big you'd gotten... you never came home..."

"I was training mother!" Domon cried. "I won the 13th Gundam Fight!"

"I'm very proud of you, Domon." Mikino said. "What about your father and brother?"

"Father is alive," Domon said. "But Kyoji…. Kyoji… he… he was taken by the Dark Gundam! And in destroying it, I killed him!" Domon cried out in agony. "It was the only way, mother! I'm sorry!"

"Domon… do not blame yourself." Mikino said. "Because I need to ask you the same favor… I want you to destroy this Ultimate Gundam before it becomes a threat once again… I want you to end my life and the ultimate Gundam's life all at once."
"What…?" Domon asked.

"Destroy the Ultimate Gundam." Mikino repeated. "And end my suffering… please, Domon… I can no longer live like this… it's not living at all…"

"Mother…" Domon muttered. "I… I…"

"Please, Domon…" Mikino said. "End my suffering… allow me to pass from this world."

"Yes… mother…" Domon muttered almost inaudibly. "I… I will try…"

The battle outside the cave was still going strong. Unit–01 and Unit–02 were camped at the entrance of the cave, shooting any Dark Army grunt that got close. Wing Zero and Epyon were flying around, destroying everything in their path while the rest of the Gundams were doing their best to hold what remained of the enemy off.

And then there was Allenby, still locked in her struggle with Dark Asia, who at every chance, tried to get to the cave, but was blocked each time by Nobel Gundam.

"Get out of my way, girl!" Dark Asia shouted.

"Not a chance in hell!" Allenby shouted. "You're not going anywhere near Domon!"

"Try and stop me, girl!" Dark Asia screamed as Master Gundam tried to fly away again.

"Get back here!" Allenby screamed. "NOBEL HULA HOOP!" Nobel Gundam tossed a glowing ring towards Master Gundam, hitting its right thruster, causing it to plummet to the ground and land awkwardly. The ring returned to Nobel Gundam, being easily caught by its ecstatic pilot.

"I told you to stay still!" Allenby shouted. "You're going to have to deal with me first!"

"Fine, then I'll just have to DESTROY YOU!" Dark Asia roared. "MASTER CLOTH!"

Allenby drew her beam whip out and countered Dark Asia's attack, wrapping his beam cloth around her own beam whip. "Nice try, but you're not the only one who knows how to use a whip!" Allenby taunted.

"Damn you, girl!" Dark Asia screamed. "But can you handle this?!"

Master Gundam pulled back on its Master Cloth, and pulled Nobel Gundam up into the air, in a high arc above the ground. He moved his free hand up and charged an old attack. "DARKNESS… F…!"

"Wheeeeeee!" Allenby said gleefully as she flew through the air and deactivated her beam whip, drew her other one and activated it, wrapping it around Master Gundam and using her own momentum to whip it into the air as Nobel Gundam gracefully landed, and slammed Master Gundam into the ground.

"Had enough yet?" Allenby asked tauntingly.

"How…?" Dark Asia asked. "HOW!!?"

"Practice," Allenby said sternly. "Here, try this one on for size." Allenby drew her beam whip out again and flew forward, twirl it around her like a drill as Master Gundam struggled to get up. "This is for trying to kill me! NOBEL BEAM DRILL!"
The attack hit Master Gundam as I was getting up, and in her typical fashion, Allenby flew past her target, giving Master Gundam an opening as Dark Asia recovered from the attack.

"Never turn your back on an enemy, stupid girl!" Dark Asia shouted. "EXPLODING SHADOW FINGER!"

Allenby dodged the attack, narrowly, but landed hard, and the Nobel Gundam's balance system went out of what, landing the Gundam on its ass.

"Damn it… reboot faster…" Allenby shouted. "Come on!"

"Too slow, girl…" Dark Asia shouted. "Now to finish you off once and for all…" Master Gundam drew its hands together. "SEKIHA… TEN…"

"This is for Asuka you bastard!" Shinji shouted Unit–01 and Unit–02 appeared and fired at Master Gundam, riddling it with bullets, and damaging its right arm, blowing everything from the forearm down completely off.

"NOOOOOOOO!" Dark Asia shouted as Master Gundam flew off the best it could with its damaged systems.

"Allenby, are you ok?" Shinji asked.

"Yeah… system's almost back online… I think." Allenby replied. "But what about him?"

"We'll deal with him later." Mari said as Unit–2 reached down and picked up Nobel Gundam. "We need to get back to the cave entrance, so hold on."

"Wait, what?!" Allenby said as the two Evangelions moved quickly back to their previous position, skidding to a halt with Unit–01 firing a stream of bullets at some Dark Army soldiers attempting to get inside.

"So, can your Gundam stand?" Mari asked.

"Yeah, the system thinks so…" Allenby said as she was placed back on the ground. "Huh, it works…"

"Good, now you can help us old these fuckers off." Mari said.

"Is Domon still in there?" Allenby asked.

"As far as we know." Shinji said.

Domon stood nervously in front of the Dark Gundam, staring at his mother. He clenched his fists as he tried to hold back the emotions he was feeling. He didn't want to kill her, but he knew there was no other way. Shining Gundam was standing behind him and Domon heard Rain's voice over the loudspeakers.

"Domon?" Rain asked.

"Rain…" Domon muttered.

"Domon, are you ok?" Rain asked.
"Rain… I…" Domon muttered.

"I can't hear you, Domon." Rain said.

"Rain… I… I NEED YOUR HELP!" Domon shouted to cover his emotions. "Just like before!"

"Are you sure Domon?" Rain asked.

"I can't do this without you, Rain…" Domon said.

Shining Gundam moved towards Burning Gundam, and its cockpit opened and Rain leapt towards Burning Gundam, and Domon caught her as they stood and faced the Dark Gundam together once again.

"Domon?" Rain asked.

"Ready, Rain?" Domon replied.

"Always, Domon…" Rain said.

"Mother… are you sure?" Domon asked loudly.

"It's the only way to end my suffering Domon." Mikino said. "I'm sorry to make you do this, but it's the only way…"

"Alright…" Domon muttered with tears in his eyes. "Goodbye… mother…"

"Goodbye… Domon." Mikino replied.

Rain held Domon's shoulder. "Are you ready, Domon?"

"Yeah…" Domon said as he clenched his right fist tightly, the mark of the King of Hearts glowing brightly upon it. "The Dark Gundam has to be destroyed!"

"THESE HANDS OF OURS ARE BURNING RED!" Domon and Rain cried.

"THEIR LOUD CRIES TELL US!" Domon roared the King of Hearts emblem continued to burn brightly on his hand.

"TO GRASP HAPPINESS!" Rain cried as Domon twirled her around.

"ERUPTING…!" Domon and Rain cried in unison as the blue gantlets around both hands slid down, armorimg the hands with them and morphing it into three fingered piercing weapons. "BURNING…!" The golden claws on the forearm armor also popped out and made the attack look all the more menacing. "FINGER!"

"SEKI!" Domon roared as the particle collectors on the back of Burning Gundam created a red and orange mandala within them.

"HA!" Rain cried as the then the chest plate followed suit and opened to reveal a particle accelerator that flashed the emblem of the King of Hearts and then glowed a deep red after it came online.

"LOVE! LOVE!" Domon and Rain cried in unison as Rain and Domon joined hands and matched Burning Gundam's stance.

"TEN!" Rain and Domon cried in unison as Burning Gundam drew its hands down and turned to
The right, crouching and preparing to throw the attack. "KYO!" The energy began to form into a great ball of light that brimmed with power and crackled with electrical discharges. "KEN!"

The great ball of energy shot off in the direction of the Dark Gundam, with the emblem of the King of Hearts leading the way. The figure of the King of Hearts emerged from the energy ball as it got close to the Dark Gundam and roared angrily, just before impact. The Dark Gundam made no move to block or dodge, and its skeletal looking arms almost seemed to embrace the attack as a burst of white light engulfed everything within the cave.

As the flash dissipated, all that remained was a pink stream of energy coming from Domon and Rain's hands going straight through the Dark Gundam's chest, leaving nothing but a heart shaped hole where Domon's mother was once suspended. As Domon turned to Rain, the Dark Gundam began to glow brightly, exploding from the inside, and being engulfed in a bright, pink, explosion that turned into a ravaging fire ball. Burning Gundam raised its arms up to protect Domon and rain on its exposed clavicle, and the flames swam around them, dissipating after a few moments.

"I'm sorry Domon…" Rain said to break the silence.

"Don't be…” Domon said. "I knew this would happen, it was always a possibility. But at least this time I got to say goodbye."

"That's all that matters, Domon." Rain said. "And you carried out her final wish, like any good son would."

"But, Rain…” Domon said as a tear ran down his eye. "Why did she have to die?"

"It was her time, Domon." Rain said.

"I… I know." Domon said. "All the Dar Gundam did was prolong her life in agony… that's why she asked me to do that… I understand why… I just… I just don't like it…"

"Domon, it's ok to be upset, anyone would be." Rain said.

"I know that, but this isn't the time or place." Domon said. "Get back to the Shining Gundam so we can go back outside."

Rain looked at him funny, but decided not to say anything as Domon climbed back inside his cockpit. Once he did, he moved Burning Gundam's hand up so Rain could hold onto it as Domon positioned her near Shining Gundam.

Rain climbed back inside the Shining Gundam, and reactivated it and the pair walked back outside. Once outside, the scene was far different from the one they had left. The remaining Dark Army soldiers had deactivated once the Dark Gundam had been destroyed.

"So, you did it, right?" Chibodee asked.

"Yeah, bro, is the Dark Gundam gone?"

"It's done…” Domon muttered.

"What about your mother?" Shinji asked.

"She… she didn't make it…” Domon said. "She was too far gone to be saved…”

"Domon…” Allenby muttered.
"Were you able to say goodbye?" Shinji asked.

"Yes, this time, I got to say goodbye." Domon said.

"That's a good thing." Mari said. "It sucks when you don't get to say goodbye…"

"Still doesn't make it any better…” Domon muttered.

"Domon, you did what many people would not have the courage to do." Argo said. "That is why you are the King of Hearts."

"How can he be the King of Hearts when he can't even protect his family?!" Dark Asia said as he appeared above the cave opening, his damaged Mobile Fighter holding its arms crossed.

"Where the hell did he come from?" Duo asked.

"Probably crawled out from under the little rock he hid under after Allenby kicked his ass." Mari quipped.

"What kind of man can't protect his older brother and poor, helpless mother!" Dark Asia sneered.

"How dare you talk about them!" Domon roared. "You don't get to talk about them!"

"What are you going to do about, it Domon?!" Dark Asia shouted. "You can't possibly stop me! You got lucky last time because I was dying! A worthless fighter like you could never defeat me! You needed Kyoji's help just to stop me!"

"LEAVE MY BROTHER OUT OF THIS!" Domon roared as he activated Burning Gundam's Hyper Mode. "DON'T YOU EVER SPEAK HIS NAME!"

"Or what?" Dark Asia shouted. "YOU CANNOT DEFEAT ME! NOT WITHOUT YOUR PRECIOUS KYOJI!"

"Should we be helping out?" Mari asked as everyone looked on.

"No, this is something Domon has to do alone." Rain said.

"For closure…” Allenby added.

"A warrior's fight against his inner demons…” Milliardo said.

"Whatever, it was just a question…” Mari muttered.

"I will defeat you!" Domon roared.

"YOU CAN NEVER DEFEAT ME!" Dark Asia roared. "EXPLODING… SHADOW…"

"I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF YOU!" Domon roared as he held his right fist up near his face, the mark of the King of Hearts burning brightly on its back. "IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO DISAPPEAR FOR GOOD! I WILL DEFEAT YOU IN THE NAME OF… KYOJI!"

"THIS HAND OF MINE IS BURNING RED!" Domon roared as he charged right at Master Gundam as it charged its own attack. "IT'S LOUD ROAR TELLS ME TO GRASP VICTORY!"

The particle collectors on the back of Burning Gundam opened up, creating a red and orange mandala within them, and then the chest plate opened up to reveal a particle accelerator that flashed
the emblem of the King of Hearts and then glowed a deep red after it came online.

"ERUPTING!" The blue gantlet around the right hand slid down, armoring the hand with it and morphing it into a three fingered piercing weapon. The golden claws on the forearm armor also popped out and made the attack look all the more menacing.

"BURNING!" The right hand began glowing with a tremendous orange light. Master Gundam began to charge as well, but it was just too late.

"FINGER!" Domon drove the glowing hand right at Master Gundam's chest, penetrating just below the cockpit, and lifted the Gundam into the air.

"I've defeated the Dark Gundam, and I've defeated you!" Domon shouted. "You are not Master Asia!"

"Of course not you idiot!" Dark Asia shouted. "I was brought to life by the Dark Gundam, I was never your precious Master, I was always Dark Asia! I am the spawn of the Dark Gundam!"

"It doesn't matter anymore, the Dark Gundam has been obliterated!" Domon roared.

"HAHAHAHAHAHA!" Dark Asia laughed as he began to die. "You think I'm the only one? I was the first one to hatch. In its dying breath, the Dark Gundam shot five eggs to Earth in case it was destroyed… by the time you get back, there may be far more than you bargained for waiting for you… you cannot stop the Dark Gundam from purifying the Earth and destroying all human life!"

"SHUT THE HELL UP!" Domon roared. "AND NOW… HEAT END!"

Master Gundam exploded in a brilliant fireball, leaving nothing behind but a smoldering dust cloud. Bring Gundam returned to normal as everyone realized the battle was finally over.

"Now it's over…" Domon said as the Burning Gundam returned to normal.

"What the hell is that supposed to mean?" Rain asked. "Domon, you shouldn't have done that… he had information for us."

"I had to, Rain." Domon said. "He was too dangerous to keep alive."

"Well, it doesn't matter now." Shinji said. "At least this is all over…"

"Except for the massive mess of parts from all the bad guys we put down." Mari said.

"NERV will handle that." Misato said. "Recovery and clean up teams are being deployed as we speak. Once we've confirmed everything's been destroyed, we'll send everyone home."

"How long will that take?" Milliardo asked.

"A few days…" Misato said.

"WHAT?!" Duo shouted. "I thought we were going home!"

"It will only take four days." Rain replied. "The machine needs to be tested and calibrated before we start messing with the fabric of the universe. I forgot to mention it before."

"She's right, Duo." Howard said. "It's gonna take a few days."

"Well, if one of the people trapped here says it will take a few days." Milliardo said. "And if Howard
agrees, than it'll take a few more days."

"So, is that settled then?" Misato asked.

"I believe so." Heero said. "Duo?"

"Yeah, yeah, whatever." Duo muttered.

"Then return to base." Misato said.

"Understood." Domon replied as everyone began heading back to Tokyo–3.

December 2, 2016 – NERV HQ

Ritsuko was standing nervously in Gendo's spacious office. It had been some time since she had been in here with anyone, and even longer than she'd been in there alone, waiting for Gendo. She heard the doors open, and turned to see Misato and Kaji walk followed closely by Fuyutsuki. Gendo came through the other door from his living quarters, and walked calmly to his desk and sat down.

"Report." Gendo said curtly.

"Damage from the battles inside the city have been repaired." Misato reported. "There was no serious damage from any of the attacks, and it appears the Evangelions are in good shape once again."

"What about Unit–XP?" Gendo asked.

"It's still heavily damaged from the battle with the Sixteenth Angel." Ritsuko replied. "We're still rebuilding its cybernetic limbs."

"Very well…" Gendo said. "Unit–01 and Unit–02 are fully operational?"

"Yes, sir." Ritsuko replied.

"What about our displaced friends?" Gendo asked.

"They're ready to go home." Kaji said. "I've told them they're cleared for tomorrow afternoon."

"Excellent." Gendo replied. "And the recovery efforts? What have we gained?"

"A load of technology we can only begin to understand." Ritsuko said. "Between the beam technology, their engine technology, and their other advanced technologies, within a few years, we'll have more technological advances than we can shake a stick at."

"A highly advanced stick at that." Kaji quipped.

"Anyway. I should be able to begin reverse engineering some of these technologies." Ritsuko continued. "We could have a viable weapon in three to four years."

"Powered by what?" Misato asked. "We don't have compact fusion reactors like theirs laying around."

"The S2 Engine." Ritsuko said. "At least until we can make reactor technology like theirs somewhat feasible."
"So, weapons for Unit–01's use only then." Kaji said. "Doesn't seem very practical."

"Regardless of the practicality, it should still be researched." Gendo said. "Their weapons are far more powerful than ours, and could easily dispatch an Angel, if the need should arise again that is."

"Understood, Commander." Misato replied.

"Yeah, sure." Kaji replied.

"What about practical, world saving kind of tech?" Misato asked. "There must be some of that in everything you've seen."

"Well, there is a way to remove the remaining fallout from WWIII." Ritsuko said. "Inaccessible areas can become habitable again, if I can get the technology to work."

"So, we'll actually be helping the world I that happens." Misato said. "How nice."

"But the weapons come first." Ritsuko said bluntly. "For obvious reasons."

"Of course they do." Kaji quipped. "Why save the world when we can make a weapon to destroy it."

"Is the device ready to send them home?" Fuyutsuki asked to hurriedly change the subject.

"Yes, Sub–Commander." Ritsuko replied.

"Can you restore the Positron Rifle to its original condition once they're gone?" Gendo asked.

"Yes, it shouldn't take too long to do that."

"We can't lose that weapon." Fuyutsuki said. "It's far too important."

"I will make it a top priority one they've gone." Ritsuko said.

"Very well." Gendo said. "Dismissed."

"Sir, may I discuss something…" Ritsuko began as everyone else turned and left.

"Was I not speaking Japanese properly?" Gendo said. "Get out of my sight."

Ritsuko turned and left without a word, with a look of pure rage on her face.

Domon and Rain were in their borrowed apartment, packing up what things they'd gotten during their stay in Tokyo–3. It wasn't a lot, but they wanted to cherish the memories they'd had, so they went out and bought souvenirs.

"Rain, are you ready to go home?" Domon asked.

"Yes and no." Rain replied.

"Why don't you want to go back?" Domon asked.

"Well… my father didn't cause the Dark Gundam to be born from Kyoji's Ultimate Gundam here… no one can judge my family past here."
"Rain… what your father did isn’t your fault." Domon said consolingly. "His sins are not yours, and if anyone says anything bad about my wife, I’ll teach them a lesson they won’t soon forget."

"Domon… I appreciate the sentiment, but…” Rain started. "I just like people not knowing what my father did. I feel respected here… but if I had a different name…”

"Rain…” Domon muttered.

"Domon, please let me take your last name… let me be Rain Kasshu, your loving wife." Rain said. "It would make me so happy if you'd let me do that."

"Rain… I…” Domon muttered.

"Please, Domon." Rain said. "Don't make me beg, I just want to have a family… and leave behind my family's past."

"Would… would it make want to go home if we did that?" Domon asked.

"Yes, it would." Rain said.

"Well then… I guess I should start calling you Mrs. Kasshu…” Domon joked.

"Really?" Rain asked. "You're not just joking, are you?"

"No, I want you to be happy, and after dealing with my mother…” Domon trailed off. "Honoring someone’s wishes makes people happy."

Rain kissed Domon passionately on the lips. "Thank you, Domon." Rain said. "So, can I ask you something?"

"Rain, you don't always have to ask that." Domon said. "I'll answer any question you want me to… we're married, we don't have any secrets, remember?"

"Yeah, I remember." Rain replied. "Are you worried about the other Dark Gundam's spawn?"

"No," Domon replied. "He may have been lying, and even if he was telling the truth, we've killed two Dark Gundams, we can kill four more."

"Domon…” Rain muttered.

"It's true." Domon said. "With you by my side, no challenge is too tough."

"What a sappy romantic." Rain joked.

"But it's true!" Domon said emphatically. "I would never have beaten the Dark Gundam without your help… and your love…”

"You really mean that?" Rain asked.

"Yes, Rain, I do." Domon replied. "When we get home, we'll face that new threat together, and we will defeat them!"

––

The boys were in their relatively messy apartment. Even though they were out fighting and repairing their Gundams a lot of the time, they had still made a considerable mess in their two month stay in
the apartment, and with their impending departure and no enemies in sight, it was time to clean things up so they could leave.

Quatre was humming quietly as he vacuumed and dusted, and Duo was busy grabbing whatever garbage he could find. Heero, Wufei and Trowa were scouring the apartment for anything that didn't belong to them, or that they weren't taking with them in an effort to make Misato's clearing of the apartment as easy as possible.

"I'm gonna miss this place." Wufei muttered. "It was nice here, even with the fighting."

"It was nice to be away from the Earth Sphere." Trowa mused. "No wars… minimal conflict…"

"What about the Angels?" Heero asked. "This world isn't free of war… they're simply tired of it."

"That sounds a bit cynical, Heero." Quatre said.

"It's the truth." Heero said. "This world may be more peaceful, but they still have many problems here to solve. But we're about to leave this relative peace to go back to our own endless waltz of war, peace, and revolution."

"Our own endless waltz?" Quatre asked.

"Yes, our own never ending battle." Heero said. "We have the White Zodiac to deal with, and any other threats that have come up in our absence." Heero paused. "Though, I will admit that it has been nice to not always be in the middle of a conflict."

"I know, right?" Duo quipped. "It's nice to give our poor Gundams a break from defending peace and freedom and shit."

"What, do not want to go home, Duo?" Quatre asked.

"Well, I mean, I miss Hilde, but I like it here." Duo said. "No colonies, just what's left of this planet. It's kinda nice not worrying about some crazy ass attack from space."

"Well, it is different living in a world where there aren't any colonies." Quatre said. "Their space is so unexplored, it's untouched by man…"

"I miss home." Trowa said. "It's not the same here, and I miss being on the colonies, and as odd as it sounds, it just doesn't feel right here."

"Because we do not belong." Heero said. "Which will be rectified tomorrow."

"Yeah, I'm glad they pulled through on their promise though." Wufei said. "For the longest time, I didn't think they'd let us go home."

"Well, does it matter now, we're going home." Quatre said. "So they were obviously telling the truth."

"Yeah, it's nice to know we can finally go home." Duo said. "But I'll still miss everyone we met."

"Well, we'll always have our memories of this place." Quatre said idealistically.

Shinji and Mari were sitting in the apartment. Asuka still hadn't been released from the hospital and wanted some time alone, and Misato was busy, so the two of them stayed in the apartment by
Shinji was reading some of Asuka's manga while Mari watched TV and boredly flipped through the channels. Every time she caught Shinji looking at her to see what she was doing, she'd pull her shirt down and jiggle her breasts just to tease him and cause him to blush and hurriedly look away.

"You know, puppy, after the fourth time, I think you just want to sneak a peek." Mari quipped. "I know how great they look, and I won't tell the princess…"

"I'm only looking at you to see why you keep changing the channel!" Shinji said. "Pick something already, the constant flipping is annoying."

"What, my boobs aren't good enough for you, puppy?" Mari asked.

"I'm not falling for that trap, Mari." Shinji replied. "Besides, Asuka would kill you if she found out."

"I…" Mari started. "Fine, I'll stop…" Mari sighed. "You're no fun anymore, puppy."

"I'm plenty of fun." Shinji said. "I just don't want Asuka to be mad at you, that's all."

"Yeah, sure…" Mari said coyly. "I guess if you're dating the princess, you don't think I'm pretty anymore…"

"Mari stop trying to trick me into something."

"Well now… the student has surpassed the master…" Mari said as she bounded over to Shinji and buried his face in her tits. "I'm so proud of you!" Shinji was having trouble breathing, so he jammed his index finger into Mari's back, which made her jump away. "Hey, that hurt!"

"That's the point, I couldn't breathe…" Shinji said. "You don't learn any other way."

"Jerk…" Mari muttered.

Shinji sighed. "Fine, come here…" Shinji said. "Just hug me like a normal person, Mari…"

"So, I can still hug you?" Mari asked.

"As long as you don't try to suffocate me again." Shinji said.

"I'll do my best, but these things have a mind of their own." Mari joked.

"No, you just like shoving them in my face…" Shinji muttered.

"That's what friends are for, puppy." Mari joked. "Puppy, are you ok?"

"Yeah… I'm just gonna miss everyone we've met…" Shinji said.

"Puppy, it's so endearing that you're so sensitive." Mari said as she hugged him. "It's ok to be upset everyone is leaving, but they have to go back home sometime."

"I know…" Shinji muttered. "It was just nice to have so many people around, if an Angel had attacked, it may not have been so difficult to defeat. When they're gone, we'll still only have two EVAs… and that's just not enough…"

"Puppy, don't worry about that now." Mari said. "I harassed miso to tell me about my EVA, and it'll be fixed in the next couple months. So, we just have to hold on until then, and then we'll have three
EVAs again."

"I know, but…” Shinji started.

♪DING DONG♪

"Who could that be?” Mari yelled. "Everyone's busy!"

"No idea…” Shinji mused. "I'll go…”

"Don't get up, puppy." Mari said. "We'll finish our conversation in a sec…”

Mari walked over to the door and opened it to the smiling faces of Hikari, Toji, Sakura, and Kensuke.

"Oh, it's you guys!” Mari said happily. "I forgot about you guys!"

"I take offence to that, Mari.” Hikari said.

"Well, we haven't seen you in weeks, we thought you died.” Toji said.

"Well, come in!” Mari said as she led them inside. "We've finally got some time to relax."

As Mari got back to the living room, the group looked around happily, but Hikari's face fell when she only saw Shinji. "Hey, Shinji, where's Asuka?"

"Hospital.” Shinji replied. "There was an incident…"

"What kind of incident, Shinji?” Sakura asked.

"Yeah, what's been going on since you disappeared from school?” Toji asked. "We've been put into shelters a lot lately, so it's not you guys missed much."

"Well, there were a lot of fights.” Shinji said. "And lots of enemies. But it's all over now, everyone's heading home tomorrow.”

"Already?” Kensuke asked. "They found a way for them to get home?"

"Yeah, and they figured out the cause too.” Mari said.

"Well, don't skimp on the details, tell us everything that's happened!” Kensuke asked excitedly.

"Well, why don't you sit down and we'll go over it all.” Mari said. "Just try to hold the reactions till the end."

December 3, 2016 – Battle Zone of the Sixteenth Angel, Wormhole Origin Point

Everyone was standing around the crater where Unit–00 had self–destructed to destroy Armisael over two months ago. They were at the point where everything had started, where Shinji's outburst had started a very interesting chain of events. It had been a long time coming for some of the displaced arrivals, and not that long for some others, but no matter the amount of time they had spent in Tokyo–3, everyone wanted to go home.

Shinji stood nervously beside Mari, Misato, and Kaji while they looked down at the heavily modified Positron Rifle he's used against the Fifth Angel, Ramiel. It was pointing straight up into the sky, right
where Unit-01 had been standing when Shinji had accidentally put all this in motion. Ritsuko, Maya, Rain, and Howard were going over the machine one last time before it was activated, to make sure there weren't any accidents when it was activated. While this was going on, everyone was doing what needed to be done… saying farewell to those not from their own universe.

As Rain and Howards walked away from the contraption towards the group, Domon walked up behind Shinji and tapped him on the shoulder, being the first to take the plunge.

"Hey, Shinji?" Domon asked.

"Yeah, Domon?" Shinji replied.

"It was nice meeting you." Domon said bluntly.

"It was nice meeting you too." Shinji said. "I hope you can fix whatever's going wrong in your universe."

"Well, when we get back, we'll set it straight." Domon replied. "I hope your Angel problem's been dealt with."

"So do we." Misato said as Rain walked over with Allenby.

"Thanks for tolerating us." Rain said. "You were very kind to us during our stay."

"It's the least we could do." Misato said. "Seeing as you were stuck here."

"And thanks again for saving me." Allenby said.

"That was just the right thing to do." Shinji replied as Allenby squeezed him half to death.

"Well…I guess we should go get ready to head out." Rain said.

"Just a second." Domon said. "Shinji… just remember one thing, don't doubt yourself. When you believe in yourself, anything is possible."

"I'll do my best." Shinji replied.

"Good." Domon said as he playfully punched Shinji's shoulder. ""

"See ya, Space Cowboy." Mari said as Domon walked off and Heero and the others walked over.

"Mission complete." Heero deadpanned.

"Way to break the ice, Heero." Duo said.

"So, this is goodbye." Noin said.

"It's been fun staying here." Lady Une said. "If not a little different from our own world."

"You'll be missed." Misato said. "It'll be a lot different without you here."

"I just hope you guys don't have to deal with too much when you go back home." Kaji said.

"Well, we have the White Zodiac do deal with, so it could be a bit challenging." Wufei said.

"But we've faced worse." Trowa said. "We will persevere."
"Yeah, we'll make it out of this, no problem." Duo said.

"Considering how you guys handled yourself here, I think you'll be fine." Shinji said.

"And you'll be fine too, Shinji." Quatre said. "You're the heart of Earth."

"What does that make me?" Mari asked indignantly.

"More of the same, really." Quatre said brightly.

"You guys are the defenders of this planet, you're what's keeping it alive." Milliardo said. "That's a job with more pressure than most people could handle, it's very commendable."

"Thanks guys…" Shinji said as he blushed.

"Shinji, I know you blame yourself for why we were all brought here." Heero started.

"Heero, perhaps no is not the time." Milliardo said.

"No, some things need to be said." Heero said as he turned to Shinji. "I made a mistake once, Shinji. I was tricked into it, and the only thing I can tell you is to not blame yourself. You can't change the past, but you can certainly try to shape the future. You're a fighter, Shinji, and even if you won't admit, you know what you're capable of."

"Wow, that's deep." Mari said.

"I know, and he's usually so quiet." Duo said.

"That's good advice, Heero." Kaji said. "You're a pretty smart kid."

"It comes from too much experience on the battlefield." Trowa said.

"There is one more thing, Shinji, and something you should pass on to Asuka…" Heero said. "And Mari, you should listen too."

"Yeah?" Shinji asked.

"History is much like an endless waltz. The three beats of war, peace, and revolution continue on forever." Heero said solemnly. "That is why you must continue to fight, Shinji Ikari. You must protect those you care about. Remember what ZERO showed you and you will be fine. I wish you luck."

"Thanks, Heero." Shinji said. "It's been great knowing you."

"I won't forget this place, or the people I've met." Heero said. "It would be difficult to forget a place like this."

"That doesn't sounds like a resounding endorsement…" Mari quipped.

"That's just his way of doing things." Quatre said.

"But we should get going." Milliardo said. "Farewell EVA pilots…"

"And thanks for getting us home too." Noin said.

"Well, you're first up, so as soon as you're ready, Ritsuko will fire that bad boy up." Kaji said.
"Right, we'll be ready shortly." Howard said. "Have her start the activation sequence."

"Roger that." Misato replied. "Did you catch that Ritsuko?"

"Yes, I heard it." Ritsuko replied. "Alright, beginning activation sequence." Ritsuko said. "Targeting appropriate space time coordinates."

"Yeah, activate that Stargate!" Mari shouted to an annoyed grunt from Ritsuko.

The capacitors around the wormhole generator began to glow as power was transferred to into the "Stargate." As more power was shunted into the generators, the ground began to shake like it did when Unit–01 lost control.

"Power output at 14%... 29%... 42%... 57%... 72%... 86%... 99%... 100%..." Ritsuko reported. "Wormhole opening!"

"Chevron 7 locked!" Mari joked as a massive blue beam shot up into the sky and illuminated the clouds as a wormhole was torn open in the sky.

"Holy shit, that's awesome..." Mari muttered.

"Yeah, is kinda beautiful..." Kaji muttered.

"I wish Asuka was here to see this." Shinji said. "I bet she'd enjoy this."

"Wormhole stable." Ritsuko said. "Lady Une, your party is clear to depart."

"Copy that, we're departing." Lady Une said as their aircraft and Gundams flew into the air. "Good luck with everything."

The Gundams and aircraft flew into the glowing blue maw of the wormhole and disappeared as soon as they made contact with the event horizon. Ritsuko waited for several minutes before she said anything else.

"Matter transmission confirmed." Ritsuko reported. "Closing wormhole."

In a flash, the blue rippling event horizon closed upon itself, and turning the sky back to the way it should look.

"Changing target destination." Ritsuko said. "Coordinates set, wormhole generator has cooled down, reinitializing sequence."

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Someone was wondering into Tokyo–3, unaccompanied by anyone. He was tall and skinny, had silvery white hair and crimson eyes, he was wearing a white button up shirt and black pants with a backpack slung over one shoulder. His name was Kaworu Nagisa.

"Hmmm... giant robots... that's new..." Kaworu muttered to himself as he saw the flash of the second wormhole getting opened in the distance. "I bet those old fools didn't expect this..." Kaworu laughed loudly. "They follow those Dead Sea Scrolls like they are the written word of God when they're nothing but vague gibberish!"

Kaworu smiled intently as he watched the Gundams disappear into the second wormhole. "So clearly this time around things have changed quite severely..." Kaworu said as he say the wormhole close and another open up. "Perhaps this time things can finally be to my advantage."
Kaworu laughed loudly at the prospects of his dreams finally coming true. "Just you wait Shinji–kun…" Kaworu said maniacally. "You'll be mine this time around… one way or another…"

Shinji sighed as he saw Burning Gundam disappear into the event horizon. The wormhole closed a second time, leaving nothing but bright blue sky behind.

"Wow… that was kinda painless." Shinji said.

"Well, it's not over yet." Maya said. "We still need to keep this from happening again."

"I'm recalibrating the system now." Ritsuko said. "Simulating power output… activating emulation program… inverting the subspace frequency… preparing to seal the rips in space. Activating the system one more time."

The ground began to shake violently again as the machine charged up and sparked with electrical discharges. As the machine sounded like it was about to activate, a shrill sound cracked the air, and a this time, a red beam shot into the air, spreading out in the sky and highlighting dozens of holes in the sky.

"Are those…?" Misato asked.

"All wormholes… to all different places." Kaji said. "This could have been far worse than it was."

"You're pretty on point, Mr. Kaji." Maya said. "This could have been far worse."

"Repair process is half way done." Ritsuko reported.

"Already half way?" Shinji asked.

"Yeah, look at the red Swiss cheese holes." Mari said. "They're shrinking."

"So, it's almost fixed." Misato said. "I'm glad."

"See, kid?" Kaji said. "No harm, no foul."

"Repair process is complete, shutting down." Ritsuko said.

"Wait, that's it?" Mari asked. "Kinda anticlimactic, ain't it?"

"What, did you expect some long, drawn out ending?" Shinji asked. "It's just another day for us. But I am going to miss them nonetheless."

"Don't worry about it, puppy." Mari said. "Everything's back to the way it should be, and we can get back to our regular fucked up lives."

"It's not so bad, Mari." Shinji replied. "We still have each other."

"Awww, puppy, you're so sappy." Mari said. "It's nice you're looking at the bright side."

"Well, things are pretty good." Shinji said. "So, there isn't much too worry about anymore. Things should be pretty good once Asuka and Rei come out of the hospital. Everything will be just the way it should be…"

"You mean us all being friends and fighting Angels and shit?" Mari asked.
"Yeah, that, but at least now we can be happy." Shinji replied.

End Gundam Invasion

A/N: I do not own Evangelion or any of the characters, GAINAX and the other distributors of NGE related material do. I am simply using them as a backdrop for my fanfic. I also do not own Gundam Wing or G Gundam, Sunrise does, as do their licensed distributors.

As for the songs used in this chapter, I don't own them either, and they're listed below in order of appearance:

Sync Score Rankings!
Shinji – 99.2% (+1.7%)
Rei – 75.0% (No Change)
Asuka – 52.3% (No Change)
Mari – 42.0% (No Change)

And that's how I end a crossover ladies and gentleman! Also, if you can't guess where the title's from, you've never seen the OVA it's named after.

The final battle, while fast paced, I believe I tied up all the loose ends while also setting up two separate fics involving Gundam Wing's After Colony timeline (the whole White Zodiac nonsense leading into something bigger), and G Gundam's Future Century timeline (the multiple Dark Gundam spawns…) where the original anime will stand intact, as opposed to NGE: Legacy, where the anime was used as the basis for my modded story.

Now, the final attacks used by the Shuffle Alliance and Domon and Rain are both from the end of the G Gundam series (Episodes 48 and 49 respectively), and are totally canon. As for Kaworu showing up as everyone was leaving, he's showing up in the next chapter of NGE: Legacy, so he's got to come into town at some point, doesn't he? As to the Dark Gundam spawns, it seemed like a logical way (taken from King Piccolo) to bring an enemy back from the grave.

As for Quatre's comment to Shinji of him being the "Heart of Earth" it's a reference to Quatre's line from the end of Gundam Wing about Heero being the Heart of Outer Space, a term deemed by fans to indicate someone being a Newtype. Shinji (and all the EVA pilots for that matter) have some of those attributes, most notably the heightened mental awareness that it takes to actually move and operate an Evangelion.

Finally, everyone is sent home and the rips in space time have been repaired, but that doesn't mean they can't be opened again in the future, even if everyone is away of the possibility, and even if Shinji is wary about letting loose Unit–01's full power.

So, now, after this brief–ish interruption (and also hopefully an enjoyable and entertaining interruption), I am pleased to announce this:

Next up! Neon Genesis Evangelion: Legacy – Episode VI: Return of Reality

Please read and enjoy!

As I said before, and will always say at the end of chapter, please leave comments, as I would like to try to improve the story going forward any way I can. And, hell, constructive criticism is a good thing.
Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!