

From the outside, the crowd of people gathered around the remains of the office building saw very little besides the growing blob of nanites devouring the structure down to its foundations, turning the once-mundane block of metal and glass into an indistinct, box-like shape of writhing black ooze, bits and pieces of which fell onto the ground below before scurrying back up... though Xili might've had a few ideas about that, because eventually the substance began to "infect" the buildings around it, appendages flying off the sides of the nano-mass and beginning to engulf everything else around it, at which point the people watching from the street got the right idea and began running away as fast as they could.

Within the ooze, deep inside the now-empty frame of the building that wasn't there, the synth-dracat hung in the center of it all, suspended from all sides by an endless series of nanite strands hooking her body to the edges of their swirling, all-consuming mass. She, too, was covered in the stuff, but rather than being actively dissolved and used to either make more gray goo or transport matter back to the central cocoon, she was being made *better*. Every second that passed not only hardened the metallic alloys that made up most of her body and improved on the functions of every internal component keeping her alive, but her very frame itself was being made to be larger, bigger, vaster, taking up more and more room inside the empty space where she used to work. It took maybe ten minutes before her feet were touching where there used to be a ground floor, while her head was comfortably nestling against the old roof, both surfaces now a thick curtain of nanites still maintaining the illusion they were surrounding the building, rather than having already devoured it.

Outside, the police had arrived en masse, only to find that none of their weapons did anything to the advancing avalanche of nano-fluid. Bullets were simply reprocessed, their constituent materials used to make more robots to replace those destroyed by it, while the presence of extra cars made for perfect targets; now that the mass of nanites had expanded to cover a significant chunk of the city block, it had enough ooze inside of it to create large, proboscis-like limbs that extended outwards at near-supersonic speeds, breaking through concrete and steel as easily as scissors would cut through paper and piercing most of the assembled vehicles before dragging them back into their indistinct, blackened shape. Little did the panicking tiny ones know that what they were fighting wasn't a techno-blob gone wild, but a cybernetic beast that was all too in control of things; Xili could tell the location of every single nanite in that storm, and if she so desired, she could order them to stop... but why do so? She still had so much to do, so far to go...

She couldn't take it for much longer. Denying everyone the sight of her perfect self was downright criminal, especially when she had honed her body to absolute synthetic perfection. The dracat that emerged from within the roiling blob of nanites was, in all respects, as naked as they came, at least in terms of colour and fur; the synthskin draped over her form was a near-perfect replica of the real thing, though it did lose out a bit on how angular it was. No

matter how hard she tried, Xili's body refused to smooth out and *look* organic, leaving her looking more like a stereotypical, vector-based robot than a sleek, modern design... not that she minded though, it just added to the charm. Made for a weird breast shape, but she doubted anyone was going to care much considering how large they were.

When her wings unfurled, covering a significant chunk of the city in shadow, she kicked up a gust of wind so powerful that anyone directly underneath her was blown away, along with cars, trucks and even the odd metal pole, windows shattering into pieces and buildings tilting outwards, leaving the dracat at the epicenter of some colossal disaster, marking the exact spot of her second birth. This was the new Xili, the *perfect* Xili, the one who looked at the city and saw not her home, but one big dish ready to be consumed. It was a bounty of steel and plastics, of metal, concrete and whatever else that she could integrate into herself; her body had become a platform on which to experiment, to improve upon, and the whole world was now her captive audience. After all, she was taller than most buildings around her were, making it impossible for anyone in the city to miss her if they ever looked in her general direction; and given how much noise she was making, very few of it decent, the chee doubted they'd be staring anywhere else.

A few brave individuals still tried to fire at her, probably thinking the organic-looking covering truly *was* as squishy as it appeared to be, but quickly learned their lesson once they saw the sparks fly off on impact whenever Xili didn't just absorb the rounds herself. Giggling, the colossal dracat took a single step forward, scattering the police force as she flattened whatever vehicles hadn't been consumed by her nanites, which continued to feed her a steady stream of building materials through specialized ports on her back; the dracat trailed a long, draping cape of nano-fluid streams, a spider's web of black goo extending over a now-vast section of the urban jungle... one that was being devoured at an alarming rate; there wouldn't *be* a city within the hour if it kept up like that!

Xili was a merciful goddess though; she made sure that any organics would be spared, safely carried down from wherever they were inside their homes or workplaces and deposited on the streets below, from where they could observe as the nanite storm reduced everything into its constituent materials and siphoned it back to the budding giantess enjoying every angle of her body off in the distance. The point was to force them to admire her, even if they didn't initially want to; one good look at Xili's body and they wouldn't be able to help themselves... or at least that was the plan.

The dracat no longer cared whether or not people knew what she was like or what she'd turned herself into; she was their goddess now, to do with the little ones beneath her as she pleased, and what she *truly* wanted was to give them a show! The chee practically purred when she saw the first news helicopters start to circle her head, putting on her best, most sparkling smile and very nearly blinding the poor cameramen with the metallic glint coming off those

chompers of hers; shiny, yes, but also powerful enough to rip through steel like it was tissue paper! All this while posing for whoever may be watching, letting everyone know that, despite her rather explosive entry, she meant no one any harm; all they had to do was abandon their worldly possessions so she could consume them, and everything would be fine! She'd solve the issue of housing and food later.

... or would she though? After all, as their goddess, it was now her responsibility to ensure that her subjects, her worshippers and loved ones got everything they needed to survive, at the very least. And as her ascension had cost so many of them their livelihoods, now how were they supposed to survive? Charity? No, that just wouldn't do... but she had an idea about what just might: what was a deity without a little bit of creation in their own image? She was sure they wouldn't mind if she enveloped them in a smaller glob of nanites, reworking them until they, too, became sculpted edifices of mechanical perfection. Muscle unto hydraulics, skin unto metal, organ unto machinery, all of it was changed in real time with minimal pain and hassle, until their forms became the best that they could be. Flesh was weak and transitory, but steel was forever. And now so were they.

It was a blessing she gave them, and to herself as well; each transformation yielded immense amounts of data thanks to everyone's unique biology, feeding back into the growing supercomputer inside of her head and giving the chee an increasing amount of ideas on how to improve upon her own design. It was a sort of mutually beneficial relationship, where each new supplicant helped make their goddess that much more perfect with their contribution; Xili was certain they were appreciative, given that they began moaning incoherently almost immediately after being released from her transformative grip.

Pretty frisky though; she was going to need to fix that part of the behavior circuitry to prevent unnecessary messes, no need to start orgies spontaneously.

While all of this took place, Xili herself continued to improve upon her design, growing ever larger with each passing moment as more of the city vanished underneath the veritable sea of nanite goo spilling from the new chee goddess; the entire downtown area was gone, its residents and workers transformed into better, synthetic versions of themselves, and soon enough the suburbs would vanish underneath her tender touch, with most of its materials being used to further fuel the dracat's ascension. There was no need to multiply the number of robots hard at work, because Xili herself wasn't planning on staying where she was for much longer; if she was to be this world's new mechanical deity, then it was her duty to show off to as many people as possible, let them know that yes, she was real, and yes, she could make their dreams of perfection come true. As a result, where there used to be a crowd of terrified onlookers was now a throng of avid worshippers following in her very literal footsteps, taking care to avoid the footfalls that cracked through the ground and opened up vast craters into the piping beneath the

pavement. Some of them would develop their own version of the nanites that turned them into synth in the first place, using them to fix the damage Xili was doing to the landscape.

The world was such a different place from where she stood that the dracat could barely recognize any of it, having to rely on local geography in order to get her bearings... for as long as said geography was even there of course; a large hill, mineral- and metal-rich hill that stood right outside town with no housing development? More like an extra snack for the dracat, who practically licked her lips as she ordered her constituent nano-fluid to cover the whole formation and dissolve it for spare parts. Particularly rich veins beneath the city itself that had gone unexplored? Perfect opportunities to drill massive holes into the ground and extract the raw ore, creating internal crucibles and furnaces to process it into something more useful. Her body had turned into a machine fit for consumption, a walking refinery-slash-factory that saw the world not as the wondrous living space that it was, but as a source of raw material for the eternal synthetic ascension she had kickstarted. Already a singularity was beginning to form within her head; while Xili didn't pay much attention to it, her brain hadn't really grown along with the rest of her, requiring her electronic computation components to step up and make up for the difference. The end result was that her original organic core was now located deep within a thick shell of circuitry and solder, one that was beginning to grow so hot that it ran the risk of overheating simply from regular operations. This obviously required improvements on the cooling systems, starting a vicious war between her own internal components, with the ultimate goal of increasing computational capacity.

Thus, it wasn't all that surprising that the dracat no longer "thought" about things in the conventional sense, at least not in the same way as everyone else did. Her ability to understand the tiny ones around her was limited by her own superiority; it was akin to a regular person trying to comprehend how a bird or a cat saw the world, they were just entirely different levels... and that wasn't good. How could she be a true goddess if she couldn't understand her own subjects? How was she to serve them and fulfill their every desire if she couldn't relate to them? Best that she upload the same kind of schematics to everyone around her, allow their bodies to reshape themselves so as to operate under the same paradigm; sure, their brains weren't as powerful a processor as Xili's, but at least now they'd be thinking along the same lines.

The results were nothing if not entirely predictable, and yet somehow the dracat was caught entirely off-guard by them. Granting her little ones the same degree of understand as she possessed naturally allowed them to start making improvements upon their own design, which led to them copying the synth-chee's nanite programming in order to start bulking up themselves. Xili found this amusing, seeing as that second generation of synthetic giants were effectively eating the scraps off her plate, but as long as they recognized who was in charge, she didn't particularly care what else they did; the whole point of her ascension was to share her joy with the world, let it feel what it was like to achieve true perfection, so if part of that was

allowing her subjects to experiment and try to become *like her*, then that was just the plan going off without a hitch as far as she was concerned!

This did present a problem with competition though, so the chee made sure to tell her nanite storm to start multiplying itself again, lest some of her followers get the wrong idea about who that planet belonged to. Not that they'd *really* have a chance to compete though; Xili was already so tall that her head was as far past the lower cloud layer as her feet were underneath it, almost tall enough that she'd be seeing the curvature of the planet in a few minutes' time. Each step she took covered miles, every motion of her wings ran the risk of creating tornadoes from how much air it displaced. The ground beneath her was in constant motion, roiling underneath the growing ocean of nanite goo that was hard at work converting the whole planet into raw manufacturing material for both her and all of her transformed followers; whole cities were converted just by virtue of her being near them, with most of their population outright offering themselves up to their new mechanical goddess, *wanting* to be improved, *welcoming* the transformation. Even the shade created by her wings was a way of ensuring her dominance over the little ones at her feet; with little effort, Xili coated the back of them in millions of rows of solar panels, the resulting energy spike then being distributed to the other synthetics without direct access to sunlight, with the excedent going towards endless rows of light illuminating this odd, wing-covered landscape, turning the perpetual night into an endless noon.

Whirring and pumping filled the air, the sounds of well-oiled mechanisms dominating the planet. Soon, Xili could directly interface with the satellites in orbit, using them to broadcast her message to anyone who might be listening: join her and become perfect, and together they would experience heaven. Join her, and they could be so much more... and join her they did, either flying into the shadow of her wings and being converted in midair, driving towards it, even sailing or using rail, the whole world was converging on her location, wanting the tiniest piece of the divine repast that Xili was producing for them. Within a few short hours, with nighttime and daytime no longer a factor given that the dracat was just *that* large, it was time for them to abandon the planet.

It seemed like such an absurd notion, but billions of material-hungry nanite monsters (and herself) had taken such a toll on the Earth that the only way forward was to leave it entirely and then strip-mine it from orbit, hopefully keeping enough stuff around that they could then create their own, better world... after they were done with the rest of the solar system, of course. To Xili, this was simply the logical conclusion of her very long journey to achieve peak perfection, to know what it was like to be the best that she could be... and honestly? She liked it. She *really* liked it. Her body was everything she wanted it to be, massive on such a scale that the shadow it cast upon the planet was larger than the Moon's... which was very quickly grabbed and turned into little more than a conveniently-sized snack for the flood of nano-fluid that emerged from her palm.

Soon, the whole world was coated in the black goo, the oceans being drained, the atmosphere sucked up, the very ground eaten away and eroded until all that was left was the mantle, then the liquid outer core, then finally the iron and nickel sphere that made up the center of the Earth... before that too vanished, leaving behind absolutely nothing. Nothing but Xili, as large as her old homeworld, and the billions of ascended synths she had brought along with her. There would be nothing but utmost perfection in her new world, nay, *universe*; with so much room to go around for everyone, why settle for one star? Why not expand, why not fulfill the dreams and fantasies of their civilization and bring it to every corner of the galaxy? Great wonders of stellar engineering, made only to fulfill their endless desire to improve upon themselves and reach higher levels of understanding and mastery of the physical universe. It just made sense to her.

And once the galaxy was done?

Well... there was still plenty of room left.