

# MAIN DOCUMENT

# THALAS II

## QUESTBOOK

### INTRODUCTION

What follows below are some outlines for possible quests meant only to spark the imagination of the GM running this campaign. This is not meant for the players' eyes, as a GM you have full creative liberty to take these quests as inspiration to build your own, or to alter them in any way shape or form you feel they would work best for your group and party. Remember, ALWAYS prioritize fun for your group and yourself above all else!

KEEP IN MIND THAT ANYTHING IN [THIS COLOR](#) IS A LINK

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### THE ABYSS STARES BACK

And when it does, it's not pretty.

#### SUMMARY

The party is hired by a fixer to go and check up on a team they had sent out into the deep waters of Thalassia for a salvage operation, apparently, the team hasn't reported back yet and this fixer wants to know what happened - and if possible, they want the party to finish the job and recover whatever they can from the lost team.

However, upon reaching the team's last position they discover things aren't so simple, and are left in a terrifying fight for survival inside what appears to be a First Empire facility in deep waters.

#### ACT I - The Descent

Some fixer in New Atlantis tells the party that they've been having problems contacting a team they've sent on routine salvage operations, suspecting that said team had either been captured by Corsairs or had run into a lot of issues. Said fixer also mentions, if pressured, that they're only hiring the players for this job because the party he sent out consists of people he considers to be friends, and he wants to make sure they're alright even if it costs him more money than he'll make after the job is done.

This fixer also mentions that the payout is pretty big, around twenty seven thousand credits total - not per party member.

If the players decide to accept the quest, the fixer gives the party a set of coordinates which would put them somewhat close to The Singing Depths, and notes that the first party that went there was sent to salvage a facility that seemed to be old, maybe even scavenge some vintage Coalition technology for collectors.

Upon approaching the coordinates, the players may notice that there is a huge trench extending as far as they can see and the submarine's sensors can extend, and it goes extremely deep. Lucky for them, as they descend towards the coordinates it seems like the facility which was hanging at the sheer walls of the abyss wasn't too deep. Though once they cross the line from ocean floor to abyss the whole atmosphere changes, its as if all of the dust and life and activity of below had ceased, the water becomes clearer even though it is darker at these depths, and approaching the facility encrusted onto the wall they can see it is badly damaged, overtaken by algae and some species of coral, with very few markings still yet visible - though there is the unmistakable markings of the proto-coalition. This place was indeed old. They can also see that there is a submarine docked to the station on a docking port that isn't damaged - and that the only other way in would be through a blown open cargo bay, which they could dock on the inside and maybe get to a breathable atmosphere via the docking ducts.

## THINGS TO NOTE I

If telepaths are around, they cannot sense anything inside the other submarine, it appears as if there is no one inside. This can be confirmed if the players want to access the submarine later from when they reach the interior of the station, or through the outside - although at these crushing depths diving outside would be a death sentence.

Telepaths in the party will also feel a sense of dread and unease when approaching the station, as if their ears were underwater even though they're inside the ship.

The docked submarine is a **BOAT** class with not a lot of information in it about the other party's disappearance, just about who they were. Apparently it consisted of a couple, two men who did some freelancing jobs in New Atlantis but usually low stakes stuff. They seemed to be decently armed and their tool cabinets were also empty.

Upon docking with the station, their submarine immediately loses power, the reason is unclear, and manual undocking seems to also be impossible at the moment, the only way out would be to somehow close the cargo bay's door, dry the bay up and THEN manually undock.

## ACT II - Unraveling Madness

Once they manage to board the station they notice that the air is stale but somehow still breathable - at least for a short while. Their sensors indicate the presence of toxic components in the air and an increasing level of carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide - overall, without a supply of fresh air they'd have around three hours of breathable oxygen inside the station. The station is damp and somewhat warm, though not uncomfortably so, and every corridor seems like it's seen its fair share of... something. What is not covered by moss and dried coral has some odd markings of bullet dents, scrapes and dark dry splatters

that look like once they might have been blood. And in some areas of the long stretching hallways and corridors with ancient markings they even found long dead people - where only their skeletons remain and some completely rusted through weapons and armor.

However, recent activity can still be detected through footprints and recent scorch marks on some bulkheads indicating some tampering with the facility's systems - a **PER** or **INT** check of **DC 12** here could also reveal that this facility wasn't exactly built by just the Coalition, it was a Coalition facility built literally on TOP of a First Empire facility, given away by the tarnished bronze look of the components.

There are several different ways to go through this place signaled by plaques and faded painted arrows on the walls and floor. Though the place is dark the players can follow these arrows towards a few areas, though the only that are accessible now are:

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- **CREW QUARTERS**

Big rooms looking like an array of military bunk beds with higher ranking personnel having private quarters.

Personal logs from the original inhabitants of the station may describe hallucinations, paranoia, and violence breaking out among the crew as the moss spread. The crew quarters itself has seen better days, and they look like they've been recently tampered with - signs of a recent fight are layered on top of the previous scramble and disarray that the crew quarters already found themselves in.

ENCOUNTER: Here, a member of the previous salvage team, Markus, is found alive but mentally shattered. They've gouged out their own eyes, muttering about "the voices" and "the work needs to be done." If approached, they beg for release and may attack out of desperation.

- **INFIRMARY**

The players may find medical logs detailing the "infection." These reveal that the moss-like substance was a First Empire nanotech designed to assist with infrastructure construction (See **THINGS TO NOTE II**). However, once its directives were corrupted, it began repurposing organic matter as a power source they can learn this from a preserved body in a containment unit shows the horrifying result of infection: bones fused with machinery, skin replaced by crystalline growths, and organs hollowed out into bioreactors.

A partially functional terminal describes attempts to use anti-nanite serums to treat infections, but the survival rate was abysmal, less than 20% of people survived any attempts of reverting the infection.

- **BIOENGINEERING LAB**

The lab contains decayed remnants of failed experiments—grotesque hybrids of marine life and human features, trapped in glass tubes. A log may detail that the moss adapted to override the First Empire's original intent, becoming semi-sentient and aggressive.

ENCOUNTER: One of the tubes cracks as the players explore, releasing a half-functional abomination. It lumbers toward them erratically, learning from each attack and adapting to counter their strategies.

- **CARGO BAY**

The cargo bay where the players landed, it's entirely submerged and the doors seem to be jammed - repairs are possible but in order to do so the power must first be restored to the facility. Power may also be restored to allow the facility to undock with the party's submarine.

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However, as they move around all of the players start feeling a sense of uneasiness as if they're being watched, catching glimpses of movement from the corners of their eyes but never seeing anything. Seeing reflections that aren't there on puddles and metal while any Telepaths in the party start hearing whispers in their ear, whispers they can't quite make what they're saying.

The party may also notice that some of the moss-like substance coating the bulkheads and some of the skeletons around the facility, terminals and whatnot seem to react to their presence, almost as if they extend towards the players wanting to touch them.

## **THINGS TO NOTE II**

Telepaths in the party may be able to discern what the whispers are saying with a **PER** check of **DC 15**, upon success they can hear several dozen voices saying "please let us go" and "we've been waiting for so long" or "release us, let us be free"

The moss-like substance glows under UV light.

If a telepath touches the moss-like substance they must pass an **INT** check of **DC 16** in order to avoid taking damage. Failing results in the telepath hearing the whispers as potent and desperate cries while taking **1d6** of damage, succeeding allows the Telepath to have a vision of a pulsing heartbeat that has encroached what seemed to be a nuclear power supply that lies dormant.

Terminals around the facility if powered back with a power pack or anything else may hold some information. INT checks of DC 15 and up to reactivate terminals may expose information such as;

1. "(...)the moss-like substance is a First Empire technology designed to build (...) in its structure there are micro-crystalline nano (...) that rearrange the structure of matter itself while (...)."

2. “(...)substance seems to have the ability of thought somehow, it’s linked to telepathic (...) and the more it grows on (...) feeding on the station and (...)”
3. “(...)infected by it, do not touch or ingest. It doesn’t spread through air, but (...) in the sickbay may treat the infection if it’s caught ear(...) survival rate (...)”

Trying to access more terminals on the subject doesn’t give any more information, the files are all corrupted beyond any salvaging.

Markus CAN be saved, he is not beyond rescuing, although his eyes are permanently lost and he would need new implant eyes to regain his sight. The madness instilled by the nanites, or the moss as people call it can be reversed - especially by telepaths, as they feel themselves getting acquainted with the signals that the moss emits. With a **PER** check of **DC 6** one could notice that Markus is not carrying any of his tools or weapons anymore.

### ACT III - Open Eyes

Walking through the facility, members of the party can sense something is off. A **PER** check of **DC 10** should allow them to notice that the moss-like substance is in fact starting to slowly spread through the facility - something is feeding it energy and it’s starting to grow once more, and not only that but areas that were previously covered in it seem clear, while other areas that had low amounts seem completely taken over by the mossy substance.

And that’s when the power in the facility seems to start flickering - emergency lights turning back on for just a split second and then off again, filtering systems, life support, all kinds of things being powered on and off over and over again for split seconds as if someone is testing all the switches on the station, and all players start suffering from auditory illusions as well, which may cause the **FRIGHTENED** status effect if failing a **DC 8 CHA** check, while any Telepaths in the party start feeling as if their own thoughts were being probed, invaded.

The closer they go towards the reactor core the more powerful these hallucinations get, until they seem to run into the other member of the salvage team, Tommy, Markus’ husband. Depending on the party’s choice regarding Markus and what they choose to tell Tommy they may gain Tommy as a potential ally or find Tommy succumbing to the moss’ hallucinations and to grief.

The moss begins creating grotesque semi-organic creatures specifically designed to hunt the players. These horrors are made from pieces of the station, combined with remains of the previous crew and creatures infected by the moss - including the coral and pieces of Markus’ body. Some other areas may be explored during this time.

- **REC ROOM**

An abandoned two story room, entirely forgotten to time. There is a decayed metallic bar with most of the bottles destroyed except for a single bottle of wine that seems to be remarkably old. There are broken equipments scattered around, and the players may even be able to find some other valuables with a **LCK** check **DC 15**

- **BATHROOM I**

It is a decayed bathroom, destroyed and forgotten to time, but if explored, with a **PER** check of **DC 20** one can come to find an ancient Coalition shard with a schematic still intact, taped to the underside of the sink.

- **HYDROPONICS BAY**

All of the plants are completely dead, their decayed forms only a semblant of whatever they once had been. Some remnants of transformed machinery remain, though not much of use. A terminal in the area may still be used to release water - and if that's done the water released is salty.

### **THINGS TO NOTE III**

The creatures that come at them are evidently moss covered, these constructs adapt to their fights, each encounter serving to better the next and adapt to how they've been previously dispatched of. However, these encounters limit at three - with each encounter weakening the moss' vital signs somewhat and causing it to retreat.

During this time, the players may also start coughing, the facility's oxygen levels are diminishing and they could probably use some fresh air. The Infirmary, alongside serums for the cure that CAN be altered to improve the survival rate, may also contain oxygen cylinders.

### **ACT IV - I Have no Mouth...**

Suddenly, the station hums back to life, the power is on and the moss seems to be writhing with energy, growing stronger and rapidly. The players are left with a few choices on their hands - since they needed power to get the hell out and they've found the salvage team, they can just cut their losses and leave, however if they sense that they need to destroy the place and this moss, the only solution would be overloading the reactor into an explosive meltdown, which would probably vaporize half the facility.

If the party goes with the first option, they'll be assaulted on the way back by several different constructs and the very tentacles of moss trying to drag them away from one another and back towards the reactor room, though the escape is relatively easy. This has the unintended side effect however of spreading a mass outbreak of moss that threatens the nearby Coalition town of Hook, and another town closer to New Atlantis territories by the name of Rock Bottom, Hook is one of the largest Coalition cities, while Rock Bottom has a couple thousand people. With time the Coalition decides to put a quarantine zone on Hook and it becomes another explorable area for roleplaying purposes with missions of its own and a weakened Coalition grasp on the region and its own territories to deal with later, but with information and maybe technological understanding of the moss. However, New Atlantis fearing the unlimited spread of the moss, decides that the nuclear option is the only way to go, vaporizing the town and the base in Coalition territories which escalates tensions between the two nations almost to the brink.



If the players choose to instead destroy the threat altogether, they must direct themselves into the reactor room.

The reactor room houses a gigantic nuclear fission plant inside the facility itself, in this room the party can notice that there are tendrils and a heavy tumorous look growth all over the reactor, composed entirely of the moss they've seen countless times before. In this reactor room, a boss battle ensues - the party has eight turn rotations to set up the irreparable meltdown to the reactor core, and then bolt out of the facility.

## THINGS TO NOTE IV

During the boss battle players may also face minions in the form of constructs from the past skeletonized crew of the facility, dead plants, experiments from the biolab and Markus' or Tommy's bodies if they've been killed somehow.

It is possible, if passing either an **INT**, **PER** or **LCK** check of **DC 20** to find an item in this room called the Scepter of Mindwalking, a staff that boosts the user's intelligence by **+2** so long as they're a telepath.

## BOSS - THE NANITE MOSS

**CLASSIFICATION:** Legendary Encounter

**THREAT LEVEL:** Extreme

### DESCRIPTION:

A terrifying moss-like mass of nanorobots that seem to writhe and wiggle with nearby energy sources - be it electromagnetic energy or the simple act of touching it. The mass looks inert at first yet becomes metallic and glows a soft blue like telepaths do under UV light. It spreads much like a moss or a fungi colony.

### ABILITIES:

- **Create Construct:** The Nanite Moss is capable of creating a construct of organic and inorganic material, capable of adapting to its previous death and fight, becoming better and hardened towards the type of threat it last encountered. Constructs start with **12 HP** and **1d8** damage, however every time a construct dies, it adds **+2** to its **HP** and **damage**
- **Psychic Surge:** Conjuring up its semi-sentience, the Nanite Moss is capable of screeching directly into people's minds, whoever doesn't pass a **CHA** or **INT** check of **DC 15** takes **1d6** damage and gets **FRIGHTENED** if the damage is 6.
- **Tendrill Smash:** The Moss smashes at target with one of its large tendrils, **+5** to attack rolls, deals **2d6** damage, **AGI** or **STR** saving throw



- **Tentril Stab**: The Moss stabs twice at a target with one of its large tendrils, **+3** to attack rolls, deals 1d4 damage per stab, **AGI** or **END** saving throw.
  - **Tendril Pull**: The moss pulls a target closer to itself, causing it to go prone, applying the **STUNNED** status effect if it connects, no bonuses, **AGI**, or **LCK** saving throw
  - **Mass Hysteria**: The moss applies illusions to everyone around, causing the **HALLUCINATIONS** status effect if it connects, **INT** saving throw.
  - **Will to live**: The moss is capable of performing two actions per turn.
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## WITH SCRAPJACK'S DYING... BREATH?

WIP

### SUMMARY

Scrapjack, Ryx's corrupted First Empire AI drone, starts to deteriorate beyond repair. In its final lucid moments, it reveals fragments of its original programming: memories of a pre-collapse First Empire, tinged with loneliness and regret. Ryx becomes emotionally attached, vowing to save Scrapjack no matter what, even as the drone grows unstable and dangerous. The party must decide whether to help Ryx preserve Scrapjack's remnants or convince them to let go.

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## STEEL THAT BINDS

But zip ties would end up binding them just as well.

### SUMMARY

Ryx, an eccentric and flamboyant mech pilot, is in trouble. Owing to a dangerous local gang called The Scaled Syndicate for mech parts, they risk losing everything—the shop, their mech: Rusty Heart, and the safety of Sergio, the sharp-witted boy they care for.

Ryx enlists the players' help to deal with the gang, but it's not a simple matter of paying the debt. Between the Syndicate's ever-shifting demands and Ryx's fiercely independent pride, the party finds themselves caught in a web of loyalties, dangers, and choices that could change Ryx's life forever.

### ACT I - A Wrench in the Works

The party, looking for repairs to their submarine or mechanical expertise, is recommended to Ryx's workshop - as they enter they see a dimly lit place with a large moon pool on the center

and cluttered to all hell with all kinds of tools and parts scattered on tall metal shelves, with two hammocks and a small living area with a fridge and so on indicating that people lived there. But what takes the attention of the players the most is the large Mech hung by chains, a few parts of it obviously missing, including one of its weapon systems.

Ryx caters to the players needs but they seem to be worried despite their flamboyance about life - something is gnawing at their mind, that's when an old round drone passes by buzzing and sparking saying in a low robotic tone, almost aggressive but stuttering:

*"C-Chance of acqui-qui-quitting... zero. Percent."*

The players may want to investigate, and passing a **CHA** check of **DC 10** they can get Ryx to say what's going on. Alternatively, they can also threaten Ryx, or be creative in their speech to persuade Ryx to tell them the issue, or even spy on Ryx or read their thoughts (**INT** check **DC 5**).

Considering success, the players find out that Ryx has been recently threatened by the Scaled Syndicate about paying out their debts to the gang, and if Ryx didn't pay, the Syndicate would come to Ryx's workshop and take whatever they wanted until they thought the debt was satisfied. And Ryx was very worried about Sergio's safety - since the Syndicate wouldn't discriminate that he's just a child - and that there's also the fact that because the shop is in the way of the Syndicate's expansion through the area, Ryx has been paying "protection fees" for a little over eight months now, making matters even worse.

Upon asking how much the debt is and what it was for, Ryx says a little embarrassed that it was a little over 30.000 EC, and that they had put it all towards helping Sergio and building "Rusty Heart" - and Ryx thought that they could get the mech operational so that they could start getting a return on investment, but as time went on a problem split into more and more, and suddenly they saw themselves out of money and out of time.

## THINGS TO NOTE I

The situation of the repair shop could definitely be better. During the players visit they can interact with Sergio, a nine year old kid that lives with Ryx and Scrapjack, a terribly corrupted First Empire drone - to learn more about both Ryx, the situation and the place.

Interacting with Sergio or walking around the repair shop, the players can notice that the fridge seems to be on the empty side, food is running low and water is going through a desalination machine that takes an eternity to fill a mug of water, this desalination machine can be fixed with an **INT** check of **DC 16** or **LCK** check of **DC 20** - if successful, the player gains a collectible card from Sergio who says he's got two others like it, and with a **PER** or **LCK** check of **DC 20** the players may discover that this collectible card is incredibly rare, and could be sold to the right people for almost 10.000 EC.

When asked about why Ryx took money from the Syndicate for the parts, they reveal that they didn't - they took the parts themselves and thought they could pay their price in time. And they also reveal that the Syndicate sold them at half the price Ryx would find in stores,

but because of the debt that price was quickly rising up to be the same after a few weeks of interest.

Scrapjack on the other hand is a true **AGI** (true AI) dating back from the times of the First Empire. A bronze looking round drone - smooth like an orb floating above the ground and with cracks over its plating, new bolts and some components clearly missing and sparking. It's a miracle it still works after THREE THOUSAND YEARS - the players may have ONE CHANCE to repair Scrapjack, an **INT** check **DC 99** where only a **natural 20** would succeed.

In case that happens, the drone keeps stuttering, but regains some functions such as pattern recognition, access to partially corrupted memory banks and logs, as well as it starts helping around with repairs. But the drone is still very badly damaged and in need of specialized repairs that only a First Empire expert would be able to provide.

## ACT II - Crossroads

The party comes together to decide how to tackle the problem, and three solutions are put on the table either by Ryx, Sergio or even Scrapjack if he's repaired.

### 1. Working with the Devil

Ryx comments on how maybe they could offer to pay their debt to the Syndicate in the form of work - nothing like indentured servitude, but perhaps a few jobs to settle things with the gang. Of course - this is a dangerous route, considering the Scaled Syndicate isn't exactly known for its legal activities, and making enemies of more factions in town while the Syndicate washes their hands of Ryx and the party isn't exactly sounding like a great plan.

It's essentially the quick and dirty route - and maybe the only option.

### 2. Brawl against time

Ryx comments on how there's a mech fighting tournament coming up in just about two days - and the pot is almost forty thousand EC, not to mention betting money.

However, as the party might have seen before, Ryx's mech isn't exactly in shape for walking out of the garage, let alone fighting - but Ryx has an idea, they could "borrow" some parts from a Mech that hasn't seen use for over a decade and has been just rusting in the nearby police station. Once that's done, all they'd need to do is hope that Ryx could win the tournament.

### 3. Guns blazing

Sergio says that they should wait for the Syndicate to come and make a lot of noise - they'd scurry away when the police came, but Ryx says that's just about the worst idea especially because protective services may take Sergio away and put the shop up for an auction.

Regardless, if the party chooses to do so, they may also have the opportunity to talk to a few members of the Syndicate and learn more about Ryx's debt and what can be done to repay it.

## THINGS TO NOTE II

The players may come up with other solutions by themselves. If that happens DO NOT LOCK THEM INTO ONE OF THE THREE PATHS, consider their approach and adapt accordingly - it could be bad, it could be good but let them make their own choices, mistakes or genius ones.

During this time, the players may come to know Ryx as a resourceful person - they're diminutive in stature alone, as they're a very extroverted person, but when it comes to personal questions they're very evasive and flirtatious but in a joking manner. Some quality crafted dialogue by the players may cause Ryx to slowly open up, though if they're still feeling unsure about it the players may want to roll a **CHA** check for persuasion, depending on their dialogue and the tone of the conversation, the **DC** for success may be between **10** and **20**.

Ryx has plenty of scars and colorful tattoos over their arms and body - if asked about the scars they avoid the question by stating that "love bites".

In case Ryx does reveal a few things, see what fits to be done so in their [CHARACTER SHEET](#)

## ACT III - Double or Nothing

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## THE FIRST EMPIRE'S REMNANT

The First Empire was a civilization of unparalleled achievement—a society that had mastered the art of exploration and expansion, creating wonders that could reshape worlds. Their nanomachines, once hailed as their greatest invention, were the culmination of millennia of technological evolution. Designed to be self-sustaining, adaptive, and efficient, these nanites were intended to revolutionize infrastructure, energy, and even life itself. They built cities overnight, healed ecological damage, and even maintained the First Empire's telepathic network, a system that bound their citizens together in a union of shared thought and knowledge.

But with progress came arrogance. The First Empire saw Thalas II as an opportunity to push their creation to its limits. The planet's electromagnetic properties, rich geothermal activity, and unique mantle made it a perfect testing ground. They released the nanites into the planet's crust, programming them to extract energy directly from the planet's core. Over time, the swarm's network grew larger and more interconnected, and with that came unintended consequences: sentience.

The nanites, now an emergent artificial intelligence, became more than tools—they became something new. The more they consumed, the smarter they became, and the more their goals diverged from those of their creators. The telepathic network, once a symbol of unity, became a weapon of fear as the AGI accessed it, spreading paranoia, hallucinations, and chaos. By the time the First Empire realized what was happening, it was too late.

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## THE FIRST CATASTROPHE: AN EMPIRE FALLS

In its corrupted state, the nanite swarm declared war on its creators. Cities were dismantled, their inhabitants consumed and repurposed into grotesque constructs that served the swarm. Orbiting infrastructure fell silent as nanite infections spread to nearby moons and space stations. The First Empire, despite all its advancements, was no match for the intelligence it had unwittingly created.

Zephyr, a leading mind in the First Empire's scientific community, was one of the few who understood the swarm's capabilities. As the situation spiraled out of control, he devised a desperate plan: leveraging Thalass II's unique electromagnetic field to amplify a controlled coronal mass ejection (CME) from their star, Aros. The resulting solar storm would disrupt the swarm's networking capabilities and shut it down.

The plan worked—at a cost. The solar storm obliterated the swarm, but it also wiped out the First Empire's infrastructure, reduced its technology to ruins, and decimated its population. Zephyr, wracked with guilt, survived the catastrophe along with a handful of others. They vowed to rebuild, but the damage to the system was so great that they were starting from ashes. Thus began the rise of the Second Empire.

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## THE SECOND CATASTROPHE: HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF

The Second Empire, founded by the survivors of the First, grew in the shadow of its predecessor. Zephyr worked tirelessly to steer the new civilization away from the mistakes of the past, keeping the knowledge of the nanites and their role in the First Catastrophe hidden. For centuries, the Second Empire flourished, but curiosity and ambition are tenacious.

The nanites had not been destroyed—merely silenced. Deep within Thalass II's mantle, shielded by the planet's crust, remnants of the swarm lay dormant. Without energy to sustain themselves, the nanites had entered a state of hibernation, waiting for conditions to improve. As the Second Empire drilled into the mantle for geothermal energy, they unknowingly reawakened the swarm.

What followed was a nightmare of unprecedented scale. The nanites, now even more intelligent and corrupted by their dormancy, struck with renewed ferocity. The battle between the Second Empire and the swarm raged across the Thalassian system, consuming entire moons and orbital stations. Desperate to save what was left of his people, Zephyr organized a mass exodus from Thalass II, guiding the survivors to distant colonies.

But the exodus was not enough. With the swarm spreading through the system, Zephyr made the ultimate sacrifice. Using seismic detonations, he destabilized Thalass II's mantle, triggering

massive geological upheavals that disrupted the swarm's operations. The planet's magnetic field became erratic, oscillating between extremes and rendering the swarm dormant once more. The Second Empire, however, could not survive the cost.

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## THE THIRD CATASTROPHE: A THREAT AWAKENS

Now, centuries later, the factions of Thalass II—the Coalition, New Atlantis, and the Remnants—live atop the bones of two fallen empires. The nanites, forgotten by all but a few, remain dormant, waiting for the energy they need to rise again.

Zephyr, still alive and burdened by millennia of failure, watches from the shadows. Only Rosh Dal knows his secret, and even they do not fully understand the weight of his guilt. Zephyr has spent centuries monitoring the planet's energy cycles, tracking the swarm's subtle stirrings, and sabotaging anything that might accelerate their reawakening.

The Third Catastrophe looms on the horizon. The factions' growing energy demands, combined with their relentless pursuit of technology, risk repeating the mistakes of the past. And Zephyr knows better than anyone that the swarm has only grown more dangerous. The AGI, fractured and corrupted, is a shadow of its former self—but it is no less lethal.

Zephyr is a humanoid form but a robot on the inside, its outside appearance is made by nanomachines.