

The world began to speed forward once again. Previously, people had used their passive mana generation to fuel their house, but that was simply not able to cut it, especially for those larger homes owned by the wealthy. Sure, there were magic families, or homes with powerful mages that were able to produce more than enough mana to satisfy their own needs, but they were in the minority.

The reasoning for this was actually quite simple. Mana did not naturally move at a very fast pace when it was not being controlled. In the early days of converting mana into power, this was not a problem as the air had been practically saturated with the energy, but that had long since stopped being the case. Now, unless someone wore a personal mana transmitter, most of the mana they produced would be lost before it reached a receiver.

Furthermore, the efficiency of mana to electricity was not particularly great. That's because the electricity created by mana is not natural electricity. It still carries a lot of magical properties, resulting in inevitable loss of efficiency when it is used to power electronics.

In this way, it is often more efficient to power items directly with mana, as was done before technology was widely used with electricity instead. The Mage Towers would hire skilled mages to do nothing but supply their mana, which would be used as a power source for the masses. Sadly, there are some items which just do not work as easily with mana, and such devices were made popular with the advent of the internet.

Now, items that require mana to operate instead have a built-in converter, absorbing electricity to generate mana. Although there is still a loss of efficiency, it is less prone to failure than supplying magical electricity to a device.

That said, people were still powering their homes with ambient mana where they could, in order to save money on their bills. Many homes had loud and bulky energy filters to extract the magical essence from the energy produced, but it was by no means a good solution.

So it was natural that people paid attention when the head researcher of Deckan offered a 'new solution' for those unable to completely eliminate their consumption problem. This was only one of many breakthroughs that he had created over the years, but each one had left a lasting impact on the world.

This new solution of his came in three parts, all of which were advertised together. The first part, a new energy that served as a foundation for this solution, and its matching device. The second part, a modified ki path to properly hold this energy. And finally, the third part of the solution was a small device that could be cheaply inserted into any home to receive the power produced by the new energy.

According to the advertisement that James had prepared, this would not simply eliminate the power bills for most residences. Rather, they would be able to sell the excess power back to the grid. After all, it was far more than just homes that required power, and many businesses or

necessary structures used more power than their occupants would be able to produce. One key example of this was a hospital, which required a large supply of stable power. Another was a police station or prison, where the energy had to be used to suppress the natural power of the prisoners.

When Udonia saw the report for the new energy plan, she blinked in confusion, unable to stop herself from sending a message to James. *Weren't you working on void power? This can't be as efficient, can it?*

*Not even close.* James chuckled in response. *At least, not if we were talking about somewhere like Desbar. For here? We'd end up losing more power than we could produce if we go for the void with the current level of technology. Otherwise, we'll have void monsters running rampant.*

*That would be bad.* Udonia gulped, nodding her head.

*Yes, that would be very bad. Don't worry, this is a workable solution. By my estimate, an average person in Dale's worlds can maintain an average output of forty kilowatts with this power, at an effective range of twenty feet. Past that point, the energy efficiency drops off drastically. If we're talking about someone with an excessive amount of energy in their body, they could easily hit upwards of two hundred kilowatts.*

Udonia did not *immediately* know just how powerful that was in relation to the average consumption per home in her world, but it was easy enough for her to investigate as a Greater Goddess. *Okay... but what are we going to do for the Destiny ships? That definitely wouldn't be enough to meet our needs for those, would it?*

James had a somewhat regretful tone when he responded. *For those... no, the bioelectric current won't be enough. I'm still working on a larger void generator for those ships. But, it will take me about five years in order to fully outfit the Destiny ships with the new generators, and this will solve the power supply in the meantime for the rest of the world.*

Udonia gave a small nod at that, accepting the answer. Five years wasn't that bad to have the power systems of the Destiny-class fleet replaced, and it was unlikely that the reality gems would malfunction in that relatively short period. If anything, this meant that Dana could turn off her mana farm.

*Okay, just make sure that nothing explosive happens.*

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Within the void research laboratory, Dana watched the announcement of the new energy with a lukewarm expression. They had spent five years collectively studying and training to manipulate void currents for different purposes. However, instead of a breakthrough in that department, there was an announcement of an entirely different form of energy to mass produce?

“Are we... still needed here?” She asked herself. Originally, they had come to join this research project at the behest of the Keeper, who wanted to find an alternative energy option for the reality gems. Granted, the energy that James had advertised would not boost an individual’s combat power in any way, lest they use lightning attacks. Thus, it would not be a suitable replacement in the combat department, and could definitely not be used to power large-scale wards.

Given all of that, Dana was unsure if herself and Tsubaki should remain with the project until the further development of void energy was completed, or if they should return to the Sky Citadel. On the one hand, this new energy would be more than sufficient for daily use, and the later void generators would likely be too bulky to carry around. On the other hand... this was still a request from the Keeper himself. Could they leave without first consulting him?

Ever since learning about the ‘amalgamation’ of worlds in the void, they had immediately stopped their production of reality gems, and had gone as far as to destroy the formations that made them. Thus, new gems would no longer be added to the mix within the void. Sadly, the worlds were designed to grow by pushing their own boundaries with self-generated mana, so it was only a matter of time before a problem occurred because of these worlds.

The most realistic answer was to simply destroy the amalgams at all four points in the void, effectively destroying the reality gems within the world. But to do so also meant that they would be destroying the power supply for their new fleet, which was not an option. It was unknown when another enemy like the golems would attack in force, and they could not afford to be defenseless.

Unable to make the decision herself, Dana stood from her desk, walking to Tsubaki’s room. When she arrived, she was startled to find the kitsune goddess laying on her bed, staring at a framed photo that she was holding in her arms. The most surprising aspect about it was the fact that she recognized one of the two girls in the picture, although she looked far more *normal* than what Dana remembered.

The little elf girl wasn’t able to stop the faint bitterness that rose in her heart at seeing Tsubaki fawn over that image, but that bitterness was soon washed away when she saw Tsubaki’s smile. *I should understand how that is... if it were Jess instead of Ashe...*

Both Dana and Tsubaki had lost a close friend in their youths, and both had been the result of small spider monsters. However, while Tsubaki’s friend had been mind-controlled, Dana’s had been directly poisoned. Dana tried to imagine how she would feel if her friend appeared in front of her again, in the same manner that Ashe had appeared before Tsubaki.

The thought alone nearly broke Dana’s heart. What she wouldn’t give for a picture of Jess, or of her father. It had been so long that she could barely remember their faces, and their souls had

long since entered reincarnation a dozen times over. Finding them as they used to be was no longer possible...

"Dana?" Tsubaki's voice broke her out of her thoughts, and Dana realized that her cheeks were wet. Tsubaki looked at her with concern, the picture placed facing downwards. "I'm sorry... I know she's probably the last face you want to see right now."

Dana shook her head, walking over and sitting next to Tsubaki. "No... I was just thinking of what I would have done, if I was in your position." She smiled softly, reaching out for the picture and turning it up. "I take it that this is the boss's handiwork?" Dana could feel the divine power of illusions in the picture, but knew that Tsubaki would never make something like this herself. Especially not if it meant borrowing power from the Keeper.

"That's right." Tsubaki nodded. "He gave it to me after the event the other day..." Seeing that Dana wasn't reacting negatively to the image seemed to take a burden off of Tsubaki's shoulders, and she leaned down to look at the picture herself as well.

"You're really lucky. You should treasure this." Dana said softly, taking one of Tsubaki's hands and placing it on the frame. "Never let anyone take it away from you. These are your precious memories."

Naturally, Tsubaki was aware of Dana's past, how she had lost her own friend. If it were possible, Tsubaki would want to create a similar picture for Dana. Sadly, she did not have the Keeper's power to view beyond the veil of time. "I know..."

"Tell me more about her, sometime?" Dana requested, her smile growing a touch wider. "Though, that is definitely not why I came here."

Tsubaki glanced over at that, blinking in confusion. "Is there something important?"

Dana let out a long sigh after realizing that Tsubaki missed the announcement, before recounting the details of the energy to her. "I think we need to decide if we should stay here or not." She said after she was done.

Tsubaki hesitated, seeming unsure herself. The two of them were still able to help when it came to replacing necessary components with magical formulas, but experience had already proven that that wasn't enough. If James intended to proceed, and they had no reason to believe that he wouldn't, he would likely be going with his own designs and building everything from scratch himself.

As she thought about that, she remembered the planetary phase satellites that had been constructed, and how James had immersed himself so completely in automating their production. "I feel like... we can still be of some use to him. However, I will ask the Keeper, just to be sure."

Dana nodded her head as Tsubaki closed her eyes, reaching out in prayer. *My Keeper, the researcher has released a new type of energy, one that is capable of dealing with the needs of the masses. However, this energy is not suitable for larger installations such as the Destiny-class ships. We require your guidance... shall we stay the course, and help complete a larger void generator, or shall we return to the citadel?*

There was a long pause, and Tsubaki was fully prepared to wait hours for an answer. If she did not receive one within a day, she would simply continue to work in the research center until she did. However, roughly five minutes later, the Keeper answered. *Produce what parts you can for his design, and then you may return.*

*Once you're back, you can resume training your personal control of the void or any of your own projects, but make sure to prioritize your own safety. You two are both too important to risk losing you to a moment of carelessness.* There was a gentle tone of concern in the Keeper's voice as it was projected into Tsubaki's mind, causing her to give a small nod in return, her cheeks flushing red.