**What Can I Say Except, Megapixel?**

The Infinite Multiverse was broken.

Because Good is *Dumb.*

Yeah, infinite wonder, infinite horror, everything is true somewhere, blah blah blah, but dimensional branches do not exist until they are *made*, and, more often than not, it is *failure* that makes them. I signed up with Slutlife, or as those trying to fool themselves call it, ‘The Company’, to try and make the world, *any* world, a better place, thinking I had found a helpful patron that would let me do better, *be* better, but it was nothing but lies, more evil at work.

Basic Training had been. . . *an experience*. To be honest, it had been a passing, innocuous comment by one instructors that had caught my attention: “It’s far easier to fail than to succeed.”

Simple, right? Only, paired with the basic instruction on Dimensional Theory that was offered, that, when you crunched the numbers, meant that for every breakaway dimension where things got *better*, there were almost a dozen where things went *worse*.

The plucky heroes dawdled just a bit too long, missing their fated meeting with unexpected allies.

Their aim was just a *little* off, rendering their ‘one in a hundred shot’ the other ninety-nine.

Their ‘in the nick of time’ escape nicks *them* instead, killing them.

Their breakthrough in technique is bottlenecked, leading to failure.

And, for want of a nail, *the world is doomed.*

But the replacement nails?

*Dirt.*

*Fucking.*

*Cheap.*

It was just that, more often than not, *no one wanted to help.*

Oh, grand gestures were fine and dandy, one moment of overwhelming sacrifice that let one excuse *any* other failure in their lives, a single all-or-nothing instance of possibly suicidal spiritual strength.

But after that?

*Nothing.*

And that was the cruel calculus of the multiverse, the inescapable truth that others avoided by dealing in incomprehensible absolutes, and the *reason* that Slutlife was so large, and there were so many others that were even *worse*, but heroic multiversal organizations, *truly* good ones, were a rarity, when they ‘should’ be just as common as their malevolent counterparts.

Oh, they were powerful, yes, but they were almost all *storybook heroes*, acting in the same way they had before, able to punch above their level, for a time, but taking *serious* losses whenever their luck ran out.

And the excuses for the corrupted ones were as numerous as they were ***s̶͈̅î̸̗c̵̢͝k̸̞͛ȅ̷̙ǹ̸͈i̶̲͑ň̷͇g̵̖̀***.

“The multiverse is infinite, so for all the good I do there is someone doing bad, and so I shouldn’t bother.”

“There’s bigger problems to deal with. This is below me. Let someone more that level handle it.”

“I’ve already done \_\_\_, *that’s enough*.”

And the *ego* of these people was astounding, the only difference between the villainous masterminds, the blood drunk berserkers, and the tyrannically conquerors they fought was their need for *praise.*

Thing is, *I got that.* Testing yourself a foe *was* exhilarating, pushing to the edge of your limit and then past it, be it through ingenious plotting, pulse-pounding combat, or grand strategy, but if *all* you did was fight at around *your* level, to improve *yourself*, to push *your* abilities ever-higher, then you were not doing it to help *others*, that was just your *excuse*. In a game doing so was fine, as *that was the point* of them and *real people were not suffering*, but, the more I learned about the ‘Heroes’ out and about, the more I realized they were treating their *actual lives* the same way, it was just that, as outside observers, it was easy to overlook the fact that Reed Richards Was Useless, excusing it as just ‘comics’ or ‘books’, when, with it being an *actual dimension that was being observed*, such happenings made the *entire* situation ***r̶̟̚e̸̡͑p̷̢̓ŗ̸̈́e̵̤͘h̵͇̋é̶͜n̸͎̈́s̷͖͝i̴̦͒b̸̥̽l̷̫̀ḛ̸̏***.

And then there was the mathematical nature of morality, something oft overlooked. What was worse, a single terrible action, or a lifetime spent being only *somewhat* of an asshole? The unthinking would say the former, using the hedonistic treadmill to excuse their slow degradation of the world around them by going, ‘well I might not be good, but at least I have never X’, ignoring the fact that a thousand small cuts were *always* lethal, while a single deep stab was often survivable. And it worked the other way as well, with a single defining good action being seen as ‘better’ than a lifetime of lesser ones, the solitary moment of true sacrifice whitewashing a life of Evils, minor though they may *individually* be.

And then, no more effort would have to be spent, to continue to help.

It was something I had oft thought about, even before being hired by Slutlife, though I did not know its name at the time, and, surrounded by those that *thrived* on petty evils, already planning their *single* good act to excuse them, the divide, the *falsehood*, only became more stark.

Then came our ‘Final Exam’, travelling to one of those doomed worlds, one that *could* be saved, with just a little power, just the *barest* expenditure of the resources that were being used to train us, with half the class dying in the process, most of them unabashedly *Evil*, not willing to lift a *finger* to help anyone, even their squad mates, and thus *not my fucking problem*.

No, we had gotten who we had been assigned to capture, the populace realizing that, this time, the world was *not* going to be saved at the eleventh hour, by others, so they could continue their lives of petty evils. I had pushed for gathering more of those that were good, but merely not strong enough to handle this apocalyptic calamity, giving the heroes of our assigned world an out to try and *continue* helping, but my squad mates had not wanted to ‘risk it’, so I had left them, walked *right* into the better guilds, and made my case, knowing I might die in the process, but as long as I was still alive when the extraction timer hit zero, I would be pulled out.

And I had been *right*.

Though I was captured and tortured by wizards from a Dark Guild for days, as Zeref snapped and decided to end the world, Natsu long dead, I was removed and made whole once more, and the fact that I had helped Lamia Scale, Blue Pegasus, Mermaid Heel, and more good Guilds escape certain death made it *all* worth it.

Though, if I had just been given a transport, if I had proper weaponry, if I had *anything* I could have done more, travelled further, and saved *additional* people before that world ended.

But Slutlife didn’t want to *spend the resources*.

My ‘score’ of 91% had been meaningless, and the jealous, regretful, sympathetic, and hostile looks I had received from my squad mates doubly so. The shakes I still suffered would smooth in time, the cause entirely psychological, as I had been healed on extraction. My exit-interview had seen me transferred to Class C, populated by Eldritch Beings, for reasons they would not expand upon, but, as I was allowed to continue to work with my updated Catalog, I did not care.

While the next update phased out the first pillar of my planned build, I declined the upgrade, made my decisions, received my purchases, selected my starting location, confirmed my starting location, *re-confirmed* my starting location, ***re-re-confirmed*** my starting location, and stepped through the portal into what the technician informed me was *certain death*, the woman *trying* to be good, despite our mutual employers, but, like I said, *good* all too often is ***dumb.***

Because Comic Book Universes *are* suicide.

*If you want to be a ‘Hero’.*

And I had no such desire.

The glowing portal dumped me in a slightly dirty alley, but nothing too terrible, my defenses holding steady until I did something that affected the Status Quo, whereupon I would be scoured from the timeline unless I had *far* more protections than my starting budget allowed for.

I *could* start small, go somewhere narratively inoffensive, and use a Template to make myself a minor hero to try and work my way up.

I *could* try and skulk about, going after villains that were not *central* to the plot, and try and walk the knife edge of attention, only it would be more akin to wandering, blind, through a kismetic mine field.

I *could* even spend a few points on a hyper-space capable ship and leave the earth, the nexus of the universe, and only come back when I was ready.

But I wasn’t here to be a Hero, or Liberator, or anything like that.

I was here to ***h̵͉̏e̴̟͐l̸͓͛p̸̌ͅ.***

So I summoned my Slutlife phone, toggling it on, the image of a young, black-haired girl in a pink petal-like dress appearing above it holographically.

“Hello, Father!” the artificial intelligence chirped. “How can I be of assistance today?”

“Do not call me father,” I corrected gently. “Please refer to me by name. And what do you need to connect to the local network?”

“If you insist Lee-C-214,” she smiled. “Or would you prefer just Lee?”

“Lee is fine,” I replied, as I would rather *not* have my own clone status constantly referenced, for a number of reasons. “And the other?”

Putting a finger to her chin, clearly thinking, Yui slowly stated, “I can do so now, but if I have access to networking protocols it’d be a *lot* easier. Just put me next to an unlocked device for a few seconds and I should be fine!”

Nodding, I slipped my phone in my pocket, telling her, “That is doable. If you need to talk to me, ring, and I will use this as a normal cell phone, as I am not sure the local tech level.”

*“Will do, Lee!”* the digital girl chirped, a fork of the original program, though, as she possessed a soul, only so many copies could be made before she lost that necessary spark, just as *I* could only be cloned so many times before any more would just be empty meatsuits, hence the need for captures.

Stepping out onto the street, I looked around, but did not see any distinguishing buildings. Lifting a hand to shade my eyes, I paused, as it was still shaking, and, with a force of will, stilled it, only partially successful. *“It is all in my head,*” I reaffirmed, taking a deep breath, turning my attention outwards, but nothing helped.

My Template was a passive one, and full of unnecessary skills, like how to ‘properly’ rape someone for maximum terror, but the power the original user possessed had been what I needed, and was the second of three pillars I would need to make this work.

Addressing an African American man who was walking past me, his eyes sliding off me like I did not exist, I said, “Excuse me, can I have a few moments of your time?”

He blinked, as if having not realized I was there, then shrugged. “Sure, man. I can spare a mo’. What’d’ya need?”

“Just a few questions, though if I could see your cell phone, unlocked, that would be helpful,” I smiled, but, while there was a moment of confusion, my target shrugged, complying with my unreasonable request, and I held to my pocket, still in his line of sight, as Yui said the word, “Ping!” which normally would be suspicious, but my power smoothed things over.

“First of all,” I smiled, “What is your name?”

“Deandre Jones,” he replied. “Are you gonna write that down or something?”

“No,” I informed him blandly, getting a ‘whatever’ shrug from the man. “Second of all, do you live here?” At his nod, I specified, “And, for the record, where is *here?* Neighborhood, city, and state, if you do not mind.”

“It’s no big,” Deandre told me, waving away my concern. “I live in midtown Manhattan, New York, New York. It’s a hell of a town, right?” he joked.

Laughing, I nodded, prompting, “It certainly is. Three more. Are you married? If so, name, age, and nationality.”

This time, the man’s smile was fond. “I am. Have been for a couple years. Her name’s Yan Jones, twenty-seven, and she’s Chinese. Well, American, but, like, *I’m* American too, so you know what I mean.”

Again, Yui went “Ping!” and I handed the man his phone back, ready for the *real* test. “Second to last, what would you say if I were to call you a ghetto-ass faggot with yellow fever who could not handle a black women so you went scurrying off for someone who would think your pathetically small dick was *not* fucking laughable, you pathetic race traitor?”

For a second, there was a flash of anger, but it smoothed out in an instant, and Deandre just smiled placidly. “Well, I’d probably punch you in the face. But you seem like a Nice Guy, so I’m sure you don’t mean it. They’ve really got you asking questions like that?” he asked sympathetically.

“Oh, no, I am doing this for reasons entirely my own,” I disagreed, waited a moment for a reaction, and, not getting one, told him, “Finally, what is your bank account routing number. Oh, and I suppose this is an extra one, but how much does a nice dinner out cost here?”

The man happily gave me the information, no one else around us so much as batting an eye, and, predicting what I wanted, when I turned on my own phone, Yui had queued up the bank transfer from my Company account, which I added an extra twenty-five percent to. A moment later, *his* phone beeped, and he looked at it, surprised, telling me, “You didn’t have to do that, my man.”

“You helped me, and *good acts should be rewarded*,” I stated with utmost seriousness. “That is all I needed, you may go.”

Deandre hesitated, “Uh, what’s your name? So I can tell Yan who’s paying for dinner.”

“Call me. . .” I paused, needing a different name, to distinguish myself from my other selves, and, unlike most Class C recruits, had not had mine *consumed*. “Call me Proleetheus.”

The man blinked, “That foreign?”

“More than you would imagine,” I told him.

He laughed, “Well then, welcome to Earth! It’s not the greatest, but it’s home.”

“It is rather nice, but we have *both* got places to be,” I stated, turning and walking away, as Deandre waved goodbye, and I headed down the street, putting my phone to my ear. “Got the network protocols, Yui?”

“I do, Lee,” she replied, though she sounded a bit concerned. “Was that, um, necessary?”

“It was, even if I would rather not verbally attack people so,” I sighed. “Now, I need to know when the next public appearance of the Justice League is going to be, and I need to be there, with journalist credentials if possible, but, if not,” I summoned my Psychic Paper to my hand, the warped space and rainbow-colored mist as it coalesced in my fingers not even getting a raised eyebrow from the people I passed, “I can still manage.”

<Mega>

Turns out, Atlantis was a known thing here, but only *recently*, there having been an incident a couple months back where they had invaded, and not just *superhero* invaded where it was only a few squads of powerful individuals carrying out tasks instead of hundreds of soldiers taking territory, but full on military legions coming marching in columns and blowing up tanks and the like. Hundreds had died. It had been handled, the previous king deposed, and now Atlantis was presenting a treaty with ‘the surface world’, really America, and, as a sign of good will, the Justice League were there as good faith witnesses to the agreement being formally finalized, as well as being the reason *why* the politicking for ‘reparations’ and the like had *only* taken a couple months.

In the two weeks between my arrival and this meeting, I’d summoned my old car from my previous life, costing me a single point, then drove the aged sedan to my destination, finally hiding out in my pocket apartment, the third and last pillar of my plan, doing the *bare* minimum on DC’s Earth, until the time had arrived. From there, I had walked in, with the other journalists, giving the credentials that Yui had created, flashing the Psychic Paper when asked for the *proper* security clearance, which the AI could *not* create without unnecessary risk.

While I could have likely pushed myself to a front row seat, getting the best angle, and so on, this *was not about me*, this was about *them*.

In the nosebleed section, I zoomed in on the signing ceremony, taking several photos, making sure to get each one of them in at least two of my shots, double checking that it *would* be enough, and then sitting back and enjoying the hour long ceremony, with no need for haste.

Part of me wondered what would have happened, in Fiore, if I had had a *single* one of them to assist me, of the good I could have done, of the pain that I would not have suffered, as my skin was slowly flayed from my flesh, muscles ripped away by diseased vermin, nerves eaten away with acid magics, as I screamed until my voice grew hoarse, until everything stretched out, only my knowledge that the company would pull us out on schedule firm, as even my truthful answers were rejected as obvious lies, no matter what their secret-finding spells told them.

I only realized I was shaking when I almost knocked over the person in front of me, who turned, asked if I was alright, and accepted my answer easily, my Template normalizing my actions, even to those with super-senses, though Clark *did* look directly at me. With a small motion I waved away his concern, as my symptoms were *purely* psychological, and I did not need the assistance.

Not saying a word to the other low-level journalists, who did not find my presence odd in the slightest, I allowed myself one last look at the protectors of this world, and walked away, glad I could **h̵͉̏e̴̟͐l̸͓͛p̸̌ͅ.**

Back in the city, I slipped down an alley, opened a portal home, and walked through it, as it was time to *leave.*

Only once the doorway had been closed, and secured, as I sat in my extra-dimensional apartment, did I open up the company app and use the first, and *primary* pillar of my plan.

***MEGAPIXEL.***

The group shot was, actually, enough on its own, and I applied the stamp to every member of the League, as well, after a moment’s hesitation, to Aquaman and the redheaded woman next to him that had the same ‘protagonist’ energy as the others.

They took, and I settled in, ready to wait the requite three days.

<Mega>

Luna checked her self in the mirror, a *bit* nervous about this, glad she’d been chosen, and by an *Agent* at that, though the fact that he’d filled out the *full* acquisition form suggested that she wasn’t getting in on the ‘ground floor’, as it were, *everything* she’d learned in Company Finishing School suggesting that such people just went ‘gimme one of those’, and things went from there.

Then again, maybe it was for the best? Agents tended to live *really* dangerous lives, and, unless she got knocked up, that was likely it for her chances, as the market for ‘used goods’ was. . . well it *wasn’t great.* That said, if she *was*, she’d be set! And, from what she’d been taught, all the guys that were into her ‘line’ were *really* into her ‘huge tracts of land’, so this was in the bag!

She just wished the original her wasn’t *quite* so old, or that the personality matrix she grew up with, to have the same general disposition as the prime Luna, didn’t *hate that fact quite so much*. But, hey, pickers couldn’t be choosers, and it was far better this then not existing at all!

I mean, at least she wasn’t an Aqua! Let alone a *Darkness!*

Luna didn’t care if they were into that shit, a girl had to have *standards*!

Checking the file, the Agent had been in the field for a couple weeks, so hopefully he’d set up shop, and was looking to splurge? Checking his file he *didn’t* have Sticky Fingers, which was a shame, but maybe if he had a few extra points, she could convince him to get it? Luna *really* didn’t want to get the ‘bumbling virgin’ treatment.

*She* was a virgin, but that was practically a *requirement*, and she’d ‘practiced’ with her dormmates, which had just been. . . proper harem preparation, of course!

Checking it, the Agent had. . . *one thousand three-hundred and thirty eight points!?!*

*What.*

*The.*

*Fuck.*

That was. . . no, the location *was* Tier Six, though she didn’t get to know *which* dimension it was, but. . . *what?*

Looking over the file in more detail, he was Class C, which was all Lovecraftian horrors and powers beyond mortal comprehension that shattered the minds of the unprepared, so, *probably* kinda weird, but tentacles were fine, even kinda *kinky* when you really thought about it!

Other than that, he got in the *nineties* on his final, which. . . well that was the kind of person who’d *get* over a thousand points, and meant he was some kind of hard-working high-earner type, who’d *totally* need comforting and to blow off some steam.

Into her.

Repeatedly.

“Okay, *you can do this, Luna!”* she told herself, slapping her cheeks *just* a little to redden them appropriately, making sure her hair was *perfect,* her U-neck shirt was tastefully done, as in the Company clothing-grade spirit gum kept it attached to the outside edges of he breasts so you’d never *quite* see a nipple, but if he, she didn’t know, *tear it off in a fit of uncontrollable passion*, it wouldn’t hurt.

Was she into that?

. . . not really, but she was *willing to try!*

Especially for someone with *over a thousand points!*

Glad the portal was time-set, so she’d show up *right* after the request went out, no matter how long *she* took getting ready, she psyched herself up, walked up to the portal, waved goodbye to her classmates who were still ‘maturing’, and walked through.

Into. . . a pocket apartment. With a fat guy. Decent looking, better when he’d lose the weight. European looking, maybe Nordic, *hopefully* Canadian, as those guys were *guaranteed* money, *not that he needed any more.* Late twenties, early thirties, which was fine, especially with Everlasting Talent. And. . . that was it. He was dressed nice, business casual, no visible mutations, and smiled her way, though he was clearly nervous, if pale skin, minor sweating, and the slight shaking of the hands was a hint.

Okay, guy with confidence issues. Him and *half of the Agents in the Company*, at least those without a couple worlds under their belt. Hadn’t even gotten the basic body tune-up package, so, maybe a complex about girls liking ‘him for him?’ Like *that* was a thing he’d ever need to worry about, with the Stamp, but she’d been taught Agents, *especially* new Agents, could be weird about stupid shit like that.

No biggie. She could work with this!

“Hello, Master!” she smiled, clasping her hands together and leaning forward in a half-bow that *really* showed off her tits. “How can I serve you?”

*Nailed it!*

Only, looking up at him, he was staring *directly* into her eyes, not glancing down at all, as she straightened.

*Oh god, please don’t be gay.*

“Well, before we finalize things, I have some questions I would like to ask you,” he stated, smoothly, but according to his chart he *didn’t* have communication talent to help, and the covert talent he *did* have shouldn’t be working like *that*, so, if he wasn’t nervous, what was with the tremors?

He motioned to the side, asking, “Coffee, tea, water, or juice, and what kind?”

“Uh, tea, green, one sugar,” she commented, looking around the apartment in more detail. It was the standard layout, to a T, though he’d at least tweaked the *color* scheme a little, though she could do a *much* better job. Glancing over to the ‘study’, the door was cracked open, showing a second bedroom, which, okay, *not a good sign,* but sometimes guys just needed to be on their own. Or *thought* they did at least. Her classes had covered *that* extensively, and how to keep your man, woman, or futa from spinning off into non-productive mindsets.

And she *needed* him to be ‘productive’.

If you know what she means.

“Is it just us?” Luna questioned, taking the offered seat, looking at the plate of cookies. He didn’t have Body Defense, so those *could* be poisoned, but, like, *he’d already paid for her,* and didn’t have *serious* serial killer vibes. Like, he was a *little* creepy, but that was more just the fact that he’d picked up *some* Talents and Defenses and stuff, but was still sitting on a *mountain* of points. And, if he *did* murder her*,* the Company would just rez and resell her anyways, though it’d *suck* in the meantime.

From the wall, a hologram was projected, and it was. . . wait, she knew this one, small child, not obviously psychopathic, black hair-

“I am also present!” the digital girl chirped. “And by your expression, you’re trying to guess my name. I’m-”

*“Yui!”* Luna yelled, then cringed, as her Agent flinched hard enough to spill the sugar across the kitchen counter. “Sorry!”

“I-it is fine,” the man stuttered for a moment. “Just. . . psychological. Damage is gone. Just in my head. I am, I am *fine*. I am healed. S-sorry, um, that was half a sugar, so, like, yeah, here you go,” he stated, movements mechanical, the hand *not* holding her drink shaking like he was having a seizure.

*Ohfuck*

“Might I suggest Stress Defense? It’s supposed to help with that,” Luna suggested gently, trying to seem calm.

He blinked, as if he hadn’t thought about it, then slowly nodded. “I, uh, are you, right, yeah, Seminar,” he stuttered, sentences half-formed, reaching out and calling his phone to him and, with precise movements, clicked through menus, before he seized up, stumbled, and shook his head, expression clearer.

“Thank you,” he stated, with honest gratitude, which was a *good* sign. “I have been here for days, waiting to get ripped out of existence, and, and while the effects were psychological, I now have the tools to help. If you will excuse me, I will get my own drink. Also, feel free to have some snacks.”

Turning his back on her, Luna was doing her best to keep her poker face on, glad that *she’d* gotten Stress Defense at the same time, because *excuse me what the fuck?*

Idly, she grabbed one of the cookies and nibbled on it, she surprised at how good it was. Like, it wasn’t *Fairy Feast* good, or maybe it *was* just not turned up to maximum, as *every* girl in her class had been warned to avoid having *any* of that if they didn’t *also* have addiction immunity, at least if they had any choice. “Did you make these, Yui?” she asked, trying to fill the space and help make her Agent feel less awkward.

“No, Lee did!” the AI chirped, shooting a concerned look towards the man. “Also, thank you for suggesting that. I had previously, but he’d been quite stubborn about it.”

*Boobs for the win!* “Glad to help,” Luna smiled, glad her Agent wasn’t some sort of lolicon. Not that there was anything *inherently* wrong with that, when you could have women in their seventh century while still looking like they were *twelve*, but she’d worried a little. She’d ask about the points, but, while it was there in the paperwork that purchased Talent got synopses of their Agent’s loadouts, it was just *kinda* rude to mention that. “Also, our master’s a man who can cook!” she smiled, subtly complimenting him.

“Bake,” he countered, sitting down with a cup of black coffee. “I am still figuring out cooking. Though I suppose I might not need to now. Also, I apologize for my rudeness. You can call me Lee. Or, on mission, Proleethues.”

She snorted at the stupid name, then froze, but, yeah, he cracked a bit of a smile. “Bringing fire to the dimensions?” Luna hesitantly offered.

“Something like that,” he mused. “Now, for the interview. First of all, would you rather I call you Luna, or something else? There was no last name listed in the catalog.”

*What? Danger! And not the violent kind!* “Call me Luna,” she smiled *hopefully* sexily. Those hours in front of the mirror preparing for this seeming to go to waste as his expression didn’t budge. “I’m *sure* we’ll get to know each other *very* well, after all!” she tried again.

The hint of confusion that drifted across Lee’s features *didn’t help,* before he nodded. “I suppose we *will* be working together for the foreseeable future, if you agree. You see, I honestly. . . am not the greatest fan of the workings of Slutlife, but I understand its place, and wish to work for them while supporting my *own* goals,” he smiled, checking off, like, *half* the red flag list for going ROBBY and attempting a suicidal ‘take down’ of the Company, that never worked, but nuked the lives of everyone around them. But she *was* Stamped, and bound to be loyal *to* him, only she could even feel *that* sawing back and forth in her mind, like it didn’t know which way to go.

“And those goals are?” she asked, more ‘cause she felt she *had* to, then she really wanted to.

“There is a belief that heroes need to go through the trials and tribulations they do in order to get stronger,” Lee mused with faked nonchalance. “That, if one was to help assist them, they would not be strong enough to handle the *next* tribulation, and would doom themselves, if not their dimensional line, because of it. But that assumes the help is. . . *singular,* and of an escapist variety, solving the problem *for* them. It is a wonderful little bit of rationale, but in the end it is nothing but an ***ē̸͇x̴̼͝c̵̔ͅu̷̗͠s̷͉̄e̵̊ͅ***.”

For a single moment, Lee *changed*, his placid expression twisting hatefully, and the air itself seemed to buzz a little with the sound of *something*, pressing in from everywhere at once, and then it was gone.

*. . . okay, yeah, get why he’s in Class C now,* Luna thought, really *really* glad for Stress Defense.

Thankfully, he didn’t need to be prompted, as he continued to monologue like a bad movie villain. “But what if the help is actually *help?* What if it makes someone stronger, better able to handle themselves, to not just assist in *this* challenge, but *every* other challenge that they face? Failure spirals are a thing, yet almost exclusively for the forces of *good*, evil disparate and numerous enough that, if one group falls, *three more* can take its place. So why not a *victory* spiral? Now, if they rest on their laurels, it won’t be a *true* ascension, but even *then* they will be in a better place than they were before, and, really, while you can lead a horse to water, even *drown* the thing, you cannot make it *drink.* But that does not mean you should not still lead it in the *first place*.”

*Ah. They taught us about this,* Luna thought, nodding in agreement to the Agent’s justification for working for the Company. “That makes sense,” she told him.

But rather than smile and preen like he was *supposed* to, his ego properly fluffed, the man pinned her with a dry look. “You do not understand in the slightest,” he accused, though without any anger.

*This isn’t fair! If you’d gotten Communication Talent* ***I*** *would’ve gotten better at this too!* *What gives!?* “I, uh*, no?*” she offered.

He didn’t say a word.

*Shit!* “Um, it *sounds* nice?” she tried.

He still stared.

Without moving a single muscle.

And it was kinda creepy.

And *really* intimidating.

*Pleasedon’tkillme.* “It kinda sounds like a justification, really,” she shrugged, awkwardly, not cracking because of Stress Defense, but unable to think of what *else* to say.

And he. . . chuckled?

“That is because it *is*,” he openly admitted.

*Why was he self-aware?*

If he was self-aware why was he still doing it?

*This wasn’t in the simulations!*

“But does it make it *wrong?”* Lee questioned.

“. . . probably?” Luna offered, taking refuge in the truth. After all, with all his speechifying about ‘helping heroes’, he *should* like that, right? “I honestly didn’t get, like, *half* of what you said.”

Again, Lee stared at her, unmoving, before he shrugged. “That is fair. Regardless, I do not need your understanding, only your assistance. The Konosuba Adventuring system is *particularly* suited to my goal, as, once empowered, while additional support for things like class changes *would* be useful, they are by no means *required*.”

“So, you just want me for my magic?” Luna questioned, feeling a little dispirited. *Oh god, I’m a Megumin!* ***Me!*** *But I* ***don’t*** *look like puberty took a look at me and said, ‘maybe later, if I feel up to it’!*

“Well, you *are* an experienced adventuring guild official,” he noted kindly, picking up on her distress. “It is highly possible that you would pick up things I would not, like needing to pick up Stress Defense as soon as possible. I will not *defer* to you, but I would be a fool to turn down experienced council.”

“. . . sexy council?” she questioned, swinging for the fences.

*Finally* his eyes dipped down, and, *yeah*, got stuck in her cleavage. *Still got it!*

“You *are* quite attractive,” Lee noted. “But I am more interested in working together than *sleeping* together.”

*More means still a little. I can work with this!* the administrator thought, working the ‘friends to lovers’ angle something her classes have covered, which put her back on solid ground. “No reason we can’t eventually do both,” she offered, giving the second bedroom a look. “That for me?”

“It is. So, do you agree to assist me in this?” the older man questioned. “If you really *are* loyal, as the Stamp claims to make you, I would rather depart on amicable terms than try and force you into a position you are not comfortable with.”

And thing is, she could tell he *actually meant it,* her binding pushing her to be honest in a *really* weird way. “I mean, I kinda thought I was gonna get fucked silly, and I’m still down for *that*, but, yeah, sure helping people sounds nice. But, okay, silly question, how are we going to be helping people if we’re selling off all the heroes?”

Lee stared blankly. “. . . What makes you think I am?”

“Then how did get *that many* points,” Luna questioned. “What’d you do, stamp the entire *Justice League?”* she joked.

He didn’t laugh.

Then he *nodded.*

“I. . . how are you *alive*?” she demanded. That was *the* example of things you were supposed to dissuade your Agent from doing! Up there with going to WH40k and taking on an anti-Entity mission alone! “How’d you get close enough to *Stamp* them all! How’d you get *away?”*

“I did not apply the Stamp until I was already here,” he revealed, which made *no* sense, unless. . .

*“No!”* she gasped. “Who’d you seduce to get one of *those*? And are they still taking offers?”

That got a laugh out of him. “No, I did not sleep with anyone to get it. I merely received an unexpectedly comprehensive hiring bonus, though I did not know it at the time.”

Luna frowned as that. . . *wasn’t* how that worked, but, rule four of being a good Harem member was not to argue without evidence, and *she didn’t have any*. But, if he had a *Megapixel*, and wasn’t an idiot, she was *set.* “In that case, I would love to assist you,” she smiled, offering her hand to shake, to reaffirm her ‘friendly’ position.

Talent Finishing school had been clear that with women, you *needed* to get your foot in the door as soon as possible, and not budge on that possible position of future sexy-times, while men could reliably shift over time, and for all others one defaulted to their closest gender expression.

He took it, shaking it firmly, and smiled back as he told her, “Happy to have you onboard. Now, any suggestions?”

“Body Tune-up, Everlasting Talent, and *every* single Defense,” Luna rattled off instantly. “With the powerhouses you already have, they should cheaper because of the harmonic resonance with your, er, non-harem harem, and you still have the points to get them even *if* you had to pay full price.”

“I agree!” Yui spoke up beside them both, causing the administrator to jump a little, having forgotten about the little AI. “I know you had planned to do so already, Lee, but you shouldn’t wait to get them all!”

Smiling indulgently, the older man nodded, “Then let us begin.” Picking up his phone, his hands started to shake once more, and he frowned, the device slipping through his fingers. “But I purchases Stress Defense,” he muttered, perplexed.

“Stress Defense stops you from getting *worse,*” Luna pointed out, not touching the phone, as a number of Agents, especially those with trust issues, *which was most of them*, would have problems with that. “Would you like me to purchase them for you?”

Hands still shaking, and, now that she was watching carefully, she could see the man trying *very* hard not to curl up into the fetal position, Lee forced himself to speak with slow, careful words. “Yes. But only. The two talents. And the full. Defense set. “

“I’ve got it,” she reassured, leaning over so that he could see what she was doing on the screen. Or her boobs. Both worked. Starting with Body Tune-up, she warned him, “Okay, doing it now,” and hit purchase.

She didn’t know *what* had happened to her Agent, but he started spasming, biting back a scream, *something* deeply hurt within him as the built-in full-body heal didn’t just trim his fat and build it up like it was doing for her, but changed something *deep* within him, the man knocking his coffee over as he fell to the floor, Luna quick to try and catch him, having worried that something like this *might* happen.

She got him right before he hit the ground, her *own* body changing at the same time, muscles the original Luna didn’t have subtly forming, flexibilities increasing, and an odd sense of *power* filling her with heady sensation. Carefully moving him, and marveling at being *able* to move someone his size that easily, she laid him down on the couch, moving back to get the phone, and, returning, lifting his head long enough to lay it down in her lap as he *still* shook, hands clenching and releasing, in a pseudo-seizure that lasted five minutes before he finally went still, completely unconscious.

“Uh. . .” she trailed off, unsure. “Help?”

“I believe you have,” Yui noted projecting herself in front of them, leaning over their Master. “He had mentioned taking damage during his final exam, but that he had been healed.”

*. . . oh.* “They only put you back together so you can make your choices,” Luna corrected. “If you’re hurt, you’re supposed to get the Tune-Up. Why would they full-heal you, if you’re gonna body jump a couple hours later, right? And it’s only five points.”

“Lee did not have five points to spend on it. He spent almost all on his defenses, his capture method, his template, and this residence,” the AI argued.

Frowning, the woman questioned, “He’s got powers?”

“Automatic perception filters do not function on Harem Members,” the girl countered, which made the fact that Lee’d gotten the *Royal Flush of Captures* make a little more sense.

“Well, we’ve got the points *now,*” Luna said, not having any response, but not wanting to admit the little program was right. Selecting Everlasting Talent, nothing happened to *her,* but some of the wear and tear evaporated off of Lee’s face, until he was twenty-five once again, as he would now be forever.

She was twenty-two herself, but the *original* Luna had been worried about getting older without finding a man, and, weirdly, this helped put her at ease. Then again, maybe it wasn’t so strange, as, even though he wouldn’t admit it, she *was* his, and, looking down at him, he was kinda cute.

*Eh,* Luna thought, *I can fix him.*

<Mega>

Arthur Curry entered the meeting room, curious. The Justice League had requested his presence, but specified it was *not* an emergency. Or at least what constituted an emergency for *them*, which usually meant active fighting. He hadn’t been present at the unveiling ceremony for their ‘Hall of Justice’, having been taking care of an Atlantean affair of state, and so he’d missed the attack by the ‘Legion of Doom’, though, truth be told, he hadn’t really been needed.

Green Lantern and Shazam had *also* been missing from that fight, when one of their opponents had shown abilities *far* beyond what should have been possible for the man, but, from the report that had been sent, it had been handled. Both missing men were here now, looking just as lost as ‘Aquaman’ felt. Flash and Cyborg seemed unsure as well, Wonder Woman was looking at Superman with concern, while Batman. . . *was Batman*.

“Should I have brought Mera?” Arthur asked, taking a seat.

Superman frowned, “Probably no-”

*“Yes,”* Batman interrupted, “But you can contact her later.” Looking towards the Man of Steel, the cowled hero prompted, “Go ahead.”

“Last night I almost got possessed,” Superman stated, the man shaken in a way Arthur hadn’t seen before. “By whatever tried to take over Weather Wizard. But it just. . . bounced off me. Hit something, clawed at it, but I was. . . was *shielded*. I can feel it even now. Like a limb I didn’t know I had.”

Green Lantern snorted, “So you can throw buildings *and* demons. Big whup. Why’d we all have to come here for this?”

*“No,*” Superman insisted. “Magic has *always* been my weakness, but this was. . . it wasn’t even a contest. I didn’t throw it, it couldn’t even *touch* me.”

“And it’s not just that,” Batman added. “Lantern, the tattoo on the back of your head, under your hair, it looks like this, correct?” With a click, the wall behind him showed a design, a chalice, surrounded by a circle with the same symbol as his ring, pilot’s wings extending from either side.

It was a bit like Arthur’s *own* tattoo, in the same spot, which was a bit odd. He had the same chalice, *exactly,* only his was surrounded by waves, a trident at the bottom, representing his connection to his mother, a lighthouse on top, for his father.

“How’d you- never mind, of *course* you know about that,” Green Lantern sighed. “Yeah, so what? People have tattoos. It’s a thing. Put it there so it wouldn’t get noticed.”

Which was the same reason Arthur had put *his* tattoo there.

“Flash?” Batman questioned, the image changing, to the *same* chalice, this one wreathed in lightning, a stylized police badge over the top, below, a broken hourglass.

Receiving a nod from the speedster, the image changed again, this chalice bordered by gears lined with circuitry, overlayed with a football, at its peak a box. This time it was Cyborg who responded, stating, “But, I got that on my own. After, after everything that happened. It just seemed right, you know?”

“But *where* did you get it?” the dark knight questioned. “Who did it? Where? When, exactly?”

“I, I don’t remember, and it’s not in my memory banks, but it doesn’t matter, I don’t need to know,” the metallic man deferred.

His black-clad contemporary nodded, “I feel the same way about my *own* tattoo.” Another click, another image of the *exact* same chalice, a broken set of beads surrounding it, bat wings spread out on either side, a broken katana underneath.

“Wait, *you* don’t want to know something?” Green Lantern questioned mockingly.

“**Yes**,” Batman replied with dead seriousness. *“I feel like I don’t need to know.* No matter how much I think about it. Which makes it a good thing I don’t make my decisions based on my *feelings*. Furthermore, it’s not only possession that we are protected against. Superman, catch,” he stated, reaching into a pocket and pulling out a glowing green marble, which he tossed at the blue-clad man.

Superman flinched away reflexively, the crystal bouncing off his arm to roll on the table innocuously. Slowly, the man of steel lowered his hand before, hesitantly, reaching out to pick up the thing.

“. . . Context?” Flash asked, voicing what the rest of them were thinking, just saying it faster.

“It’s kryptonite, but. . . *how?”* Superman asked, looking towards the black-clad man, rolling the glowing marble back and forth over his fingers.

“It’s a radioactive shard of his home world, which emits an energy that weakens kryptonians, depowering them,” Batman explained.

“Doesn’t look weakened to *me*,” Green Lantern noted skeptically, only for Batman to toss a smokebomb in the man’s face, a blue gas expanding outwards, covering half the table, clearing quickly, and leaving the man looking confused. “Was that supposed to do something?”

Cyborg replied, “Considering that was enough sedative to put down a *rhino*, and none of you even *flinched*, yeah. So, what we’re immune to poison because we’ve got magic tattoos?”

“Immune to poison, and possession, and hostile environments, and all my scars have healed, and, biologically speaking, I’m twenty-five again,” Batman noted with a tone dryer than the Sahara. “Also, there’s this.”

And they all stared as, without moving a muscle, the dark knight lifted up into the air, the same way that Superman and Wonder Woman did.

Settling back down, there was a moment of silence.

“. . . *what.”*

It was the Flash, again, but he’d just said what Arthur was thinking first. However. . .

Lifted a hand, and getting the attention of the others, Aquaman stated, “Mera has been teaching me her Hydromancy. It’s an *Atlantean* magic, and I’ve been picking it up because *why not*, but she’s said the rate I’ve been learning has been miraculous. We’d *assumed* it was my mixed ancestry, or maybe my royal blood, but what if it wasn’t?”

Superman looked stricken, asking Batman, with fragile hope, “So you’re. . . becoming kryptonian?”

“I’m sorry, but no,” the dark knight replied, with faint sympathy in his normally cold tones. “As far as I can tell, medically, I am still myself. But I’ve been developing abilities, as have you and Wonder Woman, or did you two think you suddenly became stronger out of nowhere?”

Both of them glanced at each other in surprise, then back towards what *used* to be the only non-powered member of their group. “So, it’s the eight of us?” Superman questioned.

“In the first batch, yes,” Batman agreed.

*“First* batch?” Cyborg echoed.

“Indeed. We all received our tattoos three days after the signing of the Atlantean Accord,” the dark man agreed. “Then, three days after that, the Teen Titans, along with Nightwing and Robin, received their own, and *more*.”

“That why you sent the kid to be with them?” Flash questioned.

Batman nodded, “Whoever did this clearly wanted them to be together, and, despite the risks, I believe it to be worth it. More than that, I believe I’ve identified who is responsible.”

The video shifted, showing the signing ceremony, just as they remembered it.

Except Arthur hadn’t remembered the man shaking so hard it looked like he was having a seizure in the stands, desperately trying to bring his phone up to take video, hitting everyone around him with twitching arms, sweating buckets, and trying not to fall off his own seat in the bleachers that’d been set up.

Only. . . he *had* seen the man. And paid him no attention. Just as the others sitting around the man were, despite him making a *clear* disturbance.

“Is that man cursed?” Wonder Woman inquired. “He *clearly* needs aid, but I am ashamed to admit I dismissed his plight, for reasons I cannot explain.”

Superman frowned, “I did too, but. But, I think he knows. Whoever he is. I, for a moment I saw him, but he waved me off. Yes, there it is,” he stated, pointing at the screen, as the man waved a twitching arm, then leaned back and curled up, sobbing, while everyone else did *nothing*.

“And whatever stops us from thinking about how we got *these*, is likely what stopped us from noticing *him*,” Batman noted, the footage thankfully speeding up, as the man just rocked back and forth for the rest of the ceremony, struggling to his feet and shuffling along with the rest of the press, pulling a blank piece of paper out of the air from rainbow smoke, showing it to security, who let him through.

From there they jumped cameras, until he got into a car, still shaking, though forcing himself to move, the Green Lantern asking, “What kind of car is that? I don’t recognize the make.”

“According to the marking on it, it’s a ‘Honda Accord’. And you don’t recognize it because that company went out of business thirty years ago, and never made a car line by that name,” Batman noted.

“So, he’s a time traveler?” Flash asked, a touch nervously.

However, the black-clad man shook his head. “If he is, he’s from the future. He appeared in New York City two weeks before the signing, drove down to it, disappeared until the day of, attended, drove to Jump City, disappeared for three days, emerged, and contacted the Titans, coercing Starfire into inviting Nightwing and Robin over.”

The video changed, showing the same, shaking man stop in an alley, his car falling through the ground in a cloud of rainbow mist, before he turned and walked *into* the alley wall, disappearing. The feed fast forwarded, a blur appearing over the spot he’d exited, only obvious in the sped-up footage.

“That him?” Cyborg asked, having plugged into the computer system. “No matter what I do, I can’t fix it.”

“No, it’s not,” Batman noted, as, three days later, a young man emerged directly out of a wall onto the sidewalk, glanced down into the alley, paled, and quickly strode away.

Flash held up a hand, “Are we *sure* this guy’s not a time traveler? Because he got younger, *and* less messed up.”

“If he is, only time will tell,” the detective noted blandly.

“Wait, is that a joke? You can make jokes?” Green Lantern questioned mockingly.

Without responding to the provocation, the footage sped up, following the car to the docks, where the man got out, dismissed his vehicle, then jumped into the ocean and casually swam the two miles to the island, walking up to a wall, disappearing into a wall for ten minutes, walking out in different, *dry* clothing, and striding up to the front door, knocking on it.

Starfire flew down from the roof, on guard, but, upon seeing him, she relaxed, powering her attacks down, and led him inside. This pattern continued, this time with sound, each member starting hostile but instantly calming, the man introducing himself as, ‘Proleetheus’.

“Fitting,” Wonder Woman remarked, explaining at the looks of the others, Arthur thinking the name was more than a little silly himself, “Prometheus brought fire to the mortal world, and suffered for it. This man seem to have brought us protections, and suffered similarly, only not yet.”

Once the Titans had gathered, he stepped out through a wall, returning a moment later, a blonde woman following with-

*“Damn,*” Green Lantern whistled. “I’m not sure how she keeps her shirt on, but I’m *all* for it.”

“Double-sided adhesive,” Batman idly replied, as, with a gesture, a magical device appeared, a glowing blue orb on a wooden stand, with steel and gold fittings, wheels, and so on, focusing lenses below it, terminating in a downwards facing spike.

The woman, who introduced herself as ‘Luna’, explained that it would produce an ‘adventurer card’ that that would help empower them, something the teens were a little leery of, but a few words from ‘Proleetheus’ and they no longer had an issue. One after another, they stepped up, holding their hand over it, as it glowed, inscribing the card, which filled itself out, then each teen picked a ‘class’, from Raven’s Archpriest, to Blue Beetle’s Artificer, to Starfire’s Spell Blade.

“What’s your kid’s class?” Green Lantern questioned.

“Nightwing chose Ranger, while Robin chose Assassin, and, without that device, they cannot be changed,” the dark knight informed them, mildly annoyed.

The teens all broke up, trying out new abilities, Beast Boy making plants grow, while Raven created water from nothing, a trick Mera would love to learn. *And, perhaps, now could*, Aquaman thought.

An hour later, with the impromptu party in full swing, both power-givers left, taking a group photo, before, waving goodbye to the others, walking through a window pane, which rippled slightly, and they were gone.

“And that was a little over a year ago,” Batman stated, the screen rewinding on a shot of the man and woman’s faces. “The Titans have ‘levelled up’ repeatedly since then, gaining new magical skills in line with their ‘classes’, though they’ve recently started learning each other’s, the same way I have learned how to fly. The effect seems related to proximity, which is why I suggest team training going forward, to take advantage of this phenomenon. Also, three days after this point, they all received their *own* marks. Since then, there has been no other sighting of either individual.”

Silence stretched between them all for a long moment.

“But, *why?*” Cyborg asked. “Why do this? Why not tell us? We could’ve helped him!”

“Helped do what? It took me almost *six months* to notice anything was different at all,” the dark knight countered. “By then he and his companion were long gone.”

The metal man shook his head, “Fine, but still, *why* do this?”

Superman spoke up, staring at the crystal orb still in his hand. “Why do *we* do what we do? We can help, so we do. It might be as simple as that.”

“Then why not tell us?” Cyborg pressed.

“If he did, would we listen?” Wonder Woman mused. “Or would we smile and nod, ignoring him, as we did before. Proleetheus did not speak of the marks he granted them, only these cards, and even then this *Luna* was the one who provided the instruction. He may be incapable of doing such himself.”

“Well, wherever he is, I hope he’s doing alright,” Arthur noted, and that was one thing they could *all* agree on.

<Mega>

*One Year Prior*

Stepping through the portal, I had sighed in relief. Going back out there had been a risk, but there were just *too* many problems in that universe for the eight of them to handle it, while fourteen served as a much firmer foundation, the adventurer cards helping shore up the kids’ relative inexperience with time.

Turning the corner and seeing *Uatu, the Fucking Watcher, in all his big-headed glory, glaring at my portal’s last entrance like it owed him money* had carved a few years off my now-theoretically infinite lifespan, however.

Thankfully the changes I had made had shaken this timeline so *incredibly* loose from the mainline that I could open portals with a great deal more freedom, so I did not come to face-to-face with something I would probably need half my Defenses not to be outright *unmade* by.

From there it had been surprisingly easy and straightforward, like my final exam, only without the days of torture.

So, *progress!*

Then came three days of waiting, in our new, *expanded* pocket dimension, which was now a full *mansion*, with a yard and everything, something quite useful for training my new ‘class’ in. I had absolutely *abysmal* luck, shocker, but my other stats were solidly good across the board, and, poking around the system, I had come across an ‘Arch Adventurer’ class, and taken it, despite Luna’s urging not to. Yes, it would level slower than others, being a complete all-rounder class, but I had so many points I was picking up *two more Templates* for an additional staggering *one hundred and twenty points*.

But being a Tier Four version of both Superman and *Thanatos* from Danmachi, able to give out Falnas of my own, had been worth it, and covered a *variety* of weaknesses, which I then double-stacked to Tier Five across the board, because *why the hell not?*

And it was certainly something, being semi-divine, able to fly with a whim, *phenomenally* strong, while also having an intrinsic understanding of just what death *was*, only affirming my belief that steps *needed* to be taken to keep entire dimensional lines from dying out.

Now, all three of us stood in the control room, Yui doing so metaphorically, as I booted up the now industrial-sized portal, and hit the randomizer to give me seven options to choose from.

The Nasuverse was right out, because even *I* was not that crazy, as was One Piece, because the Straw Hats created as many problems as they solved, and giving them power boosts would just bring them attention earlier than normal even if I *wanted* to. There were a couple of interesting options, but the second to last made me *smile.*

“So, boss, what’re we doing next?” the Konosubian asked, having relaxed a little, the woman oddly tense around me sometimes.

“The same thing we will do every dimension, Luna,” I told her. “We are going to ***h̵͉̏e̴̟͐l̸͓͛p̸̌ͅ*.**”

Looking over my shoulder as I made my decision, spooling up the portal, even as I bought a few sets of Command Seals, paying the premium to do so *without* a Servant, she asked, “So are ‘The Boys’ heroes?”

“No, but they deal with some powered individuals. We will stop by and lend a hand to some Super Dupers first, but after that? We will meet the ‘heroes’ of that world, and, by the time we are done, ***t̴̙̕h̷̦͂ȇ̶̻y̷̰͗ ̵̖͆w̵̬͌î̸̫l̵͖̊ľ̸͈ ̶̟͒b̷̻̿e̵̱̓.̶͍̈***”

The mostly blonde woman stared at me for a long moment. “Well. . . the Titans were nice.”

“They were good kids,” I agreed fondly, wishing I could have gotten to know them, but I had places to be, and people to ***h̵͉̏e̴̟͐l̸͓͛p̸̌ͅ***. “The Seven. . . *less so*,” I added, good spirits dimming a little. “Though, by the time we are done, it *will* be a better place, even if they originally were half the reason it is not. *Because* they are half the reason it is not. Regardless, they will eventually understand that I am right, and everything will be that much better for it.”

“And. . . if they don’t?” Luna questioned. “If they say you’ve turned them into something they didn’t ever want to be?”

I shrugged, giving *zero* shits about the wishes of Evil, of those that would always choose what was easy over what was *r̶̥͂i̷͕̍ǵ̷̯h̸̎ͅt̸͈̿* and stepped through the portal with a purpose in my stride and a song in my heart.

[*“What could I say except, you are welcome!”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79DijItQXMM&ab_channel=DisneyMusicVEVO)