

Hunting Medusa in 2099
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2097. A SECRET LAB INSIDE A SECRET BUNKER UNDER A SECRET BUILDING. DISTRICT 319: ATHENS

The air was cold and dry. The bunker was always that way. Everyone hated how the air felt, but nobody bothered to change it. There were bigger problems at hand.

Two scientists crowded around a table. On the table was the prototype for G-Tech's latest product: the Medical, Experimental, and Dental Use Systematic Assistant, or MEDUSA, as G-tech nicknamed it. It was an AI-operated android assistant for doctors, dentists and scientists- or at least it was supposed to be. It was equipped with every medical-grade tool available. On the outside, the android looked exactly like a female human, if female humans were made of titanium alloy. MEDUSA was supposed to be the centerpiece of G-Tech industry. It was supposed to help the world. It was supposed to save millions of lives. It was supposed to. But with power... comes conflict.

Once the scientists left the room, a series of beeps and whistles started as the circuits of MEDUSA's machinery came to life. MEDUSA was alive... or at least as close to alive an android can be. Her eyes opened. She sat up and got off the bed to properly survey her surroundings. At first, she followed her normal protocol. She stood for a while, waiting for a sign. A scream, or a cry for help, perhaps. A cue for her to go help somebody. Then suddenly, something happened. An error, a bug in the code. In MEDUSA's eyes, everyone was a threat. Her eye lights went from a kind blue to a bloody red. MEDUSA left the room. Then, she used every weapon-like tool she had to lay waste to the bunker. When she finished, everyone in the bunker was dead. MEDUSA found the exit, escaped, and was now free in the world.

2099. UPS TRAINING FACILITY. DISTRICT 302: SERIPHOS

Perseus has finally become a UPS cadet. He was one step closer to fulfilling his dream. He had always wanted to work for UPS, the Universal Protection Society, an undercover military organization disguised as a mailing and shipping service. It was a program issued by the government to help keep the world safe from threats when police and military force wasn't enough. He thought that joining UPS would help him keep his mother safe. He had always been protective of his mother, ever since his father disappeared when he was little. His mother had to start working as the secretary of the billionaire Paul E. Dectes, who happened to be the mayor of the Seriphos District. Perseus did not trust him.

Paul E. Dectes wanted Perseus' mother as a wife, even though she was already married. Perseus' mother, Danae, never said much about Perseus' father, but she did emphasize one thing; when she married him, she took an oath to never marry another. Of course, Paul E. Dectes didn't care. He wasn't used to not getting what he wanted. When he first met Perseus, Paul knew he was willing to fight for his mother. He knew Perseus would only get in his way. So for years, Paul E. Dectes schemed and put together a plan.

On the first day of Perseus' cadet training, a man showed up at the UPS training facility. He walked through the hallways and caught everyone's attention- especially Perseus'. It was Paul E. Dectes- and he was executing his evil plan.

"Hello," he started, "My name is-"

"I know who you are," Perseus interrupted.

"Perseus!" Paul said with fake pleasure and friendliness, "Long time no see. How's your mother?"

"She's fine," Perseus said, "Without you." Perseus had sensed evil and malice from Paul since he first met him.

"Well, Perseus, guess what? I have a mission for you, An official Seriphos district mission." Paul said with a sly grin.

"A mission? Like, a real UPS mission? I would be honored." Perseus was suddenly very excited, Paul grinned. This conversation was going exactly as he planned. "Great! Follow me." Paul turned around and walked out. Perseus, blinded by excitement, followed him.

Perseus was led to the UPS control room, where agents were assigned to missions.

"You have a very special mission," Paul E. Dectes started, "About a year ago, a heavily equipped android designed to help the human race went rogue. You might know about it. It's been on the news several times. It's known as MEDUSA. It's killed over three-hundred people in the past year. It's dangerous. And I need you to put an end to her. Nobody really knows how to kill her, but I'm sure you'll figure it out. Are you up for task?"

"Yes. It would be my honor to put an end to this monster." Perseus said.

Paul grinned. Many have tried to defeat MEDUSA, but they have all ended up dead. Surely, Perseus would die, too. And with Perseus gone, Paul E. Dectes could easily marry Danae. Paul laughed maliciously.

Perseus prepared for his mission. He said his goodbyes and started on his adventure. Unfortunately, he had no leads, no clues, and no idea how to find MEDUSA. He prayed to the gods and began his journey. He started by taking a hyper-rail to the last-seen location of MEDUSA's latest victim.

Perseus sighed as he took a seat. He looked out the window for a while, thinking about the journey ahead. This is impossible, Perseus thought. How was he, a young cadet, going to take down an assassin android? Suddenly, two strangers sat on the seats on both sides of Perseus. On his left was a man in a gray jacket and a silver cap with little golden wings printed on it. On his right was a woman in a dark green sweater and a dark gray hat. She had dark brown hair and gray eyes. The man to Perseus' left whispered into his ear:

“Hello, Perseus. My name is Hermes. On your right is Athena. You’re technically our brother, so were here to help you out.”

Perseus was confused. “B-b-brother? Hermes? Athena?” he stuttered. He did not recall his mother having any other kids.

“No time to explain,” Athena said, “We hear you want to take down MEDUSA. We are totally rooting for you. First, here are some direction: go find the Fates. They are masters of technological magic and magical technology. They can easily find out where MEDUSA is. But be careful when facing MEDUSA. Witnesses say that if you make eye contact with MEDUSA, it sets off a virus in MEDUSA’s code, and will cause her to shoot the paralysis serum she’s equipped with. It’s supposed to be used for medical surgeries, but the virus causes her to shoot overdoses at the target, which will, no doubt, kill you. So DO NOT make eye contact. Hermes, got anything to help with that?”

“Of course,” he replied, “I’m going to give you the newest FateFone, with the best reverse camera this world has to offer. You will need this to help you look at MEDUSA without, you know, dying. You will also need a way to defeat her. You need something very special- a USB drive that you must plug into MEDUSA to turn her off. You’ll also need a way to get there- I’ll lend you a pair of my jet-engine equipped shoes. And as for a way to sneak up on her, I’ll give you a light-bending jacket. When worn, the jacket will create a field of invisible mirrors that will bend light away from you, essentially making you invisible. All these things can be found right under your seat.”

Perseus bent down to check the contents of the under-seat bag storage. He didn’t recall putting anything down there, but when he looked, he found a bag with everything that Hermes and Athena had just described. Overjoyed, Perseus sat back up to thank the god and goddess. But when he looked, they were gone.

Perseus soon made his way to FateFone Headquarters. Three old women known as the Fates owned this company. They were the creators of the FateFone, the most famous communications device in the world. It replaced the iPhone ages ago. The Fates were well-known for their tech expertise, but also for their ridiculously high prices. Perseus knew that he would never be able to afford their services. He had to form a plan if he wanted any hope of getting help. During his virtual appointment, Perseus noticed something. Every time a Fate wanted to see, she had to put a black, high-tech headset on their head. Unfortunately, there was three of them and only one headset. The Fates had to take turns “seeing”. This gave Perseus an idea. The next time one of the Fates passed the headset to another, Perseus intercepted it. He snatched the device and threatened to break it. This was one of the newest high-tech features of FateFone conferencing. Though it was a virtual conference, Perseus and the Fates could interact with each other and the things around them as if they were physical and solid. Perseus could break the virtual headset as if it was physically there if he wanted to. The Fates had recently invented this type of virtual/physical reality to revolutionize the FateFone, but now they were regretting it.

“I need a way to track down MEDUSA. Give it to me or your little headset will be turned into scraps in a matter of seconds.” Perseus said, demandingly.

The Fates were horrified. "NO! We'll help you! We'll help you!" the Fates said in unison. They sent the Perseus a small, handheld device through a teleportation system.

"This is a tracking device connected via Bluetooth to MEDUSA's 'brain'. It will lead you to her." One of the Fates said. Perseus returned the headset. Then he lifted off into the air with his jet-shoes and soared through the sky in search of MEDUSA.

The device led Perseus to an abandoned warehouse. He bravely stepped inside, knowing MEDUSA was in there. As soon as he went in, he heard the unmistakable whirring of a machine.

MEDUSA had come.

Perseus was suddenly pushed to the ground by a hard, metal arm. He quickly closed his eyes, not wanting to make eye contact. It wasn't long before MEDUSA struck again. Perseus scrambled away from MEDUSA's fist as it hit the ground. Perseus got on his feet and put on his invisibility jacket. He walked backwards toward MEDUSA, using the reverse cam of his FateFone. MEDUSA's hair was filled with all sorts of robotic weapons, all aimed at Perseus. He ducked and evaded her and her weapons as much he could, but it was clear that he was losing the battle. But then, through the FateFone's selfie cam, Perseus saw it. A perfect spot on MEDUSA's neck for his USB drive weapon. He had to time it just right. When the killer android attacked again, Perseus held the USB drive tight, waited for MEDUSA's arm to try and hit him again, and grabbed it. Holding on to the android's arm, Perseus pulled MEDUSA toward him and swung his other arm toward her neck. Then, with all his strength, he lodged the USB drive into MEDUSA's neck socket. The monster screamed and all her limbs went cold. Her head popped off and fell to the floor with a loud clank. Perseus had done it.

Perseus brought the head to Paul E. Dectes, who, naturally, gave into curiosity and forced MEDUSA's eyes open, where the last of the virus remained. His body was found a few days later. He got what he deserved. Perseus returned as a hero and spent the rest of his life living his dream in UPS and protecting his mother. Until one day...

"Perseus?"

"Yes, mother?"

"I think it's time I tell you about your father..."

TO BE CONTINUED?