

By the time Lala and Momo have finished explaining their devious plan to you, Nana has already torn several of the enemy androids to shreds. The flat-chested girl sits proudly atop a pile of robotic corpses, many of them suffering super-heated lacerations from where her tail laser had struck their metallic bodies.

“What the heck are you waiting around for?” she seethes.

“Sorry – I was just talking strategy with your sisters.”

Nana rolls her eyes, “Don’t expect me to do all of the work for you. I want to protect all of the animals on this planet, but you need to pull your own weight!”

Momo smirked, “We knew that you could handle these small fries yourself, and you’re always running in headfirst without us. Don’t get mad because we’re keeping an eye out for traps.”

“I don’t want to hear your excuses, Momo – these guys aren’t worth the steel they’re built out of!”

It looks like your worry was misplaced. Nana is crazy strong even without summoning and utilising some of the animals she keeps locked up inside of her compressed space device. You suspect that Nana doesn’t want to put them in harm’s way when she can handle it herself. A pulse moves outwards as Mitsuru scans the area using the suit’s sensors. Several outlines appear through the walls before fading away so that you can see without distraction. They become solid again as you get closer, an improvement to the system that was made with 21 and Bulma’s help.

“They’re guarding the pumping facilities,” Mitsuru relays, “There’s a heat signature from the fourth chamber that looks like our target.”

“Right. Momo, Lala, can I trust you to surgically remove the rest of these robots? Nana and I can head down there and take care of the main force.”

Nana scowled, “Huh? Why are you trying to go alone with me?”

“Why not? We’re all on the same team here.”

“You try to do anything weird to me, and I’m gonna’ cut you to bits just like I did with these robots!”

“Noted.”

Lala and Momo take off to clear the outlying areas of their enemy's presence and to let you have some one-on-one time with their stubborn sister. They want you to show off how strong you are in a fight, which means that you need to stop holding back and take out as many enemies as possible. The best way to do that is to use your Mantle. You draw the card and slide it into the specialised slot on your arm.

“MANTLE! Boosting Dragon! Shattering foes with explosive power!”

You still don’t know why Mitsuru felt the need to add these corny lines to the real-life costume as well as the toys. There are boxes and boxes of identical roleplay gauntlets lining the shelves of every toy shop in the city. The branding has even evolved to include a superhero name that she came up with, without your input. ‘Shatterpoint’ isn’t the worst thing you’ve heard, at least – you’d have a hard time coming up with anything clever. You aren’t going to start referring to yourself using that name anyway, that’d be embarrassing.

“Hoh, what’s this new form you’ve taken on?” Nana inquires.

"It boosts my attack power in exchange for defence. Since this is going to be a close-quarters battle, I want to surprise them and get the advantage early." You lead Nana down a set of stairs and towards one of the access doors that leads into the control room for one of the purification tanks. The smell is pretty foul thanks to the wastewater, but Nana is used to working with huge animals – faeces isn't going to faze her.

There are several androids in the room beyond which you can see using your scanner. Firing a gun in this place isn't going to end well, so you'll need to utilise the skills that Chun-Li has drilled into you to take them down in hand-to-hand combat.

"I would say ladies first, but I think you want me to go on ahead."

"That's right. Don't disappoint me."

You sigh and open the door using a flying kick. The androids on guard turn to face you in reaction to the noise of the metal clattering against the wall, but you don't give them a moment to strike. Your body strains as you feel the armour push you to your very limits. The first punch rips the head clean off the body of the unfortunate robot in front of you. A second later you dash to the other side and slam another into the wall using a roundhouse kick.

Nana dispenses of a few more using her tail laser. It only takes a minute for the entire room to be cleared of enemies with you both working in tandem. As you regroup with Nana, she crosses her arms and turns her nose up, offering nothing but faint praise for your efforts.

"That wasn't too bad, I guess."

"Lala told me that you're a big fan of the later volumes of the story, so have you never seen me at an early stage like this?"

Nana follows you as you start walking towards the next room.

"I did! I just prefer it when you're at your strongest, that's all."

"Well I'm sorry to disappoint, but I'm afraid that I'm the only version of me that's able to summon you. Though I did hear from someone important that I'm going to become a force to be reckoned with in the future." Nana was naturally impulsive, impatient and somewhat childish. She didn't like the idea of having to wait to see the version of you that she admired and held feelings for. You can tell just from the sour look on her face.

She stamps her foot petulantly, "This sucks!"

"I'm not trying to blackmail you or anything – but there's really only two choices on offer. You can reject me and go back to business as usual, or jump in feet first and see how crazy this ride can get."

Nana groans as storms ahead through the next door without you. It's going to take more than that to convince her of your faithfulness to the image she imagines. You do your best to rip through even more androids as they try to shoot you down, but your draconic mantle, powered by one of Issei's scales, allows you to move at incredible speeds, taking down enemies and using them as shields against each other. The last one tries to light you up with a barrage of sub-machine-gun fire, but you deftly duck beneath its crosshairs and lift it over your head, tossing it onto the concrete floor below and shattering it into multiple pieces.

"I'm detecting more heat signatures up ahead, it looks like they're getting ready to inject the water supply with their chemical weapon!" Mitsuru says urgently.

You boot the next door with all of your strength, but something is blocking it from the other side and not even your power armour is enough to move it.

“The door’s locked! Nana, cut through it!”

You step aside and allow her a clear shot at the sheet metal barrier. Her tail glows red, before emitting a sharp and superheated red laser beam. With some precision cutting, she slices through the locking mechanism, leaving molten steel in her wake. The door swings open and allows you to confront Faust and his Toxidroid. “You again!” he scowls. You arrived just in time. The droid is moments away from inserting its injection system into an access point they’re created. Nana strikes lightning fast, directing her still warmed-up beam in its direction and severing the arm before it can complete the task.

“Nicely done, Nana.”

She huffs, “I didn’t do it just for your praise or anything!”

Faust is enraged, “Every time I try to complete one of our objectives, you arrive to make a mess of everything.” He draws his sword and leaps into action, but you’re wise to his tricks. Chun-Li and Motoko have filled you in on some effective anti-bladed weapon strategies since your first encounter. The prissy alien wails in pain as you step back out of his range before clobbering him around the head with a flying kick.

“I’m going to beat you in record time, Faust.”

“Don’t challenge a man with nothing left to lose! If I fail here, then my position in the Commune will be threatened!”

“Tell it to somebody who cares, jackass!”

You dive at each again, delivering a series of glancing blows on each side. Nana busies herself by targeting what remains of the Toxidroid with more deadly beam attacks. It’s an all-out brawl as everyone lashes out at whomever they can reach. Nana keeps out of range using her cybernetic wings and rains death upon the robots with glib enjoyment.

Your HUD makes it clear that Lala and Momo are making short work of the other forces above you. You barely dodge a swipe from Faust’s beam sabre, retaliation with a mid-section kick that knocks the breath from his chest for a moment. It seems like their plan to poison the water supply has come to nought.

That is until Faust pulls a suspicious-looking device from inside of his armour, “I hoped that I needn’t use such crude methods to fulfil my plan – but it seems you leave me no choice.” He pushes the button before you can stop him, and Mitsuru quickly yells into your headset.

“I’m getting a weird reading from that robot, he must have done something. Get out of there!”

Faust cackles and disappears through a wormhole as the Toxidroid begins to judder and spark. He must have set it to self-destruct! Nana is blindsided as the robot begins to attack her with no regard for its own structural integrity, forcing you to jump in and push her out of the way. There’s simply no time to get away. Your vision turns white as the robot explodes in a blinding flash and wreaks total havoc in the control room. You’re flung head over heel into the nearest wall, several pieces of shrapnel ripping into your armour.

After that comes the gas. The superheated chemical weapon has turned into a vapour and is now flooding the room at an alarming pace. Nana is down for the count, her tail twitching helplessly with stars swirling around her head. Even her alien biology won't be able to resist inhaling too much of this stuff. This is bad. Super bad.

"Mitsuru, that crap is in the air – what should I do?"

"Damn it. If Nana inhales any of that stuff she'll be toast. You need to get her out of there, but I don't think you have the time."

As your mind races through a thousand possible scenarios and situations, you realise that Nana is now risking her life entirely for your benefit. She never asked to be involved in this like the others did. Lala and Momo are nearby, and the last thing you want to see is them crying over the body of their deceased sister. With that resolution in hand – you decide to do right by her and take extreme action. Reaching to your gauntlet, you unlock the seal around your neck and remove your helmet.

"What are you doing?" Mitsuru cries through the radio.

"The right thing."

The gas is already stinging your eyes and mouth, but that doesn't matter. You lift Nana up and slide the helmet over her head before the gas reaches her lungs. Another button press seals it tight using a vacuum system that Lala designed. The internal filter will keep her safe, but now you have no protection from the gas either. Your vision swims as you try to hold your breath for as long as possible.

"Lala, Mono, you need to get down there-"

The last thing you hear before blacking out is Mitsuru desperately trying to arrange a rescue. You can only hope that they reach you in time.