



AS ABOVE

An emotional mecha LARP/journal game for 1 player by Adira Slattery

BRIEFING

You play as a fresh 17 year old recruit for the Steel Legion who has just arrived at Echo Base after surviving an attack from the enemy forces of the Jhin. You are here to be a mecha pilot! Pilots were previously elite members of assault task forces piloting glinting mechanical monstrosities, but are now a ragtag group of green recruits thrown into sometimes cobbled together or even ramshackle mecha. You step off the train to Echo Base with your meager belongings, including your prized possession of a single well worn journal.

The game is divided into 12 **Chapters**, each being played over the course of about a week. The **Chapter** includes instructions of things to do in the physical world as *italics* and prompts for your character to write and reflect about in their journal (following a bold **JOURNAL** tag). Complete the **Chapter** by following from top to bottom, and be sure to read the entirety of a **Chapter** before beginning to write. Don't read ahead to the next **Chapter**, only read the one you are currently completing. Take as long or as short as you need for a **Chapter**, but make sure you take at least 2 days and no more than a week to complete a single **Chapter**. Also, **Chapters** don't necessarily encompass a week's time 1:1 in universe, some of them can be longer or shorter at your discretion. Avoid answering multiple **JOURNAL** prompts in one sitting if possible.

At the end of each **Chapter**, you will pick one of 3 options to exemplify your character's experiences over that **Chapter**. If your experiences during that chapter focused on depression, death, isolation, and fatigue, choose TRAGIC. If your experiences focused on new life, happiness, connection, and safety, choose HOPEFUL. If your experiences focused on the pointlessness of war, anger, overcoming adversity, and defying direct orders, choose FURIOUS.

YOUR MECHA

During the course of play, you will select a physical object to represent your mecha. It is recommended you pick something robust, like a robot toy instead of a fragile model, because you will be altering and harming the mecha during play. The mecha in your journal and the physical one are connected intimately. If something noteworthy happens to your mecha as it exists in the physical world, make sure to add it to your journal. Also, you will reflect any major events that happen in universe on your physical mecha. Some of these changes are already called out in the **Chapters** as *italics* physical actions, but just as everyone's story is different so too is everyone's mecha unique. Feel free to go beyond that, and bring the page onto the physical mecha when you do. Cut your mecha when it is cut, decorate it to reflect your accomplishments, or just polish it to show your love.

Resist the urge to replace your mecha. If your mecha must be replaced, write the circumstances into your journal. Also, add the following to the **Chapter** this occurs in.

JOURNAL What happened to cause your mecha to need to be fully replaced? Describe how your new mecha feels better. What is it's name? Describe why you still miss your old mecha.

There are a number of characters who will be referenced by name in the Chapters that form the core of the story, but you have the option to supplement them with your own. Do you have a nemesis within the Jhin? Perhaps a younger sibling you are writing to? Feel free to be creative.

YOUR FELLOW SOLDIERS

Circle from the options below to flesh out the other soldiers of Echo Base.

Pt. Shune has an [easy/insecure/infectious] laugh with [piercing/beautiful/sad] eyes. 17y

Pt. Burke has a [long/shuffling/fast] gait and [soft/meaty/sinewy] hands. 18y

Pt. Pajari has a [friendly/smirking/scarred] face with [lithe/heavy/coiled] muscles. 16y

Sgt. Abara has a [strict/laid back/motivating] style of leadership. 28y

Chapter 1 - Your New Life

Write your character's name on your Journal.

JOURNAL How long ago did the Jhin kill your parents before your eyes? How have you been sleeping since arriving at Echo Base? What have you enjoyed that surprised you? Describe Gen. Mendoza's demeanor and office. Why were you in there on your first day?

JOURNAL Describe the first impressions of your squad. Why kind thing did Shune do for you? Why does Pajari get under your skin? What was a good joke Burke told? How does the squad feel about Sgt. Abara?

TRAGIC ___ HOPEFUL ___ FURIOUS ___

Chapter 2 - The Mecha

Get a physical mecha. Paint or otherwise customize it.

JOURNAL Describe your mecha's outer appearance. What is it's name? How does the compartment smell? What temperature are the controls? Describe the sounds of it's weapons. How good of a shot are you? How do you use your mecha that isn't for fighting or training?

JOURNAL What emotions do you feel as the mecha sways during a morning run? Where can the four of you go to be alone from Abara's eyes now that you have mecha? Whose mecha has really grown on them?

TRAGIC ___ HOPEFUL ___ FURIOUS ___

Chapter 3 - Evaluation

Carry your mecha with you everywhere until Chapter 11.

JOURNAL What caused Pajari and Burke to come to blows? What did Sgt. Abara do to break them up? How long until Pajari and Burke made up? What did Shune tell you she thought of this? Do you think she held something back?

JOURNAL Gen. Mendoza has come for your squad's inspection day. How do they walk? Describe the structure of an evaluation round. How do you cause your squad to fail the first evaluation round? How many rounds did it take for the squad to pass? What couldn't Sgt. Abara do to help?

TRAGIC ___ HOPEFUL ___ FURIOUS ___

Chapter 4 - First Steps

Hug your mecha once a day during this chapter.

JOURNAL The four of you are sent out into the field on your first mission to check up on a Legion listening post. How long does it take to get to the tower? Who set up the Recon equipment? Why was Pajari out of their mecha when the Jhin arrived? Describe the relief of returning to Echo Base.

JOURNAL How did it feel when you saw a Jhin mecha in the field for the first time? Describe the Jhin's mecha; focusing on sights, sounds, and movement. What's the biggest difference between them and the Steel Legion? How are they specifically eerily similar to your mecha?

TRAGIC ___ HOPEFUL ___ FURIOUS ___

Chapter 5 - Disturbance

Decisively break your mecha and then repair it. Ignore any urge to replace your mecha.

JOURNAL Out on patrol, your mecha is damaged in a short skirmish with the Jhin. Describe the sounds of the skirmish. Describe the damage to your mecha and to your flesh. Why is the damage your fault? Who covers your escape? Who tends to your wounds in the field?

JOURNAL Describe how your broken Mecha looks sitting in Echo base and how it feels to get to pilot it after it is fixed. How long does it take to get replaced?

TRAGIC ___ HOPEFUL ___ FURIOUS ___

Chapter 6 - The Cost

Sgt Abara died yesterday while leading another squad against the Jhin. *Take 5 minutes of silence in remembrance of Sgt Abara before writing.*

JOURNAL How did you react when you first heard? Who comforted Burke when they cried? Why did Shune disappear for a few hours? Describe the memorial service and the flag of the Steel Legion. Why did you start crying when talking to Pajari over dinner?

JOURNAL Who is the new Sgt? Describe how they speak. What do they say about Abarra during their introduction to the squad? Why does that ring hollow?

TRAGIC ___ HOPEFUL ___ FURIOUS ___

Chapter 7 - The Village

Watch something burn entirely. Focus on what's left behind.

JOURNAL You and 2 other squads are sent to destroy a Jhin base. Why does your squad arrive later than the other 2? Describe the small and unassuming village, and not fortified base, that you come up upon. How does it feel to see the village get destroyed by the other 2 squads? What does Burke say over the coms that snaps you out of your thoughts?

JOURNAL Describe a small boy's face, no more than 8. What color was his hair? What was he holding in his hands? Why did you not see him approach your mecha? Did you shoot at him on purpose? Describe how the blood looked on the ground around him. Describe the flames approaching his body. Why did you turn and walk away? Did you tell anyone?

TRAGIC ___ HOPEFUL ___ FURIOUS ___

Chapter 8 - War Doesn't End

Randomly select 3 options from below.

OPT 1 *Submerge your mecha in water for an hour*

JOURNAL During a mission you are disabled and knocked into the bottom of a massive lake. Describe what you see and hear there. How long does it take for rescue to arrive?

OPT 2 *Pass your mecha over a candle*

JOURNAL A fire break out at Echo Base, and your squad is on fire brigade duty. What burns that Shune cares about? How many die in the flames?

OPT 3 *Paint or customize your mecha further*

JOURNAL You have some much needed R&R. How do you repair your mech? What do you bet over cards with Pajari?

OPT 4 *Cut or scar your mecha*

JOURNAL During a mission you are in close combat with a Jhin assault mecha. How do you win? Why did it feel like you cheated?

OPT 5 *Compliment your mecha*

JOURNAL Your mecha saved you from death countless times over. Describe some of them. How would you feel if you didn't have your mecha?

TRAGIC ___ HOPEFUL ___ FURIOUS ___

Chapter 9 - Firing Squad

JOURNAL Gen. Mendoza comes to the squad and informs you that Burke will be executed by firing squad in the afternoon. What reason does the Gen. give? How do you fail to prevent it? Do you know Burke's final words? Describe the Sgt's reaction. How does this funeral differ from Abara's? *Scream for a minute before writing*

TRAGIC ___ HOPEFUL ___ FURIOUS ___

Chapter 10 - Reflection

Stand before a mirror for at least 5 minutes silently before writing, holding your mecha.

JOURNAL Describe how your squadmates have changed and grown. How do you feel about them? The Steel Legion? The Jhin? Your parent's death? Your mecha? What happens when you try and meet your own gaze in a mirror? What do you see in your eyes?

TRAGIC ___ HOPEFUL ___ FURIOUS ___

Chapter 11 - Behind Enemy Lines

Rest your mecha by your bed. Sleep by it for the chapter.

JOURNAL You and Shune are on leave together in a nearby town alone when the Jhin attack. Neither of you has your mecha. What were you trying to get in the town? How do you avoid detection while blockaded inside the town? Do you attempt to strike back at the Jhin? What act of kindness by their soldiers surprises you?

JOURNAL One night, you and Shune share an intimate moment. Describe the feeling of their flesh. Describe how they smell. How do you feel as this begins? When it ends? What does Shune reveal when you are done? The next day, the Jhin have moved on. Do you both acknowledge this event when you return to Echo Base?

TRAGIC ___ HOPEFUL ___ FURIOUS ___

Chapter 12 - What's Next

For the final chapter, do the path you have chosen the most out of all of the previous chapters.

TRAGIC

Give your mecha to someone else. Explain its meaning. Thank them.

JOURNAL During a patrol, you are injured permanently. Describe the injury. Why did that mission result in your promotion? How does being assigned to desk duty feel? How do you feel when Shune leaves on patrol?

JOURNAL Describe the attack on Echo Base by the Jhin. How does Pajari's death save your life? What causes the Jhin to retreat. Describe the memorial service and the flag of the Steel Legion. What does Shune say over the casket? How does it sound when Gen. Mendoza begins weeping?

HOPEFUL

JOURNAL Describe the mission briefing for the mission you will die on. What are the objectives? Why can't Pajari sit still? What does Gen. Mendoza do that causes everyone to laugh? How does Shune look in the dim light of the briefing tent? Why do you have hope?

Destroy your mecha entirely with no hope of recovery. Unceremoniously throw away anything that is left.

Hand your journal to someone else to read. Tell them it was the only thing recovered from the burning wreckage of a mecha. Thank them.

FURIOUS

Bury your mecha in the ground as deep as you can.

JOURNAL Describe a mountain's flora fauna. Why did you head there instead of Echo Base after your last mission? Did anyone come with you? Describe an old man's face and cane. How did you react when you saw him on the mountain? What did his wife serve you for dinner? What crops grow in the fields over your mecha now?

JOURNAL Someone else has arrived on the mountain. They are a Jhin soldier. Describe their laugh and ears. What did you feel when you saw them get out of their mecha? Were you surprised to find they were another deserter? What did you laugh about over drinks and cards?