

## A Bio 210

Chapter 210: ....the hatch...and the booklet

Ale...was not sure what to think about this, Beatrice...was not a good fighter by any metric, her movements while practiced, missed that flowing movement from one point to the next.

It was closer to seeing a machine than a martial artist, and that was something to say coming from her, who was technically more machine than anything.

In that aspect, Beatrice fought closer to how P4 did it, a flawless execution of a movement, stop. Then another.

It was....wasteful, but that didn't mean that it wasn't effective. Beatrice was mowing the remaining Zombies with great effect, all her movements managed to destroy, prevent them from moving or straight up sent them into dreamland.

And that was a thing too, the force that Ale was seeing from the little girl was enough that each of her strikes should pulverize, destroy or outright kill the humans she was fighting with, and yet...

They all remained alive, as alive as they could be while not being able to move that is.

Whatever her Core was doing allowed Beatrice to keep these humans alive, somehow, her punches seemed to be hitting some kind of self contained barrier that killed most of the kinetic force.

Beatrice's Core was actively making sure that she wasn't killing, pulverizing or straight up murdering the zombies. It was a layered shield that destroyed itself and set up itself depending on who Beatrice was fighting against.

To the zombies with more endurance, this layered shield gave them less protection, but to those that were on the weaker side? It gave as much protection as it could produce. It was an interesting setup. One that Ale didn't understand, wasn't it easier to just grant a certain degree of power to Beatrice and so prevent all of this from happening?

Ale didn't understand this. What was the point then? Beatrice was wasting mana, and energy, since she actually needed to move herself all around to make those martial arts movements, actually...

[Main Core, record the muscle composition and estimated burn and destruction-regeneration of muscle mass of Beatrice.]

[Notice, loading data... building calculations...]

Main Core crunched the numbers while Ale looked the movements and made note of which ones she could actually do and whose worked thanks to Core powers bullshitery.

[Notice, calculation finished... Target Designation: Beatrice Starcroft will grow her muscular density and mana density greatly by the overstimulation of mana that she is currently experiencing.]

[So she is training...or her Core is training her, why?]

[Notice, inconclusive data.]

So her Core was training her, or somehow she was training herself in case she knew what she was doing...

"Go to eep baddies!" Somehow Ale doubted the girl knew what she was doing if she was actually screaming those kind of things while fighting.

Ale wasn't sure what was worse, the fact that the girl would grow stronger thanks to this, or the fact that she had no actual way of finding out if the girl actually didn't know what she was doing, or if her Core was sentient and was actively helping her...

Ale knew that their Core was sentient, and had a twisted version of the best possible interest for Alexa, but...was this true for everyone?

She hadn't heard anyone else talk about their own Core like how Beatrice spoke of it, or how Alexa and Core's relationship was, or well, not anyone else besides P4 anyway. But that was one who didn't count.

P4 was a special case after all. Even by the normal metrics that Alexa worked under, this was quite an incredible phenomenon. Ale really needed to check with more people about if they communicated with their Core or not.

The obvious target would be [Big Sister] and [Golem], then afterward, only [Billy] was on the possible list. Perhaps [Gabriel]?

Besides those, Ale didn't had many options, the one with the most information would probably be [Vulcanus]...or perhaps [Vulcanus.exe]?

But asking the second or first implied that her question would be known by Alexanders... Same with asking within the Saintsworths database, that purple woman would find out and tell it to Alexanders...At that point, it would be easier to ask directly the blonde asshole.

Actually, wouldn't that be the easiest way? The man was at the top of the Saintsworths Conglomerate, the company that allegedly could control everything around here.

Even so, if possible Ale wanted nothing to do with that man, there was something deeply wrong with him, and till Ale could find out what it was, she wanted to stay away from him if possible.

But for now...

"What do you think Master?" Beatrice had finished dealing with the zombies while Ale debated who she was going to ask about Core shenanigans.

She had not come to any decision as of yet, but what mattered at the moment was that she had to say something to this creature.

"It was quite interesting, you need to work on your moves, you are too stiff when you are moving from one movement to the next." Ale decided to at least give some advice; if she was getting treated as a master of some kind, she might as well give some help.

"Mother Rona tells me the same, but like, don't you need to think about what movement to make next?" Beatrice asked, confused, "Like...don't you think before moving?"

"I do," Ale said nodding, "But that does not mean this is good for you, I need to measure my movements and act with certainty about what I have to do. That is not the case for you."

"Why not?" Beatrice asked while walking towards Ale, as Ale in turn walked towards the hatch on the middle of the room, "If you do it, then it must be the correct way of doing it, you can't become an old master doing things wrong!"

"Your way of fighting and mine are different," Ale said, shaking her head, "Mine is the way of calculation and efficiency, while yours is gearing up towards flow and movement."

"Flow and movement?" Beatrice asked confused.

"You are martial artists, right?" Ale asked.

"Yeh," Beatrice answered, "Mother Rona is one and I want to follow her example."

"Well, martial arts are all about flow of movement, of weaving your movements one after the next." Ale said quoting some weird phrase of one of the series she did a reaction video once, "While my style is all about precision and efficiency, yours is more of a reaction than anything."

"...But what if I want to follow your example?" Beatrice asked, looking at Ale with stars in her eyes.

"You must not follow examples at random," Ale said shaking her head, even if her combat style was just that, "Not all combat styles will match what you can do."

Beatrice took a moment to think about it, "I see..." And then said as much, walking besides Ale while she looked the hatch, "So...I really need to work into getting from one form to the next?"

Ale continued looking over the hatch, it seemed quite a simple one, unlike the one that Sam had, this one didn't seem to have any type of locking mechanism.

"Well, this seems like a normal hatch to access an underground level," Ale said pointing at the hatch, a simple touch was all she had needed to check the composition and get a blueprint from it.

She even managed to get [Core] to give her one that showed all the required schematics...

Was the thing showing Ale that it could do as much as Beatrice's Core? It was meaningless, Ale would not trust the thing anytime soon, she could trust it to have Alexa's interest in mind, but that was about as much as she was willing to believe in the thing.

And not a single point more than was necessary.

"Yes, a circle ground door." Beatrice said nodding.

This was really getting tiresome.

"What is the plan from the Hero's side." Ale said, turning to Beatrice, "I was called to help a sidekick called Body & Soul. Probably either one with a very weird Core power, or two."

"Hmm...." Beatrice said looking the hatch and pocking it with her finger, "As Mom Elisee says...When in doubt...To the Manual!"

And with great fanfare Beatrice pulled a booklet from inside her top, there was no room for that small booklet inside her clothing, the little girl offered it to Ale, so she took it.

The girl had been moving all around the sewer like Ale, and as such she should have evidence of sweat or grime on her body, Ale had some grime and sweat forming on her too, she dealt with it easily enough since her clothes did consume the thing (Ale liked to not think too much on the fact that her clothes ate like that, since she had no room to judge since her powerset was basically the same).

But this? This booklet? It was dry, clean of any grime or sweat, no bodily fluids or any mysterious liquid; how did this work? What power was at play? Or well, Ale knew what power was, she had a blueprint of it.

She still didn't understand how it worked and would probably stay as far away from it as possible, from what she was getting, this power worked on delusions that were powerful enough to affect the world.

Ale...

Was not that good with those, she had her own delusions yes, she couldn't hide them (She was, after all, a content creator), but to have a full power only fueled by that?

When did she know how the rules of physics actually work?

No, she could not live like that.

Nonetheless...she would take advantage of this.

"Guidelines, rules and laws the good and well abiding sidekick must follow..." Ale read the title on the booklet, turning to look at Beatrice to see if she wanted it back, "You are aware I am a [Minion] working for [Haephestus' Forge] at the moment, as noticed by my mask design and emblems on my power armor?"

"Of course Master!" Beatrice said, nodding, "I know of your cover, but since it's a cover, it's fine! Mom Elisee said that in these cases feelings are what matter, the feels never are wrong!"

....Well, Mother Elisee was wrong in this case.

"So long you understand," Ale said, sighing and opening the booklet. "First, always listen to the Hero in charge of your zone and do not let, under any circumstance, a villain see this booklet."

Ale almost closed the thing and threw it into the ground right there. But she took a deep breath and continued reading, she would not let herself be perturbed by the shenanigans, she was stronger than the shenanigans.

"....More likely than not, the Villains that matter already have a copy of this (Screw you Vulcanus and your spies, trojans and virus), but this is more of a feels kind of thing..." Ale shook her head.

"Mom Elisee also said that, and while Mother Rona gets angry with her every time, she also admitted that it was the truth; you can't hide this kind of thing, so better go by, feels like Mom Elisee said!" Beatrice beamed at the words, the girl really loved her Mothers huh? It was getting tiresome, like hearing a parrot repeat the same thing over and over, how did people tolerate these kind of things anyway?

"I see..." Ale said as she continued reading, and decided that it was too much data, so she just went ahead and asked for a blueprint scan from the thing and skipped towards the Index, "...incursion into unknown territory..."

Searching for the word she needed, she went to the allocated page and started reading yet again. As expected of an organization that worked like this, they did have some instructions about what to do in precisely this situation.

"When encountering a hostile environment that requires breaching, if your powerset allows you to tank or survive (Be it with invulnerability, regeneration, or self-healing), your work is to be the point of the spear. If your power is more of a support type, your work is to protect and help those in front of you..." Ale read while Beatrice nodded at her words, as if she was speaking the only logical thing. "...If you don't have either, you must join a team and work as a support damage dealer, if your team doesn't have any of these required roles..."

Ale did not have a team, but she could qualify as a regenerator.

"Then?" Beatrice asked with stars in her eyes, and Ale could feel the desperation in the little girl for the answer.

"Then one of you must act as a Tank to soak the damage while getting healed, if no one wants to do such role, you are to ask the nearby Hero to deal with this, if no Hero is available you are the guard the door, hidden passage, hatch, vault door, security door or teleporter." Ale said, turning to the hatch, so they really set it up for a hatch too, "Since that location is probably part of the Villain's plan, it is important to keep it under vigil."

Ale...knew it was important since it was protected, but what if a sidekick found a random door and didn't have the required team set up? Would they be tied to a random access door? She couldn't help but giggle at the idea of sidekicks and Heroes wasting time.

"I see, should I go first then?" Beatrice asked, going for the hatch's handle.

Ale's hand shot straight to the little girl's hand and stopped her from moving another inch forward, "No, I'll go first. We will go about it as we did before." Ale said, shaking her head, that she would not send the little girl, whom the NDO seemed to fear getting hurt.

Not till Ale knew more about this anyway.

"As before, you are to wait till I give you the signal, since most of the enemy forces were outside chances are we will find nothing, as of now what matters the most is finding Body & Soul." Ale said turning to stare at the hatch, "Also I need you to stand far away from here, I don't detect any traps, but it is a possibility."

The little girl nodded at her and Ale saw the accumulation of mana into the little girl's feet as she jumped away, so the Mana still followed some type of rules within the girl?

It was weird seeing the Mana Wavelength act closer as a liquid gas when she had seen it behave closer to energy; perhaps it was also part of how Beatrice visualized it? Or how her Core interpreted it?

More study was required.

But not now, instead Ale focused on the hatch, there was nothing off about the hatch, it was a normal hatch, she had checked, she had the full blueprint schematic of it on her brain even (She would delete it later).

So, placing a hand atop the hatch and letting her gloved hand close...Ale pulled at the hatch...

And as expected.....