

A Bio 211

Chapter 211: Body & Soul, the beginning of their adventure.

This had been a mistake, a very big mistake.

It was set up as a good idea by Father, and while I was against it, the only reason I ever thought about accepting was because Lord Blackthorn was convinced that boosting the development of Glory would help him get back to her previous level of intelligence.

And while I knew it wasn't because of that, I had no real option to oppose it; on the surface level, I myself was also downgraded... I suspected that at least Mother knew the truth though.

I had been able to see how she looked at me with my peripheral vision. One of the advantages of having full body control was that while my eyes looked to the front, my consciousness could focus on the peripheral vision.

A fact that scared me greatly, the amount of things I was able to do while no one else knew was staggering. From being capable of modifying how my body reacted and engineering the social cues that I had struggled with.

It was...terrifying, not because of what I was now able to do, but because of what it implied that people with these kind of powers were capable of.

I hadn't seen any data saying that all shifters could do this of course, but every core power was different, even mine would not be an exception. But the problem here was not that, but Alexa.

Like it had been since the girl came to our classroom. I knew it, the power that Alexa wielded was weirdly similar to mine.

And if so, it meant that while Alexa didn't seem like she was doing it, all her movements, reactions, emotions and all that she did could be engineered. All the silly outbursts, the way she moved, acted, and reacted. All could be engineered.

Hell, I had used some of those as a way to try and deceive Father...most of the time.

I had said that while I was able to return to my previous peak, it was not something that could be done all the time. I had implied that I could increase the amount of time with enough training. Which had been a mistake.

And so, Father spoke with Lord Blackthorn, and so we were here.

Father wanted me to my peak as fast as possible, but why did Lord Blackthorn wanted the same?

My current theory was that he had seeded some kind of backdoor that allowed him to have some degree of control over Glory, that or he didn't want to deal with the current childish Glory.

"Let's go Body!" I myself didn't mind it that much, it was nice seeing Glory not filled with stress and angry about whatever political movement hadn't played as she wanted.

But that was not the problem.

"Calm down Soul, we need to follow the orders." He said with a sigh as his body was already moving after her friend.

The great plan to increase their powers and nurture them back to their former 'Peak'?

Throw them to the wolves as sidekicks.

It had even been discussed the option to work as minions instead, apparently some organizations nurtured and protected their workers more than others, and somehow the Villain side cared more about the workers than the Heroic side.

That...did check up to some degree in Alan's mind, perhaps Alexa even worked or would end up working for one at some point. He doubted it if one went ahead and thought about what the girl had said and even implied whenever she wasn't being honest.

There was no reason for someone like Alexa to want to return to the dark side of the world, why would someone who was raised as a weapon want to return to being wielded as one?

As far as Alan had seen, Alexa probably wanted to live a carefree life, perhaps...perhaps if all her actions had been engineered, then she probably wanted to lie long enough that she could fake it.

That or the original Alexa was one of the other Alexas that Glory had seen inside the little girl.

But that was that, and this was this, and this...well...

"What do you want to do, Soul? They asked us to check up the perimeter while the grown-ups scouted around. Our job is to ensure no one violates the perimeter." An easy mission to the overstimulated young sidekicks if he was to be honest.

It was probably a way to beef up their resume, a way so they could say that they participated in a cataclysm level mission. A way to show off to the other sidekicks.

Really, it was more politics for the Hero side of the world. A way so they could say that among their first missions they had fought against a rogue mind Core user of the A-Lists.

"We need to help them!" Glory said as she grabbed him by the arm and started to pull at him towards the nearest sewer hatch.

Alan turned to look at the older sidekick that they had been assigned, a nondescript one, they were probably a corporate sidekick. That is to say, someone who worked for either the Blackthorn or the Harmonia family. Someone who had awakened a Core and ended up having to do this work as part of their duties.

Poor soul, but it played to their favor; since they didn't want to be here, it meant that they were being sloppy, that is to say. They weren't paying attention to either Glory or Alan. They weren't aware of their

real identities; this was done in order to protect them; no one wanted the heir and heiress to be kidnapped.

Alan knew, of course, that there were real guards within the retinue, probably someone hired to protect them, that or one of the heroes or sidekicks were told to keep an eye on them.

Not someone within their immediate circle, of course, but someone near them. Perhaps Father had hired one of the minions? One of the lieutenant class, or perhaps a villain?

Yeah, they were probably going to be rescued by a villain. That would be annoying to explain to Glory.

"Are you sure you want to go in?" Alan ended up saying to Glory as the girl started to fiddle with the sewer hatch, unable to open it.

Mostly because the girl was poking it like it would open like that as if it was an automatic door like the ones at their respective homes.

"Yes! We are Heroes! We must help those in need!" Glory said as her eyes shone in purple light, Alan knew of that light, it was the same Glory used to peek at other people.

Part of the reason why they gave her the codename Soul. Glory could peer and see us for what we were, what we really were; no one could hide behind double meanings or lies. One of their teachers on Core powers seemed to think that she could, at some point, use this power to measure the real allegiances and what people thought about others.

It wasn't real mind-reading, but they said it could probably be used as such. Lord Blackthorn had looked as if he had drank something bitter, if Glory had awakened this power before the arrangement they did...

Then she would probably have been sold as a child wife to some perverted Saintsworths, perhaps even offered to their CEO. Not that the man had accepted any such offering.

But the old folks all kept trying. Alan was happy that it would not end as such. But there was something more important at the moment, that being, "Can you see them?" Glory's power was weird, not because the fact that it used words to describe people's inner workings.

Their teacher theorized that it was a way for Glory's brain to process what her Core showed her, and that it could evolve into different ways to show the information when she grew older.

Current Glory however, was not able to filter or ignore some of the things she could see sometimes and her power sometimes flared on its own like this, it was part of the reason why they also wanted her to learn and control her power better.

Unlike myself, her power was obvious; if mine flared like that (That it did from time to time), I could merely change the composition of the flare-up to hide it better.

"Yes...They are screaming." Glory said in a sad tone, "They want help...they want....they want it to not hurt anymore."

That...was troubling.

The data they had been given described them as brainless and already lost people. They allegedly weren't worth the effort to save or heal. Some guarantees had been given to them that there was a specialty type Core User who could probably reverse this. And that they would be given that treatment if it was needed.

But...Glory here was stating that they could be helped? Was...was her Core that powerful?

Or was this something of a side effect of whatever Alexa had done to awaken their Cores? Perhaps...perhaps his own Core also could help? Somehow?

Alan didn't know how that could be; his power was physical, way away from the metaphysical like Glory.

Granted, Glory had some aspects of body enhancement thanks to the modifications that they had gone through, and then from the modifications that a Core power did to their users, all Core Users usually were at least peak human in physical power.

That was to say, most Core Users were either equivalent or more powerful than athletes.

"Fine," Alan ended up saying with a sigh, grabbing the handle of the hatch and opening the stupid thing. "But it was your idea to do this. And we will leave the moment I say so."

"Okay," Glory said, nodding quickly and waiting for Alan to walk into the sewer.

Of course.

"Wait a few seconds and then go in. Remember the codes Soul." Alan said as he jumped down the hatch, "And use the ladder!"

He fell down for a few seconds and felt the kinetic force hit his legs; his body composition changed to distribute the kinetic force across his body; some of his tendons and muscles were ruptured by the strain, but it was easy enough to heal them back to working order.

He didn't feel pain at all, since he had disabled those as soon as he jumped in, he did not forget to turn those on again afterwards of course, that mistake had been only made once and he learned the lesson afterwards.

Not being able to walk unless you healed yourself was annoying, after all. And having to control everything manually was hell, he mostly left his body to its own devices, unless he needed something very specific.

And he had asked, but shifters didn't live like this, so he didn't qualify as a shifter either. Even if he could theoretically imitate one.

He had been told that if he managed to pass up as a shapeshifter, he would be on the S-List. So, everyone dismissed his theories about how Alexa's power worked.

Even himself was starting to doubt it.

"Body?" Glory's voice resounded as the girl came down, "Don't look up."

Alan couldn't help but smile at that, the girl still had some of her former social ticks, like asking him to not peek under her skirt. Not that Glory was wearing one...

Her attire was a skintight bodysuit as underclothing and a pair of shorts, a loose blouse and a jacket. Also the mask of course, a pair of purple glasses and a breather mask that was designed to filter toxins in the air.

Part of the reason Glory didn't mind going into the sewer was the fact that she couldn't smell a thing.

Unlike him.

The Hero Suit assigned to him, Alan Harmonia. Body. Was a more traditional one, a skin tight suit with body armor put atop it, a scarf that could double as mask if needed and a set of eyewear that hid his eyes.

He had tweaked some of his face to look slightly different, not enough that Glory couldn't identify him, but enough that most face scanners and face recognition software wouldn't recognize him.

It was meaningless after a certain threshold of data perusal, of course, but that was also besides the point.

"Where to?" Alan asked as Glory looked around, her eyes shining in purple light again.

"[Hero], [Protagonist], [Wrong World], [Daughter of a Goddess]..." Glory intoned as her eyes started bleeding.

That...was not a good signal.

"Soul!" Alan screamed, standing in front of Glory, "Close your eyes!"

They had been told that such an act was meaningless too, that her power didn't need her eyes open, but the act of closing them sometimes worked as a way to turn her power off.

"Ah...sorry...I'm okay now." Glory said, wiping her eyes, the blood that had been dripping turning into purple motes of light that faded away, that...was also new. "I think I looked into the wrong direction."

Alan...didn't know if he should ask about that, he had heard a few worrying words. After he reported his powers and Glory's power to Father and Lord Blackthorn they had brought him apart and straight to someone he thought was mostly a myth...not because he wasn't real, but because the man was more of a convenient joke. But even so, people spoke about him with respect and fear.

[The Theater Master]

The man had looked up and down at him and scoffed, but that wasn't the issue; being ignored by a high-list SuperVillain wasn't an issue; the problem was what they told him.

"If Glory ever says the word [Protagonist] or [Hero], you need to come straight to me and tell me. That is your [Role] son of the [Harmonia]."

He had dismissed it as the man disappeared as if he had never been there.

And he hadn't understood it before, not till now. Glory had bleed from her eyes as soon as she saw that. That...that was dangerous.

"I'm okay now Body, you can let me go." Glory said it was at that moment that Alan noticed it; his body had moved on its own and hugged the girl.

It was...embarrassing, his body tended to move protectively more often than not, always towards Glory.

"Sorry about that Soul." Alan said scratching the back of his head, "Can you look in that direction for now then? We can search from that direction."

Alan had pointed in the opposite direction of where Glory had looked before, just in case. He made a mental note and there was nothing interesting in the direction that Glory had looked, best case scenario? A high on the A-List or S-List Hero had come.

Worst case scenario?

The former friend of Alexa was more dangerous than they thought. Either way, he would try to keep Glory as far away from danger as possible, that was his mission and his promise to her friend.

The friend he would probably spend the rest of his life with, he missed his old friend...But he would await for her return, and in the meantime? He didn't mind spending time with this version of Glory.

She was kind of cute when you got over her more childish acts, and from time to time...

"Onwards!" Glory said, smiling brightly and pointing ahead, "They are moving in that direction!"

Glory would act as if she had returned.

Yes...this should work...He only needed to stay as far away as possible from these...[Protagonists].