

## A Bio 215

Chapter 215: A place of misery and lost hopes....or a School cafeteria?

As they moved towards the Main Hall, the knowledge about these situations came to be quite useful, that is to say, Beatrice continued speaking about what should be happening, and these things happened a couple of seconds afterwards.

Ale had timed even that, and every time that Beatrice started speaking, Ale would prepare for something to happen, usually it was around two to five seconds after she spoke.

And Ale wasn't entirely sure if it was a coincidence or not, one may be coincidence, but two? Three? Four? Five?

At what point did it stop being a coincidence? Ale even thought about asking the girl to stop talking, but that felt kind of rude if Ale was to be honest. Besides, it did help her prepare for what was about to happen. If this wasn't happening because of the girl's interference, but was more of a prediction about what was to happen, forsaking that advantage would be the most foolish thing Ale could do.

To be honest, Ale doubted that Beatrice was predicting the future; she would sooner believe that someone was watching them and adjusting things as soon as Beatrice said a 'Brilliant thing' about what should be happening at the moment.

So while they advanced Ale was kept at her wits ends, for when the next shoe would drop, what this little girl would say and like a prophet, things would happen.

It wasn't that much what happened in the end, which surprised Ale more than she would have thought possible.

A couple stupid traps set up, a couple of hidden [Gun] emplacements turrets in the trash cans (Why would anyone put one there?) And soon enough they arrived to the Main Hall.

A site filled with a dreadful aura, the ambient seemed to be made out to kill and disrupt any feeling of warmth and humanity. Ale could almost taste the desperation oozing from the tables and chairs within this alleged [Main Hall]. This was truly...

"A school cafeteria?" Beatrice said from the side, "It looks like our school cafeteria at least."

The what?

School cafeteria?

Ale took a superficial dive into Alexa's shared memories; the girl had digitized all of her memories, from the most silly things like her plays at the bathtub to how she did and what she did at school. So it wasn't that hard to find the memories in question.

And sure enough, Alexa had no memories of any [School Cafeteria], Ale knew of the concept as she had a few jokes for her stream career that used that topic, mostly complaining about how the food at the school cafeteria resembled prison food. Not that Ale had eaten it before.

"It looks like one?" Ale asked mildly confused, why would they make a site for socialization this... dreadful?

The tables set up around seemed to be made out of metal, which meant that they were cold to the touch, the chairs looked to be nailed down to the floor, which in turn meant that they would not be able to adjust them.

At least most of these chairs seemed to be set up for subjects quite small, Ale would find it somewhat hard to fit, but she could fit.

Alexa would fit like a glove, but Alexandra? [Big Sister]? [Golem]? They would never fit, and she suspected one of them would even make the whole thing collapse.

This was clearly designed with [Child Stage] humans in mind. So why make it like so? Wouldn't it be more cost-effective to make it more alluring to them? And also there was the issue of what she was seeing on the walls at the far end of the main hall.

"And those are also in your school cafeteria?" Ale said pointing to what seemed to be a dispenser.

"I think?" Beatrice said somewhat confused, "They look like soda dispenser, but the tube is way bigger... and they have plates at the side? So why?"

Ale had a rough idea of what it could be, but she first wanted to make sure. So she walked toward the thing, each step brought more confidence in that her theory was right. Why? Because she could see rest of what the thing in that was. If they had aged artificially this, and set it up, at least someone had done their job right and tested the thing worked.

"This..." Ale said as she put a plate under the dispenser and pulled the lever at the side, making the thing come to life. The device started with a small mechanical sound followed by what sounded like a tank releasing pressure, but Ale stood there waiting and sure enough a few seconds later from the dispenser a sludge-like liquid started coming out.

It was thick and hideous, besides stinking so badly that Ale was surprised it wasn't lodged in her memory banks.

But then again, when she used to eat this as P4, she didn't have taste buds, and for that, she was incredibly thankful.

"Ewwww...." Beatrice said from the side as she clamped shut her nose, she didn't have problems with the sewers, the gore, blood, the grime, but Nutrient paste was where she drew the line. "What is that hideous-smelling thing? I can taste it from here and me no likes."

"This is Nutrient Paste," Ale said grabbing one of the spoons that were at the side, these seemed made from the same metal than the tables. If Ale was to guess she would find these to be from some cheap alloy. But that was besides the point at the moment.

"Master...?" Beatrice said from the side as Ale took a spoonful of the Nutrient Paste, "You aren't going to..."

Yes, Ale was going to. She had some doubts about this thing, she remembered that it was quite servicial for P4's needs, P4 rarely needed to eat anything else, so Ale took a spoonful, opened the part of her

mask that covered her mouth and shoved the nutrient paste into her own mouth before she could doubt it more.

The thing looked like sludge, smelled like the absolute worst combination of waste possible and the texture was akin to trying to eat glue melted in rubber, and she knew how rubber tasted, as Alexa had wanted to eat Mister Squeaky the first time she saw it.

That had been quite amusing to see.

"....Master?" Beatrice said from the side, her nose still pinched and her eyes watering, "Are you... Okay?"

"....It tastes awful," Ale said as her mask closed the mouth part of her mask, "It makes me want to puke even."

"Why would you... Eat it?" Beatrice asked confused, "Is it for training? To ensure you can survive anywhere?"

"I wanted to make sure," Ale answered shaking her head, "That this was what I thought it was, that all of this was what I remembered."

"Things you remember?" Beatrice asked confused.

Ale was... not sure if anyone of the villains from [Haephestus' Forge] would find the hidden camera recording, but if they did, well... She had done her part to sell the facade that Alexanders and the purple woman wanted to sell.

"Don't mind it," Ale said shaking her head, "Want some of it?"

"No!" Beatrice quickly said shaking her head and jumping backwards, straight to a table and then jumping behind said table to put more distance(And objects) between Ale and Beatrice. "I'm fine!"

"Right..." Ale said looking at her plate of Nutrient Paste, to be honest, she didn't want to eat it, even if it provided quite the good amount of nutrients, it was even more cost-effective than eating normal food, since this thing could be assimilated quite easily by the stomach and produced almost no waste.

That is to say, one didn't need to go to the bathroom as much when one ate Nutrient Paste, at least not because of waste generation, one would still end up going to puke since eating this was closer to torture than anything else.

Ale was not sure how they were planning to sell this part of the facade, but well... The people that came would come up with their own history about how it worked, as they had been doing so far. Ale really needed to check on that, there was no reason why they came up with lies so convenient to Alexa this often, no way all the [Humans] were that foolish.

"I'll take it to go then..." Ale said turning to her plate and looking around for a plastic bag or something that could contain the Nutrient Paste, if Nutrient Paste was something, it was convenient, Ale searched for a plastic bag and then with a slight modification to her armor she started blowing cold wind into the nutrient paste.

It started to turn from pseudo sludge-liquid into something closer to gelatin, this allowed Ale to mould it into small bars within the Plastic Bag, Ale couldn't touch it in this moment as her body temperature could ruin the form, so after a few seconds of moulding and cooling Ale had a couple of Nutrient Paste Bars to go!

So convenient!

...Perhaps she could shove it down her enemies' throats and take them by surprise? That would at the very least make someone who was not expecting this to puke from the hideous taste of solidified Nutrient Paste, because the fact that it was now a Nutrient Paste Bar did not make it tastier or palatable.

There was a reason why they always gave it in sludge-like form, that was the easiest way to consume it after all.

"Okay, then if there is nothing here you want to check let's go that way," Ale said pocketing the Nutrient Paste Bars into one of her pouches.

"I'm good Master!" Beatrice said saluting at Ale, "Just don't give me those things!"

"...These are more of a memento or a hidden weapon than anything," Ale said shaking her head, "Be a good girl, follow my orders and you will never have to take one of these."

"Beatrice will be the goodest girl!" Beatrice said nodding quite fiercely.

"That's impossible," Ale said, laughing. That spot was reserved for someone else after all.

What was even Alexa doing right now?

Alexandra should have woken up by now, and anything that Alexa was doing should be done, but even so, neither had shown up. Or perhaps they were watching and didn't want to bother her?

Ale hoped it was that, it would mean that Alexa and Alexandra had suffered by the taste of the Nutrient Paste too. Sharing is caring after all.

"I'll do my best!" Beatrice said after Ale said that it was impossible to be the goodest girl. She didn't question why, that was good. Ale would find it hard to explain that the girl she wanted to apologize was who Ale considered the goodest girl.

Even if she was a spoiled rotten girl, Alexa was quite good with the people she cared about.

"Then let's move, our next stop are the testing chambers." Ale said walking towards one of the exits of this Main Hall, not the one they had come from, but one of the doors at the other end.

"Testing chambers?" Beatrice asked confused, "What are they testing? The map or the signs didn't say anything about testing. Did you find it in the documents?"

"No," Ale said shaking her head, "Nothing in those documents said anything about testing chambers."

"Then?" Beatrice asked confused yet again.

"We found traps on the entrance, we found an office filled with data and materials about experiments, but not actual evidence of where the experiments went." Ale said pointing their findings, "Then we find this Cafeteria, dinning hall, and Main Hall."

"Yes," Beatrice said nodding, they had arrived at one of the doors, funnily enough the handle to open the door was at Beatrice's height.

"Then tell me, where do you think the people who ate here went after eating?" Ale pointed out as she waited for Beatrice to open the door.

"To their rooms? To play?" Beatrice said as they peeked at the new hallway.

It was... mundane, nothing to see, a blank hallway with some doors to the sides here and there, each with a letter and a number.

"A-Series..." Ale said reading the letters in each door from where they stood. "Let's check the other doors."

"Okay," Beatrice said closing the door and moving to the next.

The other doors had others series and numbers, from the D-Series, the L-Series, the R-Series, The E-Series, the P-Series and finally the M-Series.

"They jumped around in the alphabet," Beatrice said as she closed the door to the E-Series that was at the end, it had a yellow lizard on it for some reason.

Ale did not want to see why, it was probably a joke on Alexanders or something, that weird rumor that he didn't crush about him being a dragon, or a lizard in this case.

"Which one do we go first?" Beatrice asked, as if they would check on all of the doors.

If Ale was to guess they would have just roughly enough time to check on perhaps one of the doors, maybe two? She had sent for reinforcements, and even if that wasn't the case, they needed to find Body & Soul too.

"Let's check on the M-Series," Ale decided after thinking it through, they had come to find Meli-Meli. And Body & Soul hadn't left any evidence of being here besides opening that door.

So either they got kidnapped by Meli-Meli, or they ran away, with some luck they had run away, but Ale's tracker of them still showed them in the area.

This technology seemed to be inferior to that of [Elder] or the [Saintsworths] since it didn't pinpoint a spot within the building, so that was out of question, the easy way was out.

"I wanted a B-Series... But we can check on the Master's Series too!" Beatrice said running towards the door in question.

"Master Series?" Ale asked mildly amused.

"That's why the M-Series right?" Beatrice said nodding sagely.

"It is not, but whatever," Ale said chuckling, the M-series probably referred to Meli-Meli. A pointer from Alexanders about what door to go through.

Or so Ale hoped anyway, the M-Series hallway had five rooms on it. M1 to M4 and then at the end of the hallway the MS room.

They went one by one, but from M1 to M4 all the rooms were the same, a small room with a blanket on the floor a small hole, and a cup and bowl in a corner.

Some of the rooms didn't have the blanket, and some didn't have the cup and bowl.

But all stank, they all smelled as if someone hadn't washed in years.

"They stink, not as bad as Master's meal, but they stink." Beatrice said still pinching her nose.

What was the deal with that really? It stank worse in the sewers, why only now?

"Let's check the MS door then," Ale said closing the door into M4. This particular room didn't have a blanket, cup or bowl, or well, Ale could see the rest of the fabric and in a corner hidden away from the door the remains of a sharpened metal piece.

A shiv as they called it.

"After you master!" Beatrice said, standing at the ready. Ale sighed and walked towards the door; she already could feel the mana wavelengths coming from the other side of the door.

Either it was Meli-Meli... Or someone with a wild uncontrolled Mana Wavelengths left here... And knowing the blonde asshole and his purple woman... It could be either.