

A Bio 85

Chapter 85: Ale has...arrived? Landed? We need a pretty way to announce me too.

"....so...our next work will be a spectacle?" Alexandra asked as the words settled. She wasn't quite sure why [Eleanore] was making such a dramatic introduction about this 'Theater Master' person.

She hadn't thought that they would be hired by someone who wasn't a [Villain], but then again, she hadn't checked the full setting for works that [Haephestus' Forge] would be willing to take.

".....you.....don't know who is 'The Theater Master'?" [Eleanore] asked as her shoulders dropped.

"Our newest employer?" Alexandra answered back.

"...right...I sometimes forget how young you are...It stands to reason that you don't know of him." [Eleanore] said in a downcast tone, was that much of an issue not knowing him?

"I can research him if needed." Alexandra said pulling out her [Phone].

"No, that is quite all right." [Eleanore] answered, shaking her head, "We will brief all the minions about him in a few minutes; it is part of our standard training for high-profile jobs."

High profile? Was he that important?

Alexandra, of course, knew what the words [Theater] and [Master] meant, so from what she could infer, this was either the owner of a Theater or the lead for those that participated there, so maybe he was an orchestra lead?

But why would they need to hire [Minions] to do his job? Was he attempting to make illegal plays? Was his music forbidden? What could they have a need for minions...and more specifically, why did they ask for Alexandra?

"Did he ask for me? Why?" Alexandra asked remembering that part of the conversation.

"He asked for Rhapsody, the minion who faked her death. He doesn't know much about you besides the basic profile we provide about our Minions to those who work with us and have proven to be capable of keeping their mouths shut." [Eleanore] said, bringing a folder and giving it to Alexandra. "Here is what he saw."

On it was a series of pictures of Alexandra in her [Rhapsody] outfit, and another...and another...

"He knows I am a shapeshifter with at least three available forms?" Alexandra asked, the pictures were of her on her [Child Stage], [Teenager Stage] and her [Young Woman] stage. Also a small description about her power allowing the creation of basic bladed and blunt weapons.

She hadn't said that...even if she was able to. It also stated that she had limited regeneration, which was....technically correct, even if her limit was more of one caused by the absence of resources than the range of regeneration, which was what this file seemed to imply.

“And he wants me because...?” Alexandra asked as she continued reading it, the file seemed to focus on her capabilities and her psych evaluation, it remarked that she was one that would be able to stick to the rules and act within the range of actions of the mission.

Alexandra was happy with that evaluation.

“We aren’t sure, he hasn’t shared his plans, the briefing we will have today is mostly about his past achievements and history with us, some of his personal minions should be coming to give us the full briefing, but in the meantime we will go over what we know of him.” [Eleanore] answered taking back the folder that Alexandra had been reading, “Also...he wants you in your teenager form, so you will need to change into...Ale was it?”

Alexandra arched an eyebrow under her mask, which was a futile attempt at showing her expression since, mask. And after a few seconds of no reaction sighed and started the transformation. This one was easier to achieve since she would just shove [Biomass] back into her [Banked Storage] of Biomass.

The clothes would get a beefier reinforcement turning into thicker clothes, her top would shift into a shirt and jacket while her pants would turn into loose pants. Anything extra of fabric would reinforce the outfit to make it more resistant. The mask, however, shifted on its own to accommodate her new frame.

That always surprised her as to how comfortable it was to wear. And just like that...

“I have...returned?” Ale said extending her arms to the sides.

“Welcome.” [Eleanore] said shaking her head, “Isn’t there some oomph missing in your return phrase?”

It was?

She wasn't quite sure; it didn't feel quite right to say [I have returned!] since that was more of an Alexa thing to say, and while she enjoyed saying it too, she was also somewhat...ashamed. She didn't quite thought it would be as cute if she did it.

Alexa may be the cutest, but would it look as well if she (The prettiest) did it?

Ale wasn't quite sure of it.

"The overstatement is something for Alexa to do." Ale ended up saying, she...really wanted to do so, but she also didn't want to be just a bigger Alexa. Even if she was technically a bigger Alexa.

They needed to broaden how different they acted from each other, Alexandra had it easy since she could just act mature and everything would be all right. She had the looks and everything after all.

Alexa just needed to be herself since that was the base of them all, but what about Ale? She was...well, in the middle of the three, she did want to act somewhat childish, but also didn't want to be that child-like.

Lest they didn't take her seriously, Alexa didn't have that problem since she didn't really want to be taken seriously, so long she was pampered, everything would be all right.

“Okay, did you get everything or do you want me to repeat?” [Eleanore] asked her while she had been thinking about herself.

Did she get everything? No. Not by a long shot, but as far as what she wanted from her?

“Yeah, some guy called Theater Master wants me for a job, so we got a job to do.” Ale said standing up, they had shifted while sitting, that wasn’t that much of a problem since the [Nanites] did all the job, it didn’t matter if the clothes were folded or not, they would get constructed anyway.

“Yes, go to the main auditorium. Sylph and Golem should already be there waiting for you.” [Eleanore] said giving her a small map with directions. “In case you get lost, your phone should have a navigation mode. It only works within the facilities, but it should do. Go there and wait for the briefing, they will explain what they want you to do. It shouldn’t be anything too dangerous since we do work with ‘The Theater Master’ as a frequent client....”

There was something there that [Eleanore] wasn’t telling her, but Ale couldn’t find anything weird, It felt as if she should know what it was, as if some foreshadowing had been told to her face and she had missed it...

“[Not enough data to evaluate the problem, host is advised to proceed with caution.]”

Proceed with caution? Shouldn’t [Main core] dismiss her fears?

“Okay, I will go to the briefing then.” Ale said taking the small map and pulling out her [Phone] searching for the navigation data...

And yes, there was a new [App] that wasn't there before, she hadn't installed it nor noticed when it was installed, so perhaps it was set as default hidden on the code?

She opened and sure enough a rough navigation was set up, it only asked her where she wanted to go and gave simple instructions as to how to get there, Ale pondered outside [Eleanore]'s office what route to take.

On her left hand, she had the map that [Eleanore] had given her...

“Excuse me? Where is the young lady that got in...?”

On her right hand however, the navigation data provided by the [Elder] was easier to follow....

“Who are you? Are you lost? Where did you get that mask?”

Noisy.

“I am [Rhapsody].” Ale turned around to look at the [Old Woman] that had been pestering, she looked roughly around the same [Age] as her [Young Woman] stage. So that meant she was old.

And naggy.

Alexa was right on that, the [Young Woman] stage was naggy.

“...” The [Old Woman] stared blankly at her and said nothing.

“I’m leaving, tell [Eleanore] thanks for the map and that we are sorry about the problems.” Ale said walking towards the hallway, she would try to follow both for now. The map gave her rough indications, but the [Navigation] only said to walk this and there giving her no indication of what she would find on the way.

So using the map she could check what was ahead of her, while using the [Navigation] allowed her to move forward, the travel was easy with this, knowing that there was a bifurcation ahead of time and her [Navigation App] telling her to turn left or right ahead on time let her plan how to move and the speed at which to move.

The travel was more or less the same, some people did stop and point at her while moving, this was similar to how it had been a Alexandra, the only difference was that the eyes that looked at her weren’t of the same type.

When they looked at her while she was Alexandra, the eyes seemed to hold some degree of [Lust], but when they looked at her as Ale? They mostly were confused, and some of them even seemed to be amused.

A few people seemed to know who she was, and gossiped among themselves, but Ale wasn't quite sure, she had good ears, she had made sure of that. But even so everything had its limits. Perhaps she would think seriously about getting those [Cat Ears] that the [Nekomimi] faction always wanted to throw her way?

Had she known about this, she would have taken those [Blueprints] when offered, but she didn't see any advantage in using them during her time as P4, so she never saved them.

For now? She continued walking following the route that [Elder] sent her way through his [App]; she would need to think about where to get a [Blueprint] with [Cat Ears] later.

"Rhapsody!" [Fan Girl] screamed from the other side of the congregation of [Minions].

Almost everyone in the room turned to look at her when [Fan Girl] screamed most of those looked at her weirdly, but Ale ignored them and just walked to [Fan Girl], the girl was wearing her [Minion] outfit just as Ale was.

She was currently standing near the towering [Meat Shield] that people referred to as a [Golem]; Ale could see several groups of other [Minions] standing together; most seemed to share some type of similarity between them.

For example, at the far end, [Snout Face] was standing with several other [Minions] with bodies similar to his, and the group of mostly [Human-like] black mask minions was gone. On the other side, Ale could see a group of [Buff] [Humans] standing together while flexing their muscles.

Wonder how much fat they had in those bodies....Ale wanted to take a nibble at one of them to check...for...science.

Opposite them stood another type of minion, a group of women wearing masks with decorations of multiple colors and forms; for some weird reason, they were wearing skirts with frills, and each held a staff...

Weird.

"They are a group usually only hired for distraction, the civilians quite love them." [Golem] said when he noticed that Ale was staring at the frilly group.

She looked at them, then looked at herself...then back at them...

"I know what you are thinking, but trust me, fighting while using a skirt is hell." [Fan Girl] said shaking her head, she then turned to look at Ale and added, "They are 'The Dark Alliance of the Fallen Magical Girls'."

... so cool.

“Yeah, their core powers are mostly set around making a big spectacle or they use them to distract the Heroes and harass them while the Villain escapes.” [Golem] added, after [Fan Girl] said their name. “Also, none of them actually uses Magic, so their name is misleading.”

“I mean, Core Powers are kinda magical, right?” [Fan Girl] said from the side, “Well, some of them...”

Some? What was even considered Magical?

“What is magic?” Ale asked, all the searches that she did with that as a keyword ended pointing at works of fictions or some mentions about deranged villains. Interestingly enough [The Scrambler] was mentioned in one of those searches.

“Magic...it is like making something out of nothing? It’s the power to make what you wish a reality.” [Fan Girl] answered after thinking for some time.

“So [Core Powers]?” Ale asked for confirmation since that was close enough to the average definition for [Core Powers].

“No.” [Golem] however, denied the answer, “Magic is a mystical power that doesn’t follow the normal rules, our Core Power work under a premise and follow some rules. Weird rules and in some cases, obscure rules. But there are rules. The premise under which Magic works states that there are no rules, so long you desire for something you can bring that into reality.”

....That was overpowered.

“So if someone got a [Magic Core]?” Ale said turning to look at the group of [Dark Magical Girls].

“It will not happen, even the Mystic and Esoteric Cores that are around work under limitations, the very definition of magic makes it very hard for something like that to happen.” [Golem] assured her of that.

But Ale wasn’t that sure, she had seen weirder things happen. Such as the mysterious [Core Power] that almost made Alexa break, the same one that brought another aspect of Alexa that she hadn’t known was around.

So maybe it was possible? She would need to poke around and find how to make a true [Core], she could already make pseudo fake [Cores] after all, they didn’t have the original [Powers]. As proof of the [Mind Core] that was currently housing [Weird-Alexa].

But they were possible.

“Anyway, are you ready for this weird-ass job we will get?” [Fan Girl] asked her trying to get the conversation away from the aspect of [Magic].

“Why would it be weird? Aren’t we just going to work for a Theater?” Ale said back confused.

“ ... ” “ ... ”

Both [Golem] and [Fan Girl] looked at her weirdly, now that Ale paid attention some of the minions around also looked at her weirdly.

"I do not know who this [Theater Master] is or why working for him is such a problem." Ale ended up stating that before they kept staring at her weirdly.

She liked to be stared, she was, after all. The prettiestest, but being stared like someone weird made her feel awkward.

"...yeah that would make you think like that." [Golem] said nodding in understanding, and...said nothing else.

Ale turned to look at [Fan Girl] to see if she would elaborate more on this problem, and sure enough [Fan Girl] delivered.

"The Theater Master, is what we call a High-Tier Super Villain. He is categorized as a highly dangerous individual since he wields....weird Core Powers." [Fan Girl] elaborated, "No one is quite sure what Core Power he has, not even those Minions that have worked for him before, but there is one thing they all share in common."

That sounded like something troublesome indeed.

"What is it?" Ale asked turning to [Fan Girl] for the important part of the problem at hand, if she had been nominated personally for this job, she had thought it would mean this would require her shapeshifting power.

"It is like working for a puppeteer." [Golem] said from the side.

"Oh? Have you worked for him before?" [Fan girl] asked turning to [Golem].

"Not directly...I was once a...Chorus member in one of his acts." [Golem] answered while shuddering, it was such a weird thing to see the man made out of rocks tremble ever so slightly.

"So you worked for him...?" Ale said confused, [Fan Girl] had asked that before, but [Golem] said no...then said yes? What was going on?

"No, a Chorus Member is what we call the civilians that end up pulled into The Theater Master's Act." [Fan Girl] answered turning to [Golem], "Is that why you...."

"No, it had no effect whatsoever in my Triggering. It helped if anything, since I already had some degree of understanding of how a Core Power could affect me." [Golem] answered steady.

This confused Ale more and more, what was the deal then?

"So...He has a power that affects people around and makes them....help him? So he is a [Mind Core] user?" Ale was very confused now, what type of [Core Power] did this man have?

Also...were they even saying the name differently from her? She got the impression that they said Theater Master differently from her.

"...Probably...not." [Golem] said unsure, he...did not seem sure of that answer, so he turned to [Sylph], "I did not feel my mind change or be compelled, but it was more like I was acting as I should."

"Usually that is the sign of a Mind Core User, but I doubt they would leave such high stakes Villain run around if he was a Mind Core User." [Sylph] said turning to the far end of the room they stood in, "I guess we will get more clues about this soon."

At the far end a short flash of light manifested as a figure enshrouded in a pair of white wings appeared, "Everyone here? Good, anyone that arrives late kick them out." It was [Gabriel], one of the [Lieutenants] of [Haephestus' Forge].

The briefing was starting.