

# ABYSSAL AWAKENING

## Chapter 10: Under The Coliseum

With breakfast over, the two had a few short moments to themselves before needing to work.

According to Lilia, there were three types of labour slaves were forced to do in these parts. First was labour on the ships that entered the Slaughter Docks. Slaves would be responsible for carrying parts of the cargo to their superiors.

That was usually left to the combat slaves either belonging to an owner or those who haven't been sold yet. They were, after all, slaves who had their physique enhanced by sigils or blood.

Since neither Alice nor Lilia belonged to this group of slaves, they weren't going to help out on the docks.

The second type of labour was performed by the carrier slaves. Hunters will often temporarily hire these slaves to help them, whether that be carrying their luggage or helping them hunt. Until they earn enough to buy a slave outright, they would usually borrow them.

Naturally, if a slave dies out in the field, the Hunter would have to pay a penalty. But compared to losing one's life in the wild, letting a slave die in the Hunter's place was a much easier option. Thus, the casualty rate of slaves was high.

"Both of us have been sponsored, so we won't be getting this type of job either. After all, if a slave one of the VIPs has their eyes on died, it'll bring bad rep for the hosts of this place. Hence why it's most likely we'll get the third type of labour. I suppose we can call it the easiest type." Lilia explained while scratching her cheek.

"We just have to help out wherever we can. It can be deep in the mining shafts or helping out at an apothecary. Depending on what's available that day, it could be easier or harder." Lilia shrugged.

"You know lots." Alice couldn't help but appreciate Lilia's knowledge.

"Ahaha, well it's nothing. I was a slave before arriving in this place so I've already been through a bunch of these things. I'm not sure how things work in this city since it's a new place but it shouldn't be too different."

"Even so. Still knowledge." Alice reaffirmed as Lilia nodded.

"It is indeed still knowledge." Lilia puffed her chest out.

Looking at Alice's honest eyes and slight hints of curiosity, Lilia couldn't help but be reminded of her own sister. Despite Alice's appearance, she was more akin to a young teen with her mindset.

Lilia didn't know what caused such a disparity between her actions and appearance but it was most likely something along the lines of confinement. One that didn't allow her to interact with others.

Either way, Lilia wanted to make life a little easier for Alice if she could.

They didn't have to wait long. A man dressed in an all black outfit with a silver chest piece, shoulder guards, and wrist guards approached their cage.

Grabbing a chain, he secured it against their collars and opened the door of both cages. Without saying anything, he tugged the chain and turned around, dragging the two against their will.

Alice noticed that Lilia was being oddly quiet, her usually cheerful disposition nowhere to be seen as she stared at the ground.

'They'll probably treat us worse if they see us being happy.' Alice mused. It was the only explanation for Lilia's actions she could think of.

With the two of them following the man without saying a single word, they were led through the facilities of the Coliseum. As they walked through the place, Alice spotted the main arena through the gaps of the wooden walls. Most of the obstacles they had placed there during the events couldn't be seen anymore. Furthermore, the area had been repurposed into a marketplace.

Whether that was the main market for citizens or the black market where underground trade occurred, Alice wasn't sure.

Glancing away from the arena, Alice saw waves of workers moving back and forth. Blacksmiths in the red hue of the smithy hammered away at metal collars while Abyssal Beasts were chained up in cages, awaiting harnesses.

Apothecaries extracted the blood of Abyss Beasts while keeping them alive, large Bruisers with iron cages over their heads guarded the entrance to each facility, and mysterious cloaked figures wandered around the place, making their way toward the slave quarters.

'They're probably here to buy slaves without letting people know their identity.' Alice thought to herself. While she wasn't sure about the overall slave system and the public opinion on it, Alice could still imagine that the cloaked figures probably didn't want to parade around town letting everyone know they bought a slave.

But those were just her own thoughts.

Once they were opposite the slave quarters on the other side of the building, the two were led into an elevator that sent them underground.

The elevator was running on the same red liquid Alice had seen on the conveyor belts that sent the cages towards the arena during her first day here.

If she remembered correctly, all of this was due to 'Abyss Engineering', running on blood.

Descending into the depths of the coliseum, Alice could feel the temperature drop as water droplets formed on the rock walls surrounding the elevator.

The echo of machinery from above slowly faded out into the distance with the sound of shifting gears ringing ever louder in the silence.

Neither Alice nor Lilia made a single peep. The person leading them away was silent as well.

They assumed he would explain their job to them once they get to the bottom.

'How far are we even going...!' Alice thought to herself with a frown as the lights around the elevator flickered to life, illuminating the three of them in an orange hue.

Strangely, the rocks surrounding them lit up with a fluorescent green colour in the presence of light.

Turning to Lilia to see if she knew what was going on, the curious light in the older girl's eyes told Alice everything she needed to know.

Lilia didn't know where they were.

Once they reached the bottom, the man tugged their chains once more. He didn't even let the two admire their surroundings. The girls didn't imagine a place like this even existed.

There was a single river flowing through the cave, reflecting the soft rays of light emitted by glowing bugs on the ceiling. Large stalagmites surrounded them with the rhythmic sound of water dripping every so often from the ceiling.

Above, the stalactites slowly faded into a strange, translucent crystal that gathered a clear fluid which coalesced into an orb of water and splashed into the rocks below.

In the distance, lanterns had been set up to light up the cave. The flames inside flickered against a soft gust of wind that flowed through the cave. With each flicker, the cave would shine with the fluorescent green Alice saw on the way down.

In the presence of the glowing rocks, there was a strange fluid mixed into the river that lit it up with a neon blue, turning the ordinary body of water into an ephemeral sight that flowed like graceful silk.

In all her years trapped within the Zenia prison, she had never heard or imagined such a scene.

How much of the world had she missed? How many sights like this exist in the world?

Clutching her chest, she could feel a fire burning within. A desire to see more of this sight. She wanted to witness the beauty of the world she lived in.

Seeing Alice's enraptured gaze, Lilia couldn't help but chuckle. She found it rather cute how Alice was so enamoured by such a sight. Though she wasn't any better since this was the first time she had seen something like this as well.

With the two of them standing still, the man frowned and gave the chain a hard tug, causing Alice to fall forward while Lilia barely managed to keep herself on her feet.

"Stop dawdling." He uttered coldly. There was a clear sign of disdain in his eyes as though he was questioning why he had to be the one to show them where to go.

"Sorry." Lilia apologised while helping Alice up.

"Lets keep up with him. The more we annoy him the worse it'll get for us." She whispered to Alice while dusting her skirt.

Nodding her head in agreement, Alice gave the cavern one last glance before jogging behind the man.

Leading the two through the cavern, they soon arrived at a man made entrance surrounded by lanterns that illuminated the surroundings.

The entrance was in the form of a large set of stone doors that had the visage of a multi-limbed beast in a low crouching position. Strange glyphs and patterns surrounded the beast with a single red jewel serving as the eye of the beast.

Pushing the door open without any issues, he revealed a prison of sorts, hiding a myriad of Abyss Beasts within the cells, chained against walls.

Their bodies were malnourished and they lacked energy, a clear sign of having their blood repeatedly extracted for their effects.

Alice could even spot a large cluster of Vampire Lilies attached to one of the walls with several lilies already wilting in the darkness.

However this wasn't their stop. Their destination was much further into the prison.