

Abyssal A 421

Chapter 421 - 421: Infiltrating The City Part 2

There are 4 main hiding spots between her and the wall. Trees, natural grooves in the ground, the river and some rocks as this small river seemed to be used as a small fishing spot.

Hiding behind the tree, Alice narrowed her gaze at the guards stationed above the wall.

Since this was a little further from the main gate, they were mostly focused on seeing if anything was approaching.

Licking her fingertip, she felt the current of the air before plucking a leaf from the tree. Attaching a small fragment of her shard onto the base of the leaf, she controlled it to flow with the wind and raised it into the sky, towards the guards.

Once they were distracted by how the wind managed to blow a leaf this high up, Alice took this chance to dash towards the rock.

She couldn't go any further as they looked towards the tree after seeing it was a leaf.

Closing her eyes, Alice could hear that they were talking with one another, laughing and joking about how the leaf got up there.

Recalling her shard and allowing the leaf to fall naturally this time, Alice glanced at the distance between her and the wall.

One more dash would be enough.

Thinking about it for a moment, Alice decided to do something a little risky. Controlling the shards to shake up the tree, the guards above the wall figured that it was something unnatural and called over some guards to go down and have a look.

While their attention was focused on the tree that shook a little too much during the wind, Alice managed to reach the wall and wrapped the wire around her hands. Connecting it to her shard, she made footholds on the wall and began to climb up.

She had a short moment to make her way from the side of the wall to the section above the main gate. As long as she reached the gates, she would be able to hide herself in the groove while the guards returned.

'The other captains should be approaching the sea by now right?' Alice thought to herself.

Swinging her body back and forth, she launched herself past a gap and grabbed onto a shard she had placed in position and hauled herself up. With no time to waste, she continued on the path she had mapped out in her mind while making her way to the wall.

There were gaps in the brick that she could use as a ledge to grab or hell she could even use the runic carvings.

The key was to reach the main gate.

Glancing back, she noticed the guards were about to finish and decided to hurry up.

Creating a pole with her shards, she lunged off the wall and grabbed the pole before swinging herself at full force around the corner.

Grabbing onto the ledge by the main gate, she jammed herself in between the groove and prevented herself from sliding by anchoring her foot against the walls that flanked her side.

The groove wasn't very shallow so she could still be spotted if they looked up.

However, since they were looking for something on the tree or intruders trying to sneak in, they never expected that someone would be halfway through climbing up the wall. Especially when they didn't even know they reached the wall in the first place so why would they look up?

The wall they've come to rely on has been clear for so long now. If they were newbies, they would check out the wall but the notion was so incomprehensible that the two didn't even both and Alice let out a silent sigh of relief.

In case they were planning to look up, Alice had already placed some shards by the side to make some noise and buy some time for her to climb up.

But seeing as how this wasn't necessary, she began to shuffle herself up the wall.

Sweat dripped down her face but there was a smile beneath her mask.

This sense of exhilaration while sneaking past everyone and laughing inwardly at the fact that they didn't look up.

It was the first time Alice felt this way.

Seeing how her twin was enjoying herself to this extent, Alyss couldn't help but laugh as this would've been impossible to experience if she still had her abilities.

One disguise, one teleport. That would be all they needed but instead, they're climbing up a wall and making use of their knowledge of human behaviour as well as prior experience in trying to escape the Zenias.

Reaching the top without being spotted, Alice didn't rush to climb over since there were two guards at each section of the wall.

Narrowing her gaze, she stabilised herself between the grooves and gathered her shards.

Ripping off a small piece of wire with some dark fabric from her cloak, she made a tail shape while the shards shifted to look like a rat.

'There are two guards above, two to the right and two to the left. If I distract the other two, the third will be looking towards their direction.' Alice thought inwardly.

Adjusting herself, she began to climb towards the right while having her 'shard rat' wait for instructions on the left.

Determining the position of the guards through the sound, Alice made sure she'd be a little bit behind them and had the rat make a move.

The moment it began to scurry across, the centre and left guards turned towards the rat and raised an eyebrow.

"What's going on?" The Guard on the right asked as Alice took this time to flip herself over the edge, landing on the wall. While all three guards were looking away, she scanned her surroundings and narrowed her gaze.

There were mini spires on each section and above the doors were ledges that she could hide on. But the cover provided was far too little. Instead, she had a better idea and made a short dash to one of the windows of the spire and swung herself around the corner.

She was exposed to the other guards right now but they didn't have any reason to glance over unless the other guards called them over.

Letting out a sigh of relief, Alice climbed to the top of the spire and swung herself onto the roof, giving her an excellent view of the entire city.

Standing up, she jumped from the roof and did a free dive towards the ground. Recalling her shards that she hid in the crevices, she slowed down her fall with it and landed on the rooftop.

Now that she was in the city, it was time to proceed towards the western tower as promised.

Closing her eyes, Alice sensed the fluctuation of energy around her and verified the location of the western tower.

It was quite far away but since the hardest part was done, all Alice had to do was make her way over.

The safest route would actually be on the inside of the wall, where she was now. Most of the patrols were focused around the city, above the wall and outside the city.

By sticking against the wall like this, she should be able to avoid most of the detection.

Running along the inner wall, Alice forgot to take into account one variable.

Civilians.

Glancing to her right, she noticed a brat looking out of his window and spotting her.

Widening her eyes, she froze up and entered a staring contest with the kid.

Panic filled her heart momentarily but she had a plan to get out.

"Look what's that?!" She looked up and pointed. The moment the kid also looked up, Alice dashed towards the house and hid in the alleyway so that the brat couldn't see her anymore.

Once the brat noticed that Alice was gone, she could hear his rapid tiny footsteps running through his room.

"Mom!!! I found a weird person by the wall!"

'Pft! To think you can avoid guards but not a snot nosed brat.' Alyss mocked as Alice rolled her eyes and ignored her twin.

Continuing her path towards the western tower, she made sure to keep an eye out for the random civilians she would come across. People who were out drinking too late or even those without a home.

Reaching the western tower wasn't difficult but right before she was came into range, her eyes scanned across a woman who was skipping down the street and the same uncanny feeling assaulted her mind.

She was a short woman with elongated ears, black hair and a black and red dress.

The moment Alice's eyes lingered on Keira's body, Alice noticed her mistake and hid herself while Keria stopped skipping and glanced over.

Seeing that no one was by the house, she furrowed her brows and figured it was probably a random civilian in the house that looked away.

Their gaze had lingered momentarily on her ears.

Rubbing her elongated ear, Keira shrugged her shoulders. This kind of physical trait was uncommon in the north but she found it rather cute and had even requested it from the scholars.

It was based on the traits of certain knights in Extalia, one of which is Lord Renna of Extalia.

Ignoring the strange gazes, Keria continued on her way while cold sweat filled Alice's back.

'F*ck me our theory was right. The Zenias have f*cking fused humans and beasts together.' Alice muttered.

That uncanny feeling was unmistakable. Same with the strange energy that coiled around her body, it was a direct match to the slime serpentine beast that ambushed them on the second night.

After all of their experiments, the Zenias have finally began to mass produce these hybrids!

Chapter 422 - 422: Taking Out The Watchtower

Once Keira disappeared from her view, Alice could finally let out a sigh of relief.

If she was to grab her attention now, there was a chance that the other two would also show up.

However, if she doesn't destroy the western tower now, she'll be telling Olivr to kill her here and now.

'So you've shot yourself in the foot.' Alyss snickered as Alice rolled her eyes.

With no other choice, she began climbing up the western tower.

The formation they deployed around the city was rather rudimentary as they didn't even try to hide where the nodes are. Had it been the Abyss, Alice would've needed to try a little harder to spot it.

As she was climbing towards the top, she could sense the presence of more than 3 guards.

If she wanted to do this, she needed to do it fast.

Taking a deep breath, Alice pulled up her face mask to make sure her identity was hidden. Not that it mattered but it was good to have a safety net.

Flipping herself over the edge, she came face to face with the surprised guards. Before they could even react, Alice threw a dagger at each of them before dashing towards the core of this tower. The node of the barrier.

But just before she could reach it, one of the guards got between her and the node. Even without Cayla, Alice knew he was the strongest here.

Without hesitation, he activated resonance as a black mask and tattered jacket appeared around him.

Unsheathing a guardless sword with bandages wrapped around the handle, he slashed towards Alice.

"You're no fun, going all out from the beginning." Alice forced a smile, using her Shard of Kara to forcefully block that strike despite shattering immediately. She knew that she wasn't able to redirect that slash nor was she able to dodge in time so the best option was to block!

"Hmph." Ignoring Alice's attitude, he pivoted on his right foot and slammed a heel towards her.

Golden chains manifested around Alice's body as she suddenly did a handstand on the guard's foot.

Twisting her body, Alyss kicked towards the Guard's head. She wasn't surprised that it was blocked with ease since her physical power was completely ass right now. Hell, they're only barely managed to dodge because they're observing the movement of the body beforehand and making guesses rather than reacting!

"Catch this." Alice laughed, throwing an explosive towards the guard while shielding herself with her Shard.

Since it's gotten to this point, there was no point in keeping a stealthy operation as long as she could destroy this node.

It's why they gave her the explosives after all.

***BANG!!!!**

Shielding himself from the point blank explosive, the guard quickly looked for Alice but she was already on the way towards the node.

"Stop her!!!" He roared as the other guards finally recovered from their stupor and lunged towards her.

Sliding under their attacks, Alice tugged on the wire and triggered a fire trap she dropped behind her, setting the two guards on fire as they rolled across the ground.

Jumping over the guards, the first guard stabbed at Alice with his blade.

"Nice try!" Alice stepped to the side before relaxing her knees, allowing herself to drop down instantly to avoid the following horizontal slash.

Grabbing another explosive, she threw it towards the guard and rolled back. Tugging on the wire, she watched as he tried to knock it aside only for it to drop towards his crotch right before exploding.

*BANG!!!

"ARGGGG!!!"

Widening her eyes, Alice's smile twitched as she quickly planted the rest of her explosives on the node.

Just as she placed the last one, she felt a thick killing intent behind her as she glanced back and came face to face with a pair of bloodshot eyes behind that mask.

Switching with Alyss, they hastily dodged the grab and flipped back but the man wasn't done.

A string of slashes, stabs and blasts were launched at her.

Stepping to the side, ducking down then using her Shard, Alyss fended off the attack. She couldn't help but notice a trail of blood dripping from the man's pants.

'Why the hell did you have to blow up his d*ck of all things???' Alyss questioned in disbelief. If Alice hadn't done that, he might not have gone berserk like this.

'It wasn't my fault okay!? Who told him to knock it down?' Alice snapped back as it truly wasn't her original goal. If she knew this was going to happen, she would've just dodged.

Once she was far enough from the node, Alice was about to tug on the wire to detonate it when she bumped into something.

"How did a rat like you even get in?" A familiar voice rang out as Alice shivered. It was Keira!

'Sh*t! Of course she's here, she didn't even get that far.' Alice cursed, ducking down to avoid the slash but Keria smirked. Grabbing Alice by the armpits, she lifted her up to take the strike.

Gritting her teeth, Alice swung herself up to dodge and entered a handstand.

"Oh?" Keria's eyes glimmered as though she found a new toy.

Throwing herself back, she slammed her knee into the back of Keria's head.

"!?!?!?" Widening her eyes in pain, Alice felt like she just kneed a brick wall as Keira didn't even flinch.

'The f*ck?! Why is her head so hard???' Alice questioned inwardly.

While her mind was questioning, her body didn't stop.

Tugging the wire, she wanted to detonate the bombs but Keira was already ahead of her.

A thin trail of fire could be seen, burning up the wire and preventing Alice from detonating it.

"Well how about that little mousey? Can't detonate your bombs now can you?" Keira smiled while narrowing her eyes at Alice.

Feeling a shiver down her spine similar to the strange feeling she got when she was at the academy, Alice instinctively took a step back.

###

"How unfortunate." Olivr muttered while narrowing his eyes.

The captains and the stealth group were by the back of the city, ready to climb up from the sea but there were still plenty of guards around.

He could sense the orb he gave Alice. She was flanked by two presences. One was roughly that of a strong guard and the other a Grandmaster level being.

Since the bombs hadn't gone off, there was only one thing he could do.

'Don't blame me, blame the fact that you didn't succeed otherwise I wouldn't have needed to resort to this.' Olivr curled his lips into a grin.

###

At that moment, danger signals erupted in Alice's mind. All of her senses warned her of the imminent danger as she could feel her chest getting warm.

Widening her eyes, Alice realised what was about to happen.

'F*CK YOU OLIVR!!!' She shouted in her mind.

Gritting her teeth, she grabbed the orb and tried to throw it towards the node while using her spare hand to grab a vial of blood from her pouch.

At this point, she couldn't calculate the risks anymore! She had to survive!

*BANG!!!!!!

Before she could even let go of the orb, a surge of power erupted from within, collapsing in an instant and then bursting out with power. Alice's arm was shredded in an instant as the explosion began to expand.

Even Keria was surprised as scales began to form across her body.

The guard was killed in an instant from the eruption as the upper floor of the watchtower was engulfed by a sea of flames and smoke. On top of this, the explosives that Alice had set down earlier erupted thanks to the orb.

*BOOM!!!

A secondary explosion blasted the node apart as a shimmering barrier manifested above the city. Cracks could be seen stretching out from the west before breaking apart.

Civilians who were asleep were woken up by the earthshaking eruption as they looked out their window in shock. They paled at the realisation that their defensive barrier had been breached.

Panic and fear invaded the minds of the weak as they scrambled for safety.

Meanwhile, back at the source of the explosion, Keria pushed the flames aside as anger filled her eyes.

Her dress was in tatters and on fire but she was fine herself thanks to the scales. However, this didn't relieve the annoyance of having an explosion detonate in her face.

"F*CK!!!" She roared, looking around her and seeing that all the guards had died. Looking for Alice's body, she punched what remained of the node out of anger.

"That rat f*cking survived!"

Walking to the edge, her bestial features began to manifest as she was about to chase down the rat and find out where she landed.

But recalling Elowen's words, Keria gritted her teeth as veins bulged on her neck.

"Gods f*cking dammit!" She cursed, knowing that she had no choice but to ignore her. If she went after her now, it would be going against her orders.

Turning around, she disappeared from the watchtower.

As for Alice, her vision was hazy and there was a high pitched ringing in her ears. At that last moment, she managed to drink the beast blood before the explosion sent her flying from the watch tower. She wasn't sure where she landed but she couldn't feel her right arm nor could she feel parts of her body.

If anyone saw her, they would pale in shock.

But despite these injuries, a familiar power flowed through Alice's body as strands of her flesh began to twitch and tremble.

Little by little, her body began to reconstruct itself.

Chapter 423 - 423: State Of Alice's Body

[O' master mine what am I ever to do with you...] Cayla sighed softly.

Alice's breathing was faint and she was on the verge of passing out but a small smile crept up on her face.

'Welcome back...' Alice muttered, feeling devoid of strength.

[Thank you but not for long.] Cayla shrugged as she sat down and closed her eyes.

'Eh? Why?' Both Alice and Alyss were confused.

[. . . Where do I even begin. But before that, all I can say is you've given me a hell of a time trying to keep your dumb behind alive o'master mine.] Cayla's smile twitched furiously.

'Huh? How?'

Seeing that Alice was clueless, Cayla scratched her hair.

[I want you to think back to everything that happened from you sealing me and the weapon to when you got expelled by the Void. Recall everything that happened to your body and say it one by one.]

'Let me handle this one since I got a bone to pick with twinnie here.' Alyss narrowed her gaze. Everything that happened to Alice's body has been annoying her as well since she was reckless.

Hell, when she gets out, she has to deal with the body as well!

Since she was in the midst of regeneration, Alice could only lay there and listen.

'First, you sealed Cayla so your passive upgrade to resistances dropped. Then you had a reaction with the tree that Nyer summoned since he put some extra weird sh*t on it. After that, you decided to eat Kaden's feather which did something weird to you. Wait... What else?' Alyss blinked her eyes as Cayla felt like she was dealing with a pair of morons.

[You're not any better.]

'The f*ck you mean by that???' Alyss felt wrong as Cayla sat down and crossed her legs.

[First, as Alyss said, you had Kaden seal me. However, it wasn't just any seal. It was a seal used by the Grimoire of Original Sin. I'm sure since you've seen it in action against other Lords but it's no ordinary seal. It practically cuts off every benefit I give you. I want you to keep that in mind for now.

[Next, you met the tree. I don't know what Nyer did but that resonance you had with the tree boosted the power of your blood. I wouldn't say it made it more potent but rather increased its volatility. He also mixed in the blood of... A fallen god into it so your body was being reformed by that waning divinity.

[And then, of all the things you could've done, you decide to f*cking eat Kaden's feather without consulting with me. Kaden's feather is basically a raw chunk of power belonging to the Apostle of Corruption. It's not something anyone can just handle but since Nyer has inserted the blood of a god into the resonance, your body was being reshaped rapidly to accept that power.

This allowed you to survive eating Kaden's feather without just crumpling to the ground immediately.] Cayla explained as Alice blinked her eyes.

'It's not that bad, sounds like it worked out there, no? I don't see how it can reduce me to this state.'

[Shut up o'master mine and let me finish.] Cayla rolled her eyes.

[This increased the potency of the curse Kaden placed on your body. It would've barely been fine if you stopped there completely. But do you recall what else you f*cking did after?]

'Ah...' Both Alice and Alyss reacted.

[Your f*cking personal Artifact. I believe I've told you how they work before. They resonate with you during the link so you're compatible with one another. The Zenia relic, while it does grow, doesn't f*cking go backwards! So now you have a god's damned relic that's trying to 'fix your body' back to what you were like during the fight.

[Pumped full of resonance from the tree, divinity from blood and Kaden's feather AND amplify the curses Kaden placed on your body. But the cherry on top is you throwing yourself into the Void during the period where your power began to fade. Now your injuries sustained by throwing yourself haphazardly into the Void are also taken into consideration.

[O'master mine, do you know how much of a pain in the ass it is for me to constantly fight a tug of war with your personal relic, WHILE HAVING THE CURSES YOU ASKED KADEN TO PLACE ON ME AMPLIFIED?!

If I stopped for even a moment, your body would've imploded on itself!] Cayla ground her finger against Alice's head as Alice wasn't able to retort.

Now that Cayla laid it all out, it did seem like she had gone a little overboard with her... eagerness. And now, she's paying the price for it.

'So how are you able to talk to us now? Was it because of the blood Alice drank?' Alyss asked curiously.

*Sigh

[Half and half. The boost in regeneration does make my life easier but that's not the main thing. In fact, you're making it slightly worse because this blood also drains your vitality after it's over. What is helping, however, is the slight boost to Sigils. I don't know what Nyer did with your body through resonance but it seems like you're considered both human and beast now.

[You're growing through consumption and gaining Sigils. So right now, you're almost at the same level as the beast you killed. You're equal to a five Sigil Hunter. Since you got stronger, your personal relic relaxed a little and now I'm here.] Cayla explained.

Realising that it all tied back to her personal relic, Alice's smile twitched.

'Should I just get rid of it?' She asked while Cayla smacked her on the head.

[Are you dumb???

'Just a little.' Alyss cut in.

[The issue, while tied to your personal relic, is something else entirely. Getting rid of the relic might solve it in the short run but in the long run, you've just lost a very, very good weapon for you. I don't know how the Zenia's have done this but I'll admit, this personal relic is way too compatible with you it's actually insane.

If you didn't royally f*ck up your body when you brought it out, it would be your best friend right now.] Cayla explained.

[The choice is yours. There are both benefits to keeping it and benefits to going without it. As helpful as it is, I suppose we still don't know the full story. But knowing the Zenia's, I doubt it'll be as simple as just a weapon for you to use.] She shrugged.

Thinking about it while her body was regenerating, Alice debated on whether or not she should keep it.

In the end, she decided to keep it for now. It was simply too handy with its abilities. Three were focused on Alyss's fighting style and the other three were for her.

Where else would she find a weapon like this? Plus, she promised the core that she'd use it against the Zenia family.

However, if her life is endangered, she'd have no choice but to discard the weapon. If she's dead, how can she bring down the Zenias?

Resting on the ground while her body regenerated, Alice could only cover herself with a large jacket she had in her pouch otherwise some random kid might just look out the window and go:

"Mommy, there's a pervert on the ground."

If that were to happen, Alice might as well bury herself six feet under.

After a minute or so, Alice sat up and quickly replaced the clothes on her. She only had one set of full black stealth gear so she had to change into some less stealthy.

Unfortunately, that meant an off shoulder white shirt with a black skirt, stockings and long boots.

Grabbing herself a hooded jacket with fur lining, Alice wrapped it around her and began to stumble away from her landing spot.

Even though Cayla is able to wake up momentarily, this only lasts until the beast blood runs out. Once that happens, Cayla will be forced to go back into a tug of war to keep her body alive.

But until that time, she was able to access her Sigils as long as she didn't over do it.

'I have... 2 more vials of the blood so that's two more chances of being able to protect myself. I should get Torgeir's blood when I head back to the outpost.' Alice thought to herself.

Most importantly, she wanted to deal with Olivr. Things may have worked out but if it hadn't, he wouldn't killed her then and there.

Not only that but there was also the case of Keira. It was brief but Alice was sure she spotted scales appearing on the woman's body. Meaning her 'resonance' or something similar would be to transform into the beast that ambushed them.

Whatever it was, it gave her another clue to what the Zenias were doing. They were practically flipping the rules of the Abyss on its head and creating a new system of augments similar to Sigils but not quite.

Just like how her body was considered to be both beast and human thanks to the stunt that Nyer pulled in the inverted world, the same could be said for these new beings. If she was the prototype, they could be seen as the next generation.

Which begs the question of whether or not Nyer had a hand in this.

'I doubt it. He attacked us during our birthday banquet so I doubt Luthor Zenia would ask for his help. He hates us enough as it is for 'killing' his daughter never mind Nyer who caused it all.' Alyss shrugged.

Alice couldn't help but nod her head in agreement.

Being careful to avoid the guards, Alice wanted to see if she could find a way to escape this place before sh*t came crashing down and she's dragged along with it.

Chapter 424 - 424: Tristan

Countless swarms of guards could be seen rushing towards the burning tower. Civilians peeked through their curtains to assess the situation while Alice tried her best to hide herself.

She didn't need any of this attention.

"Urg..." Flinching slightly, Alice could already feel her regeneration slowing down as energy began to leave her body once more.

The effects of the beast blood could only last so long without sufficient purity and volume. In order to fight for a longer period of time, she'll need to better blood.

'I wonder how Bo is holding up against the Grandmaster now. They should've entered the castle right?' Alice thought to herself while slumping against the wall. Sitting down to catch her breath, she gritted her teeth in pain.

Even though her regeneration was temporarily brought back, it was already pushed to its limit by regenerating most of her body.

Some of her wounds were still open as they weren't life threatening so it didn't take priority. The main thing was regenerating her limbs and her important organs.

She was tempted to drink another vial but with only two left in her pouch, she didn't want to use them all right now. Once she had a quick rest, she'd be able to get out without any issues.

At that moment, Alice glanced to her right and noticed someone staring at her.

Her pupils shrank in shock as she didn't sense him at all despite having her guard up.

He has short blonde hair and a pair of sharp blue eyes. He wore a striking white and gold attire that looked between a blend of nobility and knighthood with armour on his right shoulder and arm along

with armoured boots. Gold accents could be seen on the armour and outfit with golden chains linking his armour to a cape.

On his waist, he carried a single longsword with a golden cross guard and silver details. Most importantly, Alice could see the crest of the Church of the Moon.

The details around the crest signify a high standing.

This man was no doubt a high ranking member of the Church of the Moon. Reaching into her pouch, Alice gritted her teeth and prepared to fight if she was pushed into it.

###

Tristan glanced at the girl in front of him. Eye full of distrust, body positioned in a way to strike whenever he decides to make a move against her.

While he was on his way to check out the tower that suddenly exploded, he had sensed a large bundle of cursed energy far more potent than anything he had ever felt before and thus decided to have a look.

He thought a beast might've snuck into the city but he didn't think that a girl would be the source of this energy.

'How is she even walking with such a potent curse on her?' He thought to himself.

Blood stuck against her bandages and she was clearly fatigued.

"I don't want to hurt you. I just want to have a look at the curses placed upon your body." He called out slowly. He didn't want to startle the other person since he truly just wanted to have a look at the curses.

If he could figure out what kind of curse this was, he might be able to help more people in the future if this ever appeared again.

He could see the hesitation in her eye.

". . . Fine." She nodded, walking out slightly and pulled down her hood.

Pausing in surprise, Tristan stared at her split hair and appearance.

"What? Never seen someone with split hair before?" She spat, causing him to cough awkwardly before shaking his head.

He could see the dark radiance of a curse on her eye, the bracelet on her arm and what seemed to be collateral damage along her body.

Furrowing his brows, Tristan realised the severity of this curse the more he looked at it. And frankly, just being able to form words was impressive never mind walking around like she was.

A curse like this would constantly siphon energy from the person until they were completely dry.

"Where did you even get a curse like this?" He asked but the girl rolled her eyes.

"Have you gotten a good look now? Can I go? This isn't the doctor's office."

"Ah sorry, give me one moment. Would it be alright if I try and dispel it?" Tristan asked as the girl was clearly surprised. She contemplated silently, mulling over the decision before curling her lips into a smile.

"Sure, go for it. But if you ask me, you won't be able to do anything about it." She taunted.

Nodding his head, Tristan took a step back as he unsheathed his blade.

Sigils started to manifest across his body as sparkles of lunar energy coiled around him.

Glancing around her, the girl could see the strands of lunar energy clashing against the curses on her body but to no avail.

Sweat dripped down Tristan's body as this was truly the most tenacious curse he had ever experienced.

*BANG!!!

Breaking apart the clash, the curse lashed out against him as he hastily defended himself with his blade.

Sliding back a few steps, his hand trembled from the backlash.

Had it been designed to counter, he might've been inflicted by the same curse just now!

Cold sweat filled his back.

"You done? Shall I go on my way now?" She asked, clearly not surprised by this turn of events.

Feeling a little embarrassed, Tristan could only nod as he watched her pull up her hood and walk away.

He didn't recall sensing such a potent curse during his time in this city.

'Maybe it's something that can only be activated at night?' He theorised but eventually shook his head. He'll do more research once he gets back to the church.

###

"Weird guy." Alice muttered.

She wasn't in any condition to fight so she went along with what he wanted to do. If at any point did he show signs of trying to kill her, she'll fight back.

But strangely, that wasn't the case. He really did try to dispel her curse then backed off when he couldn't.

Maybe this was common on the surface, but she half expected him to try and kill her since she was clearly suspicious. But if that wasn't the case, she was more than happy to oblige.

'He was similar to the principal in terms of power I'd say. So on the verge of Lord.' Alyss remarked.

[Looked very young too. Shame he's already been claimed by the moon. If that wasn't the case, it might've been a good choice to make a friend out of him o'master mine. His purification powers aren't at the level where it can take out Kaden's curse but for most curses, it should suffice.] Cayla explained.

'Well, that's something we can think about if we live. I still have to deal with getting more Sigils so my personal artifact can stop trying to kill me every second.' Alice shook her head.

'Though that does make me curious. How would you even go about dispelling Kaden's curses? I know he made this one so that it dispels naturally after a while but if I were to go against another curse user, how would I go about it?' She asked curiously.

[That's the fun part o'master mine. You don't. Kaden is the highest pinnacle of curses but that's only when he uses his grimoire. As the Apostle of Corruption and the holder of the Grimoire of Original Sin, he is the only one in the world who can cast multiple curses of Sin onto one person. Most would require large rituals and heavy expenses to cast just one, but Kaden? He can cast all seven and more.

Though by then, you'll be dead already.] Cayla shrugged, boasting about Kaden's powers.

[But in terms of fighting against other curse users, I'll be honest, I'm not so sure. Kaden's talent as a curse user was already very rare never mind reaching his level of proficiency. It's a rare occupation with even rarer talents.

[There is only one suggestion that Kaden has ever said when it comes to facing off against a high level curse user. Kill them before they can target you! The more you give them time, the harder the fight becomes. It turns into a countdown of whether or not you can end things before it reaches that stage.]

Hearing this, Alice couldn't help but swallow her saliva in shock as she didn't think fighting a curse user would be this annoying. Thankfully, she hadn't met an enemy curse user before this otherwise her journey might've ended short!

[It's not that surprising in all honesty. Curse users have one glaring weakness and that is they're weak to direct confrontations. They have to choose between having strong curses and not being able to defend themselves, or weak curses and being able to survive. Then there's the case of having resources, studying material and someone to teach them the ways.

[It's a very expensive occupation and rather than a strong curse user, most large factions would rather use that money to foster an Anti Army Hunter instead with abilities that are specifically used for wiping out large groups.] Cayla reassured.

[Plus there is the battle that wiped out most of the curse users quite a few years ago since they were getting a little too out of control. Most of the important study materials were destroyed with few actually keeping copies.]

Before Cayla could continue her history lesson to Alice, a pillar of energy erupted into the sky from the centre of the port city.

Glancing over in shock, Alice realised that's where Bo and the others were.

Chapter 425 - 425: Mirabella

Seeing the pillar of energy, Alice understood that they failed at assassinating the Grandmaster ranked Warrior.

Gritting her teeth, Alice was at a cross road of decisions once more.

She had two choices. One was to try and help them to the best of her abilities with another vial of blood. Two was to just escape and leave them to their fates.

If she was being honest, two sounded just lovely right about now but they'll struggle with the journey back. And even if they returned to the outpost, they'd probably be branded as deserters since the captains died.

If that was going to be the case, trying to stay in the north would become difficult.

[O'master mine, please don't tell me you're trying to overload your body again.] Cayla sighed as Alice coughed awkwardly.

'Don't worry, I'm not going to try something like that. Just... Just resolving some issues okay? I'll get rid of the Grandmaster then leave. With that pillar of light, the vanguard group should be beginning their assault on the main city gates.

'Selen and Egil are there since the weird hybrids haven't appeared yet. So they're relatively safe. If the Grandmaster dies, the captains will be able to help the other groups.' Alice explained as she understood Cayla's worries.

But if she could save the captains, even if they don't know it's her, it'll certainly make her life easier.

Except Olivr of course, he could die for all she cares after he tried to bomb her.

She is a forgiving person. But the moment the other tries anything that takes her life or causes the potential loss of it, she no longer cares if they live or die. In fact, most of the time she'll ensure they don't survive the next encounter.

Pacing back and forth, Alice let out a sigh and began to run towards the castle.

'Twinnie can you change out my Sigils or is the body too weak for that?' Alice asked, grabbing a vial from her pouch and unsealing it. Pouring the contents into her mouth, she jumped onto some railings before launching herself up the side of the building.

'Should be doable. Which one do you want me to switch?' Alyss asked.

'Switch out the first one since my blood is too volatile right now. If the fumes make the captains addicted it'll be pretty bad.'

'What do you want me to switch it to?'

'Jester. I'd rather keep my identity a secret after all.' Alice chuckled, landing on the roof. Crouching down, she made a mad dash towards the castle as splinters of glass began to manifest across her body.

Each time the glass disappeared, her appearance would change slightly.

Landing on a roof near the castle, Alice's appearance had completely shifted as no one would even expect they were the same person.

Long pink hair with two small pony tails at the side while the back flowed freely. Strands of blue could be seen between the pink. A pair of eyes and a toothy grin.

Her outfit changed to match her new appearance with pink and black being the main colours. The underside of the pink was a bright blue like her hair.

The design of the outfit was rather revealing and up to Alyss's tastes with it being a pink bralette top with black details, a pair of pink frilled shorts, briar thorn bracelets and thigh straps. She wore a stocking only on her left leg with a pair of pink heels including straps on the ankle.

"Ah~ Ah~ Ah~" Alice adjusted her voice to be more whimsical and smug than her usual tone. The pitch was higher than normal too.

"Nyehehe~ Perfect!" She grinned, seeing no similarities with her usual self.

Creating large blood staff wrapped in metal briar thorns, Alice dashed towards where the fight was happening.

###

*BANG!!!

Slamming against the wall, Bo was forcefully pulled out of his resonance as blood poured out of his wounds.

His vision was hazy as he clutched his chest.

Everyone in the stealth group was dead except the captains. And even then, out of the seven, only four were left Alive.

Olivr was barely hanging on, Bo was heavily wounded, the shield captain was still alive and helping Olivr while the last captain was knocked out from the previous attack.

Frida and two others died, one of them being the healer.

"Is this the best that Verona can send? How pitiful." The Grandmaster twisted his body and slammed his fist into the shield captain, shattering his shield into pieces.

He didn't wear any armour and only a set of tattered clothes as a result of their fight. However, peaking through the gaps was a refined body packing more power than even Egil.

Golden Sigil markings stretched across his arm and torso, pulsing with pure energy.

He has medium black hair that fluttered due to his aura and a pair of bright golden eyes as a result of his Sigils. A golden halo could be seen behind him with a symbol in the middle but Bo wasn't sure which religion it belonged to.

However, he could guess that it was probably one that belonged to the Church of the Sun considering the sparks and flames that crackled around him. Above where his heart would be, a pulsing crest danced with flames.

Gritting his teeth, Bo could feel his breathing becoming difficult.

"Yikers what a mess this is. You feeling alright boss?" A cheerful voice rang out beside him as Bo glanced over and saw a pink haired girl looking at him with a wide grin.

She was squatting down while hugging her knees.

"Ya got any healing vials? Or you out? I don't got any spare for you." She asked, scanning him up and down as Bo struggled and pointed at the pouch that he dropped after being thrown into a wall.

It was close to where Olivr was fighting against the Grandmaster.

"So you got some healing vials in there? Gotcha." The girl chuckled. Flicking her finger, a strand of blood shot out and hooked against the pouch before pulling it towards them.

"You should be fine now right, boss? I don't need to look after you or anything like that right? Because it's gonna be a pain in my ass if I have to."

Shaking his head, Bo grabbed a vial of healing blood and poured it into his mouth.

Feeling his wounds healing, he let out a sigh of relief before asking what's on his mind this entire time.

"Who are you?"

"Me? I'm just a bystander boss. A bystander who can't help but interfere." She stuck out her tongue before standing up.

Looking at the Grandmaster who was fighting Olivr right now, she tapped her staff against the ground and a crack in the Void appeared beneath Olivr.

Widening his eyes from suddenly losing his footing, Olivr fell down next to them as the Grandmaster turned his attention to the girl.

###

Teleporting Olivr next to them, Alice narrowed her gaze at the Grandmaster.

'Thought you didn't care if Olivr died or not?' Alyss raised an eyebrow.

'Of course I don't. This beast blood isn't going to last me the entire fight you know? Just using Jester and my fourth Sigil is enough to make me feel drained so obviously I need a battery elsewhere.' Alice shrugged.

She didn't save Olivr because she wanted him to live. She saved him so that his blood didn't go to waste if she was to need it later.

Twirling the staff in her hands, Alice began to walk towards the Grandmaster.

"Are you with these barbarians of the north?" He questioned but Alice shook her head.

"Nope~ I mean just look at me. Do I look like I'm from the north?" Alice laughed, giving her body a light twirl.

Just as she finished her twirl, she swung her staff towards the Grandmaster who blocked it with his arm. But just as he did that, a spark of energy manifest between the staff and his arm.

Void Flux!

*BANG!!!

Dodging at the last moment, the Grandmaster looked at his arm with a frown. Despite his dodge, the attack still tore off a piece of his skin.

He could sense something trying to invade his body from that attack and forcefully expelled the foreign substance before healing his arm.

*Whistle~

"You're no joke are you, big man? First time I saw someone shrug it off like that." Alice remarked.

While her personality might be an act, her surprise wasn't. With the upgrade to her blood that makes it far more volatile, she was shocked that he could forcefully expel it from his body in time. Not only that, but he also dodged a point blank Void Flux!

Taking a deep breath, the Grandmaster calmed his mind and looked at Alice.

"I suppose even if you aren't from the north, you are siding with these barbarians." He asked as Alice tapped her chin before nodded her head.

"For the moment, yes."

"I see. Then you are my enemy. Caelum, Ex Arch bishop of the Church of the Sun, current master of this Port. State your name challenger." Caelum erupted with radiant energy.

"Mirabella. Just a cute bystander who decided to intervene even though it's none of my business." Alice stuck out her tongue and slammed her staff into the ground.

Blood manifest around her as several strands shot towards Caelum who slammed his fists together.

A pulse of radiant energy pulsed out, burning away most of the blood. However, the blood that remained began to spark as he jumped back to dodge.

However, a portal to the Void opened up and Alice appeared.

"Peekaboo~" Pointing her staff at his back, she fired another point blank Void Flux!

*BANG!!!!

With a series of detonations in front of him and a Void Flux behind him, Caelum covered his body with a golden energy and withstood the impact.

"Tough guy." Alice whistled.

After firing the Void Flux at his back, she dove back into the portal and appeared above the ground, sitting on her staff that was floating above ground thanks to her control of blood.

While this was happening, Bo had one thought in his mind.

'She's strong!'

Chapter 426 - 426: Alice Vs Caelum

Sitting on her staff above the ground, Alice flicked her finger and several beads of blood manifested around Caelum before detonating into Void Fluxes.

However, now that he understood what her blood did, Caelum wasn't going to let himself be taken advantage of so easily.

Twisting his body, he punched towards one of the sparks as radiant energy enveloped his body, protecting him from the blast.

With a series of punches and kicks, he forcefully detonated the sparks as Alice curled her lips into a smile.

She had expected this hence why they weren't fully formed Void Flux's but rather, beads focuses on spreading blood mist.

The light around Caelum's body began to flicker and wane, causing him to pause in surprise.

Furrowing his brows, flames gathered towards his back as a pair of fiery wings unfurled. Twisting his body, the wings burned away the blood mist as he launched himself towards Alice.

Letting out a giggle, Alice allowed herself to fall back into a portal and appear where he had stood earlier.

Snapping her finger, motes of blood sparked around Caelum as her violet flames detonated into a sea of fire.

Latching onto his wings, Alice grinned as it began to eat away at his energy.

She could feel a flow of energy entering her, filling her up as the energy she spent seemed to be replenished.

Dismissing his flaming wings, Caelum slammed his fists together before clasping his hands.

From between his palms, solar energy gathered into a singular orb.

"What is this foul ability you are using!?!\" Caelum roared, throwing the orb towards the ground as it detonated to reveal a painting of the stellar skies encircling a singular sun.

Flicking his finger upwards, the sun extracted itself from the portal. Alice felt as though her body was being melted just from being in its presence.

'Let me handle this one.' Alyss called out as Alice nodded her head.

Closing her eyes, golden chains manifested and Alyss took over.

She stabbed the staff beside her and slammed her hand against the ground.

Her shadow began to twist and expand while violet flames danced upon its surface.

"It's not foul, just unique." Alyss laughed as black limbs shot out of her shadow, grabbing onto the miniature sun.

A twisting black and purple energy began to infect the celestial orb as Caelum gritted his teeth in annoyance.

No matter what he did, his energy was continuously being drained at an absurd pace. And the attacks he launches would be corrupted and negated by the strange blood and fire.

As the ex Archbishop, this was the first time in his entire life that he'd seen something so strange and unholy.

Understanding that he must take it into his own hands rather than relying on his Sigil powers, Caelum flickered above the sun and pulled his fist back.

*BANG!!!!

Punching the sun, he shattered it into a rain of fireballs towards Alyss who smirked while the chains disappeared.

With Alice taking over once more, she raised her hand.

*Click

Snapping her finger, countless sparks of Void Flux appeared in front of the fireballs and consumed them in the blink of an eye.

Grabbing the staff, she twirled it around her body before slamming it into the ground.

Beneath her, a large ritual circle began to expand.

Alice had taken the knowledge she gained from seeing Selen fight as well as her previous experiences to form a new attack with Alyss.

A ritual to exchange their power. But this time, rather than the flames, she sought out a different aspect of Alyss's power.

Not only that but fresh inspiration from the thought of Kaden, his curses and how he uses his shadows.

Inky shadows and tendrils shot up from the edges of her ritual circle to form a cage. Webs of corruption latched onto one another as the gaps started to close one after another.

A sense of dread filled Caelum's mind. His entire being, his soul was screaming for him to escape this cage.

Realising the danger he was in, Caelum gritted his teeth as he plunged his fist into his heart.

The golden markings around his body erupted in stellar fire as his entire body began to change.

Resonance!

*Badum!!! Badum!!! Badum!!!

His heart began to pulse as the fire grew stronger. Exploding outwards, a red and blue fire wrapped around his body as a cocoon of flames appeared.

Raising her eyebrow, Alice was about to act when the cocoon began to break. It suddenly contracted, dragging all of the flames towards the centre, forming a single core. From that core, a body was being constructed. Light and fire became his new flesh as Caelum was reborn in his Resonance.

His hair turned from black to a pristine white. A pair of glowing eyes and a white and gold winged helmet. Armour appeared around his body while a pair of wings unfurled behind him.

Summoning a pair of gauntlets bursting with energy and the mark of the Sun God, Caelum pulled his body back before crashing towards the ground.

*BANG!!!! CRACK!!!!

A pulse of fire clashed against the darkness.

'Divinity!' Alice widened her eyes, recognising that power to be the same that belonged to the Sun god Solaris.

Just as she thought this, Caelum's fists were mere centimetres away from hitting her face as she bent her body back at the last second to dodge. But Caelum took that into account and adjusted his strike into an elbow slam.

*BANG!!!

Opening a portal between them, she created the exit behind his head as he hit himself with his own attack, giving Alice the chance to roll out of the way.

Recalling the shadows that were draining her energy while being burned away by his current aura, Alice furrowed her brows.

"Seems like your heretical power cannot stand against the radiance of My Lord after all." Caelum narrowed his gaze.

"Hah! And here I thought you said you were an Ex Archbishop? How come an ex member of the church of the Sun is using its power? I thought you didn't get to use it anymore once you leave?" Alice questioned with a brave smile.

Refusing to elaborate, Caelum reached forward and grabbed the empty air. Tugging it, flaming chains manifested and coiled around Alice's neck.

Seeing this Alice widened her eyes as veins bulged on her forehead and neck. Her anger reached its peak as Sigils manifested across her body.

She may not care for the love of the Zenia family anymore, but this didn't mean anyone could wrap something around her neck!

Resonance!

The pattern of a red spider lily blossomed in Alice's pupil as briar thorns burst out from her body, wrapping around her arms. An obsidian crown crackled to life above her head, floral patterns stretched across Alice's cheek and lilies blossomed along the wounds caused by her thorns.

Wearing a bloodied white dress, Alice grabbed the flaming chains with her bare hands without caring about the damage.

Biting the inside of her mouth, Alice spat a mouthful of her own blood onto the chains as it began to wither rapidly with thorns and violet flames rushing towards Caelum like a wave of malevolent spirits.

Horror filled his heart as he immediately let go of the chains before jumping back.

In his resonance, Caelum had become closer to his God to the point he could sense the different energies in people. How many Sigils do they have, what church do they belong to or even if they're part of the Eclipse.

But Alice? She was pure, unrefined corruption dyed in the colour of the Abyss. No, she felt like the Abyss itself.

Each pulse of the dark realm matched the pulse of her heart, its authority resting in her crown.

With each step she took, a new sense of dread would take root within his body.

"What the hell are you?!" He screamed, unsure as to what he was looking at. She couldn't even be considered human with the aura she was radiating.

"You don't need to know." Alice narrowed her gaze as she snapped her finger.

In the blink of an eye, a garden of red spider lilies blossomed within the castle and latched onto Caelum's body. Briar thorns shot out from his surroundings, piercing into his body, tearing off his wings and stabbing through his chest.

Blood drained from his body as it was being siphoned by the briar thorns.

The flames around Caelum's body began to fade as Alice stepped towards Caelum and looked at him face to face.

Defiance roared in his gaze despite his current state as Alice curved her lips into a wide grin.

She recalled what she had done in the Inverted World and a sadistic joy appeared in her eyes.

"Pft, do you think you get to return to your god after you die?" She asked.

Hearing this, Caelum froze up.

"I remember sensing a little something from a few people that I've fought in the past. A precious, delicate connection to their God. But you know, once you partake in the blessing of the Abyss, that connection is weakened somewhat no matter how you try and reinforce it." Alice whispered.

Her voice was like the teasing of a demon as it approached its victim.

"All it takes..."

"Is one little snip." Alice giggled softly as she snapped her finger and tapped against his chest.

From his flaming heart, Alice's blood dug deep and began to pull out strands of energy.

Caelum's face paled in horror as he wanted to struggle but Alice jammed her left hand into his mouth, stopping him from talking.

"Shh~ just watch. Something fun is about to happen." She tugged against his tongue, causing him to choke.

Flames manifested on her hand as she grabbed the strand of energy.

Narrowing her gaze, she revealed a sadistic grin and pulled.

*SNAP!!!

Breaking the strand of energy, Caelum's body began to twist and convulse while the flames around him disappeared in an instant. His connection cut off from his God and his soul doomed to be consumed by Alice.

Pulling her hand out, she shook off the saliva in disgust while turning around.

She was going to let him hang there for a little longer so that she could siphon more of his blood into vials to be used later.

At that moment, Alice felt dread.

"Manifestation." A haunting voice rang out from behind her.

[Night Breaker Spear – Crystallisation of Myth]

Chapter 427 - 427: God's Decent

A sacred luminance filled the castle as both Bo and Olivr had to shield their eyes from the attack.

The burning against their skin, the innate reverence that welled up within them. The sheer power of the spear sent a chill down their spine as they understood that this was no mortal power.

This is a God.

"How dare a filthy mortal pilfer the soul of my believer." 'Caelum' spat out in anger as flames coiled around his arm. A single golden eye overlaid his own right eye while his body was breaking apart from hosting this overwhelming well of power.

The Night Breaker Spear, a weapon of myth that appeared within Solaris' story. A spear that pierced the night veil and brought down the radiance of the Sun.

A weapon that could only be thrown once.

*COUGH!!!

Hearing a cough from within the dust, 'Caelum' widened his eyes in shock.

"You really decided to use that of all things to try and kill me. Haha... Are you that annoyed your little boy toy doesn't belong to you anymore?" Alice's voice rang out.

It was clearly forced and even Bo could tell the girl was injured.

As the dust settled, they paused in shock.

A single spear pinned Alice against the wall but tendrils of flesh, briar thorns and red spider lilies grew around her. Thorns coiled around the spear shaft, hoping to slow it down for even a moment. Lilies that gathered to siphon the power, the twisting of the void and blackened limbs all tried to stop the spear.

Yet it was still firmly lodged into Alice's chest, completely destroying the right side of her body.

Looking down at his hand, 'Caelum' frowned.

Even if his power was restricted, that spear should've been more than enough to kill a single mortal. But she was still alive? Alive enough to taunt him?

"Who are you?" 'Caelum' demanded to know as Alice's flesh began to twist. Jumping back towards her body, she started to regenerate herself. Repairing her eye, Alice looked up at 'Caelum' and grinned.

Raising her right hand, she showed him her middle finger.

"F*ck you Solaris." Alice laughed.

'Twinnie, can you do it?'

'Who do you take me for? Of course I can.'

*BANG!!!

A dark malevolent energy erupted from Alice's body as golden chains coiled around her limbs and neck.

Seeing these chains and the energy they exuded, Solaris froze up.

"VELOURIA!!!" He roared, as flames rushed across his body, burning away everything Caelum had to offer in order to bring down more of his power.

Pulling her hand back, Alyss punched forward, shattering the Void. In the brief moment before Solaris attacked them with the spear, she had drunk Caelum's energy out of panic to protect herself.

But this had another effect. She was now equal to a six Sigil Hunter!

Overlaying Allura's Sigil onto herself, she pulled out her personal Artifact.

[Ruinous Void – Lance form]

When her personal artifact was shifted to a Lance form dedicated to Alyss, it allowed three attacks that gathered the might of the Void. All three were guaranteed hits!

Alyss recalled the sensation of mimicking Enris in the Inverted World as the corner of her lips curled up into a devious grin.

"Oi, Sun God. Do you believe the weapons of Gods are beyond the reach of mortals?" Alyss taunted as energy converged towards her Lance.

The severance effect of Allura, the guaranteed hit of Ruinous Void, siphoning and cancelling ability of their blood along with Tiamat's Sigil for absolute power that comes from gathering the ambient energy around them.

As the world lost its colour, Alyss's lance began to change.

[Replication – Night Breaker Lance of Ruinous Void]

Her artifact shifted to a dark metallic material with jagged edges and a pulsing purple power that could be seen through the gaps. Veins of purple could be seen wrapped by the briar thorns that ran down the body of the lance.

Holding this lance, Alyss glanced up at the fragment of God that was trying to descend towards the mortal realm.

Despite it being night, a singular sun hung in the centre of the sky, illuminating the realm in its brilliance.

She didn't need to kill a God, she didn't need to wound him. That was not the goal of this lance.

The goal was simple and what they had sought out to do from the start. To completely sever his connection to this location at this moment!

Taking a deep breath, she gripped the lance and felt its power flooding her body.

'No wonder this thing was f*cking us up from the inside.' Alyss thought to herself with a laugh.

The artifact is a sentient being. Juvenile and very eager. It tasted the height of Alice's power within the Inverted World and had thought that Alice got injured. It's trying to destroy the 'weakness' so Alice could reclaim that power.

The sentience wasn't strong as all it had was its baser instincts but at least for this moment, it had stopped trying to destroy their body. Instead, its attention was focused on the divine being in front of them. To accomplish the task that its owner had set out for it.

To shatter, tear and destroy the connection!

Taking a few steps back, Alyss glared at Solaris who was gathering his power for a singular strike before he was forcefully expelled.

Flames burst around the lance as runic symbols lit up on the handle. Dashing forward, she twisted her body and gritted her teeth, funnelling as much power as she could to the lance.

*BANG!!!!

Her throw caused the ground around her to shatter as the lance erupted into a brilliant spiral of light. A trail of shimmering stardust left in its wake as the fabrics of space began to twist. The Void forcefully opened up to welcome the attack, bridging the gap and appearing before Solaris.

Two points on a paper, folded in half to reduce the distance to nothingness.

With Allura's power, Alyss singled out the connection and the lance flew true.

*CRACK!!!

Trying to block the spear with his hand, Solaris gritted his teeth in anger as memories of Ayr flooded his mind. The divinity held by Velouria and her Apostles has once again appeared before him.

Doubt, confusion and disbelief gripped his mind as the spear shattered through his spectral being, colliding with his tether to this realm and shattering to countless pieces.

*BOOM!!!

A pulse of energy rippled out from his tether being shattered as flames began to melt the stone around them. Shooting to the sky was a single pillar of energy as Solaris' figure began to disintegrate.

Glaring at Alyss, Solaris showed a face of disgust.

"I'll remember you. Hear me and despair. One day, I will tear your head from your very shoulders and mount it for all to see. The story of a fool who dare take something of mine.

"This time, I will properly clean the remnants of Ayr from the face of this world." Solaris promised as Alyss rested her lance on her shoulders.

"Bold words for a worthless God who can't even kill a filthy mortal." Alyss smirked as Solaris lost his composure and screamed towards her but his words were cut out. His essence unravelled and the Sun in the sky disappeared, leaving the Civilians wondering if it had all been an illusion.

###

Meanwhile, Tristan had a frown on his face. As a Cardinal of the Moon, he could clearly recognise Divine power when it appeared. That was no archbishop, no cardinal or pope. That was the Divine being himself descending.

Who could even force a God to descend despite the restrictions?

He wanted to investigate but he could feel the intent of his Goddess. She was warning him not to intervene or approach the location in fear of having her beloved Cardinal stolen from her embrace.

With his Goddess sending down an order, Tristan didn't remain and left as she had ordered.

###

Three figures watched from the distance as frowns hung on their faces.

"Did the family send someone like that?" Keria asked, crossing her legs while floating in the air.

The aura they could feel from area was similar yet different at the same time.

"I don't believe they have." Elowen furrowed her brows as this was outside of their expectations. She wasn't sure what they should do as their plans had been thrown in disarray now.

"Maybe it's a product by a different branch? A Divine being did appear after all." Troy theorised.

"Forget it, orders haven't come down from above yet. Let us simply observe for now until new orders arrive." Elowen sighed after a moment.

If they took matters into their own hands and it turns out to be another operation by the family, they could inadvertently ruin things. Thinking about the potential punishments for doing so, she paled slightly as the three of them left, not wanting to hang around for too long.

###

A man with could be seen sitting on a throne as veins bulged on his temples and neck. His eyes burning with anger as the flames around him grew with his rage.

He was already angry enough to find out that one of his followers had been forcefully ripped from his embrace but to make matters worse, he found an Ayrian who has a fragment of Velouria's power.

"After all these years you continue to haunt me with your power." Solaris muttered, remembering the fear he felt long, long ago when he faced Velouria. That unrivalled power and control over the Abyss which dwarfed the power of the three Gods.

Summoning his apostles, Solaris took a deep breath.

"Send a message to the Moon and the Eclipse. I'm ordering another gathering of the Gods."

Chapter 428 - 428: Leaving The Port Stronghold

As the last fragment of Solaris faded away from the castle, Alyss closed her eyes and the golden chains disappeared.

"F*cking hell..." Alice muttered, falling back as the disguise of the jester began to fall apart.

While the jester was versatile in keeping her identity a secret, one attack is all it needs for it to be dispelled.

If it wasn't for the fact that she had her resonance, her true appearance might've been seen by Solaris and if that was to happen, it would've truly been a bad situation.

'Honestly, I probably shouldn't have stolen his soul like that.' Alice's smile twitched thinking about the trouble she just caused.

But after he tried to wrap that chain around her neck, she felt an unstoppable surge of rage within.

'Well, what's done is done. No point worrying about it now.' Alyss shrugged with a smile. She felt satisfied being able to go all out after such a long time of not being able to fight. A true stress reliever.

Looking at the fading lance in her hands, Alice had a smile on her face. She was glad she didn't get rid of her personal artifact. A weapon like this that could act as a catalyst for her abilities and match her growth was far too rare to give up.

As long as she can weather this period where her body is at its weakest, the results will be unthinkable. A prime Alice with all her abilities available again. Cayla, Void Fang, Ruinous Void and the full capabilities of her blood.

The goal of bringing down the Zenia family was slowly coming into view and Alice couldn't suppress the smile on her face.

"What the f*ck..."

"Ah..." Pausing in realisation, Alice glanced to her left and saw Bo clutching his ribs while walking over in shock.

She had completely forgotten that the two of them were still here since Solaris had taken her attention when he appeared.

"Erm... Teehee?" Alice stuck out her tongue.

"I... have so many questions." Bo sighed. He didn't know how Alice was able to pull off everything she had just demonstrated. With the wounds she had on her body, this should've been impossible.

Not only that, but the last attack sent by Caelum was frankly too devastating. A single spear toss that made him feel like he was going to die just by looking at the attack.

Yet here she was, lying on the ground with mild wounds at best.

"Maybe you can ask them later when we get out of here. We're still in enemy territory ya know?" Alice scratched her cheek as she glanced past him and saw Olivr's shocked expression upon seeing her identity.

'I'm guessing that b*stard's scared now since he tried to kill you.' Alyss folded her arms.

'Perhaps. Should I deal with him now?' Alice wondered before nodding her head.

'Of course, I should. Leaving behind loose cannons like him would only cause issues further down the line.'

"Bo, could you move aside for a second?" Alice asked as Bo nodded his head.

Stepping to the side, he watched as she aimed her finger towards Olivr's location.

"!!!" Realising what was about to happen, he wanted to say something but a spark of raw energy shot towards Olivr like an arrow.

*BANG!!!!

Detonating in front of him and erasing him in an instant, Alice let out a sigh of satisfaction.

"Thank you~ Had to deal with him before he tried to kill me while I'm weak. Motherf*cker exploded the orb I had on me to drag the guards to the watchtower." Alice figured she might as well explain before Bo misunderstands.

"I see..." Bo sighed as he could only shake his head. Had Olivr taken a different route, he might be alive right now but this was no time to mourn.

"The others are still fighting by the gates. The strange beasts haven't shown up yet. Let's get out of here and regroup." Bo suggested, offering to carry Alice considering her current state.

"Honestly, if the beasts appear we're kind of f*cked. I can't deal with them right now unless I plan on taking myself out with them." Alice admitted honestly.

With that last attack that Alyss threw towards Solaris, she exhausted all of the energy in her body. On top of everything, she even summoned her personal Artifact! Frankly, it's a wonder that she was even conscious right now.

"Also you probably don't want to touch my blood. Just a warning for you." She added, throwing a droplet towards what remains of Caelum's corpse.

Glancing over, he watched as parts of Caelum's flesh began to twist and mutate before finally bursting apart.

"What kind of spirits did you even attune to???" Bo blinked his eyes in confusion and shock.

"The less you know the better. Just drag me along with a rope or something. As long as you don't touch my blood, you're safe."

Nodding his head, Bo grabbed the bodies of the surviving captains while ignoring the rest. There were only three survivors.

Him, the shield captain and a captain who used support skills but didn't heal. Everyone else died in the fight except Olivr who was killed by Alice because he tried to kill her earlier.

Lifting the two captains onto his shoulder, he grabbed some clothes and rope. Bundling up Alice's body, he carried it on his back.

"I know I said that you shouldn't touch my blood. But isn't this a bit too much?" Alice's smile twitched.

With the way he had wrapped her up, she felt like she was a worm. Unable to move her limbs and tightly packed into a long roll. Only able to shuffle.

"It's either that or dragging you by rope. And honestly, rope is probably the worse option." Bo joked along, lightening the mood before dashing out of the castle.

He could see countless abilities and attacks being thrown by the gates. Dead corpses scattered across the battlefield. A friend who shared a meal with him earlier was blasted to smithereens without even seeing where the attack came from.

"The Grandmaster is dead! All units retreat!!!" Bo shouted towards the Warrior of Verona.

Despite their shallow victory over the Grandmaster, they could not occupy a port stronghold with these numbers never mind calling for reinforcements from the capital.

Hearing his command, the Warriors of Verona began to deploy defensive abilities with what little numbers they had left and began to retreat. Alice could spot Egil covering for his allies, taking the attacks using his own body and providing cover while Selen slowed down large scale abilities.

"I don't suppose we're continuing the assault after we regroup?" Alice asked curiously.

"Of course not. With these numbers, it's just suicide. We're going back to the supply base as soon as possible." Bo shook his head as Alice let out a sigh of relief.

###

Retreating back to the mountains, Alice glanced at the surviving numbers and couldn't help but frown. Out of the 55 that survived the journey here, only 17 is left not including the captains.

None of Bo's squad managed to survive the initial attack with stragglers barely surviving thanks to being covered by Egil.

The enemy targeted the healers and supporters first so they were the first to go.

Looking at these numbers, Bo couldn't help but let out a sigh. He had hoped more would survive but this was probably the best they were going to get. If Alice hadn't intervened in the battle against the Grandmaster, no one would be left.

"Rest up for an hour. After an hour, we'll prepare for the journey back." Bo ordered, taking command as the other captains were still knocked out from the battle.

Sighed of relief could be heard while many of the Warriors were traumatised by the battle.

Their eyes were hollow as friends whom they shared time with perished beside them while they survived on pure luck.

Meanwhile, Selen crossed her arms in front of Alice who was bleeding from all over her body due to the wounds that failed to close.

"What did you do this time? Your regeneration completely shut down." Selen asked with a frown.

She told Alice to take it easy but only for her to return in this state.

"Erm... Things got a little out of control I admit. But I got a clue on how to fix my body now." Alice coughed, changing the subject as Selen rolled her eyes.

Reaching into her pouch, she grabbed some bandages and began to dress up Alice's wounds.

Out of everyone, she was the most qualified since her body was somewhat resistant. As long as she keeps contact to a minimum, Alice's blood won't do much to her.

"I also got some new information on the Zenias for you." Alice whispered, ensuring that no one was eavesdropping on them.

"Hm?"

"They've created a new hybrid similar to the one back in Verten. The three beasts that ambushed us are their new products and they have a human form."

Hearing this, Selen froze up immediately as her pupils constricted.

"So they finished the experiments." Selen gritted her teeth as she continued to dress up Alice's wounds.

"You know of them?" Alice raised an eyebrow, realising that Selen had information.

"A little but not much. Erick wasn't part of the main family so the information he could get was limited. However, there were two variants of this experiment. First, to create hybrids between humans and sealed Lords.

"I'm part of that experiment and the Lord I was matched with controls time to some extent. The second half... is to create a brand new 'race' of humans. I just know that their fusion starts much earlier than the ones of the first variant.

You could even say they're born that way and no adjustments are needed later down the line." Selen explained as she remembers seeing a few of the prototypes belonging to the second variant when she was still in the Zenia family.

Children who couldn't control their transformation and mutate into malformed beings before they could fully adapt. In one sense, it was worse than succumbing to the side effects of Abyss Blood.

There was no easy way to put it. Once they mutate due to a lack of control, they become malformed monstrosities with no way of turning back to normal.

The only mercy they could receive was being killed. Either die as a monster or live as a weapon of the Zenias. That is the choice offered to this new 'race' of beings.

Chapter 429 - 429: Returning To The Outpost

On the way back to the outpost, the fatigue of pushing her body finally caught up to Alice as she wasn't even able lift a single finger.

Her wounds continuously split apart and bled with Selen constantly dressing her wounds to the point she got sick of it.

However, if she doesn't take care of Alice's wounds, she'll probably die. Even more so now that her regeneration had ceased due to her pushing herself.

"I can eat by my self..." Alice muttered, feeling countless eyes on her as she blushed in embarrassment.

"If you could, you wouldn't be in this situation would you?" Selen asked, grabbing a spoon and feeding Alice.

Right now, she was hung up on a tree with her entire body encased in bandages and clothing to prevent any more damage to her body.

Selen got sick of Alice reopening her wounds whenever there was a slight shake on the carriage so her compromise was to treat her like an expensive vase.

"Yeah but... does it have to be on a tree??" Alice' smile twitched while looking at her situation.

Those who see her might even mistake her for a stack of clothes randomly thrown onto a clothes hanger.

"Stop complaining. If you're that against it, next time don't get injured like this again. I'm not even a physician." Selen rolled her eyes, shoving the spoon in Alice's mouth before she could retort.

As Alice was being fed while hanging on the tree, the captains had another meeting.

"Can we even survive the journey back?" Vandil asked. Even though he's the shield captain, he's lost his trusted shield. He could make do with spare weapons but his effectiveness has decreased significantly.

"The old man's right. What if the beasts decide to ambush again? This time we don't have the others to help." Hilde followed. She is the support captain that got knocked out and all of her skills are focused on enhancing others. She had no healing skills that could help them if they get injured.

"Even if it seems impossible, we have to try. The port is off limits even if the Grandmaster is dead. The only way to get out of this alive is to make it back to the outpost. How are our supplies?" Bo shook his head before turning to Vandil.

"It's not gonna last. We'll have to starve for the last day of the journey." He shook his head.

Furrowing his brows, Bo sighed as this was to be expected. They barely had enough for a round trip to begin with. But after the ambush, their supplies had dwindled to the point where even after rationing things out, it'll be difficult to sustain for the rest of the trip.

"Can we reduce the rations more so we can cover the journey?" Bo asked but Vandil rejected the suggestion.

"We're already barely eating anything as it is. If we reduce it even more, we might as well not be eating anything."

Usually, one day wouldn't mean much. It's just one day after all.

But right now, everyone was starving, injured and stressed. They can't perform how they usually would and now, even a normal beast would pose a danger to them.

Bo might've recovered from his injuries to some extent but he can't cover for all of them.

What's worse is that the path back was prone to being attacked by five star beasts.

Selen and Egil were both exhausted as well so the help they can provide was limited.

Bo initially wanted to ask Alice for help but he recalled the injuries on her body. He found it weird how she needed him to represent her during the duel but now it made sense.

He wasn't sure of her circumstances but there's no doubt that such a tyrannical power as the one she showed enacted a high toll on the user's body.

Thinking to this point, he couldn't help but glance over at Alice who was shedding a tear of embarrassment while being hung on the tree. She looked like a harmless cat who's been strung up rather than a powerful Hunter who managed to kill a Grandmaster.

But that last moment when an unfathomable aura appeared...

'Forget it, no use in thinking about it. Curiosity killed the cat.' Bo shook his head.

Regardless of Alice's circumstances, why she was hiding her powers and what that was at the end, it wasn't his business. All he has to care about was the fact that she saved him and the other two captains. This was a debt he had to repay no matter what.

"We'll try and speed up the travel to make up for the lack of supplies. I'll use my pouch for the supplies. Load the injured onto the carts, we'll leave immediately." Bo ordered as both Vandil and Hilde nodded their heads.

###

The path back was arduous compared to the journey towards the port. Tension was at an all time high with everyone being on guard against ambushes by stray beasts. What would've been taken care of easily became a threat that could easily wipe them out.

The main attack force scrapped together was Egil being the frontline with Vandil who acted as his support, Selen and Bo acting as the main damage dealers and Hilde being support for them all.

But without any healer to heal their injuries sustained through the battles, their medical supplies began to dwindle. A few of the injured warriors only got a few drops of healing blood to help tide them over this period while they're being transported.

Naturally, this meant that they were in constant agony but they couldn't do anything about it.

However, the one who was most fatigued was Selen.

No only did she have to attend to Alice's wounds but also fight while protecting everyone. Constantly using her time slow barrier while keeping beasts away.

In order to not add to her burdens, Alice didn't say anything and followed her instructions.

As the time passed, people stopped talking and even food was eaten in silence. Everyone was reaching their limit but the end was soon.

Just a few more hours and they'll reach the outpost.

###

"What... What the hell happened here..." Bo muttered with a trembling voice. He could see the scars of battle scattered across the gates and craters within the outpost.

The walls that were forcefully broken down and hastily repaired. The corpses of beasts that have yet to be dealt with while their blood seeped into the ground around them.

Countless warriors could be seen wounded while broken weapons were stabbed into the ground.

With such a sight, none of the Warriors could rest easy as everyone rushed towards the outpost.

However, there was one thing that Alice had noticed.

The presence of the Abyss. The familiar strands of energy that invaded this land like the tendrils of a monster. Clawing its way out from the ground and dying the realm in its colour.

Furrowing her brows, Alice forced herself to stand up while Selen stopped her.

"I should be relatively fine now. Just go back to our quarters and rest up. I'm going to get some information." Alice reassured with a smile.

Letting out an annoyed sigh, Selen nodded her head since she was in no state to keep looking after Alice.

She was absolutely exhausted and hungry.

Grabbing a fruit to eat while she made her way to the old man's house, Alice furrowed her brows seeing the state of the outpost.

The concerned looks of the families, those who were heartbroken and those filled with despair.

A sight that will become more familiar as they get closer to the frontlines.

Making her way through the outpost, Alice soon arrived at the hill.

Out of everyone that she's met in this outpost, the old man was the strangest. She couldn't tell what level he was nor could she sense him most of the time. He just appears then disappears.

He was most likely stronger than Torgeir and possibly on the level or above that of the principal.

However, the main thing was still the fruit that he gave her. A fruit that had incomparable sweetness and sped up her natural regeneration. It didn't work that well when she was extremely injured but now that some time had passed, its effectiveness returned.

"I thought I told you to savour the fruit rather than use the beast blood?" Ragnar sighed while leaning on his chair, causing Alice to jump as she didn't notice him on the way up.

"It was kind of unavoidable. If I didn't drink it I would've died in an explosion." Alice scratched her hair.

Shaking his head, Ragnar gestured for her to sit down on the chair next to him and brought out some more fruit for her.

"Even so, I don't believe the Ravager's blood would've done this much to your body. It's an absolute mess, even more so than before. You were recovering just fine as well. What a shame." Ragnar lamented.

"True. But I also found out why that's the case. I'm not strong enough to host my power yet. After one or two more Sigils, I should recover from something like this." Alice shrugged, licking her lips while grabbing another fruit.

Seeing Alice's nonchalant attitude to her body, Ragnar was in disbelief but didn't let it show on his face.

"So what happened here?" Alice asked curiously.

"Why are you asking me? I'm just an old man spending his time on a hill with bitter fruits." Ragnar raised an eyebrow while stroking his beard.

"It's even weirder if you didn't know. Civilians aren't composed like you are when they get attacked like this." Alice laughed causing Ragnar to chuckle.

"An Abyss Break. Do you know of it?"

Chapter 430 - 430: Dead Zone

"An Abyss Break. Do you know of it?" Ragnar asked as Alice tilted her head.

"Nope." She shrugged while taking a bite of the fruit.

"An Abyss Break is when the barrier between the surface and the Abyss weakens to a state where it allows a new passage to be created. However, unlike the existing gateways between the two realms, the new passage is unstable.

"There's no telling where it may lead nor do you know how long it'll last for. But the key issue is the corruption it brings to the surface and the permanent effects." Ragnar explained as Alice glanced towards the outpost.

"I'm guessing that's the strands of Abyssal Energy." Alice muttered.

Hearing this, Ragnar froze momentarily.

"You can see that?"

"Yep. There are a few strands here and there. It's not that serious just yet but I can definitely see the effects." Alice nodded before curling her lips up into a grin.

"But the real question is how can you see it, old man? I know my method and it's not replicable. So how can you see it hmm?~" She gave him a side glance as Ragnar coughed awkwardly.

"Setting that aside, this should just be the first wave. After your group left, an Abyss Break happened after a few hours just outside of our gates. With the residue left behind by the first attack, the second and third should follow soon and by the end of it, a complete gateway would form here." Ragnar pointed at the centre of the outpost.

"That's the good outcome. A bad outcome would be that the Abyss Break turns this place into a complete dead zone." He let out a deep sigh.

"What's a dead zone?"

"Exactly as it sounds. A zone that's completely dead. It's not a gateway to the Abyss but rather the fractured remains of two realms colliding. The expulsion of energy from the collision fractures the stability of both realms, making it so that nothing can grow or survive. A volatile zone that will slowly expand if not kept in check. Just hope that it doesn't come to that stage." Ragnar shrugged.

"Well that doesn't sound ominous at all." Alice's smile twitched.

She noticed a slight pattern recently. The worse case scenarios happen around her far too often and the more unlikely something was, the more likely it becomes.

"On the rare chance that it does become a dead zone, is there anything we can do to stop it? Or do we abandon this outpost?" She asked as Ragnar stroked his beard.

"What else is there to do except run? The people here will need to abandon this outpost and the frontlines will have to be pulled back. If this place goes, we'll lose a large chunk of our land back to the Extalia Kingdom."

Realising how bad a dead zone truly is for a potential Lord to say such a thing brought a new perspective into the mix for Alice.

"Then I guess the only thing people can do is to stop the zone before it even forms." Alice leaned back as Ragnar let out a laugh.

"What?" Alice pouted, wondering why her suggestion was so funny.

"A dead zone doesn't give you time to prepare. Even now, we don't know the exact conditions for a dead zone to form. It just does. The first sign of a dead zone is the destabilization of space and a rapid fusion of both the energy from the surface and the Abyss. But once you sense the first sign, it's already become unstoppable.

"How can you prevent an attack that's already on its way to hit you? The only thing you can do is dodge. And in this case, it's to evacuate the city." Ragnar explained as Alice leaned back.

If an attack was on its way to reach her, her first instinct was to evaluate how large it was. Depending on its size, she'll be able to divert it using her Void powers. But that doesn't account for the dead zone. Depending on what kind of phenomenon it is, perhaps avoiding is the only answer.

'You're being nosy again twinnie. If a dead zone appears and you try to interfere, you'll set back our recovery.' Alyss reminded as Alice had a habit of trying to deal with any problem she saw before her.

'Ah sorry.' Alice scratched her head with a small laugh. She wanted to see if she could unravel the question placed before her, to find an alternative path rather than escaping.

"Anyways, enough about what happened in the outpost. How was the expedition? Seeing as how there's only a handful of you coming back, I guess it didn't go well." Ragnar asked as Alice shook her head.

"It went absolutely horrible. We got ambushed by strange beasts that seemed impossible to defeat twice and once we got to the city, the captains struggled with the Grandmaster."

Explaining the entire journey, and the nature of the hybrids that attacked them while leaving out their true identities, Alice could see slight fluctuations in Ragnar's expression.

Especially when he heard about the powers of the hybrids.

"Are you sure they're beasts and not summons?" He asked as Alice nodded her head.

"Summons have a different strand of energy that connects them to their caster. These beasts didn't have it, all of their power came from themselves." Alice explained.

Folding his arms, Ragnar had a deep frown on his face.

While he was contemplating silently, Alice began to eat all of the fruit.

Her stash of fruit that Ragnar gave her last time has almost run out so she was reluctant to dig into it.

"Seems like we'll have to retreat from this outpost sooner than expected." Ragnar sighed.

The news of the strange beasts was far too concerning for him to sit still.

Glancing to the side, he noticed Alice holding out her palm towards him.

"Hm?"

"Fruit. Gimme more." Alice beckoned as Ragnar's smile twitched.

"Do you know how precious this fruit is? I already gave you a large sack of them last time."

"I know. But I want more." Alice smirked.

Rolling his eyes, Ragnar stood up and massaged his lower back.

"Aiya~ You're going to work this old man to death. My poor farm is going to suffer because of you." He sighed, gesturing for her to follow him towards his hut.

Raising an eyebrow, Alice jumped off her chair and walked behind him.

In the times she visited this place, she never once entered the hut nor did she plan to. It was someone else's house after all. But if he was inviting her, she wasn't going to reject.

Upon reaching the hut, she noticed a strange fluctuation of energy around them.

'It's probably a defensive measure. Resembles the Void a little so maybe it teleports people away?' Alyss theorised as Alice nodded her head in agreement.

Entering the hut, the inside looked as expected but Ragnar didn't stop there. Continuing to the back of the house, he opened a door to the garden and Alice's pupil constricted in shock.

A flood of energy exploded into the room as she felt as though she was submerged in a medicinal bath. Just being in the presence of this energy was enough to sooth her body.

"It's the first time someone has shown this kind of acceptance." Ragnar chuckled as he stood aside, allowing Alice to step into his garden herself.

Stepping through the door, Alice saw a completely new world. No more was the snow that covered the lands or the distant mountains. Instead, it was now a mountainous land with a bright sun overhead. Large patches of farmland surrounded the house with various different fruits and vegetables.

Each section of the farm exuded a different kind of energy but all of them felt beneficial. Alice could sense the strands of energy entwining with one another, fusing together and achieving a sense of harmony and balance.

'He hasn't planted things randomly. Everything here is placed out intentionally.' Alice realised in surprise.

"How is it? Good right?" Ragnar grinned, clearly proud of his farm.

"The energy here is good for you short term but prolonged exposure is bad."

If Alice was considered to be a plant, this energy was the water and nutrients she needed to grow. Small doses at a time was fine and would help her but if she were to submerge herself in this, it would only serve to kill her instead of helping.

"I know." Alice nodded.

She could sense the changes in her body, the increase in regeneration and the recovery of her fatigue. But the benefits ended there. If she received too much of this energy, she'd have no way to expel it and in the end, she'd bloat herself to death.

"So why are we here?" She asked curiously.

"Didn't you want fruit? We're going to pick some now. You ate through my entire supply that's meant to last several months." Ragnar rolled his eyes, taking the lead through his garden.

This entire farm was far bigger than the outpost and even the city of Zdash.

Seeing this, it only reaffirmed Alice's belief that this man is an Abyss Lord. The only question now was why he was in this kind of place and not doing anything. He simply overlooked the outpost while tending to his garden, far different to the other Lords that Alice was familiar with.

Granted, before Allura dragged Gin away, he was a handler working in the Slaughter Docks.

Thinking back to the Slaughter Docks, Alice couldn't help but recall the people she met there. Once she reached the level of Six Sigils, Alice wanted to head back. To properly thank Sera for giving her the outfit and to deal with the woman who killed her first friend.

'Hope she's still alive even after drinking my blood.' Alice thought to herself as her lips curled up into a cruel smile.

Meanwhile, Ragnar was confused as to why she suddenly went from amazement to nostalgia and finally, straight up killing intent.