

Abyssal A 451

Chapter 451 - 451: Transport To The Frontlines

After finding out the reason for the fissure to lead to the Abyss, Alice continued to eavesdrop as she gained a bit of news of happenings from across the world.

News of recently popular Abyss Blood, incidents between large families, groups from the east and even a strange case of burglary happening in Extalia.

News had even gotten to them that someone had been stealing some of the most prized possessions of the different churches, large families and even the royal armoury at one point.

They claimed some as exaggeration but the fact that news spread this far meant it was more than just a hoax.

Hearing the news about the burglary, Alice couldn't help but think back to her first meeting with Kaden. The entire reason why he even found her was because the prison was heavily guarded to the point he thought there was a treasure inside.

'You don't think that it's Kaden robbing all these places do you?' Alice asked curiously.

[I can't say for sure but I doubt it'll be him.] Cayla shrugged as Alice nodded her head.

However, her senses were telling her that the likelihood was high.

Regardless, most of the things she overheard were rather miscellaneous in nature with few actually being of interest. Since that was the case, Alice made her way to a tavern that she found and tried out their mead.

It wasn't the best that she's tasted but it wasn't bad either. Good enough for her to resupply her diminishing reserves for the time being until she could afford better mead.

With her supplies now full once more, Alice had a skip to her steps while making her way back to the group.

It should've been enough time for them to resupply.

While making her way back, Alice couldn't help but notice that there were several people with collars on their necks. It wasn't the aesthetic kind either...

'Slaves.'

[Indeed. They don't seem to be war slaves either. I'd imagine they are probably debt slaves or something similar.] Cayla shrugged.

[Do you pity them master?]

'Hmm... good question. I'm not sure.' Alice sighed.

It felt a little like looking into a mirror except with slightly different circumstances. Her life was... guaranteed to some extent thanks to her uses. But these slaves? They can die at a moment's notice and no one would care.

'Just ignore them. It's not like we have the time and effort to free every single slave in the world. If we save a few, we'll have to save others. Plus, we can't take responsibility for their lives can we?' Alyss leaned back with a shrug.

'That's true.' Alice nodded.

Though a part of her wanted to help. To help them like how Kaden helped her.

*Sigh

'Twinnie look at it this way. Do you know why they're a slave to begin with? What kind of crime did they do? Do you have the time to find out the truth and see if it's bad luck or actual crimes? Just freeing them without care could lead to a situation where a serial killer is free.' Alyss reminded as she knew her twin's nature.

If she didn't say anything, this'll keep eating away at Alice until she makes a move. Thus, it was better for her to make it clear here and now before anything takes root.

'That's fair...' Alice nodded.

Alyss made sense. Some of these slaves could be justified depending on their crimes. She didn't have the kind of leisure and time to find out about each and every one of them.

This kind of situation was out of her hands.

Shaking her head, she stepped away and stopped having thoughts about them while Alyss and Cayla sighed in relief before high fiving one another.

###

Waiting by the gathering spot, Alice could see Torgeir approaching with his group while Alice was waiting with Selen and Egil.

Alice spotted a woman following behind him wearing a backpack and figured she must be Alfva, the new healer for their group.

She had short wavy black hair with hints of light purple and grey near the edges. A pair of golden eyes that seemed to glow in the dark and a flower pin on her hair.

Similar to Alice, she didn't wear any thick fur cloaks or heavily padded armour. Instead, she wore a rather standard Hunter's attire with belts and pouches on her waist. She wore a brown hooded jacket with a white shirt, white pants and a pair of brown boots.

Leather armour covered her shoulder, arms and chest.

"This is Alfva, she'll be responsible for our healing while we fight. As long as it's not life threatening, she should be able to get you back on your feet rather quickly. But this doesn't mean you should just run head first into attacks without care." Torgeir introduced as Alfva bowed slightly.

"Erm... Hi... I'm... Alfva. I erm... have five spirits... please take care of me." She squirmed under the gazes as her voice got quieter the longer she talked.

Seeing this, Alice couldn't help but feel like she was a bunny shy and scared of everything.

"As you can see, she's a little shy. You already know about Bo and I've told Alfva about all of your fighting styles. Except Alice since I haven't seen it for myself yet."

"You don't have to worry about that, she can take care of herself better than you and me." Bo shrugged with a grin and a thumbs up at Alice.

Rolling her eyes, Alice didn't deny it as Torgeir was once again reminded that Bo was the one who vouched for her to begin with.

"I'll take your word for it. Now if there's nothing else we need to do in Esna, we'll be making our way to the frontlines. Depending on our travel speed, we should be able to get there in about 3 days at most. I'll get us some horses that we can use."

"Ah, don't worry about that. Just tell me which direction we need to go in a straight line, I can sort the rest out." Alice stopped Torgeir, surprising all of them as none of them expected Alice to have a travel skill.

As for Selen, she tilted her head trying to recall when Alice used something similar.

The only incident she could remember was...

Widening her eyes, her pupils constricted as she wanted to say something but Alice gave her a side glance.

"Urg..." Groaning softly, Selen let out a stressed sigh.

"What's wrong?" Egil wondered.

"Don't worry about it. Just take care of yourself once we begin the journey."

Hearing Selen's cryptic warning, Egil couldn't help but scratch his head.

Getting Torgeir to explain the journey and where they needed to go, Alice had him pull out a map showing the location of Kvia and Esna in relation to the frontline.

Folding her arms, Alice could still use Kvia as a waypoint of some sort due to her initial attack. It had left quite a mark on the world even after Tiamat cleaned it up.

By focusing on the residual energy and the wound done to the Void, using that as an anchor wouldn't be an issue.

Just thinking of this caused Alice's mouth to curl up into a grin as she snapped her finger, causing a pool of blood to expand beneath her.

*Ahem~

Clearing her throat, Alice grabbed a hat from her pouch and turned to the group.

"This is your captain now speaking. Please hold onto your personal belongings and grab onto the railings~ we will be departing soon."

Behind each member, a metal railing appeared as they looked at it in confusion while Selen immediately tied herself to the railing so she didn't fling around.

Knowing that Selen wouldn't do something so useless if there wasn't a need, Egil did the same.

After a few seconds from her initial warning, Alice clapped her hands together and a bloodied orb coiled around them. It was semi transparent so they could see the outside world despite the red tint.

"We should be reaching our destination in a few hours, during this time I hope you have a pleasant journey~"

Before they could even question her introduction, Alice slammed her hand down as ritualistic symbols manifested across the surface of the orb.

Seeing the flood of energy being exuded from Alice, Torgeir instinctively grabbed onto the railings out of survival instinct the moment she did this and just in time too.

Beneath them, a crack into the Void was torn open as a wall of energy slammed into them, forcing them down.

"ARGG!!!!!!"

The force of the impact pinned Bo against the barrier of the orb as tethers shot out to the anchors, swinging the orb through the Void.

Even Egil was also flung from the railing as he didn't hold on tight enough while Selen's body waved around like a flag due to her tying herself down.

"YAHOOO~" Alice laughed seeing the reactions of the group while they were flung through the Void.

Using the turbulence and the warp points to her advantage, they were thrown in all sorts of directions while Alice was perfectly fine since she secured herself beforehand.

One moment they were being thrown up, then down, left then right. Despite the mesmerising sight of the Void, none of the passengers could enjoy the scenery.

"WAHHHH MOMMMY!!! GET ME OUTTA HERE!!!" Alfva screamed with tears in her eyes as her body was tossed over Alice's head.

Occasionally, passengers could see a bloodied orb flying through reality before being zipped back into the Void. Within this orb, a laughing woman was surrounded by people who were being tossed around like clothing in a washing machine. The mix of laughter and cries rang out before disappearing like a phantom.

And so, a new rumour began to circulate the north, fueled by the word of travellers who had seen this strange occurrence.

Chapter 452 - 452: Arriving At The Frontlines

*Whistle~

"Is that the frontline?" Alice asked curiously seeing the multiple smoke clouds in the distance. The countless abilities that are flying through the air with a myriad of arrays and weapons echoing their song of destruction.

A constant barrage of war every second of every minute with hardly a rest between the attacks.

"That is... URG... So." Torgeir squeezed through his teeth as he felt like throwing up.

Everyone else was paralysed on the ground with Alfva already thrown up over the cliff.

Egil was pale but he managed to hold it in while Selen was out cold.

As for Bo, he took it the best since he was used to fast speeds but this was still a little difficult for him to stay composed.

"So how are we supposed to even help them? I'm not sure if you've noticed but there's a constant barrage of attacks hitting them back. The moment they show signs of weakness or retreat, the opposition will probably attack harder than before." Alice asked curiously while making a small orb.

Overlaying the power of the Void from her fourth Sigil and the power granted to her by the Artifact, she used it as an 'Eye' to observe the situation.

She had it float through the Void and manifest in reality, showing her the state of battle.

Countless corpses littered the battlefield as even those who might've shown promise at one point lay unmoving in the cold dirt.

The haggard appearance of those on the defence, deep bags under their eyes and the emotionless stares as they watch the next attack, the next barrage.

Seeing this, Alice couldn't help but feel a slight chill as it was rather unnerving to see this kind of person. A person who felt like no matter what would happen in the world, nothing would scare them.

"It doesn't matter... We still need to get them out of there as soon as possible since there is no longer any support from the supply lines." Torgeir groaned.

"Honestly, I don't think we can retreat without any casualties. That's a lot of people we need to help. Even if we pave the path back, I don't think we'll outrun a barrage." Alice frowned.

With just a rough estimate, Alice could guess that there were more than a thousand warriors stationed in this place alone. They were all spread out along this border hurling abilities when they could and fighting skirmishes if the enemy approached too far.

If there was a silver lining, it would be the fact that this place wasn't in the direct centre of attack. Otherwise, the number of warriors they need to help would easily exceed five digits.

"So what's the plan boss? I did promise my help because you said you could handle it unless something abnormal showed up." Alice asked with a slight frown. No matter how confident she was in her own instincts and reactions, war was something else.

Even if she's on guard, she could be easily hit by an ability she didn't notice and die in the process.

"You already know the plan. Fight to a path of retreat. We draw the enemy inland and send out messages to the other branches next to us and have them collapse in. Depending on the number of enemies that follow, we'll wipe them out and continue the retreat as a large group." Torgeir explained, feeling a little better.

Folding her arms, Alice furrowed her brows before nodding.

Of course, she had an idea as well but it was completely unfeasible no matter how much she wanted to overestimate herself.

"Most of the soldiers will be exhausted from fighting. I'll talk to the Commander responsible for this place and organise the retreat. For now, follow me and wait for orders." Torgeir glanced back at the group and sighed.

While Alice's transport method did help them reach the frontlines faster, the impact of doing so was... rather costly. If he could choose, he would rather not accept this method of transport unless it was truly the final option.

Helping Alfva first, Torgeir had her begin healing the others while they made their way to the command post.

###

"I'm boredddd." A girl complained while watching the battle in front of them. She wanted to join in and cause some chaos but her orders were to simply observe and ensure nothing went wrong.

"Blame yourself. You already caused quite a mess because you couldn't take care of a single rat back at the port. Now we're stuck here as punishment." A man snapped in annoyance while doing some push ups.

These two were Keira and Troy, hybrids created by the Zenia family.

"Hah?? My fault?! Don't blame me if the guards of the port can't do one f*cking job right!" Keira gritted her teeth in annoyance.

"If Elowen was here do you still dare to blame the guards for your mistake? Just shut up and do what you've been ordered to. We're not supposed to reveal ourselves in the first place unless we're ordered to." Troy shook his head before resuming his workout.

"Tsk, boring." Keira clicked her tongue.

Due to the incident at the port, the discussion regarding the newly appointed Cardinal of the Moon was delayed by his request. With this delay, all of their plans had to be halted until further notice.

And all of this was because of a single rat that managed to get through. There was no doubt that the rat survived the final suicidal explosion too.

Had it not been Elowen's orders stopping her, she would've gone after the rat and cleaned up the loose ends.

But even if she were to do that, it doesn't change the fact the rat still managed to take out the watchtower even though she was there.

'If only I can get my hands on her again...' Keira narrowed her eyes as scales began to appear on her body.

"Hold back your killing intent. Scales are showing." Troy interrupted.

"Tsk! I know!"

Glaring at the battlefield, Keira could only hope that an abnormality occurred so that she could vent the frustration in her chest. It was fine as long as she didn't reveal her bestial form after all.

There was nothing stopping her from killing the enemy as long as they didn't find out.

###

"The Commander died yesterday, I'm the vice commander that's taken over for now due to protocol."

Hearing this, Torgeir froze up as his pupils trembled. Biting his lip, he took a deep breath and composed himself.

"Alright. Bring me up to speed on everything that's happened and whether or not we can facilitate a retreat successfully." Torgeir ordered as the two went into the room to discuss the next steps.

Meanwhile, he had already ordered Alice and the others to stand guard for now.

Leaning against the wall, Alice glanced over at the battlefield.

Thoughts ran through her mind as this was potentially what she'll have to go against if she was to fight the Zenia family.

Would she be able to survive against this kind of bombardment? It was unlikely but she was tempted to try.

To throw herself on the frontlines and see if she could push them back on her own.

'Seems like you have the same thoughts as me twinnie.' Alyss chuckled as she too wanted to throw herself in there and see how long she could last.

She wanted to see how her power measured up against the armies of the world. To see where she stood on the food chain and how far she still needed to go.

[. . .] Cayla was speechless seeing these two wanting to go wild.

She wasn't the only one either as Selen noticed Alice's gaze towards the battlefield and leaned next to her.

"Whatever you're thinking of doing, don't."

"What do you mean?" Alice stuck out her tongue, acting dumb.

"Don't play dumb with me. I've seen that gaze wayyyy too many times to be ignorant of it. You want to throw yourself in the middle and go wild don't you?" Selen rolled her eyes.

Overhearing this, Alfva glanced over in confusion. Surely there wouldn't be anyone that wants to do that right? Right?

"Tee hee~ you got me. I wanted to see how many of those attacks I could push back on my own. I'm pretty much recovered after all, gotta limit test a little." Alice chuckled while Alfva almost tripped over after hearing that they weren't joking around.

She thought Egil was going to be the scariest one considering his stature and his notoriety as someone who argues with his teammates a lot but that didn't seem to be the case here.

If anything, he's the most calm out of all of them!

The scariest one in the party so far was no doubt Alice!

After a short while, Torgeir left the room and clapped his hands.

"We're going to prepare the retreat immediately. We'll be slowly reducing our attacks on the frontline so the warriors can conserve some stamina. In the meantime, I want Alfva to help out with the healing since you're suited for this.

"Bo, I want you to scout around the frontlines, see if you can gather some information from their side since you're the fastest. Selen, help delay the condition of those seriously wounded so we can save them. Alice... just enjoy yourself but don't tire yourself out since we'll need you to help pave the path back.

Egil, cover for her in case her condition acts up again and she needs someone to carry her back." Torgeir ordered as Alice cracked her knuckles with a grin.

Now that she was given a reason to play around, she wasn't going to reject the offer.

It'll also be a decent chance for her to test out the potency of her fifth Sigil amidst the confusion on the frontlines.

With the roles now distributed, the group split up as Alice, Egil and Bo made their way to the battlefield.

Chapter 453 - 453: Egil's Motivation

The battlefield was split into three sections. The bases that have defensive barriers put in place, the no man's land and then the enemy base.

In order to protect the base's defensive barriers, Warriors need to fend off the attacks sent by the opposition along with taking out any stealth teams that are trying to infiltrate.

To combat this, there were teams designated to scouting enemy units while watch towers would mark them if they came close.

It was a combination of stealth attacks and barrages from the main battlefield in an attempt to breach the barrier or take it down from the inside.

"You don't seem surprised by the state of the battlefield. Have you been to one before?" Alice asked curiously while standing on the roof of a building overlooking no man's land.

The wind from attacks colliding caused her split hair to flutter behind her as she took in the atmosphere of the frontlines.

"I've been a few times. But not because I was a recruit or something like that." Egil shrugged.

"Oh? What happened then?"

"My old house used to be closer to Extalia. But the war has been going on for quite some time and they've already taken that part of the land. Naturally, I had to retreat but since I have a better physique than the others, I was helping out the warriors. So I'm not unfamiliar with what happens on the frontlines." Egil explained while looking at the sea of attacks raining down from the sky.

Most of them were intercepted by the attacks thrown out by warriors on their side but the few that managed to get through clashed against the shimmering blue barrier that manifested in defence.

"Seems like you've had a pretty rough time growing up then."

Hearing this, a soft smile appeared on Egil's face.

"Nah. Looking back, I had it far better than the others. It's a good childhood that I had."

Usually, Alice would be rather confident in reading other people's expressions and emotions. But Egil's current emotion and expression? Unfamiliar to her.

"Seems like you have fond memories of your past." She replied, assuming that he's looking back with fondness rather than regret.

"Yep. Which is why it's more important for me to make a name for myself helping out the nation. The sooner I can prove my worth, the sooner I can help my mother out." Egil nodded as determination flared in his eyes.

No matter the job, he'll take them all. Even if his teammates doesn't like him, even if commanders reject him, as long as he is given the chance he'll prove himself. Any kind of humiliation is fine as long as he can help her in the end. That's all he wanted in this life.

Hearing the word mother, Alice froze up momentarily as she couldn't help but think back to what she had seen in the Inverted World.

The care that should've been shown to her was instead given to a fake. But soon, those thoughts were replaced by the time she spent with Allura and a smile appeared on her face. She had already given up her attachment to the Zenia family and the need for their approval and love.

As long as she could make Allura proud and thank her for the life she and Kaden had given to her, she would be more than satisfied.

"Seems like she's the reason you're wanting to change despite the bad rumours about you. It'll be tough since most don't know about the effort you're putting in." Alice patted his shoulder.

"Doesn't matter if they know or not. I just have to prove it with my actions." Egil shook his head.

"Though... Can't you help your mother out even without proving yourself to the nation?" Alice asked curiously as she didn't see how getting a medal or recognition would be better than just helping her directly.

Pausing at this answer, a bitter smile appeared on Egil's face.

"Because she got swept up by the pandemic. It was quarantined quickly but she still got caught in it at the last moment. She's getting treatment but... she's not a priority. If I can make a name for myself, I can request for her to be placed further up, to get the help she needs.

"I'm pretty stupid, I can't do any to help. The only thing I can do is take hits and throw them back. So the best I can do is use this talent of mine to repay her for everything she's done for me." Egil clenched his fist.

"I see..."

Taking a deep breath, Alice looked towards the battlefield. She knew a little about the pandemic but that was just from the rumours.

She could guess that it was part of the Zenia's plan to get access to the Inverted World. But that was about it. Alice hasn't seen the victims of this pandemic in person yet nor does she know about the actual symptoms.

Perhaps it was about time for her to properly begin experimenting on how to use her flames to heal people. To perform an operation and purge the side effects from their body.

"Anyways, sorry for bringing the mood down like this. I know you want to go wild on the battlefield since you've recovered." Egil chuckled.

"Oh don't worry about it." Alice waved her hand. Hesitating for a moment, she contemplated on whether or not she tell him about her plans but seeing as how it was uncertain, she decided against it.

She didn't want to give him false hope, especially since she wasn't sure of the results.

"Now let me ask you a question. How strong do you think I am?" Alice grinned as the shards floated around her while the Sigils started to glow.

Folding his arms, Egil closed his eyes and recalled the attack he saw at the outpost. The one that took out the fissure and left a mark on reality.

"Enough to kill me in one shot?" He forced a smile.

He didn't even want to imagine himself taking on that attack head on. In that kind of situation, he either needs to get out of there as soon as possible or take out the caster and interrupt the cast. Alice already had remarkable reactions and fighting instincts while injured and restricted on what she could do.

No matter how confident Egil was with his physique, he knew that he would lose to Alice 99 times out of 100. That one time he'll win will probably be pure luck or if Alice imposes a strange restriction on herself.

"Bingo~ Though I can't use that kind of attack often without just collapsing from the backlash of overtaxing my body." Alice shrugged.

"With this in mind, how do you think I'll deal with the next wave of attacks that's thrown at us?" Alice asked, pointing at the sea of flames, thunder and destruction raining down from above.

Tilting his head, Egil wasn't sure since he wasn't familiar with her Sigils. All he knows so far was that she had extremely high destructive power and Void manipulation.

With just these two in mind, he made a guess.

"Are you going to send them to the Void?"

"That is a method. But personally, I prefer to do something else instead."

Curling her lips into a devilish grin, Alice activated her second and third Sigils.

There was no need to activate her Resonance on top of everything, same with her partial Bloodline release. After all, these were just standard attacks thrown out in hopes of draining the stamina of those defending. There was no need for her to go all out in taking these attacks out.

Blood began to manifest around her as Alice raised her fingers towards the sky.

*Click

Snapping her fingers, the blood disappeared from around her and at that moment, a wall of violet flames detonated in the sky.

The attacks that collided was consumed and burned away while the spectral image of a draconic creature could be seen running wild.

All of the attacks were either deflected or straight up negated as the flames faded away, acting like it was never there to begin with.

Blinking his eyes, Egil felt like he hallucinated the attacks for a moment. One instance they were there and the next, it was gone.

However, that was just the beginning of Alice's demonstration.

Some people may have the wrong idea about her fighting style since she often got into hand to hand. Of course this isn't to say her hand to hand was bad, but as Kaden said, it, Alice was more of a caster.

Creating an orb in front of her, Alice made a finger pistol as flames converged towards her. A singularity forming above the tip of her finger before erupting into a blinding spark of light.

Even though he wasn't the main target, just being in the vicinity of this attack gave Egil chills.

"Target locked on." Alice grinned. Just like how she was scouting out the battlefield using an orb of blood through the Void, she could also use this to locate her target. That way, she can throw the bomb at them using the warp points of the Void. A near instantaneous attack without the need for Allura's Sigil.

This time, her target was the watchtowers that reveal people in stealth. It should give Bo an easier time scouting if she was to take them down.

Void Flux!!!

*BANG!!!

Firing the spark, energy coiled around it and threw it into the Void.

Egil couldn't see the exit point but the energy appearing in the distance told him his answer.

In the silence of the battlefield, one of the watchtowers exploded in an array of violet flames and crackling energy. A collapsing singularity that left nothing behind.

*BOOM!!!!!!

Moments after the visual spectacle, the sound of explosion echoed out as Egil's smile twitched.

There was only one thought on his mind.

'Selen has been travelling with this kind of monster?!?!'

Chapter 454 - 454: 'Basic Skill'

Looking at the spire of flames and smoke in the distance, Egil was speechless. He has seen many warriors in his short lifetime but this was the first time he's seen such an oppressive firepower. From someone with fewer Sigils at that!

But with this kind of power, she'll have to wait a little before attacking again, right? RIGHT?

*Whistle~

"A little off target since it's harder to make adjustments for warp points, not that too bad if I had to say so myself." Alice smiled.

If she had been using Allura's Sigil, it would've been a guaranteed hit without her needing to manipulate the warp points. But she couldn't keep relying on Allura's Sigil especially since her own Sigils have additional effects that help her out.

The more Sigils she gets, the riskier it'll be to replace them with unfamiliar ones. Example being her second Sigil. She cannot replace that unless absolutely necessary since all her attacks focus on utilising the passive benefits.

She had some leeway previously since she didn't possess a four, fifth or sixth Sigil. But now, she only had the leisure to replace one unless she wanted to get rid of her current Sigils. And if that were the case, only the first could be consistently replaced since the hallucinatory effects have a niche use.

Granted, the passive effect synergised well with her blood as it'll make it addicting and poisonous.

Regardless, there may be a time when this ability becomes sealed similar to what happened during the Inverted World so Alice needed to master her own Sigils.

"There's another watchtower along the defence line. Though it is being protected so let's see how sturdy their barrier is." Alice grinned, aiming her finger pistol towards the enemy as Egil froze up.

"Wait you can fire again?"

"Huh? Well duh, of course I can. It's my most basic attack after all." Alice tilted her head in confusion.

If she was using Allura's original Nova Core then maybe not. But Void Flux was adjusted with her in mind. With her current power, she could fire off her Void Flux's and even her Void Flux – Cleaves without much difficulty.

As for Egil, the words kept repeating in his ear.

"It's my most basic attack after all~"

This spark of raw destruction that obliterated a watchtower and anyone that might've been inside was her most basic attack???

Not only that, but if he recalled correctly, it seemed like her previous counterattack in the sky was made up of countless sparks.

If she was to shoot all of this towards the enemy then...

*Crack

Egil felt something breaking in his mind but he wasn't sure what it was.

All he knew was that he should begin reevaluating what he considered as powerful. After all, he had no confidence defending against a single spark never mind a full wave of them.

*BOOM!!!

While he was spacing out, Alice fired the second strike as the collision against the barrier exploded out. Flames and smoke climbed up the barrier but struggled to pierce through it much to Alice's surprise.

Rather than a constant barrier, it was one where the outer layer would constantly be replaced and dissipate, making it hard for her flames to latch on and eat through it.

Since that was the case, Alice needed something that could penetrate rather than damage over time.

Unlucky for the enemy, she had already thought of such possibilities in the past. Her training with Kaden produced a variant of Void Flux that could even destroy the training room that he was so proud of.

The Void Flux variant focused on penetration power thanks to absorbing the ambient energy and the energy of her target while using a spiralling motion. With this, it'll dig through the defences and detonate from within.

Just as Alice was about to resume her attack, she felt something lock onto her as she snapped her finger and created a shield with her shards.

*BANG!!!

In front of her, an arrow detonated into an explosion of lightning and flames yet the shard stood firm.

Previously, her Shard lacked the proper defensive capabilities due to her injuries. But now that she could circulate her energy once more? The Shard of Kara has restored its true defensive properties!

Dismissing the lightning and flames with a wave of her hand, Alice sent out a blood eye and spotted the archer from the other side.

A Sigil burned on the archer's eye as Alice understood it must be a ranged skill that lets her hit her target accurately.

If she didn't block with her Shard, that arrow would've hit her head.

"Not bad." Alice mouthed, knowing that the archer could see her.

Her taunt clearly worked as she could see the archer showing anger and annoyance before preparing a second glowing arrow.

"I'll go for a walk." Alice turned to Egil before walking towards no man's land.

"Huh?" Blinking his eyes, Egil was about to run after her but Alice shook her head and waved for him to just wait for now.

She wanted to see what kind of firepower the enemy could bring if she was to give them the chance to demonstrate their power.

###

"What the f*ck is wrong with this chick???" My commanding officer muttered as he watched my arrow get blocked by her attack.

This split haired girl that came out of nowhere took out a watchtower in one shot! Despite its defences, even if it wasn't within the barrier, it should've been able to block against strong external attacks.

Yet it was destroyed in one hit. If the officer hadn't ordered the barrier to be put on full power, that second attack would've breached the barrier and taken out the watchtower we were in!

Just thinking about it gave me a chill down my spine but that wasn't all. In response to my arrow, the girl had actually told me that it wasn't bad.

Could she have a Sigil like I do?

It wouldn't be surprising considering her accuracy but this power...

"Tsk, she must be a hidden weapon made by those barbarians in the north. Someone who focuses on taking out barriers. Otherwise, that wouldn't explain her firepower." The officer beside me theorised but I didn't think that was the case.

Her confidence and willingness to fire a second shot so quickly after the first meant that this wasn't strenuous for her. She isn't someone who focuses on taking out barriers. She's just simply strong.

"Prepare the second shot. I authorise the use of the thunder roaring arrow."

Nodding my head, I followed the orders I was given.

The thunder roaring arrow, an arrow that can even breach the defences of the strongest beasts. It's an arrow that gets stronger depending on the defences of the enemy.

Since she was able to block my first strike with a shield, the officer must've come to the conclusion that she wouldn't dodge.

Once again, I doubted his conclusion but I couldn't say anything. I'm just an archer that could be replaced at any time.

Pulling back on my bow, energy spiralled towards the tip of the arrow. I wasn't afraid of missing, I was simply afraid of what this woman would do.

*BANG!!!!

Firing the arrow, I watched as it began to speed up before disappearing.

Surely, she can't react to this kind of speed and power.

But my expectations fell flat as a screen leading to the infinite unknown appeared in front of her, swallowing the arrow before closing.

"You're kidding me..." I couldn't help but mutter.

Not only does she have the offensive power to destroy a watchtower easily and even threaten the barrier, but she also possesses a shield and the power to open up a gateway in order to swallow attacks.

How are we supposed to kill someone like this?

Snapping her fingers, I noticed her mouthing more words.

"Bye bye?"

Feeling a chill down my spine, I instinctively glanced up and saw a gateway open up for a second time.

"Ah..."

I finally understood. I was watching the approach of my death.

Scenes of my life flashed before my eyes as I recalled my happiest memory. The memory of drinking the soup cooked by my brother.

How nice... If only I could just drink it one more time...

###

*BOOM!!!!!!

Watching the explosion in the distance, Alice couldn't help but whistle as her plan had worked.

Rather than having a Void flux that penetrated before detonating, she wanted to see if she could breach the barrier to leave a node behind. To mark down that coordinate before reopening the portal and allowing that attack to be returned to them.

Seeing as how it was a success, her knowledge of how the Void works improved once more as ideas flooded Alice's mind.

Of course, having her waltz out in the open attracted quite a lot of attention from both sides but she didn't care about that right now. This was the time for limit testing and a perfect place for her to go wild.

Countless attacks rained towards her but Alice simply raised her hand and snapped her fingers.

Portals leading to the Void opened up and swallowed the attacks.

She wanted to send them back but even for her, tracking where all of them came from was a little difficult and thus she simply let them fly around in the Void.

While Alice was preparing the perfect battlefield to test out her fifth Sigil, she didn't notice a pair of eyes locking onto her since there was a lot of attention placed on her.

"That rat..." Keria muttered as veins bulged on her neck.

Chapter 455 - 455: Keira Vs Alice

"Is she the one who messed up the plan last time?" Troy asked, finishing his push-ups.

He could see the split haired girl blocking attacks by sending them to the Void while firing off blasts with her fingers.

Each blast that collided with the barrier caused it to tremble and drain more energy in order to sustain itself.

Not only that, but her appearance didn't stop the northern barbarians from stopping their onslaught either. Countless abilities still rained down from above.

However, this time it was harder to fend it off since the girl was keeping them occupied so more attacks managed to get through their counters.

If this were to keep up, it would only be a matter of time before their barrier falls.

"Yes, she's the b*tch that should've died but instead lived after blowing herself up." Keira narrowed her eyes.

She wanted to just rush out there and tear off her head from her shoulders but she couldn't disobey orders. Her value had already dropped because of the mess up at the port. Even though it shouldn't have been her fault, she was still there when the watchtower fell.

If she had sorted it out silently, their deal wouldn't have fallen flat.

"We can make a move right? The family ordered for us to take care of the barbarians if something abnormal happens." Keira glanced over to Troy.

"I believe they meant it looks like our side is about to retreat. It's still up for debate but seeing as how the barrier is faltering, it shouldn't be an issue so long as you don't reveal your beast form." Troy shook his head.

As long as their nature as hybrids wasn't revealed, they could do whatever they wanted on the battlefield.

If anything, he felt grateful to the split haired girl. If it wasn't for her, he might've needed to keep hearing about how Keira was bored.

Cracking her knuckles, Keira grinned.

"Great! I can finally vent this anger in my chest. Just make sure the soldiers don't interfere with my fight, she's mine." Keira stretched her body before jumping towards the battlefield.

Letting out a light sigh, Troy passed on the message to the commander and had him focus on preserving the barrier first.

###

Glancing up, Alice tilted her head in confusion as the barrage of attacks suddenly stopped.

"Did they get bored?" Alice muttered in confusion and annoyance. Right when she was getting excited, they decided to give up.

Just as she was about to turn around and leave, a familiar aura approached her at rapid speeds along with a thick killing intent.

Widening her eyes, Alice's smile curled up into an excited grin as she created a spear and twisted her body.

*CLANGGG!!!!

Colliding with Keira's arm which was covered by obsidian and lava, Alice let out a laugh.

"Yo! It's been a while hasn't it? I'm glad someone knows how to keep the fun going instead of stopping!" Alice greeted, kicking the spear and pushing Keira back.

"Didn't think you were a fun lover you rat! Weren't you so scared of fighting last time? Are you gonna blow yourself up again?" Keira taunted back, slamming her foot down as an arena of flames was created in an instant.

"Don't worry about an arena, I'm not planning on cutting the fun short." Alice chuckled.

Since a hybrid decided to bring herself to her doorstep, she was going to make it worth her time. A perfect target to limit test the powers of her current Sigils and her body.

"I wouldn't be so sure. If you're not going to cut the fun short then you don't have to worry about it." Keira flipped her hair before snapping her finger.

At that moment, a crimson circle appeared around Alice's body before locking down and fading away.

Furrowing her brows, Alice was about to say something when Keira jumped out of her shadow.

Bending her body back, Alice countered by creating a blood blade but Keira was one step ahead.

Flames coiled to life above her palms as she stabbed a flaming lance down.

*CLANG!!!!

Forced to use her shard to guard, Alice rolled to the side.

"Hah! Dirt fits a rat like you after all." Keira sneered.

*BANG!!!

Stomping down with her foot, inferno chains shot out, seeking to restrain Alice.

Now that it's come to this, Alice snapped her finger and created several portals into the Void before cutting it off, forcefully severing the chains.

Wiping the dirt from her face, Alice narrowed her eyes and created a spear in hand using her third Sigil.

Seeing that Alice wasn't retreating, Keira grinned as she entered a slightly relaxed stance before taunting Alice to make the first move.

Since she was humiliated by this rat last time, she was going to pay it all back and more!

'So you want to be arrogant huh? Let's see how you can keep this up later.' Alice rolled her eyes as she dashed towards Keira while keeping her body as close to the ground as possible.

Right before colliding, she adjusted her footwork and used the ground to her advantage. Sliding on her left foot, she ducked under Keira's counter before slashing up with her spear.

Dirt launched towards Keira's eyes as flames erupted from her body, burning the dirt away and then caught the spear between her fingers.

"Playing dirty now are we? As expected of a rat." Keira sneered but Alice didn't respond and simply smiled.

Void Flux!!!

*BANG!!!!

A spark detonated behind Keira as her body was flung forward and away from Alice.

Crashing across the ground, she quickly got back onto her feet as veins bulged on her neck.

The blast had seared her outfit but her skin was unharmed.

"Seems like I'm not the only one suited for dirt." Alice stuck out her tongue, snapping her finger as Keira braced herself for the next Void Flux.

However, to her surprise, no attack appeared.

Instead, a portal opened under her foot, disrupting her balance as Alice twisted her body and slammed the spear shaft against Keira's head followed by a kick in the face.

Glaring at Alice with bloodshot eyes, Keira was about to use her flames when Alice jumped back and a Void Flux detonated beside her face.

*BANG!!!!

Watching the ball of flames do nothing to Keira's body, Alice couldn't help but whistle.

"You're one sturdy motherf*cker aren't you? Gonna make me break a sweat at this rate." Alice chuckled.

However, despite her confident words, Keira's toughness indeed worried her.

The Void Fluxes that she used, while not at maximum output, weren't something to laugh at either. It should've been more than enough to leave a mark but all it did was damage Keira's outfit.

Brushing the smoke aside, Keira stood unharmed with anger written all over her face.

Even though Alice didn't do any damage to her, all of her attacks only served to heighten her anger.

On the side of her body, Alice spotted scales that were glowing with a golden red hue.

Cracks appeared on the side of Keira's cheeks as she took a deep breath.

"!!!"

Instinctively, Alice felt the threat of death and opened a portal as fast as she could.

*BOOM!!!

A torrent of flames rushed towards Alice, colliding with the half opened portal and shattering it in an instant. What she couldn't teleport away using her fourth Sigil crashed against her left arm, turning it to ash as Alice gritted her teeth from the pain.

Behind Keira, she could see the visage of her bestial form as the air around her mouth sizzled from the heat of her breath attack.

"Tsk, I should call you a cockroach instead of a rat. Slippering f*cker." Keira growled in anger.

However, now that Alice had lost her arm and suffered mortal damage, all she needed to do now was to finish her off.

Creating a lance of flames beside her, Keira walked up to Alice who was clutching her shoulder while kneeling on the ground.

"It's over." Raising her hand, Keira stabbed the lance down.

"Gotcha." Alice grinned.

*KRRR!!!

Her flesh twisted as bones, flesh and skin reformed in an instant and Alice grabbed the flaming lance with her bare hands.

Even though her skin sizzled from the head, violet flames burst out and fought back.

Golden chains manifested across her body as her aura shifted into that of a more violent nature.

*BANG!!!!

Releasing a devastating right hook to Keira's body, Alyss twisted her body and sent Keira crashing across the ground as she shook her right hand.

"Ssss! You're not wrong twinnie, she's a tough motherf*cker! Broke my hand punching this b*tch!" Alyss complained, taking a sharp breath as she healed her right hand.

Glancing up, Keira was shocked speechless.

That speed of regeneration, it was absurd! Even amongst the hybrids, there were few who could match this speed. Hell! Even those focused on regeneration might not even beat Alice in terms of raw speed alone!

After seeing this, Keira made her choice.

No more playing around! Alice couldn't be allowed to leave today!

Her hair flared up as flames manifested on the edges of her hair. Around her, the ground began to crack apart as lava splattered past the gaps and the air began to distort from the flames.

However, Alyss was unphased. Summoning Ruinous Void, she transformed them into their gauntlet form!

The power of the Void surged around her arms as it condensed into a pair of purple crystalline gauntlets. Pulses of energy could be seen radiating from the weapon as violet energy exuded from the surface like mist.

Hopping on her foot a few times, Alyss disappeared from her spot and appeared right in front of Keira, her arm pulled back and ready to unleash a devastating punch!

Chapter 456 - 456: Alyss Vs Keira

Appearing in front of Keira, Alyss grinned.

She adjusted her footwork, twisted her hips and slammed her fist forward.

Instinctively, Keira raised her arms to guard.

*BANG CRACK!!!!

Widening her eyes in shock, Keira watched as the obsidian armour on her arms broke apart to reveal the bruised flesh inside!

She wasn't able to hide the shock on her face as Alyss's eyes gained a sadistic gleam. The gauntlet variant of the Ruinous Void allowed her to plant 'bombs' wherever she punched and detonate them for armour piercing damage.

Seeing as how Keira's arms were bruised inside, she was rather happy with the effects.

Not letting Keira a moment to recover, Alyss stomped down on Keira's foot, preventing her from escaping before unleashing a flurry of attacks against the torso and the head.

When she would guard her head, Alyss punched her in the ribs. If she guarded her torso, Alyss gave her a right hook left hook against the head.

Anger filled Keira's mind as she gathered energy around her but Alyss was one step ahead.

Grabbing Keira by the wrist, she twisted her body and threw Keira into the air.

"I'm counting on you twinnie!" Alyss shouted, giving back control momentarily as Alice already knew what kind of combo Alyss wanted to do.

Snapping her finger, she created a portal behind her and jumped through.

As Keira reached the apex of the throw, she turned her body to try and find Alyss but it was no use.

A portal opened above her as Alyss dropped down and kicked Keira in the side.

Another portal appeared below Alyss as she appeared in front of Keira and gave her an uppercut. One last teleport above Keira before grabbing her arms and stomping down on her back, sending them crashing towards the ground.

***BANG!!!**

Jumping out from the smoke, Alyss furrowed her brows.

She could see that her shoes were being melted by lava as she kicked them away. All the damage she did to Keira during this combo could mostly be ignored as she started to cover herself with the same armour around her arms.

"How dare a rat... Do this to me..." A low growl could be heard as Keira pulled herself from the rubble.

Flames, lava and obsidian could be seen all over her body as scales began to show up.

'Seems like she's planning on transforming.' Alice frowned.

'Seems like it. She's definitely the skinny wingless dragon from the ambush. The lava breath and fire powers explain it. However... her human form seems pretty weak. The only thing noticeable is her durability.' Alyss agreed as she didn't plan on letting Keira transform easily.

Without giving her a chance to keep speaking,

Ruinous Void – Axe Form!

The strongest form of Ruinous Void made for raw destruction and power. In exchange for this power, it does make her slower but the trade off was the fact that each hit would increase damage! A stacking ability along with obscuring regeneration was a great trade off in Alyss's opinion.

Granted, this would struggle against fast enemies since it's mainly targeted at large beasts.

Bringing her centre of gravity low to the ground, Alyss dashed towards Keira as each step would crush the ground beneath her.

Twisting her body, she was about to release a horizontal slash when Alice forcefully took over and created a portal in front of them.

***BANG!!!**

Returning back to their original spot, Alice had cold sweat down her back. If Alyss had continued their attack, they would've been eaten by the molten dragon head that shot out of the ground.

"I've had enough of this. You're dead you f*cking rat!" Keira shouted. Her eyes turned draconic while scales continued to manifest across her body.

The aura around her soared, forcing Alice to take a step back from the pressure.

Resonance!

*BANG!!!!

Just as Keira activated her resonance, a burly man landed next to her, punching her in the face and causing her to crash against the ground.

The flames around them faded as Alice was confused by the sudden appearance of another.

Seeing as how he possessed the same uncanny aura, Alice realised that he was probably another hybrid like the woman.

"Stupid b*tch." Troy clicked his tongue in annoyance.

If he hadn't interfered, everyone would've seen them for what they truly were. Hybrids.

Should such a secret get out, they can forget about returning to the family.

Glaring at Alice, he was somewhat surprised that someone could actually harm the defence of a hybrid. But with Keira being someone who focuses on speed, an attack like that wouldn't harm him who focused on the defensive aspect of his new evolution. So it was nothing to worry about.

Throwing Keira over his shoulders, Troy began to leave when a spark appeared in front of his face.

"Are you really so eager to throw your life away?" Troy warned in a deep voice as he glared back at Alice with killing intent.

Hearing this, Alice gave a charming laugh as she snapped her finger once more, detonating a spark next to his face.

"Don't worry, I treasure my life. But you two~ Seems like you don't want your secret discovered by the Kingdom. Aren't I right?" Alice taunted with a grin.

Since two hybrids brought themselves to her doorstep, she wanted to see how far she could push them.

To push them to reveal their true natures that they seem desperate to hide.

"Don't push your luck. Your time will come." Troy frowned, stomping his foot down as the ground fractured before an earthquake erupted, causing Alice to lose her footing.

Without wasting another second, Troy crouched down before jumping away, leaving Alice alone on the battlefield.

"Tsk, what a mood killer." Alice frowned.

It would've been the perfect moment to test out her fifth Sigil against two hybrids but they weren't intent on fighting to the end. Not only that, but seeing his stature, Alice presumed his was the white bulky beast.

One that none of the warriors could harm.

Without trying herself, she wasn't sure of his defence but it didn't worry her too much.

This was just a taster of what was to come. After all, neither of them used their resonances.

Since her fun was cut short, there was no more reason to stay here on the frontlines where everyone could see her.

She might as well help out the northerners a little and take out this annoying barrier so they can't chase them while they're retreating.

"Let's see..." Alice muttered, scanning her eyes across the barrier to look for a weak point.

She could see the array of energy coiling with one another, shifting through the barrier and gathering into certain nodes around the base.

In order to dismantle the barrier, she'll need to topple it over by getting rid of these weak points.

Just as she summoned her artifact, Alice could feel her hand tremble as she understood she must've overexerted herself a little.

Constantly using the abilities of the artifact drains her stamina quickly and pushes her body to the limit.

Without fully recovering, she couldn't use it freely without consequences.

'Seems like I got a little carried away.' Alyss scratched her cheek as she was the one who kept on using the Artifact.

'Don't worry about it. As long as you had fun.' Alice reassured with a chuckle.

Since her body was nearing the limits, she'll scare them a little instead of taking out the barrier.

Damaging one node should be enough.

Taking a deep breath, Alice gathered her flames into a single spark and turned it into an arrow.

Creating a bow using metal and blood, she arched her body back and fired the arrow.

*BANG!!!

Without seeing what had happened, Alice turned around and made her way back to their side of the battlefield.

After the fight with Keira, parts of her outfit were burned to ash much to her annoyance. Her favourite pair of shoes were also destroyed leaving her to walk in the dirt with her socks.

Even though she bought a lot of outfits, she couldn't go around destroying them with every fight. The costs will eventually stack up.

Meanwhile, a sea of violet flames exploded out and began to eat away at the node.

"I'm back~" Alice greeted Egil who wanted to say something before sighing and giving up.

There were many questions in his mind but he doubted Alice would answer them.

"Welcome back. Seems like I don't have to drag you away to safety." He chuckled.

"Nope~ The fight ended before it turned interesting. Killed my mood." Alice shrugged, letting out a disappointed sigh.

Hearing this, Egil's smile twitched once more.

The intensity of their exchange was clear for all to see. It was short but many would've died 20 times over! Especially that fire breath attack that the other girl used.

Then there's the large man and the killing intent he exuded. It was far away but Egil could feel his hair stand on end. But Alice? She stood in front of him and shrugged it off.

With each demonstration, Alice only proved how much of a monster she is when it comes to power. It made Egil begin to question if he even chose the right Sigils up till now.

###

"Urg..." Clutching her head, Keira sat up and noticed that Troy was sitting not far away from her.

"What ha-"

"You're a f*cking idiot." Troy cut her off as veins bulged on Keira's neck.

"HAH?!"

"You almost exposed our identity as hybrids. Do you hate that rat so much that you'd rather kill her then have the family kill you?" Troy spat out in annoyance as Keira couldn't respond.

Gritting her teeth, she stood up and punched the wall behind her in anger.

Next time, next time for sure. She'll drag that rat where no one can see and finish her off for good.

Chapter 457 - 457: Alfva's True Face

With Alice returning back to their side of the battlefield, they decided to rest up while Torgeir finished their preparation for retreat.

Attacks from their side began to slow down while the enemy was preoccupied with the damaged barrier thanks to Alice's stunt.

Since there was nothing else for her to do right now, she decided to go for a little walk around the frontlines. To see how Selen was doing as well as to get familiar with the healer girl who seemed a little too scared.

Thinking about Alfva, a question appeared in Alice's mind. How did she even get five Sigils if she's this scared?

The more she thought about it, the more confused she got. After all, Alfva wouldn't have picked weak Sigils if Torgeir had chosen her out of all the healers they had. There must be something else about her that Alice didn't know about.

Shrugging her shoulders, she made her way to the medical bay.

###

"OI! SLOW MOTHERF*CKERS! MOVE THE INJURED IN ALREADY AND GET THOSE WHO'S BEEN SORTED OUT OF HERE!!! I NEED THE F*CKING SPACE!"

". . ." Blinking her eyes, Alice wasn't quite sure what she was looking at. Selen was frantically running around, casting barriers while throwing up in a bucket occasionally due to over-exerting herself. The medics on the field scrambled to follow orders as stretchers carried bandaged warriors in and out of the area.

Alfva was covered head to toe in blood while standing on a table and shouting out orders at the top of her lungs.

There was not a single sign of the timid Alfva from earlier, only a warlord who only expected you to follow her orders and nothing else.

"Selen! I need you to freeze his condition now!" Alfva jumped down from her table.

Rolling up her sleeves, she grabbed a fresh pair of gloves as Selen conjured her staff and created a time slow zone focused on the patient.

Without hesitation, Alfva grabbed a scalpel and tore into the man's body. Digging out some punctured organs along with rotting flesh, she activated the Sigils on her arm.

Emerald energy surged towards her as crystalline butterflies began to fly out from this stream of energy. Latching onto the wound where she pulled out the organs, the butterflies shattered apart, turning into crystalline copies of the organ.

Once they were in place, Alfva activated another Sigil and the crystals melted away, revealing new functioning body parts.

Shoving the flesh and organs back into the body, she had her butterflies latch onto the opening and seal it up.

"Undo." She ordered while Selen followed.

Once the barrier was undone, Alfva slapped the man in the face as a Sigil mark appeared on his cheek.

Green energy flooded his body, rejuvenating him.

"Now get this f*cker outta here! BRING THE NEXT ONE!" Alfva shouted, gesturing at the on-field medics to carry him away while another was brought in.

The next patient was missing an arm, a leg hanging on by strands and burns all over his body.

"What the f*ck are the third rate medics doing?! DID YOU EVEN GET HEALING SPIRITS?!" Alfva screamed in annoyance as she tossed the gloves away before grabbing new ones.

"Barrier, now!"

Holding back the urge to throw up, Selen created another barrier. It faltered momentarily but managed to stabilize itself.

Once again, Alfva waited for the barrier to stabilize before getting to work.

Grabbing the leg, she forcefully tore it off and threw it over her head as it landed in the arms of another medic who panicked and dropped it.

Stomping down, a ritualistic circle spun to life around her as butterflies appeared once more. Lining up next to one another, they broke down and turned into bones, attaching themselves to the stump before melting and turning into real bones.

Repeating the process with the flesh and eventually the skin, she had Selen drop the barrier and slapped him on the face.

A marking appeared and his burns began to heal.

"Tell the dumbf*ck who's supposed to look after him to not let him walk or use his arm for at least a week. Let my crystal flies adapt to his body before he uses those limbs. Otherwise, he can forget about having them." Alfva wiped the sweat before screaming for the next patient once more.

Both Alice and Egil didn't know what to say. It was the first time either of them saw Selen pushed to this extent while Alfva did a complete 180 turn in personality.

"Erm... Maybe we shouldn't stay here." Alice's smile twitched. She was afraid that if they blocked the flow of patients, Alfva's anger may be turned towards them.

"Agreed. Though... Selen looks like she's at the end of her ropes." Egil nodded.

Noticing Alice and Egil, Selen wanted to run over and cry for help when Alfva stuck out her leg and tripped her over.

Slapping a mark on the back of her head to heal the wounds, Alfva grabbed her by the ankles.

"You're not going anywhere, you're too good of a help to go. You two! F*ck off if you can't help!" Alfva glared at Alice and Egil who shivered and nodded their heads without hesitation.

"Don't leave me here!!!" Selen cried out for them, breaking her stoic nature as she didn't want to stay in the med bay anymore. But neither Alice nor Egil wanted to annoy Alfva right now as they simply apologized to Selen and ran away.

Leaving the med bay, they ran into Torgeir who was looking over some documents while making his way over.

"Ah, you're back. Did you have fun on the battlefield?" Torgeir asked with a small wave.

"It was alright. Fun got cut short. But setting that aside, I don't suggest you go to the med bay right now. Alfva seems a little... on edge." Alice coughed.

Hearing this, Torgeir tilted his head for a moment before realising what she was talking about.

"Ahahaha, seems like you saw what Alfva's like when she's doing her job. She gets like this whenever it comes to healing people but you get used to it. As long as you don't obstruct her, you'll be fine.

"Here, come with me." Torgeir gestured as both Alice and Egil swallowed their saliva.

As they made their way back to the med bay, they stepped through.

"What now?! I'M BUSY!" Alfva snapped as she glanced back.

"Should I come back another time then?" Torgeir asked as Alfva froze up.

Gesturing for Selen to dispel the barrier, she slapped the woman on the operating table with a marker and sent her off.

"Ahaha... Erm... nope... What do you need?" Alfva squirmed as her voice got quieter.

"?????????" Both Alice and Egil blinked their eyes in disbelief while Selen ignored what just happened.

She immediately found the closest bed she could use and collapsed on it, getting as much rest as she could.

"How are the injured? Do you think you can get all of them prepared for travel? We'll be retreating from this location soon." Torgeir asked as Alfva thought about it for a moment.

"I'll still need... Erm... 2 hours if you want them to survive travel... Though they won't be fully healed." Alfva replied quietly as Torgeir folded his arms.

"Hmm... That's fine. The key is to get them out of here. We'll be moving our supplies onto carriages and having our casters set up an illusion as well as timed attacks to make it seem like we're still here. The faster we get this done the better." Torgeir nodded.

"Let me know if there's anything you need help with okay?" He smiled as Alfva nodded her head eagerly.

Turning around, Torgeir checked his list for the next location he needed to go.

"See? Not that bad once you get used to it." Torgeir chuckled while Alice and Egil was left stupefied.

Looking back at Alfva, the two couldn't believe she could just flip her personality like that of a switch.

For Alice, she had a literal second soul inside her so it made sense. But Alfva? It confused her.

"The f*ck are you looking at? I thought I already told you to help or f*ck off!" Alfva snapped as Alice and Egil jogged out of the tent.

Walking away, the two began to piece together the situation.

"Torgeir?" Alice asked.

"Torgeir." Egil nodded as he too had the same guess.

Since their interaction with Alfva was short, they couldn't say for sure as they never saw her elsewhere. But with all the clues they've gotten, it was probably more so due to Torgeir's presence rather than work.

But considering how Torgeir seems oblivious of it, the two couldn't help but sigh.

After a while, Bo came back with some good news. Thanks to Alice's initial barrage of attacks, battle and her final attack that damaged a node, the members of the Extalia army was faltering since they weren't sure when Alice will appear on the field again.

Even now, they still haven't completely doused out the flames that appeared on the node and were panicking.

Not only that, but some of them even gave her the moniker of split hair demoness. The power that she showcased was enough to leave a lasting impression on their minds.

Hearing the nickname, Alice hid her face from embarrassment and tried her best to ignore the stares.

As for Torgeir, this new was indeed good for them.

"Since they're preoccupied with Alice's attack, let's speed up the retreat. Alfva, I'll need you to treat the injured while we're traveling. I can't give you the full two hours that you wanted." Torgeir apologised but Alfva shook her head.

"That's fine... I can heal them while we're travelling."

"Good. Alright, gather your things, we're preparing for the retreat now." Torgeir ordered as everyone got to work.

Chapter 458 - 458: Path Of Retreat

Watching all of the casters gather to form a ritual, Alice couldn't help but observe in silence.

Her understanding of rituals was basic since she never dove deep into the concept. All she knew was that it was an act of equivalent exchange. One where she would make a 'contract' with the opposition in order to bolster her abilities.

For her, it's a unique situation where she can exchange some power with Alyss since a lot of it is sealed thanks to Velouria's power. But for others, the target of exchange is usually the Abyss itself or a powerful entity with a prewritten contract.

Of course, it wasn't limited to just these. According to Cayla, all of the high ranking members of the church can form rituals in order to gain some divine power from their gods. The Eclipse sacrifices via battle or blood rituals to gain power and it's a similar case with the other religions as well.

However, it's a little different for the Moon and Sun since their doctrines does not include killing the masses and inciting chaos.

Little by little, Alice could see the illusion being constructed by the casters while others prepared timed attacks that would go off in intervals.

She would've helped out but her illusions are based on people inhaling her poison blood mist. It wouldn't help out in a large scale illusion like this one.

The only task she was given was to help with defence if the enemy noticed and sent attacks their way.

Glancing down, Alice could see Selen sleeping on the seat as she was completely exhausted having helped out Alfva at the med bay.

Without Selen being around to help speed up the process and make it easier, Alfva became more quiet and focused on the treatment. She couldn't just brute force it without the time slow.

Shaking her head, Alice turned her attention to the caravan. Compared to the other groups that she's been part of, this was far bigger.

The injured were in the middle, healers next to them, casters lined up front and back while tanks covered their rear and paved the path home.

Thanks to Alice's transport skill, they were able to arrive far earlier than intended at the cost of not fully checking the path back. However, if they came too late, the damages would've been far worse. To Torgeir, it was better to come early and figure out a way back than to come late and see ruins and destruction.

There was one issue however and it was that the casters were absolutely exhausted except for a small handful and Alice.

They were already exhausted having to keep up with the enemy barrage. But after casting the illusion and setting up timed attacks, they were completely empty and had to rest. Even if they pushed for it, they couldn't use their Sigil power.

As for the small handful of casters... they were a little lacking.

Even without Cayla telling her how many Sigils they have, Alice could already guess by seeing the energy around their body.

They could probably fend off one or two waves of attacks but after that, they'll also be exhausted.

"Tsk." Clicking her tongue, Alice let out a sigh.

She knew that she was supposed to help out with the retreat but she didn't think it was going to be this bad.

Taking a deep breath, Alice calmed herself.

In order to defend this whole caravan properly, Alice had to make an efficient system for countering attacks quickly.

Her reserves weren't endless so she couldn't just keep throwing large scale attacks out without care. Especially if she's the only one responsible for their safety.

The most energy efficient method was to use her violet flames. But using the flames might take a little too long for it to take effect. It takes time for the flames to properly consume the attack after all.

She could try to block by opening pathways to the Void. But this method was the most exhausting. Especially since most barrages are slightly off time to prevent one ability from blocking them all.

Furrowing out brows, Alice let out an annoyed sigh.

So far, it seemed like she'd have to try her best to brute force it. There's still the method of drinking blood to upgrade herself to six Sigils but in front of this many people? Absolutely not.

Therefore, she had to figure something out with just the five Sigils she had on herself.

Once the casters have finished their set up, Torgeir ordered the group to begin retreating.

Looking towards the timed casts, Alice decided to modify them a little in order to buy them some more time.

Making a small portal, she created small sparks of violet flame and planted one in each attack. That way, the moment they explode, her flames will begin eating away at whatever it hit.

Plus, she adjusted her flame to be the tenacious type. One that hung on so long as there was energy to consume.

With this, it should trouble the enemy quite a bit and make it harder for them to follow up even if they discover the truth.

###

"They're moving." A scout reported as the commander curled his lips up into a smile.

"They are truly desperate if they're preparing to leave this quickly. Such a large scale illusion must've taken quite the toll on their casters."

With Torgeir being so preoccupied with saving his allies, he didn't even notice that some of them were spies planted by them in order to keep track of their movements.

"Prepare the next wave of attacks, we'll take them out once they leave their barrier." The commander ordered.

Leaning not far from the commander, Keira narrowed her gaze and walked away.

"What are you planning?" Troy grabbed her shoulder but Keira smacked his hand away.

"One attack. That's all I need. I just need to make sure they don't see me right? I'll wipe out the entire group in one attack." Keira glared as Troy furrowed his brows.

"For you to be this insistent, she must've really gotten under your skin huh? Go for it, I've already warned you plenty. If you're not satisfied after one attack and expose yourself, you only have yourself to blame." He clicked his tongue in annoyance.

"I can take care of myself." Keira ignored his warning and stepped away.

Shaking his head, Troy let out a sigh as he'll probably have to bail her out again.

As long as she leaves after one attack, regardless of what happens, the family wouldn't blame them. But if she was to push her luck?

He'll be assigned a new partner for future missions.

*BANG!!!

Hearing a loud explosion, Troy furrowed his brows and glanced up.

He could see the first wave of attacks colliding against the barrier as it was able to defeat the Extalia's counter without any issue. Violet flames latched onto the barrier and began to spread rapidly while frantic shouts echoed out.

"What are you idiots doing?! How can you let this attack hit the barrier?!" The commander shouted in anger.

But the barrage wasn't over. As the second wave of attacks was released, the Extalia was too slow in responding since they were preoccupied with the faltering barrier and once again, violet flames latched onto the barrier.

After the previous damage caused by Alice's attack, the barrier had already lost a lot of its structural integrity. It lacked the same defensive properties as before and these violet flames have become far more deadly.

With this being the case, it was going to be harder for the Extalia army to chase after the fleeing barbarians with their counterattack.

Meaning...

"Seems like luck is on your side Keira." Troy chuckled.

Without the eyes of the army on her, she can go wild so long as she takes care of the witnesses. He wasn't afraid that she'd fail the surprise attack. But the split haired girl still worried him.

Her confidence shook him.

She seemed to know all about them yet they didn't know anything about her. She showed power capable of wounding Keira to the extent where she's pushed to transforming or risk dying, all without resonance at that.

There were far too many secrets with the girl and an anomaly they needed to be careful with.

But to ensure there were going to be no witnesses to Keira's rampage, Troy placed his hand against the structure behind him as iridescent crackles of energy shot through the base.

The nodes around the barrier began to crack apart, weakening their defences further as they had to focus on blocking the counter attacks with their full force rather than preserving power to go after the barbarians.

Meanwhile, Keira noticed the situation and saw that Troy interfered with the barrier.

Knowing that this meant there were no witnesses, Keira curved her lips into a grin as scales began to appear on her face.

Sigils manifested across her body as they slowly lost their shape, covering her entire body in a layer of energy.

Within this cocoon of energy, a silhouette of her body could be seen twisting and stretching. Her eyes emitted a piercing red glow as cracks began to form across the surface of the cocoon.

***BANG!!!**

With an explosion, the cocoon broke apart to reveal the bestial form of Keira, an elongated serpentine dragon with obsidian armour and lava all over her body.

She already saw how Alice struggled with diverting her breath attack. Now that she was at her full power, her death was guaranteed.

Just thinking of it brought joy to Keira as she shot into the sky and hid herself amongst the clouds.

Chapter 459 - 459: Staying Alert

Watching the bombardment of timed explosions hit the enemy barrier, Alice folded her arms.

They had expected the enemy to prevent them from retreating but that doesn't seem to be an issue anymore.

If anything, they'll be lucky if they could extinguish the flames.

However, despite all of this, Alice couldn't settle down the bad feeling in her chest.

Even though there was no visible danger, it felt as though she was walking into a trap. All her senses were warning her, telling her to run. A bad gut feeling that she couldn't get rid of. Yet no matter where she looked, she couldn't find the source.

'Are they in the Void?' Alice theorised as she created a small opening and sent a blood eye through the gap.

Observing the ever changing scenery of the Void, Alice couldn't spot anything out of the ordinary so she doubted it was the first hybrid that ambushed them. That one was able to transport their beast army from the Void and send them out the same way.

She tried the same thing herself when she helped everyone get to the frontlines quickly but after one try, she knew how taxing it was.

And to transport an entire army? It was impossible for Alice. During the travel, there will be many who get accidentally detached from the group and be doomed to float through the Void unless another opening appears.

Since she was unable to get rid of this bad feeling, Alice decided to set up some precautions.

She needed a passive defence that would warn her if anything was to approach, even in stealth. There was no guarantee but it was better to have something than to sit out in the open.

A grid system similar to what she did when she was predicting how Bo would move.

But unlike before, she now had access to her Sigils meaning the range could be expanded a lot more than what is limited by her shards.

This grid was going to stretch in a 50 meter radius around the caravan and move along with them.

Each grid is going to be filled with tiny metal shards and blood so if anything in stealth was to walk past, it'll latch onto them and reveal their silhouette.

She was tempted to add some blood threads but if she were to do that, it'll make the grid too obvious. Right now, you couldn't see the grid unless you focused on it.

It was good enough of a warning system but next was actual defences.

Once again, Alice ran into the issue of energy consumption and speed of her defence.

'What if... you use slightly enhanced Void Fluxes so a singularity forms and sucks in the attack to be destroyed?' Alyss offered as Alice shook her head.

'Consumes too much energy if I want the singularity to stay and eat the whole attack. If I do it that way, even if the size is small, I can only throw out like ten of them at most.' Alice sighed.

That was her limit right now with her current body.

The more she added to her attacks, the faster she'll exhaust herself. It's why she was holding back on her Resonance. The moment she activates her Resonance her stamina will begin to drain like a bucket with a hole in it. She'll be out of commission after one fight and that was not what she wanted right now.

Unless absolutely needed, she was going to deal with all of her issues without using Resonance.

[Perhaps you don't need to cancel out the attacks Master. What if you focused on diverting it so it misses the caravan instead?] Cayla asked curiously.

'That'll depend on our surroundings. Diverting it could cause the road to become unstable or even collapse on itself. Though it wouldn't hurt to try.' Alice tapped her chin.

In order to divert the attacks, she'll need something to shift the course of the attack.

Before, that would be her shards.

But for a large scaled attack, would it even be enough?

Controlling the Shard of Kara to float above her palm, Alice expanded it into the shield form so that the iridescent blue barrier could be seen.

Expanding it further, the barrier began to weaken before breaking apart.

Similar to the barrier that the Extalia kingdom employed, these shards acted as nodes and anchor points for the barrier. Too far apart and it'll begin to weaken before shattering.

Thinking about it for a moment, Alice created metal shards in a similar shape and placed it in the middle of two shards.

She wanted to see if the metal shards could reinforce this barrier by acting as a bridge for the barrier to latch onto.

But even though she successfully increased the range of the barrier, allowing it to hold on without any issues, the barrier itself has become much weaker. Unlike the other Shards of Kara, the metal piece had nothing it could resonate with.

All it accomplished was plugging itself into the weakest spot. It still hasn't solved the issue that the barrier became weaker the further it was from the original shard.

As they continued to travel, the bad feeling continued to plague Alice's chest as she couldn't drop her guard for even a second.

On the other hand, it seemed like the Extalias had given up on stopping their retreat, causing many of the warriors to cheer out in happiness.

Even Torgeir had a smile on his face as he relaxed himself. If the Extalias had given up, it meant that his brothers and sisters in arms could now return to their families in one piece.

Soon, the atmosphere of the caravan became a joyful one but Alice couldn't allow herself to even crack a smile.

The happier her surroundings became, the worse this feeling in her chest became.

There was now no more doubt.

Someone was hunting them down and observing their every move.

But who?

"Why the long face? Shouldn't you be drinking some mead and passing out by now?" Egil asked curiously. Even the mages responsible for taking care of the enemy attack have started to relax their guard and joke around with their friends.

"I wish. But someone has to keep guard while people are enjoying themselves. Plus, I need to make sure I don't break my body or else a certain someone would be annoyed at me." Alice chuckled, glancing down at Selen who was snoring a little due to the fatigue she felt in the med bay.

This was the first time she had to use her time slow abilities so many times in a row so it was only natural that she was exhausted.

Seeing that Alice wasn't willing to relax, Egil could only shrug his shoulders. It wasn't like he had anyone he could relax around like Alice and Selen, so he simply stayed near them and kept them guarded in case something did happen.

Time passed and soon they began to settle down for food.

But Alice's expression was still as dire as the moment they set off on this journey.

Warnings plagued her mind, signalling at the danger to come. The unknown enemy was waiting in the darkness with their mouth curled up in a beastly grin, waiting for the moment everyone dropped their guard.

*Yawn~

Sitting up slowly and giving her body a stretch, Selen scratched her hair while looking around in confusion.

"Good morning sleepy head, we're stopping for camp right now." Alice glanced back with a smile while still keeping her attention on the grid around them.

"Oh we're camping? Let me sleep some more then. I'm not hungry." Selen yawned a second time before preparing to lie down.

However, before she could, someone rushed over to their carriage and grabbed her by the shoulders.

A chill shot down Selen's spine as she slowly turned around and saw Alfva with a pair of bloodshot eyes.

She had been treating patients nonstop for the last few hours without Selen helping her. In order to get through the rest of the injured that needed help, time slow was a must.

"You, me, heal, time slow, NOW!" Alfva ordered.

Without giving Selen a chance to reject, she dragged her away with surprising strength as all Alice and Egil could do was watch with pity.

"I'm glad I don't have time slow abilities." Alice couldn't help but mutter.

If she did, she would be in Selen's position right now.

"Agreed." Egil nodded his head as the food was soon distributed to everyone.

Their meal consisted of meat soup, bread, and some other snacks that you get to choose from.

Compared to the food you get in a tavern, this was a little lacking. But for the warriors who've been eating nothing but rations, this was a heavenly meal.

Finishing her food quickly, Alice began circling the camp and placing nodes properly without having to maintain all of them consciously.

That way, it'll lighten the burden as she planned on keeping this up until they returned home. She couldn't rest easy knowing something was potentially hunting them down.

There were still a few days left of their journey. To maintain concentration throughout, she needed to have slight breaks every so often while keeping the grid up. It was going to be difficult but for their survival and safety, she had to hold on.

###

Observing everything in silence, Keira felt joy. Even though Alice's senses were abnormally strong, it was only a matter of time before she fully exhausted herself from keeping this up.

All she had to do was wait while observing everything. And soon, one attack will end it all.

Chapter 460 - 460: Plans For Sikha

While Selen and Egil went to sleep, Alice stayed away throughout the night. They tried to convince her but it was no use.

She couldn't rest easy when her gut was screaming warning signs at her. Only when they returned to safety would she sleep.

Continuing through the night, Alice found herself on the verge of drifting off a few times but kept herself awake through various methods.

Occasionally, there would be people waking up out of a panic before falling asleep straight away.

Of course, Alice wasn't the only one staying awake since there were people taking shifts and keeping watch. But they weren't maintaining an array like she was.

"Working hard I see." Torgeir chuckled, sitting near Alice once it was his turn to keep watch. Even though he was the commander, he couldn't allow himself to sleep peacefully while others worked hard to keep watch.

"Someone has to. The others aren't maintaining this array after all." Alice shrugged. She could tell that Torgeir noticed this since she spotted him observing it earlier.

"I figured that was the case. Something on your mind? It's gotten you quite on edge."

"You could say that. Just a gut feeling for now, nothing more. It shouldn't be an issue to keep this barrier maintained until the end of the journey." Alice dismissed with a wave of her hand.

"I see... would you like a light spar then? To get the blood pumping." He offered. Thinking about it for a moment, Alice nodded her head.

"Sure, why not. No abilities, just pure physical sparing."

Nodding his head, Torgeir stood up and took a few steps away from Alice.

This light spar was going to focus entirely on hand to hand combat. He got a rough idea of how strong Alice was from her little walk on the battlefield but even he knew she was holding back.

A spar would give him an idea of her reaction speed and fighting style now that her body wouldn't bleed whenever she did anything.

Giving her body a stretch, Alice hoped this spar would wake her up a little.

Bouncing on her feet, she made some light jabs in the air.

"Ready when you are." Alice smiled.

"Seems like you're confident. Alright, let's begin-" Just as Torgeir finished the words begin, his pupils shrunk as Alice's foot was already inches away from his face.

*BANG!

Blocking with his arms, he was surprised by the force and power behind her kick but she wasn't finished.

Twisting her body, Alice followed up with two more kicks before a downward heel, forcing Torgeir on the retreat as he tried to counter.

However, Alice kept herself close to him and manoeuvred through his blind spots.

Her physique was already small so her doing this only made it harder to hit her.

Since this was pure hand to hand without any abilities, Torgeir couldn't lock Alice down.

Going into a handstand, Alice kicked up, breaking Torgeir's guard.

"What's wrong? Don't tell me you're only planning on blocking?" Alice smirked.

Rolling his eyes, Torgeir took a deep breath and stomped down with his foot.

Alice was mid handstand and this stomp disrupted her balance, causing her to flip back as Torgeir followed up with a punch.

***BANG!!!**

Smacking his punch to the side to divert the direction, Alice's smile twitched as she heard the air crack from the force.

"Is this a spar or are you trying to kill me?" Alice asked as Torgeir shrugged.

"I'm sure this is nothing to you."

No denying that, Alice jabbed him in the sides before kicking off his knees to jump into the air. Releasing a quick one two kick to the head, she grabbed him on the arms and tried to knee him in the face.

However, Torgeir managed to break free of the grapple and blocked the knee. Grabbing the ankle, he slammed her into the ground.

Rolling to the side, Alice did a leg sweep but it felt like hitting a brick wall instead.

Torgeir was stupidly stable and wouldn't move a step.

This back and forth exchange continued a few times as Torgeir got a grasp on Alice's fighting style. Her style mostly revolves around using her legs to generate as much power as she could while using her fists to disrupt her opponent.

Jumping back, Alice took several deep breaths.

"I'm going to change it up a bit." Alice chuckled as chains began to appear on her arms and neck.

"I thought you mentioned no abilities?" Torgeir raised an eyebrow.

"Don't worry about it, it's not an ability." Alyss's voice rang out next to him as Torgeir's pupils shrunk.

Instinctively, he raised his guard.

***BANG!!!!**

Sliding back from the force of the punch, he felt as though he was hit with a hammer.

Glancing up, he could see Alice with a maniacal grin.

Stomping down, she launched herself towards him as Torgeir could sense that something changed within her.

Taking a deep breath, he stabilized himself as he prepared to defend against her kicking attacks.

"Wrong, I don't use kicks that often." Alyss chuckled, giving him an uppercut. Following up with a left hook, she slammed her elbow into his chest before punching his abdomen, pushing him away from her.

Just as Torgeir recovered, Alyss appeared in front of him again.

*BANG!!!

Tanking another solid right hook, questions flooded Torgeir's mind.

How could someone's fighting style change so much so quickly? It's not just a change of styles either. Habits as well. It's like he's fighting someone completely different.

However, just as he was getting used to the punches, the chains disappeared and her foot appeared in his vision.

*BANG!!

Stumbling back from the kick, Torgeir theorised that the chains were the sign of her style changing.

With Alice continuously switching styles, it took longer than expected for Torgeir to adapt to it. In the end, it ended a stalemate. Alice couldn't deal enough damage to be declared a winner while Torgeir couldn't quite catch Alice.

But it achieved their initial goal of giving Alice something to do.

Sitting down on a log, Alice reached into her pouch for some mead. However, her hand froze as she eventually decided against it.

She wanted to drink it after a good spar but the danger was still present. She could still feel the gaze of the enemy down her neck and drinking would only expose herself.

Especially since she'll struggle to control herself once she had a drink. Instead, she opted for the fruits that Ragnar gave her instead.

'Twinnie, I think we have a major issue that we need to sort out sooner rather than later.' Alyss spoke up as Alice glanced over in confusion.

She could see Alyss clenching and unclenching her fists.

'What is it?'

'Our fighting styles are too simple and predictable. We're just using raw strength which we're at a disadvantage in. Aside from that, it's also just instincts. Too many wasted movements and unoptimized attacks. You also saw how easy it was for Torgeir to deal with us right? Even though he's a caster just like us.' Alyss explained.

Thinking about it for a moment, Alice nodded her head in agreement. She didn't have any specific style or attack plan. She merely attacked in a way that felt 'right' based on her instincts.

While her instincts have indeed saved her from death many times, it's also true that she struggles with landing substantial blows without just relying on her Void Flux or other attacks.

'I think it's about time we figure out a proper fighting style. Didn't Ria mention in the past that the eastern Hunters use Sigils with their martial arts and fighting styles? Since we're on the surface, it wouldn't be bad to travel east for a bit and visit the Land of the Blistering Heat, Sikha.' Alyss suggested.

Furrowing her brows, Alice contemplated this choice. It's a slight detour and it'll take longer to regroup with Ria and Luke. However, doing so could improve her power substantially.

'I don't see why not. Once we finish things in Verona, we'll head east to Sikha. I'll need to buy a map and get some travel funds too.' Alice began making plans.

[There's probably one thing that you need to be wary of Master if you plan on visiting Sikha.] Cayla spoke up.

'And that is?'

[The Sun God Solaris. If my memory is right, the east doesn't follow any of the three God religion closely but Solaris has always had an influence over there. I don't know how it's changed but considering your recent... conflict, it would be wise to stay vigilant when visiting the country.] Cayla warned.

Nodding her head in agreement, Alice could almost imagine a pillar of flames shooting down from the sun the moment she makes herself known.

Solaris now knows that she holds traces of Velouria's power thanks to the chains along with the fact that she could 'steal' one of his believers from him.

She could expect him to send a crusade or something of that nature to capture and kill her if she wasn't careful.

'Seems like I'll be making use of the jester Sigil more than I thought.' Alice chuckled.

While she was making plans regarding her visit to Sikha, hours passed and soon, Torgeir woke everyone up to resume the journey home.

Throughout the night, the cold chill of a predator observing their move never disappeared and Alice maintained the grid at full function.

Minutes turned to hours, hours into days. Occasionally, one or two beasts would approach but the other casters dealt with them easily. It didn't require Alice to make a move since her focus was on the grid.

After going without sleep for so long, Alice could feel herself reaching her limit but she ignored the fatigue to the best of her abilities. There was only one night left before they reach Esna. One last rest and one last journey through the day.

Safety was close. Once they're back in Esna, she can drink her mead and sleep.