

Abyssal A 471

Chapter 471 - 471: Leaving The Void

Sitting in the Void, Alice waited until her energy was recovered. However, she still wasn't sure if her body was suited for going back to their realm.

Opening a rift back, she decided to test it by sticking her arm through.

*BANG!!!

Almost immediately, she could sense a slight rejection from the realm as her arm was blown apart in an instant.

Blinking her eyes, Alice looked at the stump left on her arm. Her smile twitched as she regenerated her arm and let out a sigh.

"Stupid Feris. At least tell me when it's safe to go back if you're not going to help." Alice mumbled.

Since it wasn't safe to go back, she decided to practice her Void Steps.

Right now, she understood the activation conditions but stopping the charge was difficult.

To begin with, the Void Steps required her to step on a portion of the realm that was rubbing against another realm. It's the friction between these two realms when done right that can propel her forward.

Narrowing her gaze, Alice activated the Void Steps once more.

Stepping down where she manipulated the realm, Alice immediately felt an overwhelming force throwing her body forward as she struggled to maintain her posture. No matter how she tried to exert her strength, the moment she is launched, her posture breaks.

*CRASH!!!

Slamming into some rocks, Alice let out a frustrated sigh.

'I wake up and the first thing I see is you slamming yourself into a rock. The f*ck is going on?' Alyss yawned.

'Just learning some new skills. While you were sleeping, I met the ruler of the Void and killed the hybrid.'

Hearing this, Alyss blinked before nodding her head.

At this point, she wouldn't be surprised if Alice was to randomly meet one of the Gods never mind the ruler of the Void.

'So what's the skill you're trying to learn?'

'Void Steps. By stepping on the friction between two realms, I can propel myself forward. Basically, teleportation if I do it properly.'

Standing up, Alice did another demonstration as she activated the skill. Once again, her posture folded the moment she teleported and slammed into some rocks.

'Isn't it just a case of keeping your posture though? Seems easy enough.' Alyss asked while resting her chin on her palm. From a third person perspective, it looked easy to execute.

'Yeah, easy for you to say. But I'm a caster you know? I don't have a freakishly strong body.'

'Debatable. I don't see casters throwing hands and trading punches with someone specialised in close quarters combat. But setting that aside, let me give it a go. When we switch, more of the power is diverted into reinforcing the body than casting so my physique should be better.' Alyss retorted with a smirk.

'Go for it.'

Rolling her eyes, Alice activated the skill and switched places with Alyss.

She wanted to see how quickly her twin's confidence would shatter once she felt the overwhelming force throwing you forward.

Just as Alyss was about to step onto the skill, she noticed something strange with her body. However, she wasn't able to adjust herself in time and was flung into a rock just like Alice.

'So what's this about being easy enough?' Alice revealed a smug grin seeing her twin upside down.

'Didn't count! I wasn't ready! Also what the hell did you do to our body?' Alyss pouted, feeling embarrassed by her mistake. The overwhelming urge to punch Alice's face with that smug grin was growing by the second.

'I unlocked the full Bloodline Release. Turns out my soul is unique enough to be used as a base now. I don't need to worry about Velouria's bindings.' Alice explained offhandedly.

Hearing this, Alyss's smile twitched as this wasn't something you should gloss over.

Switching back with Alice, she had her show the full Bloodline release.

Seeing the spectre that represented Alice's soul, Alyss found it rather charming yet freaky at the same time. And honestly, a good representation of what Alice is like as a person.

One moment she could be this fluffball who's indulging herself on mead and the next she's ripping someone's heart out from their chest. Both cute and deadly.

Not to mention a strange enjoyment for white and pink clothes even though Alyss herself preferred darker colours. Long sleeves also.

However, with Alice's Bloodline Release fully unlocked, there were some passive benefits to their body.

They still not quite at the standard of other strong five Sigil Hunters but passively, they were around four Sigils worth of physical strength.

Activating her Bloodline Release would push her past the boundary and bring her closer to six Sigil levels of physical strength.

Once Alyss figured out their new strength, she prepared herself for another attempt at the Void Steps.

'No excuses this time okay?' Alice grinned.

'It was just a coincidence last time. This time I'll show you how easy it is.' Alyss scoffed.

Preparing herself, she took a more stable stance and had Alice activate Void Steps.

***BANG!!!!**

Slamming into a rock, all Alyss could hear was Alice's howling laughter.

The sudden increase of force propelling them forward was not to be trifled with. No matter how Alyss braced herself, it felt like having a rug pulled out from under them.

'So how the hell did this Feris woman or whatever she's called do it successfully.' Alyss mumbled in annoyance while trying to hide her embarrassment.

'Who knows. But it was just a coincidence last time huh? Seeing you falling on your ass doesn't seem to be a coincidence for me.' Alice replied, not wanting to give up this moment to bully her twin.

Their little scuffle eventually woke up Cayla who saw the two arguing about who can do the Void Steps better. Seeing this, she let out a sigh before going back to sleep.

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Practicing some more while occasionally checking if she could go back to reality, they found a slight gimmick to the Void Steps.

A way to prevent them from falling flat on their ass while teleporting. Unfortunately, stopping was still an issue but at least they now looked good while slamming into a rock.

Some of the rocks even have Alice's outline imprinted onto the surface.

But soon, she saw that her arm wasn't blown to pieces and understood it was time to head back.

Giving her body a good stretch, she gave the Void another glance before stepping through the portal.

Shielding her eyes from the Sun, Alice furrowed her brows and looked around her.

Right now, she was in the middle of a crystal cluster. The sun reflected off the countless mirror life surfaces as confusion filled her mind.

If her coordinates are correct, this should be where she teleported them before Keira's attack landed. Yet none of this was familiar to her.

"Don't tell me this is the result of her attack..." Alice muttered in disbelief.

Searching for the highest point, Alice jumped up and scouted around the place. She could see Esna in the distance.

Meaning, this was indeed the mountain range they crossed before teleporting. If Keira's attack packed this much power, Alice didn't even want to imagine what would've happened if she didn't teleport them.

Just thinking about it caused cold sweat to roll down her back as Alice was glad she could deal with Keira before she got another chance to attack them.

'Should've woken me up if you were fighting the Hybrid. I wanted to get a few good hits in myself ya know?' Alyss lazed on a throne while sitting up side down.

'You and Cayla were both having such a good time sleeping so I didn't want to wake you two up.'

'AH! That reminds me you piece of sh*t! Me and Cayla almost worked ourselves to death trying to keep your body from falling apart! I know it was a life or death situation but at least give us a heads up before you go ape sh*t and start trying out crazy stunts!' Alyss raged, remembering why she was sleeping in the first place.

Trying her best to pacify Alyss, Alice made her way to Esna as Selen and the others are probably waiting for her.

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"Say, do you think Alice is having a better time than us?" Ria asked as she swung her legs back and forth.

"Probably." Luke sighed, doing the same.

Right now, the two of them were locked in a cage dangling above a sacrificial altar that the Eclipse Cult has crafted.

"It's not like she's getting herself captured or being prepped for sacrifice is she?"

"True... Though knowing her she'll probably be fighting for her life regardless. Urg... I wanna go to the surface too." Ria lamented while looking at the countless hooded figures filtering towards the altar.

"At this point, I don't think the loli hag is going to let us go without torturing us properly." Luke shivered, thinking back to Rosalyn's training.

Hell, even calling it training was being generous. Rather than training, it's more like torture for Rosalyn's amusement and an outlet for her frustration against Allura and Kaden.

"If she hears you say that she'll deep fry you in blood." Ria warned.

"Let me have a break. It's not like she's here anyways." Luke shrugged.

"Who said so?"

Freezing up, Luke glanced to his shoulder and saw a tiny red bat staring at him with its head tilted to the side. Its beady eyes staring at him unblinkingly while a menacing grin could be seen on its face.

"Who said I wasn't here, Lulu? We're going to have some fun once the two of you are finished with this mission." Rosalyn laughed.

"HUH?! Why me as well?!" Ria felt wronged as she didn't even say anything bad about her.

"You didn't defend my honour and allowed this dumbass to slander me. All of them are here now. You have an hour to wipe this branch clean." Rosalyn shrugged before waving her wing.

Feeling her anger build up, lightning crackled across her body as Ria tore apart the cage around her.

All her frustrations, all her anger, she'll take it out on these cultists!

She wanted to finish Rosalyn's training quickly so she could reunite with Alice soon and gamble her days away in the arena!

Chapter 472 - 472: Returning To Esna

Waiting by the bar while tapping her heels, Selen felt nervous as the fight took much longer than she had expected.

"Don't worry too much, she'll be back before you know it." Egil reassured but Selen wasn't convinced.

She could still recall the destructive power of Keira's attack against the mountain. If Alice wasn't careful, she'll suffer.

"You know how she is. She'll probably try some weird sh*t and then injure herself again. I wouldn't be surprised if it's taking her this long to get back because she can't leave the goddamn Void." Selen grumbled.

Grabbing a jug of mead, she swung her head back and drank it all in one go.

"Urg... How does that girl drink so much mead???" Selen questioned as one jug was already a lot for her.

But for Alice, she could drink throughout the night and be relatively okay the next day.

"Don't question an alcoholic how they can drink so much." Alice grinned.

"ARGG!!!" Crying out in surprise, Selen jumped out of her seat as she turned back and saw Alice standing behind her with a smile and a light wave.

"Wahaha~ Behold~ I am back with no injuries." Alice gave Selen a peace sign before calling the waiter over and ordered herself a few jugs of mead.

"What took you so long?" Selen huffed, sitting down in annoyance.

"Realm wouldn't let me back in. If I rushed it, I would be blown to bits the moment I stepped out ya know? I'll have to be careful about when I use my fifth Sigil." Alice shrugged.

Rubbing her hands in excitement, she drank her mead with a happy smile and grabbed some fruit. Some relaxation and mead after a tough fight was the best way to relax.

"I guess I should be happy that you didn't pick up any new injuries." Selen sighed before smiling.

"By the way, did you know that they're bringing a cartographer from the capital with the next caravan that's coming? They need to redraw the map after the mountain got erased."

"Oh for real? Now that I think about it, if the landscape changes, they redraw the map and leave, then it gets changed again, do they have to do two quick updates back to back?" Alice asked curiously as it seemed to be quite a hassle.

The chore of constantly updating the map whenever two strong Hunters fight sounded rather tedious.

"Well it's their job so they can't exactly say no to it." Selen shrugged.

"Do they at least get paid well?" Alice asked curiously. If they have to continuously go and redraw maps, with some places even becoming extremely dangerous, the pay should match the danger.

"Average wage. Sometimes even less." Egil spoke up as he knew someone who was a cartographer.

"Jeez, life is unfair I guess." Alice muttered.

If it was her, she wouldn't want to be a cartographer if her pay was going to be average. At that point, she might as well just do a standard job behind a desk or be a receptionist at the guild.

Though thinking about her own temper and habits, perhaps being a receptionist at the Hunter's Guild wasn't a good choice. She'll probably start her own fights.

"Where's Torgeir? I thought he'd be relaxing since everyone's back now?" Alice asked curiously.

After she got out of the Void, she wandered the outpost a little but couldn't see Torgeir anywhere.

"He's... busy. Even though a lot of people came back, a lot of them also died on the frontlines. The commander on the frontlines also died so it's now up to Torgeir to sort through a lot of the post-battle processes." Egil answered.

After all this time, he managed to build a bit of trust between him and Torgeir. Enough where Torgeir felt comfortable enough to rant about his annoyances at times since both of them have gone through life or death battles together.

A bond forged through battle.

"Sounds like a pain."

"He needs to write up a report of everything that happened too." Egil chuckled.

Catching up on everything that's happened while she was stuck in the Void for a while, Alice asked them what their current plan was.

"I'm going to visit my mother. Since the frontlines are retreating, there's a short break where nothing's really happening." Egil revealed a sombre smile.

"I want to visit her before we're called back to action. It's just a guess but the capital will probably call for a counterattack to reclaim some of our land."

Nodding her head in agreement, Alice wanted to help him but she still wasn't sure how she could resolve the issue of the pandemic caused by the Zenias.

Her control over her powers was still lacking and she hadn't experimented enough to put it into practice on someone as important as Egil's mother.

If she wanted to help, the first thing to do was to get information regarding the pandemic.

'There's probably a research base or something in the capital.' Alice thought to herself.

She was already planning on visiting the capital to meet the Abyss Lords of the north if she could. She'll simply make a detour to see if she can find out any clues.

"And you?" Alice turned to Selen.

Leaning back, Selen was silent.

Since Alice's body was now pretty much fixed, there wasn't much of a need for her to keep babysitting her. If anything, it's counterproductive to what she wanted to do. That being to disappear for a bit so the Zenia family forgets about her and then begin to dismantle their branches.

Knowing the things that Alice has been running into, conflict with the Zenias is guaranteed.

"I'll probably follow you for a bit before roaming the north some more. I need to make some preparations for the next step of my journey." Selen smiled.

"It's about time I look for my sixth Sigil since I've been on five for a while now. Originally, it was meant to be sorted after the Inverted World but you know how that ended." She turned to Alice who nodded before freezing up.

Since Cayla had been sealed for a long time, she had forgotten that Selen only had five Sigils.

She hasn't even unlocked her second Resonance yet.

But despite that, she was keeping up with strong opponents using the power of Miralith.

"Anything you got in mind or are you just going to see what's available?"

Unlike her, normal Hunters have a much harder time organising proper Sigils for them.

The process requires them to go to a shaman, see their options and pick one. Or if they're not happy, they need to wait and train themselves for more opportunities.

They can't just pick whatever tickles their fancy in the moment like Alice.

"I've had my eye on something though I never got the chance to pick it. It just never showed up. Though I think this time should be different." Selen shrugged.

After reviewing all the fights she's gone through, Selen understood a large weakness of her's.

She doesn't have a pure offensive skill that can help her end a fight despite being a caster.

All of her skills can be largely focused on supporting rather than being the vanguard. To finish a fight, needed that extra push.

"Do you need help to kill the beast or do you have that sorted?"

"I'll be fine. I've been preparing for this after all. But that's only after we're done with the capital right?" Selen waved her hand dismissively.

Her final preparation will be done in the capital since they'll be meeting the Lord of the Forge hopefully.

If she could get a better weapon while she's there, it'll help her out immensely.

Partying for a little longer, they decided to look for Torgeir in his office.

But rather than seeing him, all they could see were paper towers upon paper towers.

Torgeir was even using his Sigil abilities to stop the paper towers from falling.

"Ah... It's you three. And welcome back Alice, seems like you didn't run into any issues." Torgeir forced a smile as his eyes were hollow.

Seeing this, Alice almost felt guilty about what she's about to ask next.

The key word being almost.

"So... Now that everything's done and I've helped you bring your comrades back, what about the promise?" Alice asked with a smile.

*Sighhhh...

Letting out a long sigh, Torgeir searched around his desk before pulling out two letters.

"First letter is what I promised you previously. Write what you want to write and give it to the person in charge of the Hawks. He'll see the stamp and know to what to do. The second letter is your appointment in the capital. This includes Selen.

"With the testimonies of the Warriors as proof, they know that you saved all of them from an Extalia ambush near Esna. I'm not sure if they'll let you meet the Lord of the Forge just yet but they didn't mention a reward so it's probably still up for debate.

"As for the third item, the book on beasts in the North, that's still being compiled in the capital. When you go to the appointment in the second letter, they'll give you the book. Or at least that's what I'm assuming." Torgeir explained while holding out the letters.

Accepting them with a grin, Alice put it away in her pouch.

"Thank you~"

"You're welcome. If anything, it should be me thanking you. If it wasn't for you... I don't even want to imagine how many warriors we would've lost. Not just at the frontlines but in other places as well." Torgeir nodded with a smile.

Alice was truly a blessing to their outpost. A strange one but a blessing nonetheless.

"Ohou~ is that so? Then don't you think this kind of feat deserves some monetary reward?" Alice grinned while rubbing her fingers together. The gesture for money.

". . ." Torgeir retracted his unspoken thoughts.

Chapter 473 - 473: Cartographer

"What the hell is this..." A man muttered while looking at the forest of crystals that now stood where a mountain used to be.

"The collision site of the attack." Torgeir replied as though it was nothing weird.

However, for the cartographer, this was the first time he'd seen such a drastic change of landscape outside of battles conducted by Abyss Lords.

The most shocking thing was that no one died to this!

"And you say the threat has been dealt with?" He asked, feeling rather doubtful.

If someone could unleash this kind of destructive power despite not being a Lord, how were they even able to take care of the enemy? How were they able to survive the surprise attack?

"Indeed. Alice isn't one to lie about something like this. And I've seen personally how strong she is when she protected everyone from this attack." Torgeir chuckled, expressing his trust in Alice.

Even though they didn't see the battle, he believed her words.

Furrowing his brows, the cartographer was doubtful.

From what he's gathered, this Alice Agnelia only has five Spirits attuned to her. For her to fend off this kind of danger sounded impossible. Especially considering the fact that she's an offensive warrior rather than defensive.

Unless he sees it with his own eyes, he didn't believe that she could do this kind of thing.

However, his job was not to question the legitimacy of this five Spirit warrior being able to stop this attack but rather to redraw the map.

Shaking his head, he pulled out a device and landed near the crystals.

Pouring in a vial of blood, he watched as the numbers began to change.

"Doesn't seem like there's any major contamination or corruption so we can leave this place be. Earthen beasts may flock to this place more often and smaller fissures will open to the Abyss, populating this zone. For the short time, I'd advise civilians to avoid this route or find a long way around.

"We still need to determine the level of beasts that appear here so we can judge the danger of this zone." The cartographer muttered while writing down notes into a notepad.

"For now, there doesn't seem to be any major threats." He closed his notes and pulled out a map of the area.

"Just protect me if anything pops up, I'll focus on adjusting the map now." He sighed while glancing back at Torgeir who nodded his head.

While this may be a little boring just escorting the cartographer, it was a much desired break from going through paper work.

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*BANG!!!

The sudden sound of something crashing into a fence caused people to look over at the cloud of dust. From this cloud, they could see Alice clawing herself from the rubble while coughing and waving away the dust.

"As you can see, the skill is not exactly easy to stop once you start." Alice rubbed her butt in pain while looking at the broken fence.

Thankfully, she had already gotten permission from Torgeir so she didn't need to worry too much about the damages.

As long as its not destroying literal buildings or tearing a chunk out of the outpost, she was given the green light.

"So any clues on how to stop?" Alice asked.

She figured that if she was struggling, she might as well see if Selen or Egil had any ideas on how she could master this skill.

Alyss tried to brute force it and well... it didn't go well.

"Hmm... I mean I don't have much knowledge on how the Void works so I don't even know where to begin." Selen scratched her hair as it was beyond her.

"You said you were slipping right?" Egil asked.

"Yeah. The moment I step down to activate the skill, my posture just breaks apart. But when Feris did it, she's doing it effortlessly. It doesn't even look like she's straining." Alice nodded.

Granted, Feris is the owner of the Void so it's only natural that she finds this easy. Not to mention the fact that she's probably the one who made this skill.

"Have you tried to keep your centre of gravity low?" Egil suggested.

"Been there done that. Still fell over in the end and imprinted myself into a rock." Alice sighed.

"Are you able to carry people with you? Maybe it's easier to understand if we tried it ourselves."

Thinking about it for a moment, Alice decided to give it a go as she hadn't tried this method before.

*BANG!!!

*BANG!!!

After two more collisions, the three of them sat on the ground while folding their arms.

"Yeah it's tough. I couldn't keep my balance either." Egil sighed.

Even with his physicality, the force of the skill was akin to someone just grabbing his ankles and throwing him over. Practically impossible to keep himself upright.

On top of everything, there's still the issue of Alice trying to stop herself at the right point as well.

Right now, she's akin to a bullet. Not stopping unless she hits something.

"You think if you grabbed a spear or something, you can just throw yourself at them with this skill?" Selen joked as Alice rolled her eyes.

If she wanted to do that, she might as well use her Void Flux or the new skill she's trying to develop.

One that even scared off Feris from helping out.

With neither Selen nor Egil being able to help out, they decided to leave it for later.

With the caravan arriving from the Capital, there were new supplies and merchants that tagged along. Selen and Egil decided to check out the caravan while Alice figured she might as well take this time to write the letter to Ria.

She'll write a letter, have the Void Hawk send it to the Abyss and find an Underground branch. Either that or have it sent towards the Silver Wind valley branch and have the branch manager there take care of it.

As for the fee... Ria can pay for it.

Agreeing to meet up in about an hour or so, the group separated for now.

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"Alice is getting monstrously strong now." Selen sighed as the two of them looked around the temporary market set up by the merchants.

"She is. That new skill of hers... If she can master it, I don't think anyone would be able to hit her unless they take her by surprise." Egil agreed with a nod.

"If they take her by surprise. I fought her before. That instinct of hers is practically cheating. Any sign of hostility and she'll react instinctively and fight back. Her survival sense is out of this world too. To take her by surprise while she's focused, you have to hide everything without a single bit of intent leaking out." Selen shrugged.

"So pretty much impossible then."

"I wouldn't say that. There's been times when Alice drops her guard even though she doesn't know it. I don't know what triggers it but safe to say it's difficult for most to capitalize on it. Plus, even if you surprise her, she might still be able to react on time." Selen shook her head.

"The meteor surprise attack proves it. She lacked sleep, was exhausted and even dropped her guard because we were close to safety. Yet despite all of that, she was still the first one to react to danger and give out orders. Then, if it wasn't for her teleporting us, we would've all died in that attack." She sighed.

"How am I supposed to keep up with her?"

Hearing this, Egil was silent. He thought about the powers that Alice could control and realised how tough she truly was as an opponent.

But that didn't mean there was nothing they could do.

Granted, there were easy ways of countering her and hard ways. For Egil, Alice was probably the worst opponent he could ask for. Not only could she keep up with his speed and power thanks to her instincts, but her attack power was off the charts.

Trying to defend against her attacks would be suicide for him.

But Selen? Her control over time gives her an edge that other people don't have.

In his life, he has only seen or heard of one person who can control time and that's Selen.

"Maybe... You can change your approach with your time powers. So far, you've just been using it to slow down attacks right? Are you able to use it to slow down your opponent? If Alice can react quickly, can't you just slow down her body?" Egil suggested.

"I mean... I can but it's a bit more difficult than just targeting her. The easiest way is for me to speed up my own time or slow down my surroundings. Focusing on someone requires them to stand still while I lock onto them. And even when that happens, the skill can be broken apart pretty easily with brute force." Selen explained.

Had she inherited the full powers of Miralith then perhaps she could pull this off with ease. But her body couldn't handle that kind of transplant.

"Then what about the area around them?"

"If the time slow isn't centered around me, it's harder to pull off and takes more time. It's not impossible just difficult to execute during a fight." Selen shook her head once more.

Just as she finished this sentence, Selen paused in her steps as an idea appeared in her mind.

An idea that seems ridiculous but if she could pull it off then...

"Egil look over here for a moment." Selen called out.

"What is it?"

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"Egil? Egil? Hello~" Selen waved her hand.

"Huh? Sorry did you say something, I didn't quite catch that." Egil blinked in confusion.

"Nothing, don't worry about it." Selen grinned, patting him on the back as she went on ahead with a skip in her steps.

Scratching his cheek in confusion, Egil followed behind her, unsure as to what had just happened. He felt like she had said something but couldn't quite remember.

Chapter 474 - 474: 'Alcohol'

After finishing the letter, Alice handed it off to the office and decided to roam around the market for a bit.

Since everything she needed to do had been sorted, she had some time to herself.

Most of the merchandise available was just supplies and clothing. The weapons were mostly negligible especially since she can make her own using blood and metal. Granted, it might be weaker than the high grade gear but it served its purpose.

Plus, when it came to high grade gear, Alice had her sealed Void Fang and Ruinous Void. Both weapons acting as core parts of her fighting style.

Just thinking about the Void Fang made her smile as she waited dearly for the moment her seal broke. She wanted to see how the weapon would change upon coming into contact with her new skills and energy control.

But that was in the future. For now, she wanted to focus on her mastery over the Void.

Wandering around the market, Alice decided to buy some street snacks while seeing if there were any cute clothing she could buy.

But the aesthetics of the North were mostly focused on keeping you warm rather than cute.

Thick hide coats, large shirts and so on. Everything was made with the intention to keep you warm.

'Well duh, who's gonna focus on looking cute when they're about to freeze to death?' Alyss rolled her eyes.

'Who knows, maybe someone wants to look cute.' Alice stuck out her tongue.

For Hunters, the natural cold wasn't something they needed to worry too much about. Of course, it still affects them to some extent but not enough to wear overly warm outfits.

Aside from the supplies, the next most popular thing in the market was sending and receiving letters from loved ones. Not everyone could afford a Void Hawk service so they chose to send letters the traditional way.

With her interest of the market dwindling, Alice looked around for Selen and Egil. It's a little earlier than planned as there were still half an hour to go before the hour passed.

However, her thoughts were cut short as she caught a whiff of a mesmerising scent in the air.

"Ohya? Ohya ohya?" Alice blinked her eyes as she began to drool.

Swallowing her saliva, she followed the scent to a small stall that seemed to be selling alcohol.

The stall was hidden between two large stalls focused on selling supplies so not many took notice of it.

Sitting on the floor, a woman could be seen sitting cross legged while slowly falling asleep with her head on her palms. She had long blonde hair, a pair of mismatched eyes similar to Alice should she unseal Cayla. The left was white while the right was red.

She wore a rather standard northern attire to keep herself warm but the most noticeable part of her appearance was the 'side effects' on her body.

A pair of small horns, elongated ears that drooped down and sharp canine teeth.

Perhaps the reason why most ignored her stall was also because of her appearance though Alice didn't understand the dislike towards people with side effects.

It's not like they've committed a crime, merely drank too much Abyss Blood.

Plus, it's not too different from people acquiring Sigils for power. Though... Perhaps the north take it more harshly when its done by people who aren't warriors.

They consider these people devil worshippers who sold their souls for power after all.

"Miss? Are you awake?" Alice waved her hand in front of the woman as she snapped awake.

"Huh? Oh sh*t a customer. Welcome to my store where I brew the best beverages using Abyss Blood. Guaranteed to give you a small boost to fertility, enhance power in bed and makes sure your partner won't be able to walk tomorrow mornin'. I have other stuff but the boost in fertility is no joke young miss." The woman introduced as she tapped each of the containers with her finger.

Glancing around her for a moment, she leaned forward and whispered towards Alice.

"If you really want a good time you can go for this one too. I guarantee that your partner will leave you begging for more after round 1." She smirked while making suggestive motions with her fingers.

However, Alice only blinked in confusion.

"Round 1? Ohhh you mean like increasing stamina?" Alice folded her arms as she looked at the selection available.

"Exactly! You get it young miss hehe~" The woman clapped her hands.

"Does it boost energy and control as well?" Alice asked curiously.

"Huh? I mean it boosts energy but control... If anything it's more loss of control and losing yourself to desire." The woman tilted her head, feeling a bit confused by Alice's response.

"Hmm... That's no good. If I lose control then there's not really any point."

She wanted more control without losing too much power if possible. But if this only boosts stamina and energy while sacrificing control, there's no reason for her to make this trade.

"Ohhh I get you now young miss. You're the hardcore type huh? Don't worry, I gotcha covered too. You just gotta use a few tools to offset it so you have a good time ya know?" The woman slapped the knee.

"Oh? What kind of tools?"

Gesturing for Alice to come closer so the others couldn't see, the woman grabbed a suitcase she had in the back and opened it slightly for Alice to see.

However, the sight of these elongated objects only confused her further.

"How is this supposed to help with energy control?"

". . ." The woman was speechless.

'. . .' Alyss face palmed.

Alice blinked her eyes feeling confused by the conversation.

"Miss... I must ask... how old are you?" The woman's smile twitched.

Considering she was wearing the uniform for the army, she figured the girl in front of her was an adult. But if she was this clueless and innocent then...

"A bit rude but I'm 20." Alice furrowed her brows.

"Have you ever been... Told about the birds and the bees?" The woman asked nervously.

"Are they specific beasts that'll help energy control?"

". . ."

'Alice, twin, my dear sister and whom I share a body with. Please tell me you're joking and you're not actually this stupid.' Alyss was practically begging at this point.

'Hah?! What do you mean am I actually this stupid???' Alice felt offended. If anything, she thought she was pretty smart all things considered.

Hearing this, Alyss almost fell off her bed as she ran over to Cayla who was resting and shook her awake.

[What is it?] Cayla groaned, feeling annoyed by Alyss shaking her.

'We're gonna have to teach Alice about the birds and the bees.'

[Oh f*ck no.]

Cayla went back to sleep.

Alyss's smile twitched as she tried to wake up Cayla but she refused to budge.

While Alyss was trying to get help from Cayla, the woman who owned the stall put the suitcase away and coughed awkwardly.

"Erm... yeah. But I don't have that kind of alcohol here."

"You don't? Then what do you have? I thought you said the drinks boosted energy." Alice asked, feeling scammed while the woman choked on her saliva.

Thinking about it for a moment, she decided to show Alice a selection of three drinks.

These were... standard drinks that weren't enhanced aphrodisiacs.

Giving Alice a small sample from each of them, she waited for her reaction.

Licking her lips, Alice folded her arms.

These were good but they weren't what attracted her attention in the first place.

Closing her eyes, she tried to track down which container held the correct drink and soon pointed to one of them.

"What's in this one?"

Seeing what Alice was pointing to, the woman's pupils constricted as she wanted to cry.

'Miss, young miss, out of all the ones you could've picked, why did you pick the strongest aphrodisiac that I have?!?! So you wanna die for your first time???'

"I... I don't suggest buying this one." The woman cleared her throat awkwardly.

Hearing this, Alice blinked her eyes. What kind of merchant suggests that the customer doesn't buy?

In the end, the woman relented as Alice seemed rather insistent on buying it and wouldn't take no for an answer.

There was only one suggestion that the woman had for Alice and that was to get someone to teach her about the birds and the bees before drinking it.

A rather strange requirement in Alice's opinion but she stored the vial away and made her way through the marketplace in search of Selen and Egil.

###

"You want me to tell you about WHAT???" Selen wanted to punch a wall while Egil couldn't look Alice in the eye.

"Well I found some nice smelling alcohol but the woman said I needed to learn about the birds and the bees first. Is that slang for a beast or something? If it is then it should be fine no? it's not like... well ya know." Alice hinted as she glanced at Egil.

Selen understood that Alice was talking about side effects but this isn't really a case of side effects but rather who the hell asked her to find out about the birds and the bees.

But more than that, how the hell does Alice not know about it???

She was excited to tell Alice about her new idea for a skill but this one question had completely taken her by surprise.

The girl in front of her could drive away gods and flip conventional wisdom on its head but she didn't know about the birds and the bees.

'Gods help me...' Selen cried internally.

For the first time in her life, she didn't know what she should do.

Chapter 475 - 475: A Spar Between Alice And Selen

Selen's smile twitched while looking at the clueless Alice. Even if she was locked away by the Zenia family, surely she would've overheard something about the birds and the bees right? RIGHT?

Thinking about this, Selen suddenly recalled the time they went to the banquet in the Inverted World. During that time, she clearly recalled Alice making something under her skirt to scare off the people flirting with her.

"Didn't you... ya know, make something under your skirt when we were at the banquet? How do you not know about the birds and the bees?" Selen questioned, grasping at straws so that she didn't have to explain it to Alice.

"That? I heard a scholar do it and the person seemed really scared. Like, really really scared and started to beg. It's probably a punishment, right? I even copied the tone and everything." Alice tilted her head, trying to recall the exact scene in her mind.

Meanwhile, Alyss froze up.

'Twinnie, switch with me for a moment and let me talk to Selen. And while I'm doing so, don't eavesdrop.' Alyss requested as Alice furrowed her brows.

'Huh? Why?'

'Look, just do it okay? It's not like I ask of this from you often.'

Finding it a little weird, Alice eventually nodded her head and agreed.

Golden chains appeared on her body as Alyss took over while Alice blocked her ears and stopped herself from eavesdropping.

"Selen." Alyss called out.

Hearing the unfamiliar tone, Selen frowned.

"Just think of me as someone who lives with Alice. I think I figured something out about that." Alyss scratched her hair.

"She's doing a monkey see, monkey do kind of situation. So unfortunately, she doesn't know f*ck all about the birds and the bees." Alyss explained while letting out a sigh.

"That... still doesn't explain what little information she has though." Selen decided to question Alice about this woman later. But for now, she wanted to figure out the level of knowledge that Alice has.

Looking around for a moment, Alyss gestured for them to follow her.

"You know roughly about how Alice was raised right? Well... At least somewhat of an idea." Alyss opened her mouth while glancing at Egil.

She needed to word her words carefully as to not tell the whole story.

"Somewhat, yes."

"She spent 10 years there. The only thing she could learn was whatever she overheard and what the guards talked about. She may have some vocabulary that leans towards the... advanced level of the birds and the bees thanks to this but she has no foundation.

"And I'll be honest, I do NOT want to talk about the birds and the bees with her." Alyss's smile twitched imagining such a situation.

She already found it weird a while back. Alice didn't have the same reaction when she pulled the prank at the banquet as her.

There were only three possibilities at that point. She found it enjoyable, she didn't care about it or she didn't know what she was doing. Like a child who didn't know waving a knife around was dangerous, she didn't know that what she was doing was rather... vulgar.

But never did Alyss think that it was the third option. She had always just assumed it was the second option.

"So what are we supposed to do? There's no doubt that she'll be asking about what the birds and the bees mean now." Selen asked with a sigh.

"There's one thing we can do."

###

'Twinnie you can take over again now.' Alyss tapped Alice's shoulder.

'What did ya talk about?'

'Nothing important, just some complaints on how reckless you are. But Selen wanted a spar with you since she's making a new skill. It seems pretty advanced so she wanted your reaction on it.' Alyss chuckled.

Hearing this, Alice's eyes began to sparkle as she immediately jumped up.

'Selen got a new skill? What is it about?'

If Selen was making a new skill, there was a good chance that it could serve as inspiration for her own skill or give her a chance at breaking through her current bottleneck.

'If I say it, it'll be a spoiler, won't it? You'll find out when you fight her.'

Just before Alice took over, Alyss turned around and gave Selen a loud high five. The action signifying that Alice had completely forgotten about their earlier talk just as planned and was now interested in the spar.

There were only two words on Selen's mind.

'Thank f*ck!'

As the chains disappeared, Alice blinked her eyes.

"Welcome back~ So who was that anyways?" Selen asked, pretending like nothing ever happened.

"Oh you mean Alyss? She's like my twin. How do you put it... Two souls one body? She pops out occasionally when I'm fighting or if she wants to do a bit of shopping too." Alice explained as Selen recalled the first time they fought.

There was a moment where her body controls kept flipping while these chains manifested on Alice's body.

"Ahh... I see. So that's what it was." Selen mumbled.

"But setting that aside, you said you wanted to spar right? With your new skill." Alice grinned.

"Yep. But I don't think this area would be good considering there are too many eyes."

Folding her arms, Alice thought about it for a moment before suggesting that they should go to the crystal forest that was created thanks to Keira. Since the place was already destroyed, they might as well make use of it.

With the arrangements sorted, they began to discuss the rules while making their way over.

"Since this is a spar, I'll be limiting the stuff I can use. I'll be honest, a lot of my skills are made for killing after all, not quite suitable for a harmless spar." Alice scratched her cheek with an awkward smile.

After all, if she was to take Selen by surprise with a Void Flux, she wouldn't come out of it unscathed.

"I mean... I think you can still use it. Just not the crazy stuff please. I can handle the standard variants." Selen chuckled.

If Alice were to use the attack she used back in Kvia then...

There won't even be a crystal forest left to look at.

"Alright. So no variants of Void Flux. I'll probably avoid using my fifth Sigil too. Don't need to create another rift between me and the realm for just a spar otherwise my body might explode." Alice nodded.

For this fight, Alice was going to limit herself to the first four Sigils, Resonance, Bloodline Release and the Shard of Kara.

"What about your artifact and the weird Resonance that you did when the meteor came down?"

"Oh that? I mean I could but I'm not sure about the lethality of it yet. I haven't had much practice with it after all." Alice folded her arms.

There were still a lot she didn't know about her Artificial Resonance. Thus far, all she could tell was that it worked similar to her Artifact in that it significantly enhanced her control over the Void.

It seems to also boost the potency of her Void based abilities but that could also just be a placebo effect.

"It'll be fine though. I still got plenty of cards up my sleeve for the spar so don't worry about it." Alice reassured with a grin.

Now that her Bloodline Release has been unlocked, even if its just for her own soul, her physical power was boosted to a level where she should be able to keep up with Selen.

Arriving at the entrance of the crystal forest, the three of them made their way towards the heart. Since they were relaxed, they didn't notice the cartographer and Torgeir on the opposite end.

Finding a clearing within the heart, the two stood opposite one another while Egil acted as the referee for this spar.

"I'll have to warn you though. If you let your guard down, you'll lose in an instant." Selen gave her body a stretch.

"Ohya? Confident are we? But if you say that, it's going to be harder to make me drop my guard ya know?" Alice laughed. Her curiosity was at an all time high. If Selen was this confident in her new skill, she must have a plan to end the fight in an instant.

Alice was dying to know what kind of skill could give Selen this much confidence.

"Oh I know don't worry. Why don't we make a bet about it?" Selen offered.

Hearing that Selen wanted to make a wager, Alice curled her lips up into a grin.

"Fufu~ What kind of wager are we talking about now?"

"If you win, I'll buy you some mead from the tavern. Enough to replenish the supplies I saw last time in your pouch."

"!!!" Alice's eyes practically radiated fighting spirit as she wasn't about to give this up.

"But on the 'off chance' that I win... Why don't you do me a favour?" Selen asked as Alice tapped her chin.

"What kind of favour?"

"I can't think of one for now so why don't we postpone until I need?" Selen shrugged.

"Sure, I can do that." Alice nodded.

With the rules and wagers now put into place, they got ready for the duel.

Taking a deep breath, Alice focused her mind. Even if it's a spar, she's not one to just take it easy on her opponent.

Plus, she understands that Selen is a strong fighter. The fact that she lost/drew to Selen in the past when they met was indicative of that. A woman who's incredibly strong with her time powers and body control.

"BEGIN!" Egil called out as Alice immediately activated her Resonance.

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"Eh?" Blinking her eyes, Alice froze in shock as she didn't even know when Selen had placed a blade against her neck.

Chapter 476 - 476: Secret Behind Selen's Skill

Blinking her eyes, confusion filled Alice's mind.

'When did she get this close? When did she pull out the blade? What happened?'

One moment, the spar began.

The next, Selen was in front of her and the spar ended.

Seeing the confusion on Alice's face, Selen had a smug smile on her face as she withdrew her blade.

"Hehe~ Seems like even the great Alice is taken by surprise. So what do you think? A pretty good skill if I have to say so myself." Selen puffed up her chest with proudness as this was a de facto one sided win for her.

Revealing a smile, Alice nodded her head.

"Yeah it is. I don't think anyone can defend against that if you try to assassinate them. Only issue I can see is with the opponent's defences but it shouldn't be an issue if they can't react."

"Yep, that's still an issue I haven't figured out yet. During the time I'm using this skill, it's hard to put a lot of power into my strike so it's relatively weak compared to what I can usually do." Selen admitted, twirling the blade in her hands.

"Let's go again, I wanna see if I can figure it out." Alice suggested.

"Sure, though I don't think you'll figure it out with that mindset."

After all, the more her opponent focuses, the stronger this skill becomes.

Taking their stances once more, the two stared at one another as Alice narrowed her gaze.

Since Selen is able to traverse the space between them in an instant, she needed to set out a grid to protect herself. A grid that'll let her react instinctively.

She knew that this wasn't a case of time stop either since Selen's power doesn't stretch that far. Otherwise, she would've mentioned it already.

However, despite creating a grid, Alice still lost with Selen appearing in front of her.

'Let me give it a try.' Alyss spoke up as she too was extremely interested by this skill of her's.

'Sure.'

Switching out, Alyss cracked her neck while taking an offensive stance.

During these fights, Alice had been the passive one so she was going to take a different approach. She'll attack Selen before she can use this skill.

"BEGIN!" Egil shouted.

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"EHHHH???" Alyss blinked her eyes, realising that she was flat on the ground with Selen pointing her blade towards her.

"How the f*ck???" Alyss was completely baffled.

"Want me to tell you two the secret?" Selen grinned, resting the blade on her shoulder.

"Nah, let me try and figure it out some more." Alice shook her head as she took over once more.

So far, neither brute force nor passive styles have worked against this skill of Selen's.

Furrowing her brows, Alice understood that it was something to do with Selen's ability to control time. The question now is what exactly does the skill do.

For this attempt, she'll read the flow of energy!

"BEGIN!"

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"?????" Alice lost before she could even see the flow of energy.

"Fufu~ Shall I give you a hint to try and figure it out?"

Scratching her hair, Alice relented as she nodded her head with a sigh.

"The hint for you is perception and focus. I'll give you... 5 matches to figure it out." Selen challenged.

Alice's smile twitched as her fighting spirit was ignited.

"Deal."

Standing opposite Selen, Alice dwelled on Selen's words.

Perception and Focus.

The hint to how Selen's skill worked.

First match – ended in an instant.

Second match – Alice tried to close her eyes and use her ears to focus on Selen. No use, ended in an instant.

Third match – Alice tried to switch with Alyss midway through in order to dispel the skill but once again, it was no use. Alyss was also caught up in the skill.

Fourth match – Alice surrounded herself with blood mist to try and block the skill. No use, instant loss.

Fifth match.

Taking deep breaths, Alice tried her best to calm her mind.

So far, nothing had worked. She tried everything she could think of when it came to her Perception and Focus but it was no use.

The issue was that she didn't know what was going on in the skill. It's like someone just snapping their finger and the match ends. None of the process could be seen.

If she can't see the process, she can't figure out how to counter it. Thus, this time, she was going to go all out in defending herself.

As the match began, a singularity appeared in Alice's eye as she created a defensive circle around herself. A zone using the properties of the Void to stop attacks.

However, halfway through activating her defences, it collapsed from destabilization while Selen tapped her on the forehead.

"And that makes five wins." Selen chuckled.

Revealing a helpless smile, Alice gave her body a stretch and sighed.

"You really made something impressive. I seriously have no clue on how it works." Alice shook her head and admitted her defeat.

For the first time, Alice suffered a convincing defeat from someone with the same number of Sigils as herself.

She understood that the abilities of the Abyss are vast and numerous. No matter how she may consider herself as powerful, there will still be a moment where her skill set is completely countered.

Hell, a situation where someone with less Sigils defeating her could happen.

"Because this skill is probably the worst enemy for someone like you with extremely high instinct and focus." Selen chuckled.

"Oh?"

"Basically my skill messes with your perception of time. The more you try to focus, the more the moment of focus is dragged out. Essentially, I place you in a state where you focus so hard you begin to space out. During that instant, you are not digesting any of the information you're seeing and thus can't react.

"Then it's just a case of activating my acceleration on my own body to bridge the gap while you can't react. No matter how strong your instincts are, you can't use it if you can't process the information." Selen explained.

Hearing this, Alice blinking her eyes in disbelief.

If that was indeed the case, then whenever anyone is in a high stress situation where it requires concentration and focus, the stronger this skill becomes and the easier it is to pull off.

The more Alice tried to figure out the skill during the battle, the harder it became to break out of it. A cruel loop that's unbreakable unless one knew how the skill worked.

Heck, even if they knew how the skill worked, how do you stop yourself from focusing when death is so close at hand?

"How the hell did you even think of something like this???"

"I got a slight hint when I was talking to Egil about my abilities. I had to rethink my approach and I got an idea when I recalled your instincts and focus. Though there is a downside to this skill." Selen shrugged.

Thinking about it for a moment, Alice realized what it could be.

"Let me guess, it depends on whether or not the opponent keeps their attention on you."

"Exactly. If their attention is turned away, the skill is broken and all of my movements became clear as day to them. Once that happens, reapplying the skill becomes a pain in the ass and it'll even give them a hint on how it works.

"Since you never looked away or turned your attention to something else, I was able to keep the skill activated on you. But if I was to use it in a situation where there's a lot of things to focus on, such as multiple people to fight against, it becomes a waste of energy." Selen chuckled.

She was testing this skill out while walking around the marketplace and noticed the flaws early on.

But in a one vs one situation where all attention is focused on her? Unbreakable!

"Let's have one more spar, you can see how the skill works that way." Selen was the one who suggested it as Alice nodded her head.

Taking a deep breath, Alice stood opposite Selen.

Since she needed to divert her attention to something else in order to break this skill, Alice needed to find something to focus on. There were two options for this.

One, find something in her surroundings. Two, focus on her own actions.

"BEGIN!"

*BANG!!!

Selen shot forward as Alice found herself spacing out momentarily before taking back control.

Even though she knew how this skill worked, it was still disorientating even if you managed to react to it.

Creating a blood blade in her hands, Alice twisted her body and parried the blade.

Hitting Selen's wrist to try and disarm her, Alice kicked towards Selen's stomach only for the skill to reactivate.

Immediately turning her attention towards making a concentrated orb of blood, Alice slammed it down, pushing the two of them away from one another.

However, just before Alice could land, a portal opened behind her as she appeared behind Selen ready for the finishing strike.

But this moment of focus was enough for Selen as she activated her skill.

The two stood with blades pointed at each other's necks as a smile could be seen on their faces.

"I'll be damned. Even after knowing how your skill works it's still annoying as all hell to go against." Alice smiled as Selen chuckled.

"Of course. I have to figure out something to keep up with the sh*t you get yourself into."

In a high level fight against a strong opponent, even if it was just for a split moment, this lapse in focus could become extremely deadly. A deadly trump card that can save a life or take one in a split moment.

Chapter 477 - 477: A Demonstration Of Power

Messing around with the skill some more, the two took a break and got some snacks to eat from their pouch.

While they were resting, they noticed the cartographer making their way around the area.

"Torgeir!" Alice called out with a wave.

Since they ran into Torgeir, she might as well invite him for a snack too.

"I thought you three would be enjoying the market. How come you're here?" Torgeir asked curiously while the Cartographer followed behind him.

"We were testing out new skills and stuff. Since this area is already like this, it shouldn't be an issue to mess around here right?"

"As long as you don't make any major changes, it shouldn't be an issue." Torgeir chuckled.

However, the Cartographer only raised an eyebrow in confusion.

"Ah before I forget, this girl here is Alice Agnelia. The one who saved the warriors. The girl next to her is Selen and the tough guy over there is Egil. They all contributed heavily to helping the outpost." Torgeir introduced before introducing the Cartographer to them.

A man named Jonas was doubtful of Alice's power.

Furrowing his brows, he observed Alice and scanned her from head to toe. No matter what Torgeir says, he just can't see this small girl being able to fend off an attack that could flatten this mountain.

"Are you sure you're the one who took care of the person behind the ambush? Perhaps you could've teleported everyone like they said but I don't see how you can kill her if they were able to do this." He expressed his doubts while gesturing to the crystal forest.

Hearing this, Torgeir frowned in annoyance. Despite all the evidence, he still doubted. A rude question despite just being here to draw the map.

"Hmm... an attack of this scale isn't that hard to pull off ya know? If you have the right Sigils and enough time." Alice tapped her chin while looking around her.

Torgeir raised an eyebrow at Alice's calmness as he thought she'd be annoyed that the cartographer was doubting her and essentially calling her a fraud who didn't actually kill the person responsible for the ambush.

"Bold words. An attack of this level isn't something a mere four spirit Warrior can replicate." Jonas scoffed.

"Alright that's enough. You're here to do your job as a cartographer, not to nick pick what you believe or don't believe." Torgeir interrupted as he couldn't let this man continue to slander Alice after she saved them.

"Tsk." Clicking his tongue, Jonas nodded his head.

However, one could still see doubt in his eyes.

"I just have to show something on a similar scale right? It's not that hard. I'll show you what I used to kill the person behind the ambush if you want." Alice stretched her body as she stood up. This was a good chance for her to get more practice with her skill.

Furrowing his brows, Torgeir was about to say no when he saw the glint in Alice's eyes.

'She's eager.'

His smile twitched as he nodded his head.

"Sure, just keep it within the boundaries of this area."

At this stage, she wasn't going to take no for an answer.

"Alrighty~ Stand back everyone, you don't want to get caught in the blast radius now do you?" Alice chuckled, waving for both Selen and Egil to stand back.

Selen took the hint and began to jog away with Egil.

Meanwhile, Jonas thought they were exaggerating.

Seeing as everyone was far enough away to some extent, Alice smiled before taking a deep breath.

***RUMBLE!!!!**

Immediately, her energy soared as the clouds began to crackle with lightning due to the excess of energy surging from Alice's body.

Resonance!

Briar thorns and spider lilies blossomed as a black dress appeared on her body.

Bloodline Release!

Her shadow began to shimmer as motes of darkness floated up, converging into the spectre of a maniacal woman laughing while crying tears of darkness.

Ruinous Void – Artificial Resonance!

A singularity appeared in Alice's eye as the realm began to warp around her.

The sudden explosion of energy shocked even Torgeir as she had gotten far stronger than the last time he'd seen her!

It's to the point where even he was fearing whether or not he was far enough away.

*CRACK RUMBLE!!!

The ground fractured around Alice as it began to float upwards.

The convergence of energy coalesced into a singularity floating above her palm as a disk of pure energy began to materialize.

Holding it out to the side, Alice crouched down as her target was locked on. The heart of this crystal forest.

She was going to eradicate it from the centre!

Activating her fourth Sigil, a ritualistic circle appeared beneath her as sparks of energy jumped from her body. Little by little, the realm in front of her twisted into a warp point. A single line of pure speed where she rips through both reality and the Void to reach her target.

At this point, Jonas began to panic but it was too late to tell her to stop.

*BANG!!!!

Shattering the ground beneath her, Alice condensed the singularity into a single minuscule orb and disappeared from her spot.

It wasn't like Selen's perception manipulation.

No, it was raw speed from traversing the realms for one goal and one goal only.

To reach her target in the shortest time possible!

*BANG!!!!

From the heart of the crystal forest, a black hole spun to life, carving out a cavity within the earth as flashes of light whipped against the surrounding structures, severing them with the power of two realms clashing and tearing.

In an instant, the top half of the crystal forest was cut away while a large crevice could be seen in the heart. Crackles of lightning and micro tears that allowed the energy of the Void to leak out flickered across the crystals near the impact spot.

Standing in the centre, Alice flicked her hand as she held back enough to not tear a hole into the Void otherwise Feris might be rather annoyed.

These micro tears will heal up in due time naturally.

Creating a portal back, Alice appeared next to Torgeir and Jonas.

Jonas was on the ground as he stumbled back from the explosion and tripped over.

"So how is it? I believe that's enough proof as it is." Alice smiled.

"Every day you bring new surprises. But thank you for keeping it within the area." Torgeir chuckled.

While he was surprised by what Alice could do, it made sense once he attributed it to her being an anomaly.

'Yep, common sense doesn't work with this girl.'

"You're welcome. We'll be taking the caravan to the capital now so I don't think we'll see each other again unless a coincidence occurs. Since that's the case, I might as well give you a parting gift."

Taking a deep breath, Alice activated her second and third Sigil to make a blood orb above her hand.

"If you're ever in danger, channel a bit of energy into this and throw it towards your enemy. It'll blow up and should seal up their ability to use Sigil powers for a bit." Alice explained.

Creating a second orb, she threw it casually to the side to demonstrate.

***BANG!!!!**

A torrent of violet flames erupted as the crystal was decimated.

A miniature orb holding a Void Flux that'll explode on impact and coat the target with Violet Flames.

A one time use item to turn the tides and save Torgeir's life if it ever came down to it.

Seeing the destructive power of the orb, Torgeir was almost afraid to accept it in fear of it just detonating in his hands.

However, if it indeed worked as Alice had explained, it was a priceless life saving tool.

"Thank you."

Waving goodbye to Torgeir, Alice left the forest with Selen and Egil.

Arranging for a carriage, it was time for them to make their way to the capital.

###

After finishing with marking down the change in the forest, Jonas bid his farewells to Torgeir.

"Seems like Verona has gotten some annoying people." Jonas muttered as his skin began to peel away, revealing his true appearance beneath the disguise.

"But that last attack... It's not something a four Sigil Hunter should be capable of." He muttered as more of his disguise began to disappear.

Massaging his neck, he flicked his hand and created a small wooden bird.

"Keira didn't fulfil her ritual so she took a punishment. In that state, if she was to take that kind of attack, it's no surprise she died. Elowen should be pretty happy though, the culprit has been found." He smirked.

Embedding a message into the bird, he threw it into the air and watched as it flew away towards the south, where Elowen was waiting with Troy.

"But to think the commander would send me out for this kind of boring errand. I should probably lodge a complaint."

Shaking his head, Sigils began to light up on his body.

His form began to twist and crack, extending his limbs as wood burst out from under his skin.

A skull formed over his head with two large wooden antlers attached to the top.

A wooden beast with bones and black spiked fur.

Taking a step, he sunk down into the ground and disappeared as though he was never there.

###

Sitting by the window, Elowen waited.

Soon, a wooden bird appeared by her window as she read the message and stood up.

With the culprit now found, it was time for them to make a move. An attack on the capital to end this war and seal up any news they may potentially have on the hybrids.

Even if the Lords are there, so what? The Zenia family is not scared of a few Lords.

Chapter 478 - 478: Tumultuous Era

The journey towards the capital was going to take roughly a week or so. The caravan already had guards assigned so all Alice, Selen and Egil needed to do was just relax for the journey.

All provisions were provided for so they didn't need to hunt either.

For this week, Alice had to just relax and enjoy herself.

"I'm boreddd." Alice complained while lying on a seat and kicking her legs up.

"We haven't even set off yet." Selen's smile twitched.

"Yeah, but it's gonna be a week of this. No fighting, no hunting, just sitting and doing nothing. It already sounds boring. What if I ask them where the capital is and I'll warp us over there?" Alice asked as her eyes gleamed with sadistic light.

Recalling what it was like to have Alice warp them to the frontlines, Egil paled and quickly shook his head.

"It's a peaceful journey and a good chance for you to see what the scenery is like in the north. You two aren't from around here right?" Egil asked as Alice and Selen nodded.

"The north is mainly known for the large mountains and frozen lakes. We'll pass by some of the more famous ones on the way to the capital so it should be something pretty interesting to see." Egil explained.

Folding her arms, Alice thought about it and nodded her head.

She was surprised places like this still exist when Lords are running around, dismantling the surroundings and so on.

Soon, the caravan began to move as Alice dangled from the ceiling.

Sitting by the window, Selen couldn't help but roll her eyes with a smile. Alice was like an overly excitable kid who was trying to keep herself entertained.

Exhaling hot breath against the window and drawing with her finger. Leaning her head against the window and letting it bounce whenever the carriage would shake.

At one point, she even began to juggle miniature singularities that she would create that are no bigger than a fingertip.

Since the journey was long, Egil decided to have a nap and so did Selen.

Seeing the two napping, Alice laid on the sofa with a bored expression. Cayla was sleeping and Alyss was having a light nap as well.

With nothing else to do, Alice decided to have a few drinks before sleeping as well.

Reaching into her pouch, she chose her medium quality mead for now. The limited supply of Ayrian Mead was not to be touched unless it's a special occasion. The high quality mead were few and far between with Alice not finding something that could qualify for that rank in the north just yet.

Well, with the exception of the weird one she bought at the market but she needed to learn about the birds and the bees first before she could drink it.

Recalling this, Alice remembered that she forgot to ask about it since she was busy sparring with Selen.

Shrugging her shoulder, she decided to ask them later if she remembers.

With that out of the way, the only things she had left were medium quality mead and the fruits that Ragnar gave her.

Thinking back to Ragnar, Alice couldn't help but wonder where he went. After going their separate ways in Esna, she couldn't find him anywhere.

And here she wanted to get more of the fruits if she could.

###

Walking through the frosty mountains of the north, Ragnar looked to the side and observed his homeland.

Taking a deep breath, he let out a sigh as he couldn't help but recall the power of Tiamat and the power of Alice who was somehow able to affect the Abyss Lord.

For a retired Lord, his power has waned drastically.

Revealing a bitter smile, Ragnar shook his head and continued up to the peak.

That fight was a cruel reminder of the passage of time. He was no longer young nor did he have the power of his prime. Hell, even in his prime, he wasn't sure if he could defeat Tiamat.

Perhaps if he was to resolve himself to die, he could slow her down to some extent. That was the power different between them.

Raising his hand, golden energy converged but scattered almost immediately.

He was nothing but an empty husk. A reminder of what once was.

He may have Sigils but he had no power to fuel them properly.

Reaching into his pouch, he brought out the bottle of Ayrian Mead that Alice gifted him. A rare mead that she claimed to not be made anywhere else.

Opening the bottle, he could smell the fragrance of this mead. He found himself standing in a field of flowers while silken weaves would brush against his body.

Just one smell was enough to invoke such feelings from deep within.

"Truly a good mead." Ragnar smiled, taking a sip before sealing the bottle.

Since this was limited, he'll take his time with it.

Upon arriving at the peak, Ragnar could see a large muscular man meditating with a layer of snow on top of him.

"After all these years, you still like to meditate here." Ragnar chuckled.

Hearing his voice, the giant man trembled as his eyes snapped open.

"Master! You're back!" Urigar called out in surprise.

How many years has it been since his master had last graced these peaks?

"For the moment yes. It seems to me that you've been diligent. Good job." Ragnar smiled, praising his best student and whom he had left everything to. His power, his title, his legacy.

Sitting down, Ragnar took a deep breath and looked at the sea of clouds spread out around them.

"What has brought you back to these peaks?" Urigar couldn't help but ask curiously.

Years ago, after passing down his title, his master decided to separate himself from everything that was going on in the north and retreat to a place no one knew about.

"A tumultuous era has become, Urigar. It's gotten to a stage where I can no longer neglect the world and sit idly by. I've recently met a youngster. A youngster so full of life and excitement I couldn't help but get excited myself." Ragnar chuckled.

Stands of golden energy started to appear around his body.

"After a fissure to the Abyss was opened, a monster unlike any I've seen before appeared. A dragon Lord holding untold amounts of power within her body. Even after pushing myself to the limit and exhausting all that was left within me, I couldn't even make her flinch.

"However, the youngster was able to hinder her. It was the youngster who allowed me to win a bet between me and the beast. But it was a reminder of how much I've fallen. In this chaotic era, one must rise to the occasion no matter what or die as collateral." Ragnar smiled as sweat dripped from his forehead.

Sigils lit up across his body as he attempted to gather energy but it was akin to filling a bucket full of holes. Futile.

Regardless, he still wanted to do something. Anything.

"I understand. I too have noticed a change in the breath of the world. Disorderly energy now weaves amongst the masses. Energy of the chaos God, mutated energy from the Abyss and the conduct of men who seek a heretical power.

"There are signs of a new faction master. Outside of the core three. A faction of blood who revel in acts of heresy far worse than the Eclipse." Urigar explained his findings while standing behind his master.

Placing his palms against his back, the energy of a Lord flowed into Ragnar in an attempt to help seal the holes within his body.

"So what do you plan to do?"

"I continue what I have been doing. Succeeding your mantle as the War God of the North. I will defend our homeland to my very last breath." Urigar smiled.

Letting out a chuckle, Ragnar reached into his pouch and pulled out the Ayrian mead.

"This was a gift I received from the youngster. A precious mead that is no longer made. It's truly a high quality liquor that's should be shared. Since it's been many years, why not a drink with this old man." Ragnar laughed.

"It would be an honour."

###

The caravan slowed down as it was time to rest for the night. While food was being prepared, Alice decided to have a light spar with Egil since they haven't spared with one another in a long while.

Plus, Alice wanted to restrict herself and focus on practicing the Void Steps rather than any other skill that she had.

Once she mastered the Void Steps, it'll become a key part of her fighting style, a set of footwork that'll surprise her opponent and take them by surprise. Not to mention the fact that it can act as a life saving skill as well, dodging an attack at the last moment.

The only issue being...

*BANG!!!!

Crashing into a tree, Alice held her nose in pain while Egil let out an awkward laugh.

"Do you want me to continue?" He asked as she nodded her head.

The spar was to have Egil use his full speed to try and attack Alice without holding back at all since her regeneration was now unlocked.

She wanted to use Void Steps in a stressful situation in order to see if she could get any ideas.

Waiting for Alice to recover, Egil stomped down as illusionary spirits appeared around him.

*CRACK!!!

Stomping down, his figure rushed towards Alice like an unstoppable train.

In the blink of an eye, he was already in front of her as Alice's pupils constricted.

Activating the Void Steps, her form flickered out of sight.

'Did it succeed?' Egil wondered.

But just as he finished this thought...

*BANG!!!

Alice crashed into the side of a carriage and dented it.

"MY CARRIAGE!!!" A shout could be heard in the distance.

Chapter 479 - 479: Hand To Hand Combat Practice

Sitting on her knees, Alice was forced to repent after breaking one of the prized carriages and the damage was paid by the three of them.

She was banned from using the skill until they reached their destination in fear of breaking more carriages.

"Look, I'm sorry okay? I didn't realise the carriage was that delicate." Alice pouted.

Hearing this, the owner of the carriage felt the urge to smack this girl on the head.

"Girlie, this carriage is sturdy enough to block an attack or two from strong beasts!" He scolded while folding his arms.

The force of which Alice slammed into the carriage had left a human sized dent on the side, making it unusable since the seats were blocked by folded metal.

The most they could do with this carriage now was simply to let it store some goods while the people who were meant to sit there sat with the other supplies.

Since Alice was the one to break the carriage, they lost their comfy seat privileges and sat on rock-hard boards.

Crossing her legs, Selen glared at both Egil and Alice with annoyance as the two didn't dare to look her in the eye.

Just seeing the vein bulge on her temple was enough to tell them how annoyed with was to be forced to sit on these seats for the rest of the journey.

Not only that but how much money they had to pay because Alice broke the carriage.

That money could've gone into new equipment, food, lodging and so on. Yet it was spent to pay for a stupid carriage.

###

After the incident on the first day, Alice spent the time focusing on hand to hand combat instead as it'll avoid the possibility of destroying more things.

Rather than with brute force, she wanted to practice the more delicate part of hand to hand. Parrying, countering and striking.

Dashing into Egil's range, Alice tried a jab to the neck but he dodged with ease. A counter strike towards her chest that she then slapped away to the side.

Using her spare hand, she grabbed his wrist and went in for a neck chop but Egil could see it coming from a mile away.

Ducking down, he punched up in an attempt to break Alice's guard.

However, her flexibility was far greater than what Egil had expected as she stomped down against his fist, using it to propel herself back.

Right before she could land, Egil rushed in with a punch aimed at Alice's stomach.

***BANG!!!**

Parrying the fist by pushing it to the side, Alice winched as she could feel her palms stinging from the force behind the punch but they weren't done yet.

This spar wasn't one focused on power and Egil was holding back as much as he could. This spar was on focused on technique.

'Time to go on the offence!' Alice rushed in.

Rather than slaps and parries, Alice twisted her body for a devastating jab towards Egil's head that was blocked by his arm.

Right jab, left jab, a hook towards the head.

Egil's footwork was surprisingly light as he weaved through the jabs easily.

Noticing this, Alice adjusted her fighting style once more.

Kicking up with her foot to break his guard, she twisted her body and released a downward heel kick towards his shoulder.

*BANG!!!

Missing her target, Alice wasn't fazed as she pivoted on her heel and slammed a spinning kick to his chest which was blocked by his arms.

Sliding back a little, Egil was surprised by how quickly Alice could adapt. From a parrying style of mostly slaps and chops to a boxing style of jabs and hooks and finally, a kicking style.

While he wasn't sure of the source, all he knew was that Alice made 'bridges' in her mind and linked the styles together into one singular form.

However, right now, it felt a little incomplete.

'Let's push it a little.' Egil thought to himself, rushing in for a jab towards her head.

Blocking with an open palm, Alice diverted his punch down before going in for a jab of her own.

But with a counter attack already closing in on her head, she changed this jab to a palm strike, pushing the second punch away.

Using her spare hand, she aimed for an uppercut but Egil leaned back and dodged.

He grabbed Alice by the shoulder and went in for a headbutt, surprising Alice as she found it hard to move her body.

But it wasn't as though she was out of options. Dropping her body down, she loosened the grip by a little before sliding her arms out, pushing up the grip so that her arms were free. Using his arms as a bar, she swung herself down, avoiding the headbutt and transitioning into a kick against Egil's jaw, forcing him to stumble back.

Recovering from his stumble, Egil opened his eyes and saw Alice face to face with him.

Out of instinct, he launched a jab forward but Alice slid back and grabbed his wrist.

Pulling him towards her guard, she parried his second punch with another open palm. With both of his fists out, she brushed it to the side then slammed her palm against his sternum.

Unfortunately for Alice, Egil's physicality was higher than expected as this time, he didn't even stumble. With her guard now open, he slammed his arm against her head.

Alice was late in the block and was forced away from the hit.

Shaking her head from the pain of the late block, Alice narrowed her gaze.

Despite his large size and muscles, Egil was shockingly fast. She knew this when they fought the first time but his speed wasn't limited to just one direction. He was nimble even in close quarters.

Truly, if her stats weren't completely skewed towards using Abyss abilities, Egil would probably be an insurmountable wall for her. A wall that was not only fast but could also defend against abilities thrown at him.

The perfect frontline.

Rushing in for round three, Alice sought to end this spar.

Compared to Egil, her body stature was far smaller than one would expect. Thus, she was going to take advantage of it!

Keeping her arms close to her chest, Alice weaved into his guard as she unleashed a double palm strike against his chest.

A punch came flying down from above but she was prepared. Two kicks, one to the side of the knee and one to the stomach. The first broke his stance and the second caused his punch to miss completely, bringing the giant down on one knee.

Just as she went in for a jab against the neck, Egil curled his lips into a smile and ducked out of the way. Forcing her to go for this jab was his plan all along!

From below, a devastating uppercut came rushing towards Alice's head as she aimed for a palm block once more.

Stopping his punch, Egil grabbed her arm. Twisting his body, he threw her over his head, aiming to slam her against the ground.

Unable to correct her posture without dislocating her shoulder, Alice gritted her teeth and tried to twist her arm. However, Egil's grip was secure and immovable.

*BANG!!!

Slamming against the ground, Alice felt the air being forced out of her lungs as she waved her hand in defeat.

"Urg... You got me." She groaned.

She thought she was doing pretty well and victory was in sight. But at the end, Egil was about to turn the tide and win.

"I noticed that you lock yourself into a single style if you're not given enough time to react. I'm pretty sure others will notice too if you prolong your hand to hand combat. In that kind of situation, all they need to do is to bait out a parry from you and they'll be able to catch you off guard.

"Of course, there are things you can do but in a pure hand to hand combat situation, you don't have enough experience." Egil explained while helping her up.

"Where did you even learn your style from? There's a lot that's mixed together." He asked curiously.

"Observation. I just look at how people fight and see which movements feel alright. I got a few more in my brain but they don't suit me. I'm a caster after all." Alice shrugged.

"I've never seen a caster this proficient in hand to hand aside from you and Selen." Egil chuckled.

Most casters would keep range and would constantly fire skills. For opponents like this, all Egil needed to do was to rush towards them and break their guard.

But for Alice and Selen, these two have devastating hand to hand combat on top of ranged skills.

Especially Alice.

If skills were allowed and he was an enemy, during that last moment, there's no doubt she would've broken her arm just for a point blank Void Flux.

She had her regeneration backing her up after all, making it hard to properly capitalize on the mistakes that she makes.

Which is why these spars are all the more important.

To thoroughly reinforce her foundations so that bad habits won't cause any rudimentary mistakes that could cost Alice her life.

Most people would have this sorted out early but it was different for Alice.

While Alice and Egil were discussing how they could hammer out her bad habits and reinforce her foundation, Selen was practicing her new skill.

She wanted to see if she could use it to influence others aside from herself.

Example being if someone was fighting Egil and Alice, she wanted to see if her skill could be set on people other than herself.

If she could do that, she'll bring far more benefit to the battle than being half focused on attack.

Chapter 480 - 480: Capital Of Verona

Thankfully, there weren't any more incidents after the first day. No more slamming into carriages and breaking them.

During the break, Alice and Egil would spar with hand to hand combat, fixing Alice's bad habits while Selen practised her new skill.

At night, they'll eat the food prepared by the caravan and go to sleep.

As for what happened during the day, Alice was like a hyperactive monkey jumping all over the place. From sitting on the roof to dangling herself off the edge and so on. With their seats being rather uncomfortable, neither Selen nor Egil could catch some sleep to pass the time.

Just like this, a week passed uneventfully. Even the rare instances of beasts approaching the caravan would be dealt with swiftly and no abnormalities occurred much to Alice's slight disappointment.

With the capital of the north just around the corner, Alice sat on the roof and waited eagerly.

She wanted to see what kind of city the northern nation would have as its capital and the home of several Abyss Lords.

Alice could still recall the feeling she had when she saw Ayr for the first time.

'I wonder if I'll get a similar vibe from this place.' She chuckled inwardly.

'Don't get your hopes up. Ayr is a city made by a Goddess after all. Unless Queen Verona is someone similar, I doubt it'll have the same 'vibe'.' Alyss shrugged while Cayla nodded in agreement.

However, as they turned the corner, Alice found herself at a loss of words.

A paradise of crystal and light sat between the depths of a frozen canyon. Tall spires of ice stretching high into the dazzling northern sky with an array of lights above. A cascade of gentle lights filtered through the glass spires, coating the city in a mesmerising shimmer of northern beauty.

Frozen waterfalls frozen in motion, sparkling cold mist and rolled from below and in contrast, the warm orange glows of lights within the houses.

A labyrinth of buildings lined up beneath the protection of the castle with bridges connecting two sides of the city together.

Down the middle, a frozen river where children could be seen skating around while adults supervised.

However, this was just a small part of the city.

From the canyon, Alice could see hints of the true scale peaking over the top. A pyramid of buildings and structures leading up to a main structure that stood higher than everything else.

A large white tree with snow white leaves. Pulses of gentle blue energy could be seen dancing through the gaps of the trunk, rising to the top before being transformed into a protective blue film that draped over the capital.

But most importantly, there was something about this city that stuck out to Alice.

The protective film over the capital...

It held traces of divinity!

[It doesn't seem to be a full divinity. But rather, a divinity in the making. An incubation stage if I had to describe it.] Cayla analysed as she was the most familiar with the energy emulated by divinity.

'Is she trying something similar to Velouria?'

Outside of the three natural Gods, Velouria was the only one that was 'manufactured' in a way. She wasn't born a God but rather made into one by the Will.

If there were traces of nascent divinity in the barrier protecting the capital then perhaps Queen Verona was trying to become a Goddess herself.

[Perhaps. Outside of the three main Gods, there are the outer Gods. But aside from them, I haven't seen or heard of anyone else trying or even succeeding in joining the ranks of Divinity.] Cayla frowned as this was outside of the knowledge she had compiled over the years.

[If anything, I'm more concerned about you. You hold traces of Velouria's fallen divinity. If the Queen was to sense this, I'm not sure what she'll do considering the fact that she's trying to become a God.] She warned.

Realizing that an apex Abyss Lord might set their eyes on her because of Velouria's Divinity, Alice couldn't help but swallow her saliva nervously.

As much as she was confident in herself, even she knew that she couldn't match against an apex Abyss Lord. Hell, even a normal Abyss Lord could kill her never mind one that's trying to become a God!

The sensation of being suppressed by Enris's power and divinity was still fresh in Alice's mind. If someone similar to that was to target her here...

'Yeah, I'll be careful this time.' Alice nodded.

As they approached the gates of the city, they went through the process of ID checks and luggage checks to make sure they weren't bringing any prohibited items.

While entering, Alice marvelled at the beauty of the city as her eyes sparkled at the sight of the attire these people were wearing.

The city was by no means warm but at the same time, it wasn't as cold as the outside. Just the right temperature to wear casual attire without worrying about warmth.

But most importantly, big sleeves!

"Selen, how much spare coin do we have? Do you think we can spare some so I can go shopping?" Alice asked as her eyes sparkled with excitement.

"After the carriage, we don't have that kind of leisure money." Selen replied coldly as Alice's eagerness was instantly quenched. Tears formed on the edges of her eyes as she looked like a wounded puppy.

Since the carriage was expensive, most of the reward they got from Torgeir was used to pay for it. The money they had left was reserved for lodgings and food.

"Urg... Do you think they run a gambling arena here? Maybe I can fight and earn some money." Alice asked while feeling regretful. She could see all the different outfits that people were wearing and wanted to buy some immediately.

Alas, she was broke.

"There are arenas, but Northerners take it more as a challenge rather than to gamble money. We pride ourselves with honour so placing money on two warriors is seen as disrespectful." Egil explained as Alice let out a devastated sigh.

"We still have rewards that haven't been given to us yet. If we get a decent amount of Coin, you can have some to buy mead or clothing." Selen sighed, feeling like a babysitter as Alice nodded her head happily.

"Alright, let's get the appointment over and done with then." Alice decided.

The sooner she deals with this appointment, the sooner she could go enjoy herself.

###

An ethereal woman could be seen sitting on a throne. She had long flowing white hair with streaks of a deep blue. The edges of her hair shimmered with a crystalline glow, reflecting the lights around her.

She wore what seems to be a dress made from ice and iridescent blue energy. A pair of cold eyes and white lashes.

Despite her casual appearance at this moment in time, there was a passive aura of authority around her.

Noticing something strange, she glanced up with her crystalline pink eyes and furrowed her brows.

A foreigner has entered her city.

And not just any foreigner.

A foreigner who felt like an amalgamation of energies woven together in an unnatural fashion. A chimeric being showing signs of artificial power.

"Abyss... Void... Human? No... She can't be considered a human." The woman muttered.

Tapping her finger against the armrest, she closed her eyes before opening her mouth.

"Frida." She called out.

Beside her, an elegant woman kneeled. She had long flowing pale blue hair shimmering like the lights filtering through a layer of ice atop a lake. She wore a flowing gown dyed with hues of blue and white. Floral and ice lace patterns could be seen overlaying the edges of her gown as the underside glowed with a gentle blue.

"My queen." She replied, voice gentle and calming.

"Can I trouble you to take a look at the guests that just appeared in the city? One of them feels... unnatural." Verona requested as Frida nodded her head.

"Unnatural? Can I presume her to be an agent of Extalia?" Frida narrowed her gaze.

"Let's not jump to conclusions. Observe and report, that's all you need to do for now." Verona shook her head.

Recently, there's been moments where strange beasts and 'unnatural' energies began to invade her nation. In other words, man made abominations that only know how to follow orders and a blatant disregard to life itself.

But they weren't the only threat. Beasts of blood and fanatics to a new cult have been making themselves known near the borders.

There were too many things to deal with and not enough capable people to help her sort it out. Urigar was retraining himself after the expedition to the Abyss. Unfortunately, he wasn't able to obtain a solution to the pandemic.

Sigurd was busying himself in the forge, hoping to create a new weapon. Though, it's not like he was someone to help outside of making equipment. The fact that he was even staying here and making equipment was already a blessing.

Had it not been for Sigurd, this nation would only have three Abyss Lords including herself.

Frida was the only one she could rely on at this moment.

As for herself, she was still trying to cultivate a divinity that refused to crystalise.

However... Even if she was to succeed, it could bring about more trouble than expected. She wasn't sure how the other three Gods will react to the birth of a new divinity. If things go wrong, it could become a case where they're besieged by an alliance of all three.

Letting out a sigh, she could only hope that wouldn't be the case.