

Abyssal A 571

Chapter 571 - 571: Jejin Port

'Are we there yet?'

'No.'

'Are we there yet?'

'No.'

'Are you sure we aren't there yet?'

'For the love of- NO!- wait...'

'So we're there now?'

'NO!' Alyss felt like she was losing her mind as Alice was bored.

It's only been two days but she's been asking this over and over again without stop. If they could train and experiment, it wouldn't be bad but the boat they were on couldn't exactly handle their experiments.

One wrong move and they'll all go sinking into the sea.

Cursed with relaxing and doing nothing for three days, Alice resorted to playing around with a ball of blood.

Throwing it up, catching it and so on.

Cayla was keeping herself busy with research and updating the old information that she had.

As the Eye of the Abyss, she had to make sure her information was correct after all.

Alyss was using this time to try and figure out the key workings behind her strange vision but was struggling as well since there were no one to test it against.

Of course, Alice asking her if they were there yet didn't help at all.

On the first day, there was a leviathan preparing to attack the ship which got Alice excited. But the crew dissuaded the beast from approaching even before it could attack.

It was only natural since they can't expect passengers to give them a hand. They needed ways to deal with it themselves.

Naturally, this left Alice disappointed and wanting more.

There were no attacks, no hidden plots, no assassinations, no nothing. Simply peaceful as they travelled the sea.

'I bored!' Alice threw a tantrum as Alyss smacked her on the head.

'I know! Stop saying it every second!'

Clutching her head out of pain, Alice pouted and glared at Alyss before sighing.

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"FREE!!!! DOM!!!!!!!" Alice shouted out with her arms in the air.

She didn't care what the others were thinking staring at her. She was simply revelling in the joy of being free from the boring torment that was waiting on a ship.

She breathed in the eastern air with a huge smile on her face.

After three days, she finally arrived at the port in Jejin. Compared to the north and even the slaughter docks, the style of the port was a lot different than what she had seen before.

Not only that, but it seemed like red was a prevalent colour in Jejin considering how most of the buildings were covered in it.

The key detail of the port was that the city was rather... vertical in comparison to the other cities. Tall pagodas reached high into the skies with bridges connecting between the buildings.

Golden lanterns hung from the edges of buildings, banners waving in the wind, the shouts of vendors and people mixing into one, boats with dragon designs drifting through the man made rivers through the city.

Everything was different from what Alice was used to and frankly, she loved the scenery.

Far in the distance, giant mountain peaks hidden by clouds could be seen as tiny ant like silhouettes climbed up the colossal stair case.

Strangely, Alice could even see people sitting on what she could only assume to be weapons and other strange items to... fly?

A couple standing on a large green leaf flying through the city, young men posing on swords and even a woman sitting on a lotus.

Just as how the streets were bustling, the air was also filled with people.

If Alice was to jump, there would be a high chance that she collides with someone.

Regardless, there was one thing that Alice wanted sort out immediately.

Outfits!

There was an array of different outfits and Alice couldn't wait to try them all out!

'Ah~ What kind of outfit do I want? Something sexy? Something cute? Something modest?' Alice giggled with a skip in her steps.

It took her a while but Alice soon found the clothing store and it was already packed with customers.

A few of them were whispering to one another about Alice's hair but Alice ignored it and didn't care.

She was here for the clothes not the approval of random people who judge others by how they look.

"Welcome~ Oh my, we got a cutie to visit us today." A seductive voice echoed out from above as Alice glanced towards the source.

She could see a tall woman smiling at her while smoking a long pipe.

She had long white hair with hints of red near the edges, a pair of fox ears, golden eyes and several white fox tails swaying behind her.

She wore an elegant off shoulder red and brown dress with golden flowers, tassels and red highlights.

However, she didn't wear any shoes and simply had a pair of anklets on her ankles.

Tapping her pipe against the railings, a gust of scented incense drifted down as she appeared behind Alice, touching her hair.

"It's rare I see someone with hair like yours so let the owner serve you today. How may I help the esteemed guest?" She asked with a smile.

Seeing the owner take the initiative to greet the customer, the other staff members focused on their own tasks again.

"I want to find something that suits me. What do you think will match my flare?" Alice asked.

She wanted to see what the owner would pick.

"Quite an interesting question. The go to procedure would be to match contrasts. Dark hair with light clothing, light hair with dark clothing. Naturally single colour themes are also acceptable but you have a split of both. Are you looking for something with colour or do you wish to play into the black and white more?" She asked, lifting Alice's fringe and saw the scar.

Before she could observe further, Alice flicked the owner's hand away and covered her right eye again.

"Preferably something that doesn't bring attention to my scar."

"Of course. An unfortunate situation but not one we can't resolve." Tapping her chin, the owner curved her lips into a smile.

"I have the perfect outfit for you my dear."

Waving her hand, she wrapped Alice in her tails as she transported the two of them out of the place and arrived in a different part of the store.

Just as she was about to say something, her ears jerked up.

"Dear guest... Can I ask that you don't touch my tails inappropriately please?" She asked with a twitching smile.

"Ah!" Alice blinked her eyes and noticed that she was practically bear hugging all of her tails.

She was taken by surprise when the owner wrapped them around her but more so when she felt the fluffiness.

It was a sudden urge that overwhelmed her that she couldn't control.

"Sorry!" Alice apologized as the owner forgave her.

"Now before we begin, allow me to ask dear guests about your budget. After all, I wish to provide you the best service and outfits possible."

"How much do you think I should spend? I'm a woman who likes my outfits. During my stay in the east, I will be changing clothes quite often. Should I spend a lot of money on the outfit you're going to get me or should I buy more to suit my needs of fashion?" Alice replied with a question of her own.

Thinking about it for a moment, the owner smiled.

"I'll let the guest decide once you have seen what I can do."

Snapping her fingers, crimson thread dropped down from above as different cabinets appeared.

Countless assortments of fabrics, accessories and jewels revealed themselves as the owner got to work.

There were several avenues that she could go down to match Alice's appearance and aura.

She could take advantage of the strange spider lily pattern in her eye, the split hair or even her sporadic personality.

With so many options laid out before her, ideas filled the owner's mind.

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In the end, the owner decided to play into the dual nature of Alice's hair as the main focus.

The outfit she crafted was asymmetric. A delicate mix of whites, blacks and purples into one attire. The white came from the right side of her hair, the black from the left and the purple from the faint hues that appeared from certain angles.

The left side of the outfit was fitted with a layer of white fabric to contrast the black hair, wrapping from the shoulders to the waist. Layered on top was a black jacket with a long black sleeve. Silver embroidery in the form of spider lilies decorated the edges of the sleeve and would shimmer with purple at the right angle.

Beneath the white fabric was an off shoulder black dress that wrapped to the right.

Rather than a sleeve, the right arm had black gloves that reached the bicep with silver accessories on the wrist.

The jacket transitioned into a high slit skirt that flowed with a mix of both white and black fabric. Black belts with silver ornaments wrapped around Alice's waist with purple string hanging off them with silver coins and tassels.

Beneath the high slit skirt, Alice wore another black skirt to keep things a little modest and a pair of black stockings.

To pair with the asymmetrical sleeves, Alice's shoes were of different length. The left, to contrast the long sleeves only reached halfway to her knees while the right, to contrast the glove, reached past her knees.

Giving herself a twirl in front of the mirror, Alice couldn't help but curve her lips up into a smile.

She absolutely loved it and understood that the owner put a lot of work.

"Give me 20 more designs. I trust that each of them will be of the same quality as this one right?" Alice grinned.

This was why she worked so hard for Platina at the port.

All for this moment!

Chapter 572 - 572: Incident In Jejin

Leaving the store with several new outfits for herself to use and some accessories, there was a wide smile on Alice's face that she couldn't suppress.

She tied a portion of her hair into a high ponytail held up by a silver needle while the rest of her hair draped on her back.

Naturally, she moved a portion of her bangs over her right eye.

In total, the outfits costed her 40 Platina, which was 2 Platina per set. Very expensive when considering the other outfits she bought before but the quality of the material and the designs were satisfactory so Alice wasn't bothered.

Plus, money could always be earned again, she just needed to look for a poor- no, rich fella to rob again.

Making her way down the street, Alice held in her hands a skewer of candied fruits that she had bought on her way out.

'I can't believe you already spent almost half of our money in one store.' Alyss's smile twitched. She knew her twin's spending habits on clothing was a little absurd but even this was getting out of hand.

'What do you mean? This is for our time in the east ya know? It's not like I'll be buying more.' Alice smiled while eating the candied fruits.

'Bullsh*t. You'll see another store in the next city over and buy more outfits again.' Alyss retorted.

Alice wanted to defend herself but with a mouthful of candied fruits, she couldn't say anything.

[Alyss's isn't wrong though. In terms clothing, you've spent well over 100 Platina on it since we started this journey. That kind of money can last people a lifetime.] Cayla interrupted, leaving Alice speechless and feeling wronged.

'Why are you two ganging up and bullying me now?! You can't expect me to say no to some nice outfits can you? We're going to a new nation after all.' Alice pouted.

'We can!' Alyss rolled her eyes.

Retreating back to reality to avoid the bullying, Alice let out a sigh and ate another piece of her candied fruit.

With her being new to this city, there were so many things she wanted to check out, so many things that she wanted to learn.

One of the highest on her list of priorities is to see this 'Martial Art'. The demonstration in Caethis left her disappointed and Alice could only hope that it was a one time thing.

Chewing her stick, Alice did a quick tour around the city.

Despite its verticality, most of the stores and businesses were on the ground floor. The higher up you go, the fewer stores there were.

And even if there were stores, it was mostly private stores that required prior arrangements and so on. Instead, the taller buildings were used as residential areas.

Standing in the centre of the busy market place, Alice her eye practically glued to the flying objects that people were standing on.

Once she focused on the strands of energy around them, Alice started to realise that there was a network of invisible paths that they follow.

Just like how carriages have routes, these flying objects also have roads that they have to follow.

The objects were similar to hooks that latch onto the strands of energy that was in their world. As they hook onto the strands of energy, they begin to glide across that 'layer' allowing them to fly.

If they wish to increase or decrease the height, they simply need to increase the intensity of the hook or loosen its grip on the strands.

The rest is reliant on their own balance.

"Hmm... Doesn't seem too difficult." Alice muttered.

"Young miss, you must've come from overseas if you think riding one of these is easy." An old man laughed, overhearing Alice's murmurings.

"I am from overseas. But it doesn't seem that hard, just keep your balance and make sure your energy is correctly hooked against the strands." Alice shrugged.

Her eye was still focused on the flying swords, trying to figure out their secret.

"Hahaha, everyone from overseas says the same thing but few have proven their words. Would you like to give it a try? A friend of mine has a store open for kids to experience how it feels to ride a flying sword. Since it should be your first time, it would be a good chance for you to prove yourself right?" The old man grinned.

Giving him a glance, Alice finished her candied fruit and nodded her head.

"Alright old timer, show me where to find this store."

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"Name."

"Alice Agnelia."

"Age."

"20."

"Can you explain to me what happened?"

"It was an accident sir."

"You caused 4 injuries, 6 counts of property damage, destroyed a ship and 1 count of terrorist action. How do you defend yourself?" The enforcer asked as he spread out the documents in front of Alice.

Sitting opposite the table, Alice coughed awkwardly.

Truly she didn't think it would end up like this.

A few moments earlier...

"Do you understand the instructions Young Miss?" The vendor asked as Alice nodded her head.

Standing on the sword, it wasn't that hard to maintain her balance.

Plus, it was made easier since all she needed to do was connect herself to the sword by wrapping her feet with energy.

"Now raise yourself slightly." He instructed.

All Alice needed to do was to funnel a bit of her power into the sword...

*BANG!!!

"Eh?"

Seeing the violet flames burst out from the sword, both Alice and the vendor stared at the flaming blade with a growing worry in their hearts.

"Erm... Is this normal bosSSSS!!!!"

Mid sentence, the sword suddenly shot forward, dragging Alice away. Alice didn't know why but the blade was now sucking in energy at an alarming rate!

"Get out of the wayyy!!!" She cried out, trying her best to control the sword but it wasn't listening to her commands!

"Huh? What's going ARGGG!!!"

An unsuspecting young man turned the corner and had the guard of the blade slam into his face, sending him crashing towards the ground.

"I'm sorry!"

*CRASH!!!

Crashing into a building, Alice came face to face with a family of four eating their food before blasting through their living room and into the next building over.

She tried to remove herself from the blade but the connection was too secure! She couldn't move her feet!

"This is the police! Pull over now!!!" A furious roar could be heard from behind as Alice wanted to cry.

'I also want to pull over!'

All of a sudden, the blade tilted back as it sent her crashing through the floors of a building before exiting out the roof.

Once it flew past the highest point of the city, it then dropped down and dragged Alice with it.

The police tried to set up a net to catch Alice but this was a flying sword enhanced by her violet flames!

Upon contact, the flames immediately burned away the net and rushed towards the port.

Seeing the bowsprit about to pierce her chest, Alice's smile twitched and pulled her arm back.

Even though she can regenerate, she'd rather not be torn in half!

Void Flux! Blasting a hole through the ship, Alice flew through it with the sword as she could finally feel the connection between her and the sword wavering.

Quickly detaching herself from the sword, Alice kicked it away before realising it was probably a bad choice.

Just as she opened a portal to send the blade away, the instability caused the energy within the blade to turn volatile and blew up!

*BANG!!!

Present time.

"Do you have any idea on why the sword would suddenly malfunction? We recovered some remains of the sword used for the bombing and it's clear that it's energy overload. Even if it's an old model used to let children play, even an adult would struggle with overloading the sword." The enforcer asked as Alice shook her head.

"I don't know, you can ask the boss. I just stood on the sword, linked myself to it and then it set on fire. I couldn't remove my feet from it at the time." Alice explained. It was truly an accident that she had no control over.

She didn't think it would turn out like this.

Scratching his head, the enforcer sighed as he stood up.

He called someone in to watch over Alice while he asks his higher ups what to do with her.

'Wanna break out?' Alyss asked.

'Won't that just make things worse???' Alice's smile twitched.

'Unless you want them to imprison you, I don't think there's a different choice. It's not my fault that you got yourself arrested before a day has even passed.'

Unable to retort, Alice let out a sigh.

She didn't want to fight against law enforcement if possible since that'll make the rest of her journey annoying.

'What do you suggest other than fighting them?' Alice asked.

Originally, she wanted to hide her identity but the damn officer brought in a lie detector. If there was hesitation and falsehood on her end, it would clearly let them know. It's also why they were deciding on what to do with her.

It being an accident didn't come up as a lie.

[Maybe you could try brainwashing them?] Cayla threw out a random suggestion but Alice shook her head.

After all, even if they brainwash them, it won't erase the damaged buildings.

Just as she was thinking about what to do, the enforcer entered once more with a strange orb in his hand.

He had a complicated expression and set it against the table.

"Hallo hallo~ Can you hear me? Is my voice clear? Is my beauty on display? Perfect. So you're the girl who overloaded my flying sword."

Chapter 573 - 573: Bai Suyin

"Hallo hallo~ Can you hear me? Is my voice clear? Is my beauty on display? Perfect. So you're the girl who overloaded my flying sword."

Above the orb, an image of a girl could be seen close up. She had a pair of blue eyes and brown hair tied into a ponytail. She wore a blue and white flowing dress with red tassels and jade accessories. Long sleeves and a pair of boots that reached her thighs.

"Tell me, how did you do that? No matter the design of the sword, I made sure that it can't go out of control like this from the first iteration. So what did you do?" She asked with excitement as Alice was reminded of Caera and Elara.

Both of them exhibited the same level of excitement when talking about their research and Alice was beginning to think that this might be a common trait shared by people of similar natures.

"I dunno. I just stood on it and it combusted before going out of control." Alice shrugged.

If she knew what truly happened then she wouldn't be in this kind of mess to begin with. Though she had two theories on what might've happened.

One, her violet flames caused the instability considering its nature of cancelling out Abyssal energy.

Two, because of how the sword interacts with the body, the four energies in her body caused the sword to go out of control.

"Hou~ I see... I see I see... can you give her a talisman?" The young lady turned to the Enforcer as he nodded his head and placed a jade accessory with golden thread twisted into a dragon shape around the object.

"For normal residents, this Talisman works as a beast deterrent. It prevents beasts from approaching by absorbing a bit of your energy and uses it to mimic the aura of stronger beasts. It only really works on the lesser intelligent beasts though. However, it's perfect for civilians. It uses the same basic principles as the sword so I want you to hold it." She explained as Alice raised an eyebrow.

"Sure, I don't see why not. But if it blows up don't blame me okay?"

"Of course, you have my word." The young lady nodded with a reassuring smile.

Since she was taking the blame, Alice shrugged her shoulders and grabbed the jade.

"!!!"

Widening her eye, she felt the threat of death and immediately threw the jade off to the side.

*BANG!!!!!!

All of the officers in the room were blown back as Alice managed to protect herself with blood.

To her right, there was now a gaping hole in the reinforced room.

The Enforcer that handed her the jade couldn't help but swallow his saliva nervously.

"Aiya~ I didn't think a beast deterrent could end up like this. You are truly the mystery aren't you? What are her crimes again?"

"Four injuries, six property damage, destruction of a trade ship and one bombing against a government building. Well... two if you include this one just now." The Enforcer replied as the young lady tapped her chin.

"How do you feel about finding out why my inventions keep blowing up with you touching them?" The lady turned to Alice.

"If you're asking if I want to find out or not, then yes, I want to find out. But I've only just came to Jejin today, I want some time to explore the place." Alice rested her chin on her palm.

"I'm sure you do considering you're a traveller from abroad. But how do you plan on exploring this place when everyone uses my inventions?" The young lady asked.

"Don't carriages exists?" Alice's smile twitched.

If everyone was using this woman's inventions then wouldn't she be a walking bomb???

"They do. But they've also been improved by my hands." The young lady nodded her head.

The two were at a stare off momentarily before Alice raised her hands in defeat.

"Fine, what do you want."

If it was truly as she said then there's nothing Alice could do without the worry of just randomly blowing up herself and the people around her.

"Fufu~ that's what I like to hear. Come and visit me in Fusha, it's the third region. I'm currently occupied so I can't travel around a lot." The girl clapped her hands with a smile, happy that Alice was cooperative.

"Name?"

"I'm glad you asked. I am the genius, the beauty, the peerless inventor, the forever 17 Bai Suyin! You can just call me Suyin." She struck a pose while Alice stared at her blankly.

"Alright then. I'm guessing while I'm on my way to the third region, I shouldn't touch any of your inventions at all then?" Alice asked as Suyin nodded her head.

"Yep. I got quite a few so from the top of my head, there's flying swords, talismans, armour, weapons, formation flags, public transport, toilets-"

"Hang on a f*cking minute. The f*ck do you mean toilets." Alice interrupted.

"I made energy efficient toilets. What's weird about that? Anyways, there's also cutlery, fly swatters, automatic doors, chairs..."

Listening to Suyin list of everything that she's invented, Alice felt as though she couldn't touch anything.

Anything she touches might as well just become a bomb.

"Alright! I got it! I'll try not to touch anything!" Alice stopped her as Suyin blinked her eyes.

"If you say so. Anyways when you arrive, just tell the guards your name. I've already let them know that if a Alice Agnelia comes to find me, they should let you through." Suyin gave her a thumbs up before ending the call.

Looking at the orb on the table, Alice wanted to hand it back to the guards that were standing far away but seeing Alice reach out, they immediately rushed to grab it.

"Please, don't touch anything miss Bai created." The Enforcer's smile twitched as Alice let out a sigh and nodded her head.

Thankfully, the chair she was sitting on wasn't made by Suyin otherwise she would've blown up the moment she took a seat.

'Seems like we got a journey planned for us already.' Alyss folded her arms.

'Seems so. I don't want to rush things either though. I want to actually enjoy what this place has to offer.' Alice lamented.

[I don't believe Suyin gave you a timeframe of which you needed to arrive. If anything, if she's worried that whatever you touch would blow things up, she should be sending someone to come pick you up.

[After all, she seems to be a prominent figure that has her inventions spread throughout the entire nation.] Cayla shrugged.

Pausing momentarily, Alice blinked her eyes before nodding her head.

'Sh*t you're not wrong. Alright, let's go enjoy yourselves then. There's plenty of food I want to try from the restaurants too. I don't know how it tastes but the smell is certainly alluring.' Alice grinned as she left the station.

The scent of barbeque and spices drifted through the air as Alice could already feel her stomach rumbling from hunger.

Finding a restaurant with the best smelling food, Alice took a seat and looked at the menu.

Most of the items available were all spicy with a few exceptions being non spicy.

Naturally, as the lover of all things spicy, Alyss took over and began to place order after order.

If Alice was allowed to spend her money buying clothes, she was allowed to spend her money getting spicy food.

One by one, the waiters began to place the dishes on her table.

Despite being just one person, with how many dishes she ordered, they had to reallocate her to a table for 10 instead.

From dumplings to roast meat, the table had practically the entire menu laid out on top of it as Alyss rubbed her hands eagerly.

She could hear the whispers from people seeing this, wondering if she truly meant to eat it all but she didn't care.

All she wanted to do was satiate this hunger.

The first dish she reached out for was a whole roast duck. As she took a large bite, the crispy skin broke apart, revealing the tender juicy duck meat beneath.

Immediately, Alyss's eyes lit up as she began to devour the meals like a barbarian.

Seeing her way of eating, the other customers were shocked. They expected a well dressed pretty lady like her to be eating in a refined manner, even if it's a large amount of food. Yet the way she was eating was practically barbaric!

Looks of disdain was shot her way as the customers tried to focus on their own meals.

"Waiter! Can you tell the chef to put more spice please!" Alyss shouted out as some of the dishes weren't spicy enough for her.

The clanging of plates and waiters rushing back and forth from her table and the kitchen left some of the customers dissatisfied but they couldn't say anything.

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Alyss's dinner lasted 2 whole hours. During that two hours, the waiters and chef didn't stop even once as she continued to try more dishes from the menu. With how spicy she wanted things, they were practically throwing entire portions of chillies just for a tiny portion of food.

It was more spice than meat!

Regardless, Alyss was satisfied.

With both the food and clothing now experienced, there was only one thing left that Alice wanted to try out.

The most important matter that she saved till last.

Alcohol!

She wanted to try the eastern alcohol out and see how it compares to the other places she's been too.

Alice doubted it'll be as good as Tristan's mixtures but he was an anomaly. She couldn't use his standards elsewhere.

Regardless, she was still looking forward to eastern alcohol.

Chapter 574 - 574: Alcohol Thief

Feeling excited about the eastern alcohol, Alice asked around for the best bar in the city that didn't require her to book a time.

The answers were varied but every so often, people would say the same name.

Jade Lounge.

It was a bar that was located a little higher than average and allowed a view over the city. Unlike the other stores that are also located high up in the tall buildings, this one wasn't a private store so anyone could walk in.

Everyone who mentioned the Jade Lounge had good things to say about it. Their variety of alcohol, the food that came with it and so on.

However, just saying the drinks were 'good' wasn't enough for Alice. There was no mention of how it tastes or anything like that. She had to try it herself to find out if it was worth the popularity.

Now that she knew what bar she wanted to go to, finding directions was easy.

With the city being more focused on verticality, there were naturally lifts to help traverse the floors.

But Alice decided to walk. After all, if these lifts were also made by Suyin, she'll be bombing the damn building!

"Quick! Stop the thief!!!" A man's voice shouted out as Alice gave it a quick glance.

She could see a middle aged man drinking some alcohol while running from several people who were finding it hard to catch up.

He wore a set of old tattered clothing, clearly patched together using fabric from other clothes. Aside from the old clothing, he wore a set of loose fitting pants and wooden sandals. His hair was medium length and dishevelled with a face full of uneven stubbles.

"He stole our prized alcohol!!!"

"Stop criminal scum! You have violated the law!" Alice shouted out as she blocked the man from continuing further.

She didn't care if he was simply running away with stolen goods. But to not pay money for alcohol? The blood sweat and tears of those who brewed it? Blasphemy!

"Ahh? Who the f*ck are you?" The middle aged man raised an eyebrow with a frown.

"Doesn't matter, what matters is that you tried to skimp out on alcohol money."

Snapping her fingers, blood tendrils jumped out from the ground as it tried to grab the man.

But before his limbs could be caught, he twisted his body and weaved out of it.

"!!!"

Bridging the gap between him and Alice, the man reached up for an uppercut.

His movements were strange, uneven and disorganized as Alice leaned back to dodge.

But the uppercut was a feint.

Alice could feel his leg hooking against her ankle as he tried to sweep her off her feet.

Quickly stepping back, Alice went in for a throat jab but the man only grinned.

*BANG!!!

Widening her eye, Alice didn't even know what had happened as she felt a hand strike her ribs. Furrowing her brows, Alice stomped down and created a blood pool.

Seeing that she was using Sigil powers, the man took a drink of his alcohol and spat it out.

*BOOM!!!

Flames erupted from the alcohol, burning away her blood and turning it into fumes.

"Foolish choice!"

Activating her first Sigil, Alice dragged him into a hallucination.

"Are you sure about that?" He laughed, taking another drink before tossing the alcohol in the air.

Flickering in front of Alice, he jabbed her twice on the chest before she could react.

'Twinnie let me!'

Quickly taking over, Alyss parried the next two jabs before entering a counter of her own. She slammed her shoulder into his torso, pushing him away then followed up with a triple kick combo.

Back of the knee, side of the head and a heel kick down from above.

The first two hit by the third he grabbed and flipped her over his head.

"Did a ghost take over? Your flow completely changed." The man asked, catching the drink. At this point, the men chasing him were about to catch up.

"I don't have all the time in the world so let's finish this quick alright?" He smirked before going serious.

Stomping down with his sandals, an invisible zone expanded in an instant as Alyss widened her eye.

A flurry of kicks, palm strikes and punches burst out in an instant with Alyss barely being able to parry half of them and forced to dodge the others in strange manners that broke apart her balance.

Kicking out with his foot, the man prevented Alyss from regaining her balance before slamming a one inch punch against the stomach, sending her crashing into the nearby wall.

"Not bad kiddo, but try again next time." He laughed, turning around and prepared to jump away.

However, a portal appeared beneath his feet. A hand grabbed his ankle, slamming him down against the pavement.

"Where do you think you're going, the fight isn't over yet." Alyss glared, getting Alice's help momentarily to stop the man from leaving.

"Tsk tsK tsK, youngin's these days can't take a loss at all. Fine, let this unc teach you a lesson." The old man massaged his shoulder.

Alyss knew the man in front of her was strong. She couldn't let her guard down and more importantly, she refused to lose in close quarters combat!

The instant the man took a step forward, he disappeared!

Alyss's instincts screamed at her to dodge as she stepped to the side, narrowly avoiding his heel strike. But he wasn't phased by her dodge.

"All instinct no refinement. You should go back to your martial school and study well." His voice rang out as Alyss turned around to catch him.

Unfortunately, the man jabbed her twice to make her lose balance before punching down with his fist.

*BANG!!!

Slamming against the pavement and cracking it apart, Alyss felt the wind knocked out of her lungs.

Giving her a lazy wave, the old man took a drink before running away again.

He could tell that she never had anyone teach her how to fight. All her moves were based solely on instinct and experience.

'What a shame.' He thought to himself. If she got the training she needed, then he might've had a little trouble.

At that moment, he felt a surging killing intent behind him as though a beast had just broken free.

An overwhelming sense of flight told him to run.

There was no instinct to fight at all!

Quickly turning around, he could see Alyss picking herself off the ground while glaring at him.

The killing intent soon faded away as she took a deep breath to calm her mind.

One more exchange, that was all she wanted. To figure out exactly what she was lacking in close quarters combat. Thus far, she has only beaten those who are weaker than her. Yet when the going gets tough, she kept failing to keep up.

She hated it.

As twins, they delegate tasks that they are weak at to the other.

Alice handles range and casting. While she can fight close quarters combat, she finds casting much easier.

The opposite was for Alyss.

But at the rate of Alice's growth, soon Alyss wouldn't even get a chance to intervene.

She could already sense that her twin was reaching her level when it came to fighting close quarters combat.

She had to rise in the face of adversity!

"Fight me like you mean it!" Rushing forward, Alyss wide right hook as the man caught it.

Quickly reversing the situation and grabbing his wrist instead, Alyss ducked into his range and tried to throw him over her shoulder but he felt like a mountain on her back!

"Tch!"

Going for an elbow, her attack was caught easily as the man pushed her forward and attacked with a double kick.

Guarding her torso, Alyss blocked before ducking down to avoid his next hit. She tried to jab him in the chest during this but he caught it once more and directed it off to the side then slammed a palm into her stomach.

Sliding back, Alyss was ready to charge forward but he was already gone.

"I'll fight you properly if we meet again. But unc wants his drinks today and got no time to play~"

A vein bulged on her neck as Alyss could feel annoyance rising in her chest.

He disappeared just like that. No clue on where to find him or anything.

Ignoring the guards that were asking if she was alright, Alyss walked away in annoyance.

'I know what I want to do here now.' Alyss suddenly spoke up as both Alice and Cayla glanced over.

'This place teaches close quarters combat right? Ria mentioned that they were the best in the past. Do you think we have time to check out the different schools that they have?' Alyss asked as her plan was simple.

They didn't have the time or leisure to properly learn everything. Instead, she'll fight.

She fight, fight and keep fighting to rack up the experience.

She'll observe what makes their fighting effective, the weaknesses and what she can take for herself.

Alyss will hammer the knowledge into her mind so that it becomes second nature to her.

'Of course, we should have plenty of time to check out the martial arts of the east.' Alice nodded with a smile.

Since her twin wanted to learn, who was she to say no? Plus, Alyss had been putting up with her shenanigans all this time. So it was only right for Alice to let her indulge in her own desires.

Plus, she too was interested in this martial arts herself. She wanted to see if she could improve her current fighting style of quick jabs, parries and kicks.

Looking up at the mountain in the distance with countless people walking up the steps, Alice could see occasional bursts of energy on the mountain peak.

No doubt a fight. If they wanted to spar with people, that mountain might be a good start.

Chapter 575 - 575: Intruder

From her estimations, Alice guessed that there was an 80% chance that the top of the mountain contained fighters who were sparring at this moment.

However, she had no information about the place, its formalities or whether or not they'll accept a spar with an outsider to begin with.

Therefore, the first step was to gather information!

'Let's see... we need to go look for Suyin so that we don't blow everything up that we touch. She mentioned that she was located in the region closest to the south so there's a bit of distance for us to cover.' Alice mused to herself.

Since the distance was long, it gives them more time to spar with people that she came across.

Making her way towards the base of the mountain, she was beginning to see more and more people with weapons strapped onto their back or waist.

If the previous area could be called the residential area and the markets, this was now the place for fighters.

'They're... not that strong are they?' Alice frowned. She was trying to find a strong fighter within the crowd but she couldn't see anyone that stood out to her. If she has to estimate, they were only about 3 Sigils in strength maybe less. She hadn't seen anyone with four Sigils yet.

'The homeless looking old man earlier didn't use Sigil powers a lot either. Only maybe like 2 Sigils at most.' Alyss spoke up as Alice nodded in agreement.

What the homeless looking old man used was mostly physical attacks with hints of Sigil powers at certain moments. In terms of what she expected for Martial Arts, what he demonstrated was probably the closest to their expectations.

Regardless, Alice wasn't going to get information just by speculating. Walking around the base of the mountain, she looked for someone that seemed knowledgeable and focused.

'Found one.'

Her target was a bald man with a scar over his eye. He had a sword on his back and a martial attire consisting of a sleeveless shirt and baggy pants. An outfit that allowed for maximum body movement.

"Hi~ Excuse me~"

"F*ck off." The man snapped back at her before focusing on the steps.

". . ."

'I wanna punch him.' Alice suppressed the annoyance in her chest and looked for someone else.

Unfortunately, she was turned away by everyone she tried to talk to.

'What the hell is going on??? Do the people in Sikha have a habit of not talking???' Alice fumed while sitting by the side, watching the fighters stand in silence before making their way up the steps.

[You know, I could've gathered informa-]

'If I didn't seal you. Yes Cayla, I'm aware.' Alice pouted.

[I'm glad you know.] Cayla smiled.

Even after all this time, she was still holding a slight grudge over the fact that Alice had sealed her without prior warning.

She knew what Alice was going for but she should at least let Cayla know so that she could make certain preparations. But now, she couldn't do anything other than work with what she already knows and try help Alice balance her body at times.

Not wanting to give up, Alice made her way to the second floor of a restaurant nearby and sat by the window.

She wanted to observe the fighters and what they were doing.

For two whole hours, she sat there watching but still couldn't figure out what was going on. They all stood in silence in front of the steps before going up. There was no fluctuations or anything.

"Guest, are you perhaps interested in what they're doing? You've been observing them for two hours now." A young waiter asked with a smile.

Glancing at him, Alice nodded her head.

"I tried to ask them but they all told me to leave." Alice smiled helplessly with a shrug.

Even though she was dressed like them now, she was still clueless about the local customs.

"That's only to be expectedahaha. They're trying to focus on passing the exam before they're allowed to go up." The waiter laughed as Alice tilted her head.

"Exam?"

"Indeed. Every sect requires you to pass an exam before going up the mountain. It's given through jade talismans that you can buy-"

"Okay you know what, that's all I need to know. Thank you." Alice smiled, placing down her money before leaving.

Since everything was involved with Suyin's inventions, she couldn't exactly go through the conventional means.

Therefore, she can only scale the steps without passing anything.

Making her way to the steps, Alice scratched her chin before pushing past the people blocking the way.

Immediately, Alice sensed hostility aimed towards her but she couldn't quite make out the direction.

'Do you think it's a defensive trap? To stop people from brute forcing their way up?' Alice asked curiously as Alyss simply shrugged.

Plus, even if they knew, it's not like they'll change their approach.

As Alice took another step, a flaming arrow manifested nearby and shot towards her.

However, she simply smiled and tilted her head back, dodging the arrow with ease.

'Seems like it is a defensive formation.' Alice smirked.

Taking another step, more arrows began to appear and rushed towards her.

Without hesitation, she snapped her fingers and created a singularity above her palm.

The arrows were drawn in and destroyed without resistance.

Seeing as how the defensive traps are merely arrows, Alice continued to walk up the steps as the fighters from below watched in confusion before realising that she must be an intruder trying to brute force her way into the sect!

Just as some of them were about to move, a thick wave of killing intent washed over them, causing them to hallucinate.

The skies turned blood red as withered hands broke out from the ground. Raven cries echoed out as Alice's shadow seemed to stretch over them, warning them not to make a move.

All of the fighters immediately froze up, unable to take even a single step out of fear.

Glancing back at them with a smirk, Alice turned her attention back at the steps and continued to walk up.

She could feel some sort of energy trying to prevent her approach but she simply surrounded herself with the violet flames.

Right now, Alice was akin to a demon. None of the traps could slow her down and none of the usual methods were working.

She was completely unphased!

In the distance, bells started to ring as Alice could sense several 'powerful' auras approaching the top of the steps.

'They're probably preparing to fight back.' Alyss folded her arms.

'So be it. We're not exactly going through the conventional method after all.' Alice laughed.

'Do you want to take over? You want to learn martial arts after all.' She offered as Alyss nodded her head.

Golden chains manifested across Alyss's body while blood swirled around her.

Alice had also taken this chance to help change Alyss into an outfit that better suited her tastes.

Compared to Alice's outfit, Alyss's was a lot more revealing. A sleeveless black crop top with silver highlights, black gloves reaching her elbows, a high split skirt that reached down to her ankles with a pair of shorts underneath, stockings and a pair of boots.

Her entire outfit screamed physical fighter with Alyss cracking her knuckles. She had a menacing grin on her face as she made her presence known with a burst of aura.

Down below, even though the fighters were afraid, some couldn't help but feel a little overwhelmed and excited seeing Alyss's outfit. Her shoulders, stomach and thighs were exposed for the world to see after all.

"Intruder! State your purpose!" A booming voice roared down from above.

It carried an invisible force that tried to push Alyss back but she shrugged it off without care.

"I came to fight! Bring me your strongest!"

Crouching down, Alyss funnelled strength into her legs before launching herself up the mountain.

Countless traps were triggered in an attempt to drag her down with one even transforming the world around her.

However, Alyss understood it was simply an illusion. It didn't feel like a personal domain and instead, it was more similar to the hallucinations that was caused by her first Sigil.

Pulling her arm back, energy coursed through her body as she laughed and punched down.

***BANG!!! SHATTER!!!**

The illusion was forcefully dispelled as the impact of her punch crashed into the wave of arrows and attacks sent her way.

"I found you." She narrowed her gaze, sensing the powerful figure at the top of the steps.

The shadow beneath her stretched out with blackened limbs reaching up. Using it as a foothold, Alyss launched her body up and arrived at the mountain peak.

She could see a group of people waiting for her arrival, each with their weapons in hand.

"Attack!"

A myriad of abilities were sent her way but Alyss was unphased.

Compared to the homeless old man, this was nothing!

Purple energy crackled across her body as she slammed down with her heel.

*BANG!!!

Breaking through the net of abilities without any issues, she had already determined their rough strength. Most of them were around four Sigils with one having five.

Spreading out her senses, it seemed as though he was the only one worth thinking about as Alyss immediately targeted the five Sigil man.

Slamming her palms down, shadows stretched out as the limbs grabbed the other disciples and threw them away, giving her the chance for a one on one.

Realising that the intruder wanted a one on one battle, the man summoned a halberd and swung towards Alyss with killing intent.

Chapter 576 - 576: Defeating The Sect

Seeing the man summon a halberd, Alyss grinned and created two blood swords and caught his halberd.

Pushing it off to the side, she ducked into his guard and went in for a jab to the chest but he reacted fast.

Intercepting her jab was his pommel followed by a kick against her arms.

Using the halberd as a vaulting pole, the man threw himself towards her with a wide downward cleave.

Parrying the cleave once more, Alyss was about to move when the man kicked the shaft of the halberd, causing it to spin upright as he jumped up and stomped down against the pommel.

*BANG!!!

Quickly stepping out of the way before the halberd could split her in half, there was a wide grin on Alyss's face.

"More!" Flicking both of her blades up, she twisted her body and kicked both towards him before rushing forward with a spear.

Furrowing his brows, the man quickly parried the flying blades and entered a low stance to counter Alyss but her figure disappeared!

Swapping places with one of her blood blades, she slashed down with her sword in an attempt to end this fight!

*CLANG!!!

Raising his halberd behind his back, the man blocked her strike.

Azure energy converged towards his blade, turning into a serpentine dragon. Twisting his body, he spun the halberd and unleashed a devastating horizontal strike!

Excitement welled up in Alyss's heart. She could end this fight through brute force but that was not her goal.

Her goal was to learn, to study, and to break apart the techniques her opponents used. Brute forcing things was the last thing she wanted.

Flipping her body, she dodged the strike before gathering the blood weapons into a halberd.

She had seen enough.

Entering the same stance as the man, she rushed towards him and released a downward cleave.

"!!!"

Widening his eyes, a vein bulged on the man's neck as he intercepted with an upwards cleave.

*CLANG!!!!

As the two weapons collided, Alyss kicked the shaft, turning the blade upright before stomping down, forcing the man to dodge in the same manner that she had earlier.

Grabbing the halberd by the pommel to extend her reach, Alyss swung towards the man who parried and tried to go for a stab.

However, she quickly pulled the halberd back and blocked using the shaft before spinning the weapon to throw his aim off.

'She's copying my moves!' The man understood what was happening.

It was still rough around the edges but the more they clashed, the more she was beginning to understand the logic behind each move. Why he used it at that moment, what he sought to achieve.

At first, she was forced to dodge out of instinct but now she was dodging based on prediction.

"What are you here for-"

"Shut the f*ck up and fight!" Alyss interrupted.

Throwing the halberd at the man to force him to raise his guard, Alyss rushed forward and grabbed it by the pommel, turning the spear throw into a horizontal swing!

Realising this, the man took a step back to get out of range but Alyss was long prepared.

Transitioning the swing into a cleave, she jammed it into the ground and vaulted towards him and cleaved down with a full crescent.

*BANG!!!

Their weapons trembled in a standstill as Alyss narrowed her gaze and kicked them both away.

Palm strike against his right wrist to open his guard followed by an elbow with the same arm against the chest to push him back! Using his knee as a platform, she kicked him against the jaw into a strike against the stomach, sending him rolling across the ground as blood splattered against the floor.

Clutching his chest, the man's expression was pale.

At this moment, it felt as though Alyss was surrounded by a crimson aura, dyeing the world in chaos.

"Are you from the south?" He squeezed through gritted teeth.

Resting her halberd on her shoulders, Alyss shook her head.

Just as she was about to respond, she felt a presence behind her and immediately raised her halberd to block!

*CLANG!!!

It was one of the disciples she had thrown away earlier. He glared at her with a pair of bloodshot eyes and she could see that he was using a similar technique to the man she had just defeated.

However, it was rough around the edges and lacked cohesion. He was simply swinging out of panic and fear.

"Garbage!" Pushing up with the blade, she twisted her body and slammed her heel into his ribs, cracking them in the process.

Seeing that there was no one left to give her a good fight, Alyss grabbed the man's halberd and stabbed it into the ground before snapping it in half.

Feeling the handle of the weapon momentarily, she smirked and glanced at the signboard of the entrance.

Pulling her arm back, she threw the handle and pierced the sign!

Happy with her handy work, Alyss handed over the controls of the body as they made their way down.

There were guards attempting to stop her but one glare using killing intent was enough.

Plus, it wasn't like she killed anyone.

'I'll let you take the next one.' Alyss folded her arms in satisfaction as she needed some time to fully understand the theories behind the man's moves.

Unlike most hunters that they've seen, Alyss noticed that the man's Sigils were mostly based on perception and body movement.

However, he lacked a resonance.

The most likely scenario was two Anti Hunters and two Anti Beast Sigils.

'So generous. But don't you think that word is going to spread? That a psychopath is going around fighting groups like this.' Alice chuckled but Alyss shrugged.

'Blame Suyin for being so popular. If it wasn't for the fact that everything we touch that she made turns into a bomb, we would've gone the standard route.'

'You realise that talking is an option too right? And that we could've just talked to them to figure things out.' Alice chuckled, wrapping herself in a swirl of blood and changing back to her black, purple and white outfit.

'Yeahhh but that'll take too long and I can't be bothered. They might also just turn around and give us some convoluted reason as to why they can't fight us. Might as well just storm the front door and get the strongest to come out. As long as we don't kill, it's fine right?'

'You realise that you broke the ribs of that poor fella who tried to save his master right?'

'. . . Except for him then.' Alyss coughed awkwardly.

Just as Alyss was about to go about her day, she noticed someone following her from behind yet keeping their distance.

'You think they're here for revenge?' Alyss asked, wondering if she should deal with the stalker.

'I don't think so. If they were, I would be sensing hostility. Maybe they're just curious as to why I attacked. . . You know what? Wanna play a prank on them?' Alice curved her lips up into a smile.

'Oh? What kind?'

'Hehehe~'

Leading the stalker to the edge of the city, Alice spent the time buying a few supplies for her travel before arriving at the carriages.

Naturally, she wasn't planning on taking them since they'd explode if she did. Instead, she bought a travel map with the routes to the different regions.

Compared to the north or the Abyss, there were far more mountains in the east. A lot of the routes had to be planned carefully to avoid dangerous paths. There were even signs of recent modification due to bandits taking over certain mountains.

With a map now acquired, Alice left the city with the stalker in tow.

###

I've never seen that kind of tyrannical fighting before. The way she stole the sect master's technique so blatantly and used it against him. The way she stormed into the sect alone, shrugging off the traps and even breaking their sign...

It was simply... Divine!

She's by far the strongest female fighter that I've ever had the pleasure of laying my eyes on. But if she's so strong, how come there was no news about her? Her split hair is the furthest thing from common so that shouldn't be the case.

Unless... She's from overseas?

I wanted to see what else she'd do. From the looks of things, she seemed to be interested in fighting. But... Why is she buying travelling supplies? With the carriages, travelling between cities shouldn't take long at all.

I want to talk to her...

But if I do, I'll probably get my ass kicked like those in the sect.

She seems to be leaving the city now, it'll be harder to tail her since the paths are rather clear. It's hard to find something to hide behind...

Wait! Sh*t where did she go?!

"Hello boy~ I know I look beautiful but stalking someone is the wrong way to way a woman's heart you know?" A whisper rang out next to my ear as I felt as chill down my spine.

I could feel a set of delicate fingers pressing against my throat with a blood blade resting on my windpipe.

I could see her shadow looming over me. The silhouette of her hair dancing against the wind.

However, one wrong move and it meant death!

But... but...

"Your chest is pressing against me..."

###

"Your chest is pressing against me..." The boy whimpered in front of Alice as her smile twitched furiously.

In a situation where a strange woman is pressing a knife against your throat, why is THAT the thing this boy was concerned about?! Plus, it wasn't even like she was hugging him from behind!

Rolling her eyes, Alice removed the blade and flicked him on the head.

"What do you want? I don't believe I have to warn you about the phrase stranger danger right?" Alice asked as she lost interest in the prank already.

The fact that the boy was more concerned about boobs than death threw her for a loop.

Seeing as how he was spared, the boy immediately kneeled down.

"Please take me as your disciple!"

Chapter 577 - 577: Jin Yusheng

"Please take me as your disciple!" The boy shouted out as Alice stared at him blankly.

He was roughly a little shorter than she was and looked to be around his late teens. His attire was better than average with some defensive Sigil powers woven into the fabric. One look and it was clear that he wasn't an average kid. He had long brown hair tied into a low rat tail and a pair of golden eyes.

"Name?"

Hearing this, the boy's eyes sparkled, thinking Alice had accepted him.

"Yusheng! Jin Yusheng." He replied happily as Alice started to make her way back to the port.

"Where are you going Master?" He asked curiously.

"I'm going to see if there's anyone that recognises you so that they can take you home." Alice yawned.

She wasn't interested in taking a disciple or anything like that. It's too much hassle. Plus, she was in the middle of learning herself, she didn't have the qualifications to teach someone.

"Wait! Please Master don't be like that!" Jin cried out running ahead of her and stopping her from going towards the port.

"Look kid, I'm not looking for a disciple. And why me of all people? Wasn't there a group just now that you could've joined?" Alice folded her arms.

"Because you're strong!" He replied without a hint of falsehood.

Hearing this, Alice's smile twitched.

"You brat, so if someone stronger pops up you'll naturally follow them?"

If that was the case, accepting this brat as a disciple was just asking herself to be sabotaged!

"Erm... Maybe!"

". . ." Alice wanted to facepalm.

There's being honest and then there's this.

'Pft, the kid's pretty amusing. He's more concerned with your boobs than almost dying and honest when you ask him crap.' Alyss smirked.

'If you like him so much why don't you take him as your disciple then.' Alice rolled her eyes.

"If you say that, what makes you think I want to take you as my disciple?"

"Hmm... because I'm honest? People prefer it when others are honest do they not?" Jin tilted his head.

Alice couldn't exactly retort. It wasn't wrong but it wasn't entirely correct either. There was a fine balance between lies and truth that you had to mix together in order to keep others happy.

"Even so, I'm simply not looking for a disciple kid. I don't have anything to teach you." Alice sighed, scratching her hair.

She hadn't run into this kind of situation before and wasn't sure how to react. This was the first time someone came up to her with the intent to take her as a teacher.

If she were to just abandon him, she'd feel bad about it but at the same time, she didn't want a student/disciple.

"Then what about taking me as a follower? You're planning on travelling by foot right? I can handle the chores if you let me come along with you." Jin offered.

"What about your parents? Aren't they going to worry about you?"

However, Jin simply shook his head.

"They're dead." He replied without a hint of emotion.

Alice had to admit, his bluntness threw her off a little when paired with his unflinching gaze.

"So you're hoping to follow me and learn so that you can get revenge?"

"Hmm... If the opportunity arises I won't say no to it. But I just want to be able to defend myself if something like that happens again." He smiled while scratching his cheek.

'Don't you think he's got a few screws loose in his head? Not that we can say anything really.' Alyss asked as Alice couldn't help but nod in agreement.

Thinking about it for a moment, Alice opened her mouth.

"How familiar are you with the nation as a whole?"

Jin's eyes lit up as he sat up straight.

"I'm only really familiar with two regions but I can always learn."

"And the traditions?" Alice asked.

"I can always learn them if you wish to know about them."

'At least the kid is willing to learn if you let him follow you.' Alyss nodded her head in approval.

'Honestly, if we accept him it'll be better than when Allura picked us up. We basically didn't do anything for her and only made her lose money.' She followed up as Alice coughed awkwardly.

Unlike the kid, Alice was kind of just following Allura around and doing nothing. Meanwhile, this kid was willing to learn things just so that he could follow Alice.

Since he was being so earnest, Alice couldn't exactly say no.

Plus, she needed a guide in this place anyway. Having him sort that out would certainly make things easier.

"Alright. But you'll be responsible for all the chores while we're on the road. I only have one goal right now and that's to visit Fusha. On the way there, I want to challenge every sect or group like the one I just challenged now. You'll be responsible for pointing out which groups are in which area. Got that?" Alice summarized as Jin nodded his head with a wide smile.

"Leave it to me! Errr... master?"

"Just call me Alice."

It wasn't like she was taking him as a disciple. Right now, he is simply a travel companion.

"So how much do you know about the sects or whatever they're called?" Alice asked.

Thinking about it for a moment, Jin shook his head.

"Not much. But if you give me a day, I can get some information from Jejin Port."

"Not even an hour and you're already wanting to delay my travels by a day? Bold one aren't you?" Alice folded her arms with a smirk.

"I can gather information in the next town over if that's what you want instead." Jin offered.

"Forget it, it's not like I'm in a rush. Find me an Inn with some good alcohol. We'll stay the night while you gather information." Alice waved her hand dismissively as Jin nodded and ran back to Jejin Port with Alice following behind him.

###

Looking at the destruction caused, a tall woman couldn't help but frown.

She wore an sleeveless emerald eastern dress with golden cloud patterns embroidered into the material, a pair of sleeves with the same design and a pair of shoes. Red tassels decorated parts of her outfit as it was common for eastern designs.

The woman had long black hair and a pair of crimson eyes.

"Uncle... I'm sorry, I should've arrived earlier. What happened?" She kneeled down in front of the old man that Alyss fought.

He was currently sitting on a chair with a pale face and a vial of blood next to him.

"An intruder... She was here for a fight. Nothing else." The old man squeezed out with difficulty before drinking the vial to regain some colour.

"She didn't steal or kill. If she wanted a fight, I don't know why she didn't take the proper path." He rested his forehead on his fingers as the woman frowned.

"There's been some signs of movement from the south. Do you think she's part of the Cult?"

"I'm not sure. But that killing intent of hers... Her hands are far from clean." The old man shook his head.

Hearing this, the woman seemed almost convinced of her own theories before standing up.

"Qiu Qiu, leave it be. No one died, there's no reason to keep pursuing this." The old man grabbed his niece's wrist, understanding her nature and what she was planning to do.

"It's fine uncle, I'm just making sure she's not part of the Cult. If she isn't, I won't do anything. But if she is, for the sake of public safety, I cannot let her be. You know what's my responsibility." She smiled as the old man sighed.

"Be careful. There wasn't much I can find out about her fighting style or power. But one thing is clear, she is a genius. One exchange was all she needed to emulate my martial arts. If you're not careful, she might steal your fighting style as well." The old man warned.

Nodding her head, Qiu Qiu began to make her way down the mountain with a slight frown on her face.

Recently, the heretics in the south have been making bolder and bolder moves across the borders. Some even began trading with places overseas and smuggling illegal weapons over.

With this kind of threat looming over their heads, she couldn't allow even the smallest detail to be missed. If there was a chance that this woman was part of the Cult, she'll cut it down before it could fester into an infection!

In her hand, she held a piece of the halberd that Alyss had shattered and thrown into the signboard.

Closing her eyes, she brought out an talisman and muttered a quick incantation.

*Jingle~

The sound of bells ringing could be heard as spectral foxes appeared next to her feet.

"Track her down." Qiu Qiu ordered.

Immediately, the foxes turned into wisps of smoke that rushed towards the Port.

###

Jin's efficiency was far greater than what Alice had expected. In less than half an hour, he had already found the best Inn for locals with the best drinks. It wasn't the kind of bar that was focused on tricking tourists, like the one that Alice was planning on visiting but a reliable place for locals.

Not only that, but the room was rather cheap and had a beautiful garden to match.

There was an open building located in the middle of an artificial lake filled with lotus plans and other greenery that shimmered under the moonlight. Sitting on some stone benches with local wine in her hands, Alice had a content smile on her face.

"It's a wonderful evening with fine wine and scenery to match. So why have you come to interrupt my relaxation with such thick killing intent?" Alice asked, turning her gaze at the intruder standing on the wall.

There was only one thing on Qiu Qiu's mind after seeing Alice.

'She's part of the Cult!'

Chapter 578 - 578: Six Realms Five Desires

There was a very distinctive energy that belonged to the cult. An energy that members of the demon extermination squad were trained to sense.

Around Alice, there was a sense of malevolence that clung to her, refusing to let go.

'Even compared to the captains in the Cult, her aura is much thicker. Is she an elder?' Qiu Qiu thought with a frown as she placed a hand over her blade.

If she is indeed an elder, the only question remains is who and why? She didn't match any of the descriptions of the current elders which means that there was a chance that she could be a new one that hasn't been known yet.

"Are you mute? Don't you think it's a little rude to not answer someone when you barge into their relaxation time?" Alice frowned, feeling a little annoyed.

This woman appeared out of nowhere exuding killing intent and not even saying anything.

Granted, she did the same when storming the sect earlier but at least she announced that she wanted a fight. This woman was just staring at her.

While Alice was wondering what was going on, Qiu Qiu was weighing up the odds in her mind.

But truth be told, there wasn't a choice to begin with. As a member of the demon extermination squad, there's only one path to take.

Exterminate!

Taking a deep breath, a sharp aura burst out of Qiu Qiu's body as she grabbed her sheath.

"Heretic, surrender yourself for a swift and merciful death!"

Crouching down, energy converged around her arms and blade.

Instant Draw – Killing Arc!

The blade escaped the sheath and slashed towards Alice in an instant. Before her instincts could even catch up, the second layer of defences around Alice's body reacted first as she shifted to the side.

Feeling the blade cut into her shoulder, a vein bulged on Alice's neck as anger filled her chest.

Grabbing Qiu Qiu's wrist before she could go further with the slash, Alice kicked her in the stomach, sending her sliding back.

Qiu Qiu's eyes couldn't help but widen in surprise as she didn't expect Alice to be able to react to her instant draw!

"Oi! Whore! I just bought this outfit today! If you're going to hit someone, either make sure it kills or go for the head dipsh*t!" Alice shouted as the pattern in her eye shifted into that of a singularity.

Clenching her fist, the pressure of the Void crashed down onto Qiu Qiu's body as she realised her movements were slowed down.

Before she could even get out of the way, Alice appeared next to her with a dagger.

Since this woman was intent on killing her, Alice wasn't about to let her run free!

*BANG!!!

Resonance!

Activating her resonance, a ghostly flame appeared around Qiu Qiu's body, wrapping her in white bandages with red markings as she forcefully broke out of the Void suppression with a myriad of slashes.

*CLANG!!!

Parrying Alice's dagger, Qiu Qiu was shocked by what she could see.

In Alice's shadow, countless souls howled in pain and regret. They clung onto her, chained and unable to leave. Their mournful gazes...

"You! Just how many have you consumed?!" Qiu Qiu shouted, pushing Alice back before entering an offensive stance.

Her form seemed to shift as Alice noticed it wasn't the full product of a Sigil ability but rather something else. Martial arts!

Movement and attacks that take advantage of certain properties granted by Sigils to enhance the power!

Instant Draw – Soul Chaser!

Alice could sense a zone being expanded as a smile curved up on her face.

Around her, phantom silhouettes appeared, each with its own distinct killing intent and pattern of attack.

"This is much better than that old man!"

Snapping her finger, crimson threads burst out as Alice quickly equipped her gauntlets.

A cage of threads protected her before bursting into violet flames.

Seeing the danger, Qiu Qiu immediately halted her attack as darkness began to spread from her fingertips, dyeing her arm in darkness with crimson veins twisting into floral patterns.

*CLANG!!!

Before Alice could react, she sensed Qiu Qiu attacking the thread behind her and disappearing.

Just as she turned her head, another collision could be heard.

Countless attacks were being thrown out with Alice unable to accurately pinpoint Qiu Qiu's location.

Furrowing her brows, Alice assumed it must be an ability that messed with the optical senses.

Therefore, she had to perceive the space around her instead of using her sight.

Closing her eye, she expanded her own zone before activating her fourth Sigil, increasing her control over the Void!

She could sense ripples in the space. Similar to the ripples in water when a dragon fly taps its legs upon the calm surface, Alice could see countless traces of Qiu Qiu's movement.

One moment. That's all she needed. . .

Void Flux Cleave!

Creating a blood blade in an instant and slashing down without hesitation, a crimson arc tore apart the space as Qiu Qiu hurriedly blocked with her sword onto to be shocked by the raw power behind this one strike!

Despite blocking, space itself was being shredded and if she didn't do something about it, her arms would be gone!

Gritting her teeth, Qiu Qiu quickly adjusted herself from parrying to deflecting the strike off course.

By sacrificing a portion of her arm and shoulder, she forced the strike to miss her arms and body.

Jumping back, she reached for a healing vial while Alice wanted to stop her.

As she took a step forward, Alice sensed a wave of killing intent behind her. Mixed with this killing intent was a sense of death!

If she was to turn around, she understood that something bad would happen. But if she didn't, her back was going to be exposed.

Her mind worked quickly as she soon came up with a solution.

Summoning the Shard to her hand, she expanded it into a protective barrier around herself before coating it in her violet flames!

*CLANG!!!

The shard shifted the trajectory of the strike as Alice could see the strange black blade flying past her head.

Catching the blade, Qiu Qiu allowed it to absorb a portion of her blood as all six Sigils lit up across her body in unison.

Realizing that she was about to attempt a second Resonance to unleash her personal realm, Alice was about to bring out her relic when Alyss stopped her.

'Can you let me handle this one?'

Turning to her twin, Alice was silent for a moment before smiling and nodding her head.

'Go for it. Steal as much as you want.' Alice chuckled, handing over the control of her body.

She knew Alyss's thought process and what she wanted to do.

This woman was a perfect opportunity for them to steal some martial arts!

Golden chains began to manifest on the body as Alyss opened her eye with a confident glint.

Naturally, Qiu Qiu noticed this change as well. The souls in the shadow had faded away somewhat and the unique energy belonging to the cult decreased.

However, she simply summed this up as a trick and nothing more. There was no mistaking what she saw and sensed earlier.

No amount of disguise could conceal that from her!

Six realms five desires – Twin wheel samsara!

As her personal realm expanded, Alyss was expecting the world to change but to her shock, that was not the case.

Instead, the world seemed to shrink and in an instant, Qiu Qiu became this overwhelming figure that loomed over the world with Alyss's senses forcefully dragged out of her body.

As she regained her focus, she could see Qiu Qiu standing in front of her with changes across her body similar to a standard Resonance but far more dangerous.

She had a pair of golden gauntlets on her arms, bandages across her chest, a red tattered skirt, baggy white pants and a pair of golden anklets with no shoes.

Across her body, her Sigils transformed into streaks of red while two golden disks hovered behind her.

The first disk was split into six sections while the second was split into five.

The first was: Hell, Ghost, Animal, Human, Asura and Deva while the second was split into Touch, Taste, Smell, Sounds and Form.

Grabbing her blade, Qiu Qiu sheathed it against her waist as the wheels on her back began to spin.

Hungry Ghost Path + Desire of Taste!

Alyss felt a surge of killing intent around her as a frown appeared on her face.

Spectral beings lashed out as she coated her hands in flames before punching down.

However, before her punch could even collide with the ground, the flames were extinguished!

One of the ghosts around her combust in flames before breaking down and being absorbed into Qiu Qiu's sword.

Twin wheel samsara – Banquet of craving!

Unleashing three slashes that seemed to hover in front of her, Qiu Qiu then unleashed a stabbing move, shooting the attack towards Alyss as she immediately dodged to the side.

But despite dodging, Alyss could feel her energy being siphoned away as a wave of lethargy overwhelmed her senses.

Paired with the lethargy came the sense of weakness and boredom. She couldn't help but wonder why she wanted to steal the martial arts for a moment but quickly snapped out of it as the silver radiance of the blade reflected against her eye.

Instant Draw – Killing Arc!

*CLANG!!!

Punching the side of the blade with her fist, Alyss gritted her teeth and conjured a wave of black limbs to grab onto Qiu Qiu but the limbs were quickly absorbed and destroyed.

A pulse of energy erupted from her body, pushing Alyss back.

Furrowing her brows, Alyss was beginning to realise the difficulty of this fight.

That sensation, that feeling... It was similar to how Allura fought in the past purely based on the power that Qiu Qiu was displaying.

Allura severed concepts with her power, making you lose motivation mid fight.

But her? She seemed to be consuming both energy and emotions!

And that wasn't all, there was still five other paths and four senses that Qiu Qiu hasn't tapped into yet!

Chapter 579 - 579: Stealing The Instant Draw

Taking a deep breath, Alyss focused her mind.

She analysed the powers that Qiu Qiu had demonstrated and came up with the theory.

When the Ghost disk is paired with the sense of taste, it allowed her to absorb and redistribute the energy similar to their fifth Sigil.

The only difference is that Qiu Qiu limits her target to one person and needs her attacks to hit or be in close proximity.

Since that was the case, physical attacks were all Alyss could do while hoping that her energy wasn't siphoned away through touch!

Controlling the shards of Kara, she had Alice merge them together with blood and metal threading through the centre, turning it into a spear!

Twirling the spear in her hand, Alyss lunged forward for a stab.

*CLANG CLANG!!!

An upward swipe followed by a downward slash.

However, Qiu Qiu parried it with her spear and tried to counter with a slash.

Blocking it with the shaft, Alyss stabbed it into the ground and kicked her in the chest.

*BANG!!!

Creating some distance between the two of them, Alyss tossed the spear before kicking it with her foot, shooting it towards Qiu Qiu who was about to dodge to the side.

To her surprise, black limbs reached out from the ground and whipped the spear around like a rope dart! With the attack now coming from behind her, she sheathed her blade.

Instant Draw – Soul Chaser!

Not only did she parry the spear, she also parried Alyss who tried to go in for a sneak attack.

However, this has given Alyss a clue.

A smile curled up on her face.

Jumping back, she recalled the spear and broke it into two halves.

One turned into a spear while the other turned into a blade similar to Qiu Qiu's.

Widening her eyes, Qiu Qiu couldn't believe what she was seeing.

That stance, that aura... It was impossible!

Instant Draw – Killing Arc!

Creating a crater beneath her feet, Alyss accelerated in front of Qiu Qiu with her blade already mid swing!

*BANG!!!!

Catching the blade between her hands, Qiu Qiu gritted her teeth as the sounds of bells rang out.

Around them, spectral phantoms of foxes jumped out in an attempt to attack Alyss.

'The weakness of the Instant Draw style, I know it well. You might be able to copy but you don't know it as well as I do!' Qiu Qiu grinned, thinking she'd won.

However, seeing the confidence in Alyss's expression, a bad feeling rose up in her chest.

The shards around the blade loosened up.

The difference between the two of them was that Alyss's weapon had no fixed form! What was the blade could turn into the sheath!

Instant Draw – Soul Chaser!

Her form flickered momentarily as the foxes were cut apart.

Slash marks manifested across Qiu Qiu's body.

"!!!"

Quickly jumped back, she was about to throw a healing vial into her mouth when the container was cut in half by Alyss.

'She's getting faster!'

Instant Draw – Killing Arc!

Instant Draw – Killing Arc!

Both fighters unleashed the same attack as their blades clashed, creating sparks that whipped against their surroundings and kicked up the water in the lake.

As they locked blades, Qiu Qiu was beginning to recognise just how dangerous Alyss was!

It was only a brief exchange and she didn't even use her martial arts a lot. Yet that brief exposure was enough for Alyss to understand the weakness and strengths of this power.

"Don't leave me disappointed now. Are there only two forms of your martial arts? Seems a little lacking don't you think?" Alyss provoked as she stomped down, expanding her own Zone!

There were three states of Zone as taught to her by the Apostles belonging to Solaris.

Offensive, Passive and Absolute Zone.

When executing the Instant Draw – Soul Chaser, the Offensive zone was absolutely needed. It's a Zone that heavily focuses on the offensive power while leaving the user relatively defenceless should the enemy breach the boundary.

But there was one change that she wanted to make.

During her demonstration, Qiu Qiu never fully expanded a Zone for Killing Arc! From her understanding of the movements and path of the blade, Alyss realised that the Killing Arc demanded the third form of Zone. Absolute Zone!

An area of absolute control to bring out as much power as you can for one strike. An attack that destroys whatever enters your range. Far more powerful than the Offensive Zone but at the same time, demanded more from the user.

It was a Zone that not many could master as evident from Qiu Qiu's incomplete strike.

Releasing a pulse of energy to push Qiu Qiu away, a dark aura seemed to hide Alyss's appearance as the Absolute Zone expanded with Qiu Qiu being in the range.

She could feel the threat of death from all directions as her mind began to panic. An impossible idea appeared.

Did she master the Instant Draw?

A martial art that she's been trained in since she was a child, a martial art that helped her get a spot in the Demon Extermination Squad, her pride and joy, was stolen and mastered?!

"Impossible! I refuse to accept this!" Qiu Qiu shouted as the disks behind her began to shift.

Hell Realm + Sense of Touch!

Demonic markings manifested across Qiu Qiu's body as crimson flames burst out and transformed into a raiment.

Eliminate the feeling of pain, isolate the anger, enhance the defences of the body!

Pushing her defences as high as she could, Qiu Qiu rushed towards Alyss who was standing perfectly still.

Her eye was closed as her mind was focused. She didn't need the sense of sight to observe her surroundings.

In the Absolute Zone, everything is known to her.

Instant Draw – Perfected Killing Arc.

*CRACK!!! SHATTER!!!

"You have my thanks. Hopefully, the others will show martial arts similar to what you have shown me."
Alyss smiled.

Behind her, Qiu Qiu stood frozen in place.

Her blade was broken and there was a ghastly diagonal slash across her chest.

Blood poured out from her mouth as the wheel behind her faded away.

"Im...possible..." She muttered as her vision blurred.

Collapsing on her knees, Qiu Qiu's chest heaved up and down with laboured breaths.

Her mind was focused on Alyss's slash. The demonstration of the Absolute Zone, how the Killing Arc should look like.

The beauty of control, the tyranny of having your fate dictated by someone else.

The eternity that exists between the boundaries of life and death.

When a person is harmed, the mind remembers the experience and adapts. Should you face that experience once more, your mind would've figured out a solution.

But when facing death, what can the mind do?

Feeling the blood drain from her body, Qiu Qiu felt countless memories flood her mind.

It was her brain going through everything she had experienced in her life, every ounce of knowledge she had experienced in a futile attempt to transcend death.

The mind's last desperate attempt to survive.

'Ah... So this is death.'

***BANG!!!**

Feeling a burst of energy behind her followed by an Absolute Zone, Alyss immediately turned around ready to attack but her pupil constricted in shock.

In front of her, Qiu Qiu's broken blade was inches away from her face.

The wheel behind Qiu Qiu appeared once more and this time, it rested on the section of Deva and Form.

Qiu Qiu's gaze was unfocused but there was a smile on her face.

Instant Draw – Transcendent Samsara.

It was a single moment. But in that moment, Qiu Qiu would've won.

Falling over and passing out, there was no more movement from Qiu Qiu as the energy faded away and same with the zone.

Standing there, Alyss furrowed her brows and stared at the woman.

###

"ARG!!!!" Waking up in a panic, Qiu Qiu sat up in a cold sweat.

Flinching from the sense of pain, she glanced down and saw that she was covered in bandages. Most of her wounds have healed thanks to a healing vial but she wasn't fully recovered yet.

On the table next to her were her belongings and the fragments of her shattered blade.

Her memories were a little fuzzy but she could still remember the main exchange between her and Alyss.

There was no doubt that Alyss stole her martial arts and perfected the Killing Arc.

Clenching her fist, Qiu Qiu forced herself to stand up and gather her belongings. She didn't know why Alyss spared her but she had to report this.

Not only that, but she needed to figure out what to do next time in order to properly win.

Just as she was about to leave, an old man blocked her way.

"Payment for the treatment and food." He held out his hand.

Blinking her eyes, Qiu Qiu realised that Alice must've left the bill to her.

Just as she reached into her bag for her wallet, she found a single note.

[This is payment for my dress.]

". . . "£\$^!%"£^\$^\$£^%\$^%!!!!!!"

###

Weighing the wallet on her hand, there was a smug smile on Alice's face as she was currently travelling with Jin.

'I'm pretty surprised that you let her live.' Alice asked as Alyss wasn't the kind to show mercy.

Especially since that girl came at them with the intent to kill.

'She seemed interesting. If I let her be, she'll chase after me and show me more stuff later.' Alyss replied while practicing the new martial arts in the mental space.

Hearing this, Alice smiled as she knew the truth.

Her twin was just a little annoyed that Qiu Qiu got one over her at that last moment. There was no denying that Alyss dropped her guard and if Qiu Qiu's weapon wasn't broken, that attack would've landed.

However, this trip was just as much for herself as it is for Alyss and thus she wouldn't say anything else. She'll simply support her twin's actions from the back.

Chapter 580 - 580: Sects, Clans and Houses

Glancing back at Alice's smile, Jin couldn't help but wonder what had happened.

While he was gathering information last night, he returned to a somewhat destroyed Inn and Alice's sleeves being torn apart.

But she didn't find it necessary to tell him and only had him get a new room for her.

"If you keep glancing back like that, someone might think you're planning something shady." Alice called out since his glances were a little too obvious.

"Ah! Sorry!"

"So did you find out anything interesting last night?" Alice asked while pulling out a flask.

Pulling out a notebook, Jin told her everything he found out.

For the Jejin region, it was split into three tiers of sects.

The major sects consisted of three sovereign sects that essentially controlled the region. Beneath these three were the six houses and six sects. Everything beneath is deemed as lesser.

The sect that Alice had invaded, the Linyu sect was a lesser sect that didn't have much influence.

Rather than a proper sect, it was more accurate to call it a tourist attraction since it was by the port.

As for the other regions, only the Fusha region follow the same layout. The last region, Yatari, the region that Lord Kizan belonged to, didn't accept any sects.

Instead, they focused on two aspects. Clan heritage and demonic strength. The so called demonic strength was... rather unique in that it was somewhat similar to a mix between how beasts gain strength and the human system of Sigils.

The details were largely unknown since the last region kept their secrets closely guarded, even if they were in an alliance with Fusha and Jejin.

Regardless, Alice was only focused on Jejin right now.

Looking at the map, it'll take them quite a while to travel through the entirety of Jejin to reach Fusha.

Ideally, her route should cover both Jejin, Yatari and finally, Fusha. That way, she could explore the entire nation minus the south which was off limits due to the movements of the cult.

[If I recall, a hundred or so years ago, maybe more, there used to be competitions held often in the east. I'm not sure if the tradition is still being kept but back then, it was a way to determine their strength and prestige.] Cayla spoke up as she had some outdated information on the east.

Kaden had travelled east in the past but didn't stay for long.

"Jin." Alice called out.

"Yes?"

"Do you know if the different regions still hold a competition?"

"You mean the Dragon Phoenix Gathering? Yes, it's still being held but it finished about a month ago. If you want to participate, you'll have to wait another year." Jin replied.

"Is there a different competition then? Or is it just that one?" Alice frowned.

She didn't want to wait a year just for a competition especially when she could just attack the sects instead.

"I think there's another one but it's more so for fighting against the south. I'll keep an ear out for information regarding that one if you want."

"Sure. For now, let's just head to the closest sect or house." Alice nodded while taking a drink from her flask.

Having someone else plan the route for her was rather nice since it meant less work for herself.

If Ria was the one leading them... yeah, Alice didn't even need to think about it.

###

"Where the f*ck are we?!?!?!?" Ria shouted out as lightning crashed down around her.

Luke sighed from a boulder as they didn't even have a map to work with since Ria had accidentally fried it during one of the fights.

"This is the fifth time we've past-"

"I KNOW!" Ria stomped her foot.

They've been walking in circles for a while now and even killed every Abyss Beast that was checking out the strange situation.

But after all the ruckus they were causing, it was now strangely silent.

"Has Rosey sent out a bat yet?" Ria sprawled out on the ground.

"Yes, but I don't think you'd want to see what she wrote." Luke pulled out a note.

"I'm sure it's not that bad."

Hearing this, Luke shook his head but didn't deny her the chance to read the note.

Passing over the note to Ria, Luke took shelter behind the boulder and summoned some chess pieces to protect himself.

[Are you lost? Are you? Huehuehue~ Who's my directionally challenged idiot who'll get lost on a straight road? You are~ yes you are~ I suppose your gracious master might feel generous enough to give you a way out~ You know what to say hehehe~.

From your beloved, beautiful, merciful and perfect master, Rosalyn.]

*PUCHI!!!

Ria immediately felt a vein burst on her forehead as lightning crackled across her body.

Dark clouds loomed from above as her chest heaved from rage.

Just as she was about to shout something, the note shifted and new words appeared.

[Huehuehue~ Are you annoyed? Well are you? Hehehe~ this only appears if you start losing your marbles. You wanna smack me don't you? Shame you're too weak to even hurt my toenails~ Tell you what, if you managed to get out in a week, I'll hold back a little next time okay? I know your directionally challenged ass can't even handle 10% of my power so I'll drop down to something more within your... league shall I say?

Let's go with 2% next time if you get out. Bye bye for real now my lightning chihuahua~

From your beloved, NOT directionally challenged, beautiful, merciful and perfect master, Rosalyn.]

"You blood sucking, vampiric piece of sh*t!!!" Ria threw the note on the ground and stomped it over and over.

After staying together for so long, Rosalyn knew exactly what to say to get under her skin. This wasn't even a unique situation. No matter what training expedition they were sent on, she would keep sending notes like this, poking fun at her.

Mid stomp, Ria noticed a third change on the note.

[If you stomped this, the map that was meant to show disappears.]

It was followed by a hand drawn chibi of Rosalyn giving her a smug face and a middle finger.

*CRACK!!!

Something broke within Ria as she involuntarily entered her Resonance state out of pure anger.

As though wanting to complain about the noise, a beast crawled out of the ground and saw Ria covered from head to toe in blue and yellow lightning. A deep malevolent aura was fluctuating around her, making her look as though she was a lightning god ready to unleash her wrath.

Immediately, the beast turned around and wanted to escape but it was too late.

Raikiri!

*RUMBLE BANG!!!!!!

Calamitous lightning converged above and struck down on the area, cleaving in half as the beast was eradicated without even a speck left of its existence.

It was instant, brutal and deadly. One blinding strike to erase everything in a straight line.

Undoing her resonance, Ria took several deep breaths to calm herself as Luke stepped out from behind the crumbling boulder.

"Let's get out within a week." Ria forced a smile as Luke shrugged.

Watching the two leave the area, Rosalyn had a grin on her face as she enjoyed Ria's anger.

"Don't you think you're going a little overboard with teasing them like that?" Allura revealed a helpless smile with her arms folded.

Despite Rosalyn's... methods, it was true that Ria had shown significant improvement since the last time Allura saw her. Granted, it was just one strike but that was enough to impress her.

Raikiri, an instant strike containing concepts from the attack that she taught Gin. It's not an exaggeration to say that Ria took everything that was good about it and transformed it into an attack that suited her own nature.

"My methods are overboard? Have you seen yourself???" Rosalyn rolled her eyes at the spectral image of Allura.

"You left these two milk sucking little sh*ts at my door and said f*ck all. Same with Kaden. If I didn't know that he'd start abusing me if I rejected, do you think I'd still take them under my wing?! You can't blame me for getting some entertainment out of this." She clicked her tongue while kicking her legs back and forth.

"Hey, I never said your methods are overboard. Simply that maybe you should cut down on the teasing. If Gin saw you like this, he'd rush over immediately and get revenge for his darling granddaughterahaha." Allura laughed.

"Let his wrinkly expired ass come. I'm not afraid of him. The only complaint I have is that his blood tastes like expired milk, absolutely vomit inducing." Rosalyn made a throwing up expression before turning serious.

"So? I don't think you contacted me just for an update on how the little sh*ts are doing. What do you want?"

"Can you take a look at the east for me? I've noticed some... traces of outer gods in the war zones where I'm at. It seems like a group in the east has been shipping them out. I can't exactly investigate it myself since I'm a little preoccupied here. And... Well... I don't need to say anything about Kaden right?" Allura revealed a helpless smile.

"Urg, fineee. I'll go check out the east. Can't be that bad now, can it? And can't you make up with Kaden already? Do you know how f*cking annoying it is to act as a middlewoman for you two? Are you

mocking me for being single? Well? Are you?!" Rosalyn tapped her finger against the spectral Allura out of annoyance.

"You know we're not like that."

"Uhuh, sure you're not. If you're not like that I'm also not horny for blood then." Rosalyn rolled her eyes before ending the connection.

Despite her joking around, even she understood how serious the situation was for outer gods to get involved.

"Urg... there's too much garlic and spicy blood in the east." Rosalyn muttered in reluctance before disappearing from her spot.