

Abyssal A 631

Chapter 631 - 631: Abnormal Ritual

'What the hell is going on?!' Alyss shouted, unsure of what was going on around them.

Alice suddenly disappeared from their mental space and she was forced to take over the body.

Tossing and tumbling through the chaotic mish mash of realms colliding, Alyss jumped from debris to debris, making sure she wasn't crushed in between.

[Both the physical and the spiritual are being dragged into the fabricated realm. But because your situation is unique in that there are technically three souls in one, the transfer process isn't a smooth one.] Cayla replied, reading through the details of the ritual and everything she knew.

[If Alice follows everything I say, and hopefully doesn't get baited by the voices and hallucinations, she'll return to her physical body without any issues. You're also here so the chances of 'seeds' being planted is lower than usual.]

'And if she was to get tricked?' Alyss questioned as she activated the second Sigil, creating a blood blade and aimed it at the giant debris flying towards her.

Void Flux – Cleave!

Twisting her body, she activated her Phantom Shift, launching herself at the debris and cutting it in half.

[In the chance that she gets tricked, she'll lose a portion of her soul to whoever activated this ritual. With the scale of things, I can only assume it's a high ranking member or even an Apostle at that.

[And let's just say if she comes back after losing a portion of her soul, this place won't just be the three of us anymore. There will be a fourth, the Call of the Eclipse. The Voice and extension of Enris to some degree.] Cayla frowned.

However, that's only if this was the normal version of the ritual.

Already, she noticed some discrepancies as the energy flowing through the pillars and the land around them was different to what she remembered. In fact, there were even traces of Eldrich energy within this calamitous storm.

'So what you're saying is we're gonna have to get another bed in here?'

[. . .]

Between the two of them, Alyss was never the joker. Feeling Cayla's blank stare, she could feel embarrassment flooding her cheeks as she quickly coughed, not wanting to suffer this feeling any longer.

Shaking her head, Cayla glanced at the realm around them.

They could see the walls of this realm slowly consolidating as an Eclipse hung in the sky.

From the ground, countless blades of varying sizes burst out, acting almost like gravestones. Some were larger than even the biggest building they saw.

Tattered flags with unrecognizable emblems, flaming ruins, corpses of giant beasts acting as mountains. Giant floating islands with broken chains, crashing into the ground and creating drag marks.

It was clear who was responsible for this at a single glance.

[So it's War. Hide yourself. You don't want to let them know we're still able to move freely. For now, let's wait for Alice to come back.] Cayla suggested as Alyss nodded her head.

Placing her hand against the surface of the debris, Alyss conjured blackened limbs to grab at the loose pieces around them, forming a shell of rubble.

Just as she was about to say something, she felt the markers that Alice had placed for the people she wanted to protect.

From the ground, the limbs of civilians burst out, clawing open their graves as their maniacal screams echoed through the sky, shocking Alyss.

The ghastly cries sounded like an orchestra of pain, paired with the squelching of flesh being torn, eyeballs being crushed and crazed victims snuffing out their suffering.

Seeing all of this, Alyss felt chills like no other.

One moment everyone was enjoying the festival. Then all of a sudden, it came crashing down.

[Their mind is broken. . .] Cayla frowned.

If she were to reference her outdated information regarding this ritual, this shouldn't have been the case. They would've been driven insane, yes. But to this extent? To the extent where they wished to reject everything they see, everything they know?

It must've been the Eldritch power within the ritual.

After coming to this conclusion, doubts began to sprout within Cayla's mind, a subtle worry regarding Alice's safety. Were the old rules still applicable? What else did she need to avoid? How could she get Alice to come back safely?

As this doubt took root, Cayla's entire body froze up as she noticed darkness spreading on her limbs.

Little by little, the darkness parted to reveal an eye staring back at her.

At first, it was one. Then it multiplied into two.

Her fear, her doubts, it was delicious fuel.

'Begone!' Alyss shouted, feeling a foreign entity trying to invade their mental realm.

Violet Flames burst out, wrapping around Cayla like a protective blanket while blackened limbs tore away the shadow and extinguished it.

Feeling the grasp of the Eldritch power disappearing, Cayla stumbled back in fear. Her hands trembled while cold sweat filled her back.

This... Invasion.

This corruption...

[What has War done...] Cayla couldn't help but mutter, fearful of the true goal behind War's intentions.

This was the Eclipse at its truest. An unpredictable force of chaos sweeping the lands. A sudden calamity with no sign of appearing. And in its wake, countless victims lay buried beneath the broken earth.

As this fear gripped Cayla's mind, Alyss couldn't help but frown, trying to think of a way to dispel this doubt.

But she had to admit, even she was beginning to falter. She could feel her own belief dropping.

Even though she had absolute faith in her twin, her mind wandered, worried and doubted the survival of Alice.

Taking a deep breath, she engulfed the entire mental space using her Violet Flames, blocking out the external influence.

Immediately, the shadows of the mind started to disappear and she could think properly again. However, Cayla was still suffering from the shadows as Alyss could only focus on reality right now.

While quite a few of the civilians chose to... escape from the insanity, many of them slowly stopped reacting.

They all stared up at the eclipse with a blank expression.

Furrowing her brows, Alyss noticed a few sentries roaming around the place.

Beasts that look like the amalgamation of tendrils, tattered flesh and arms. They glide across the floor using their tentacles while the arms hung around its body, holding desperately onto its mutated form.

A single, giant eye housed itself in the centre of this mass.

Walking past the corpses of those who departed, the sentries would pause for a moment before capturing the corpse within its gaze. After not even a second had passed, a tentacle would shoot up from the ground, dragging the corpse away.

Concluding that it was probably not the best idea to come face to face with the sentries, Alyss slowly made her way out of the rubble.

There was a mark not far from where she was and it was moving. Therefore, Alyss could only assume that the person Alice marked was still alive. At least she hoped so.

Phantom Shift!

Crossing the gap from her debris to the next pile of rubble, Alyss quickly dove into the cracks and hid herself.

'Three sentries are patrolling this arena. Their view is around 160 degrees sweeping from left to right in 1 second intervals.' Alyss analysed as she could feel her own heartbeat against her chest.

She was feeling nervous.

Her palms were sweaty and it was hard to fully calm her breathing.

There was something about these creatures that unnerved her. She could not, did not want to stare at them nor did she want to be captured in their gaze.

Sitting still for a moment, she began to identify the pattern of their movements and dashed across the gap once more.

Peeking past a giant sword that acted as her cover with some rubble, Alyss spotted the first marker.

Hualing.

There were tears streaming down her face as she glanced up at the sky blankly.

Just as Alyss was about to move towards Hualing to pull her own, Cayla grabbed her sleeve within the mental realm.

[Don't... Don't move them.] Cayla was still feeling the aftereffects of mental corruption but tried her best to hold on.

[Look at their back and behind their head. They're now connected to something as a whole. Remove one and you could risk the sentries coming in an instant.] She pointed at the barely visible tendril connecting to Hualing's body.

'What can we do then?' Alyss frowned.

[I don't know. Originally, you'll need to kill whoever is hosting the ritual and then figure out a way to get rid of the Call of the Eclipse. But now? With Eldrich in the mix? I don't know. There's too little information to go off of.] Cayla frowned, clutching her head.

Gritting her teeth, Alyss cursed under her breath before leaving another marker. A drop of blood that could be used as both a teleport point for Alice and as a cleanser.

If needed, it'll burst into Violet Flames and get rid of the shadows affecting Hualing.

Since there was nothing else she could do here, Alyss could only make her way to the next marker.

###

Looking down at his hands, Jin was silent.

There were no chains, no confinement...

Yet he felt bound.

Beside him, Ye Shen didn't say anything either. He simply led Jin towards the summit of this realm.

"What happened?" Jin asked, letting out a soft sigh. He wanted to glance back but there was an invisible force pushing him forward.

"I was found. No more no less." Ye Shen replied, not saying anything else.

Glancing down at each of his steps, he soon reached the top where a single throne existed atop the summit.

A woman hidden by a shadow sat casually. Her smile curved up upon seeing Jin.

Chapter 632 - 632: Kazira

"Dear lad, tis good to see you. Have you enjoyed your holiday? I hope you haven't forgotten the teachings that I painstakingly had my disciples pass down." The shrouded woman smiled, flicking her finger, forcing Jin to kneel in front of her.

However, Jin didn't reply. What is there to say?

He thought he could run away, he thought he could be free from her clutches. But in the end, even after training with Alyss, there was nothing he could do in the face of this power.

Why did he even remain in the East? It would've just been better to ask Alyss to send him overseas.

"Ignoring me? *Sigh~ You're going to break my heart. Though I suppose that's going to be your heart soon. I'm so glad that you didn't forsake everything I taught you. The foundation is still there. Where's your joy? Where's your reverence? Your body is about to become of use to me." She chuckled.

Remaining in her seat, she raised her hand and snapped her finger.

In the distance, several giant swords began to pull themselves from the ground before stabbing into the walls of this realm.

"Soon, you'll become part of a God. Don't you think that's something to smile for?" She asked as Jin finally lifted his head and looked at her.

"What use is becoming part of a God if I'm not alive?" Jin chuckled while the woman scratched her chin.

"For a mortal, you do make a good point." The woman admitted before standing up.

Pausing momentarily, she walked towards Jin as his gaze was unflinching.

With every step, a little bit of the shadow would be peeled away. Little by little, her true form revealed itself.

The form of the Apostle of War, Kazira.

She had greyish blue skin, pure white hair and a pair of radiant white eyes. A strange marking similar to that of the Eclipse could be seen on the centre of her chest, glowing with the same white. Black jutting obsidian chunks could be seen piercing out of certain parts of her body.

The neck, head, arms and even her leg.

A scar stretched over the right side of her face with her hair styled to cover it up. Her hair wasn't long, only reaching around her neck but the tattered veil made it seem longer, reaching her lower waist.

Adorned on the side of the veil was a black and white flower with black spikes jutting out from below.

Her outfit, a chaotic blend of grace and ferocity. A mix of an elegant white dress with sharp pointed chains coiling around her arms, belts and buckles around her arm, neck and thigh. Hanging around her back were a pair of blades, similar to the one that everyone was taught to use.

Or rather, their weapon was similar to hers.

"Why don't we take a peak." Kazira grinned, making a circle with her index and thumb and placed it over her eye.

Capturing Jin in her gaze, she licked her lips.

"Fear, resignation... And a tiny spark of hope. Do you believe the anomaly to come save you? But colour me disappointed. I thought you would've at least shown a bit of anger. Maybe thinking of how to tear my head from my neck, to stab me in the heart. But no, you essentially gave up the thought of killing me." She shrugged.

"Maybe you should learn to be like your friend over here."

Repeating the process with Ye Shen, her smile grew wider.

"Resignment with a hint of anger, jealousy, grief and even... Lust. Oh my, perhaps my form suits your tastes?" She teased, lifting up the corner of her skirt.

Ye Shen didn't look, keeping his eyes on the ground.

"Were you perhaps entertaining the idea of beating me and then pinning me on the ground? Have your way with me? Aren't you aiming a little too high dear boy? Careful you don't get burned." She walked up to him before kicking him in the stomach, launching his body away.

*BANG!!!

Crashing into a pillar, Ye Shen coughed up a bit of blood before falling to the ground.

"Ye Shen!" Jin glanced back in shock, not expecting him to get kicked like that.

"Oh stop your crying, a little kick like that won't kill the boy." Kazira rolled her eyes as black mist started to roll out from his shadow.

Little by little, his wound recovered and Ye Shen stood up.

"Finally got your head out the gutter?" She asked, capturing him in her gaze once more.

This time, there was no sign of lust as she nodded in satisfaction.

As a weapon of War, she only needed him to have the feelings of anger. Whether that be pointed towards her or elsewhere, as long as there is anger and feelings of conflict, she is satisfied.

But an emotion like lust? Something like that was more in line with what Famine wanted.

The famine of companionship generates lust, a doorway for them to become a slave of their own desires. Just as Famine liked.

Just thinking of Famine's hobbies gave War shivers as she wanted to avoid interacting with Famine as much as possible.

Shaking her head, Kazira glanced up at the unseen figure that no one else but her could see.

Once she becomes the God of War, the first thing she'll do is to get rid of Enris and then Famine.

###

After checking the location of everyone who Alice had marked, a frown appeared on Alyss's face as none of them were unscathed. All of them seemed to have a shadow planted into their mind as they showed no reaction to the world.

But most of all, she couldn't find the marker that was on Jin's body. Was it revealed?

Or perhaps...

'No, he wouldn't have died since he's still needed for their ritual.' Alyss rejected that thought before looking up at the sky.

The composition of this realm was exceedingly strange. Despite looking like an open space, there were countless invisible pathways that she couldn't make sense of.

Something that was in front of her might actually be far away as a single step was enough to transport her to another part of this place.

Thanks to Cayla marking down certain points that they've walked through, she's mapped out a rough route of everything they've explored.

Which only amounted to around 20% of this realm.

'Still no sign of Alice?'

[None.]

Hearing this news, Alyss couldn't help but clench her fist but there was nothing they could do.

The scale of this ritual was too big for her to resolve using her personal artifact. Even if she were to use her full output, she doubted she could cancel out the barrier.

Hell, even with the lance form, she couldn't find the weak point within this tangled mess.

'Please tell me there's at least some good news since I'm about to lose my mind here.' Alyss sighed, hiding in the rubble once more to avoid the sentries patrolling the place.

The more she explored the realm, the more she could see. It wasn't just the sentries on the ground, strange bat like creatures made of the same material patrolled the air space.

Countless eyes layered the bottom of their body, capturing everything they could see on the ground.

There were even a few moments where Alyss came close to being caught.

[Depends on what you define as Good news.] Cayla shrugged, drawing out a diagram on the piece of paper in front of her.

'What you think is good news then.'

[The flying islands seem to be off limits. Not even the strange birds are going near them. Perhaps they hold important ritual sites since the convergence of energy focus around the islands. However, the islands don't seem to be the only point of importance.]

[These tubes that you found on the bodies of people. I've tracked the strands of energy as far as I can but after a certain point, it just becomes a tangled mess. But this tangled mess is also what's helping form the 'net' of this realm. A foundation of sorts to keep this place from falling apart.] Cayla explained as Alyss sat up.

'Then shouldn't we just cut it all off?'

[If you want soulless husks then by all means, be my guest. It'll certainly achieve your goal of breaking this realm but there's no guarantee for the souls that got snatched. Including Alice.] Cayla frowned as Alyss slumped over in disappointment once more.

'Wait. . . Sh*t! Doesn't that mean Alice doesn't have a way back then? We don't have a tube on us.' Her pupil constricted upon coming to this realisation.

[She does. We're acting as her anchor or rather, you are. You're basically acting as her tube right now.]

Hearing this, Alyss sighed out in relief.

Now that she had marked down everyone that Alice wanted to save, there was only one thing left. She'll make her way to the islands and see if she can find Jin.

###

"What in the f*ck..." A man muttered with a frown.

Turning his head towards the direction of the Empyrean Dragon Sect, a vein began to bulge on his neck.

He was out gathering materials for Nyer but at the rate things were happening, this place not last long enough.

He doesn't know who was stupid and insane enough to attempt to open a hole but he was not going to stand around and do nothing.

Reaching into his pocket for an orb, he crushed it as a connection was established with Nyer.

"What is it?" Nyer questioned without even turning to look at him.

"Don't give me that. You sense it, don't you? I'm putting your job on hold." The man frowned as Nyer gave him a side glance.

"Do as you wish. But only when you absolutely have to move. My specimen is caught up in it right now. Give her the freedom she needs to grow."

The faster she grows, the better. And this kind of environment is perfect for her adaptation.

Furrowing his brows, the man clicked his tongue before nodding. Before he could say anything else, Nyer already cut off the connection.

"Annoying b*stard."

Chapter 633 - 633: Ith'Zir

Shuffling through the strange plains of this realm, Alyss soon reached the bottom of the islands. Hidden in the shadow, she glanced at the giant chains leading up.

Despite looking ordinary, there were a faint layer of energy coating the surface. A thin, murky layer that was reminiscent of Eldrich energy.

'...'

[I can probably analyse and figure out a way-]

'I'm going to touch it.'

[???

'I'm going to touch it.'

[Have you not been listening to a word I've been saying? Did you forget how the Eldrich energy works?]
Cayla blinked her eyes in disbelief.

'I know how it works. I just think it's worth a quick experiment.' Alyss shrugged.

The idea she had in mind was to use her blackened limbs. The more she thought about the relation of her... 'birth' and Alice's the more she's confused by the composition of their bodies.

She was the 'original' yet her power can negate Abyssal powers.

Alice was a fabricated soul yet she now has divinity and void powers. So where did the Eldrich energy come from?

She could only come to one conclusion.

Herself.

These blackened limbs, the way her powers took on a form resembling that of Eldrich energy...

And the final nail on the coffin, her flames losing to Eldrich energy in a contest of power.

Therefore, the only answer she could come up with was Nyer injecting her body with a mixture of Eldrich and whatever concoction he created to counter the Abyss.

Everything after was obtained through Alice's own experience after all.

[Stubborn! Have you at least thought of the risks?] Cayla folded her arms in annoyance seeing the determination in Alyss's eye.

'Yep. I know that if I come into direct contact with the energy, I establish a link to the Outer God right?' Alyss smiled.

However, this only caused Cayla to smack her on the back of the head.

[If you know then why are you still doing it?!]

'Ouch! If you let me finish, I wasn't going to touch it directly. I was going to use my energy to touch it. When we came into contact with this energy before, it had to touch Alice's wrist directly. But using our energy caused it to have a contest of power.' Alyss reminded as Cayla paused before nodding her head.

'So I'm thinking what if I can increase the output of my energy. That way, I can interact with it without worry.' Alyss suggested.

Contemplating the idea, Cayla furrowed her brows before nodding.

It was worth a shot.

Taking a step back, Alyss conjured her blackened limbs as her shadow began to stretch.

As the hands came into contact with the chains, a jolt and a chill spread throughout Alyss's body.

But after a brief moment, nothing else happened.

'Seems like this is fine.' Alyss smiled before using the limbs as footholds to run up the chains.

Thankfully, it didn't seem like any of the sentries were worried about people climbing up the chains so none of them were looking towards her direction.

###

Alice didn't know how long she's been walking for.

This endless expanse that continued to stretch on, the voices haunting her mind.

She paid them no heed.

She didn't answer, didn't talk, didn't stare, didn't stop.

There was only one goal and that was to keep walking.

But doubts began to fill her mind. What if the Cayla she heard was part of the trick? What if this was all to keep her in this place longer?

Does this place classify as a realm?

Should she try to get out?

"Go on, try. Isn't that what you're best at? Experimenting and figuring a way out?" The voice called out behind her as Alice almost faltered for a moment but kept her focus forward.

"Why are you afraid? Why are you denying what you're good at? Go on, give it a try. It's not going to hurt."

It felt as though the voice had managed to see the weakness in her mind, latching onto it and trying to make her slip up.

As she continued to walk, Alice didn't notice the darkness that was slowly manifesting on her finger tips.

###

Poking her head up, Alyss scanned the surface of the floating island and frowned.

Located in the centre of the island, there was a giant statue of sorts of a woman's upper half. Half of her torso was embedded into the ground at an angle with flowers blooming around the chest. A pair of emotionless eyes glanced down with briar thorns and a jagged crown of sorts piercing out of her body.

Around the edges, small writhing masses of darkness seemed to be constructing more parts of the statue.

But that wasn't what caused Alyss to frown.

What caused her to frown was the slight resemblance it was beginning to show.

Beneath the 'design' and appearance of the statue, a blank state could be observed. But as the black mass began to reconstruct the statue, parts of it were now starting to resemble Alice.

'I don't suppose you know what's going on with that. Because I have a bad feeling about letting that thing complete Alice's statue.' Alyss pulled herself up as she spotted a cloaked figure praying beneath the statue.

[I... Don't know. There are too many unknown variables at play.] Cayla was beginning to panic.

She didn't know if the advice she gave Alice was good anymore.

The introduction of Eldrich power has modified this ritual beyond recognition and even if she wasn't sealed, she doubted she could get the information she needed.

"Weary traveller, might you come and pray with me?" The figure suddenly spoke without turning around.

Furrowing her brows, Alyss walked up carefully as blood converged into a single blade by her side.

"What's the deal with this statue?" Alyss asked, pointing her sword at the woman.

*CRACK!!!

To her shock, the woman's head snapped a complete 180, staring at her with an ear to ear smile. Her eyes were a strange swirl of countless eyeballs, drawing Alyss's gaze.

[Get out of her sight!] Cayla shouted.

Without hesitation, Alyss slammed her hand down as blood and metal erupted in front of her, turning into a wall that blocked the woman's gaze.

'What's going on?!'

Before Cayla could even answer, a mass of twisted flesh slammed into the wall, breaking it in the process.

Quickly rolling to the side, Alyss created more walls around the place to act as cover for herself.

[Ith'Zir. The Hungering Gaze. That's the Outer God that woman worships. There are many Outer Gods that hold the power over eyes but that pattern, it's no doubt that of the Hungering Gaze.] Cayla quickly manifested a document.

[There were only three instances where Ith'Zir was ever observed. Not much is known since they're not a very active Outer God but just know that you should avoid her eyes at all cost.]

'Sh*t! Then what the hell am I supposed to do against it???' Alyss questioned, noticing eyes beginning to manifest on the mass of corrupted flesh.

Without hesitation, she gathered her energy into the blade and released a vertical slash.

*BANG!!!

Before the slash could even reach, it was blocked by an invisible wall created by one of the eyes.

[Kill the host, break the connection.] Cayla frowned.

She didn't know how Ith'Zir was able to manifest here. However, there was no doubt that it was Ith'Zir's power.

Gritting her teeth, Alyss rushed forward with Mirage Steps while creating cover for herself.

Yet despite this, the woman's head continuously snapped to her location, even behind the walls.

While Alyss was busy trying to find a way to avoid Ith'Zir's gaze and kill the woman, Cayla was analysing the energy around them.

Clearly, the barrier hadn't broken yet. If it did, Ith'Zir would've summoned one of its 'main eyes' causing madness to descend upon this location. The fact that they could still think was evident that Ith'Zir was not fully here yet.

Which then only asks the question, how was this host able to use Ith'Zir's power?

What did War do?

###

"Oh? Seems like someone has some backbone to them after all. They even managed to get out of the labyrinth." Kazira raised an eyebrow, noticing the commotion on one of the islands.

But seeing who it was on the island, she couldn't help but tilt her head.

The anomaly.

How was she there?

Kazira was sure she took some extra precautions with her since there was a chance that she couldn't been sent by the Goddess.

Even if the Goddess loved chaos, Kazira couldn't be sure that she would just let her make connections to the Outer Gods after all.

Yet she was now fighting against the Icon of Ith'Zir.

Scratching her chin, Kazira wondered if she should send the other Icons to her location. But doing so might cause gaps to appear in her ritual instead.

Even if the anomaly was to kill one Icon, it was still acceptable.

In fact, sending the other Icons and exposing the gaps in her ritual would be equivalent to an Apostle acting personally to kill a civilian. Complete overkill and a foolish choice when the Icons should be protecting the ritual sites.

Making her decision, Kazira turned around and glanced towards Jin who was now in floating within an 'egg'.

She couldn't continue immediately since she was still acting as the anchor for the Outer God. But once the Icons finish their job, she'll be able to act with some degree of freedom.

Snapping her finger, she injected some dark energy into the egg and watched as Jin's body begin to show signs of corruption.

Chapter 634 - 634: Gift From The Past

Running with all of her might, Alyss scrambled around the arena while countless tendrils of dark energy spawned wherever the woman glanced.

Her senses were pushed to the limit as she couldn't envision a way to attack the host without being consumed by her gaze.

'HAVE YOU FIGURED IT OUT YET?!?!' She screamed at Cayla.

[SHUT UP! I'M TRYING TO THINK!] Cayla screamed back as she too was scrambling through her old notes, trying to figure out how to defeat this host.

However, everything that she had written in the past couldn't be used right now since it didn't match Alyss's fighting style at all. Attack from afar? Using a ritual to isolate?

Using certain Sigils to blind?

Alyss couldn't access any of those right now. And even if she did, she needed high level Sigils for it to work on the host.

With what she knew of her, the Zenia family rarely gave her powerful blood since they were afraid of her escaping.

Sliding another set of tentacles, Alyss activated her technique.

Destruction Point!

Homing in on the weak point of the tendrils, she adjusted her blade and made a vertical slash, severing the tendril and creating a path for herself.

However, behind her, the tendril repaired itself and lashed out at her.

Gritting her teeth, Alyss parried without turning around.

'Still nothing!? I'm about to die out here!'

[Do you know how hard it is to focus with someone shouting in your ear?! I'm going as fast as I can!]

She needed to gather as much evidence as she could so that she could figure something out. A way for Alyss, using the skills she has, the martial arts and even her Eldrich power, to reach the host.

She needed a way to restrain that Eldrich gaze, a way to stop Alyss from going into madness the moment she was captured.

What could she do? What could she take advantage of?

What options are available to them at this moment in time?

[!!!] Sitting upright, Cayla's pupil constricted.

Her smile trembled as she let out a laugh.

[I got it!] She grinned.

Out of all the possible options, this was something she never considered.

A power or rather, a seal that was bestowed upon Alice.

At first, they thought it was simply a seal to restrain whatever Nyer created. But if that was the case, it should've been Alice that was sealed.

Yet she was still the main body.

So what did it seal?

Alyss's power? That's not quite right either. Otherwise, she wouldn't have been able to use the blackened limbs or the Violet Flames.

Therefore, there was only one answer.

Velouria, as someone who's very familiar with the Outer Gods, noticed the seed of power early!

Those chains were used to restrain the Eldrich power dormant within Alyss!

Her power gained through ritual, one that caused the chains to dig in violently was always Eldrich energy!

'What are you laughing at!?!?' Alyss questioned, wondering if Cayla lost her mind.

[The fact that my previous master is a genius! She even prepared for this scenario!] Cayla stood up with a grin.

[Listen to me carefully Alyss. I need you to let her capture you in her gaze momentarily. Just a moment but it should be enough for the chains to activate.]

'Hah???'

[The chains that Velouria placed on your body were never one to bind you. Rather, it was to bind the Eldrich energy, preventing it from going out of control! Think about it, when the chains weren't there, didn't Alice begin losing her mind? Moments of insanity, not that she's not insane already but you know.] Cayla shrugged.

Thinking about it for a moment, Alyss nodded.

After the chains were placed, Alice became a little more... 'tame' compared to when the chains weren't there.

This... 'Inner Hunger', was suppressed.

In fact, the most recent memory of the chains working was during the first confrontation. When Alice was captured by the Outer God's energy.

Alyss had presumed that her forcefully taking over managed to free Alice. But when she manifested, the Golden Chains followed, bursting out of her body and dispersing the energy.

[We can think about it later. But for now, just let the host capture you and allow the chains to act!]

Gritting her teeth, Alyss nodded and agreed with Cayla's gamble.

Snapping her fingers, Alyss disabled the walls.

In that instant, the woman's head snapped towards her location and the entire world lost its light.

Tendrils shot forth from all directions, capturing Alyss as a strange mass of flesh burst out from the woman's body, pulling Alyss close and opening its countless eyes.

Alyss felt her entire essence being swallowed by the Outer God. The connection that formed between them, the true body behind this host.

A boundless mass filled with eyes, a shrouded body that can't be observed and this... eerie energy that persisted in this space it occupied.

*RUMBLE!!!!

{!!!} Letting out a shriek, the formless mass recoiled back as Golden Chains pierced out from Alyss's body, stabbing against the tendrils of the beast.

In that instant, this corrupted space was dismissed and Alyss found herself back in her body.

"ARHG GGG!!!"

In front of her, the priest let out a cry of pain while blood poured out of her eyes.

She stumbled back, clutching her face in pain while the corrupted mass of flesh was now nowhere in sight.

Not wasting this chance, Alyss immediately activated her Resonance and Absolute Zone!

Phantom Shift!

Appearing in front of the host, she twisted her body and unleashed a series of slashes, shredding apart her limbs.

Gnashing her teeth in anger, the host tried to fight back but just as she raised her regenerated arm, Alyss flicked her blade up, severing the wrist.

Dark energy burst out from the wound but the chains glowed brighter, suppressing the energy around her.

Sheathing her blade momentarily, Alyss focused her mind and overlaid the personal artifact over her weapon.

Lance form!

A form that let's her target what she wanted without missing!

Destruction Point!

Targeting the connection between the host and the Eldrich energy, Alyss unleashed a three fold slash, converging on one point and destroying the tether!

The instant the tether was destroyed, the host's body began to crumble away to ash, unable to contain the Eldrich energy that existed within.

Letting out a sigh of relief, Alyss glanced at the statue and saw the flowers withering. Pieces that resembled Alice seemed to have broken off somewhat, turning it back to the 'blank' state it had before.

'Seems like if we kill the other hosts around this place, the statue should revert back to the blank state. Do you think that'll free Alice?' Alyss asked.

Thinking about it for a moment, Cayla shrugged.

[I don't know. The... parameters of this ritual is too strange. I don't know what the Eldrich energy is doing but none of the information I know can be trusted anymore. We also don't know where Jin is.] Cayla was worried.

With Jin being a key piece to the previous ritual, there's no doubt that he'll be one of War's main targets. The question now was where to find them and what she's planning to do to him.

'Let's go for the hosts first. Now that we know the chains work, we just need to assassinate as quickly as possible.'

[Agreed. I've already marked down the next closest island. Based on the energy that we've seen, the pathways we need to take is rather simple.]

Nodding her head, Alyss sheathed her weapon and left the location.

###

"Oi..." Kazira paused as a vein bulged on her neck.

"Oi Oi! What the f*ck?! Why is the Icon of Ith'Zir dead?! How is she dead?!" Kazira questioned, confusing Ye Shen who was standing by the side but didn't say anything.

Gnashing her teeth, Kazira swatted the empty air in front of her.

"Don't give me that sh*t! Weren't you the one who guaranteed that the Icons can do their job?! One ritual site is already gone and the progress has slowed. Why am I lending my body if you're just giving me failures like this ha?!" Kazira spat out in anger as her aura began to rise.

Not far from her, a dark energy manifested, threatening to lash out.

"Get your priorities right. I'm not asking you for your power. You're asking me for mine. You have no advantage in this." Kazira glared as rusted blades exploded from the space around her, piercing the black energy.

Despite the blades being corrupted momentarily, a fierce crimson energy lashed back, suppressing it.

"So what now trash? I can make you into something... Subline and wonderful. Or do you want to actually pull your weight?" Kazira warned as a chaotic energy burst out from her body, manifesting as crimson spikes and rusted weapons.

The Authority of War!

Feeling the authority crashing down on the location, Ye Shen couldn't keep himself standing as he was forced to kneel.

A moment of silence extended before the presence of the Authority disappeared.

Kazira seemed satisfied by the response as she walked back to her throne besides the egg housing Jin.

Parts of his body was already beginning to change with certain symbols being stitched onto his body. There was an emptiness in his gaze yet it was not complete just yet.

A little more.

Just a few more steps then Kazira would've successfully cultivated two host bodies for herself. One to house Eldrich energy and the other her current authority. By combing the two, she'll create a twisted divinity to ascend the ladders of godhood.

She could already see it, the God of War.

People calling her name in reverence, the battles raged through her will. She desired such authority!

###

Wandering through the endless expanse, Alice's pace was beginning to slow down.

Her gaze faltered with only a single thought in her mind.

'Who... Am I.'

Chapter 635 - 635: Zal-Ka'Rith

'Who... Am I?'

Who was she? What was she doing?

Why was she walking in this endless expanse?

She didn't know why, but she knew she had to keep walking. To ignore everything around her and keep walking. . .

But why?

Strange memories floating in her mind. As though she was looking at things from an outside perspective.

Was... this split haired woman her? Or was she someone else?

She could see her smiling, laughing, drinking.

But...

It didn't feel like her.

She seems the most familiar yet at the same time, unfamiliar.

A fabricated existence wearing someone else's skin. Someone else's thoughts.

An illusion of a person.

She glanced down at her own hand, the countless spider lilies that blossomed across her skin.

Death.

The stench of death followed her closely. Where she walked, death followed.

She couldn't help but ask...

Was this kind of existence necessary for this world?

Was a being with such a blood be allowed to persist?

One wound.

That's all it'll take without proper care to ruin a region.

To corrupt and destroy.

Her powers, an amalgamation of four sources. Each keeping each other in check yet at the same time, it was a ticking time bomb. Waiting for the perfect chance to explode.

Should she try and attain divinity?

If so, what will she do about this eldritch power within her?

Why did she want to attain divinity? Why was this girl fighting so hard for it? Despite her nature of death.

Once again, she couldn't help but ask, Who Am I?

Three simple words yet the answer made her contemplate for an eternity.

She could say she's Alice Agnelia. Yet it's not quite right. Is she Alice Zenia? That's not it either.

That was the twin whom she unfairly stole the name of and even replaced it with Alyss.

Then what was she?

At that moment, she felt her world darken.

Strange viscous green liquid filled her surroundings with a single man standing in front of her, looking up at her.

"Subject V-213k is showing signs of stabilization. Though the host body is... incompatible. The soul is stabilizing to an acceptable degree but the body is degrading. This will last... 3 days at most."

The man muttered, making notes on a pad before placing it down on the table next to him.

His eyes were hollow, as though given up on the world in its entirety. Slumped shoulders and the fatigue of an endless journey reflected upon his gaze.

A strange sadness filled her chest as tears began to form around her eyes.

Noticing her reaction, the man glanced up in mild confusion.

"Subject V-213k is... Crying? Early signs of emotional development." He muttered, walking closer and picking up his notebook once more.

He recorded every detail without missing anything but the next words she spoke caused him to drop his pad.

"N..yer."

Was this the man's name?

Why did he look so happy yet sad?

She wanted to reach out towards him.

Raising her hand, blood began to pour from her body, mixing with the liquid in the container as her flesh tore apart.

Panic filled Nyer's eyes but he soon calmed down and returned back to a stoic expression, devoid of expectation.

A deep fatigue.

"Subject V-213k showing early signs of decomposition. Perhaps a destabilization caused by a premature awakening and emotional development. Housing an artificial soul prematurely showed great signs of development but the body cannot sustain such growth." He muttered, placing his hand against the glass.

She felt her vision beginning to blur, fading as more and more of her body broke apart, unable to hold itself together.

"Subject V-213k time of death... 4 minutes after birth. I will... choose a different approach."

Then her world faded.

All sensations numb.

Was V-213k her name? The source of her existence?

If so, she was pronounced dead.

So how was she still here?

As though answering her questions, her world appeared once more.

Strangely, the world felt so much bigger than before. Her balance was unstable yet a hand held her gently, supporting her.

Looking up, she could see a sad smile on Nyer's face as he lifted her up.

"V-398k, do you see the land in front of you?" He asked, pointing at a landscape of ruins.

What used to be majestic structures now crumbled with vegetation growing on the surface. Beasts roamed the streaks, breaking walls to see if they could find any scrap of meat before leaving in disappointment.

"This used to be the greatest city in the realms. A place of prosperity and peace. A place I hold dear to my heart." He spoke with such tender softness.

"But a place is simply a location after all. What matters are the people within. Do you see the tallest broken tower?" He pointed towards the centre.

"A Goddess used to live there."

"A... Goddess?" She questioned.

She wasn't sure why she asked that question.

"Yes... A Goddess. Far above the mortal grasp yet she walked the same soil we walked. She laughed, she cried, she raged just like us. How strange don't you think? Unlike the other divinities, she walked alongside us. Cared for us." Nyer trailed off as his sadness soon turned into anger.

"Yet the world rejected her existence. Rather, the other divinities couldn't tolerate it. It's unfair isn't it?" He turned to her with expectation in her eyes.

There was a brief moment of clarity in the girl as her gaze softened at the city.

But that clarity disappeared just as quickly as it appeared.

Her vision shifted once more.

This time, she was back in a container.

The man who seemed calm yet volatile was now throwing documents across the room.

His inaudible screams could be felt through the glass as he punched whatever he could get his hands on before collapsing with his back on the wall.

He tugged at his hair, covered his eyes while gritting his teeth in frustration.

A hallowed husk aiming for a single goal that was so close yet so far out of his reach.

A sad existence.

"Four hundred and eighty nine thousand. That's how many clones I've made now. Where am I going wrong? What can I do to make the soul stabilize? Why is the body rejecting the artificial soul?" He muttered, glancing at the container holding V-489k.

"Perhaps this... Experiment direction is a failure. I must change my approach. The body and soul must grow simultaneously. Having one exceed the other will cause an instability. I'm sorry V-489k. I will now terminate this experiment." He spoke slowly, standing up and walking up to the glass.

As he prepared to end this experiment, she gave him a gentle smile.

Then her body was reduced to nothingness.

"It's a sad pursuit devoid of meaning and hope. The dead should stay dead. Past is in the past, time waits for no one." A familiar voice spoke out next to her but she didn't reply nor did she pay it any attention.

She had to keep moving forward no matter what.

"He chases after a shadow, a woman he cannot bring back. Yet he continues to work. Cloning, reincarnation and even forceful descent. He explored the workings of the soul, made contracts and breached lines of morality no one should ever.

"Forever so close yet so far. Even the soul rejects his work. His mind forever trapped by the beauty of the past, he cannot ever look forward. He's cursed himself an immortal life for an endless pursuit. A curse or a blessing I wonder." The voice continued to speak, not phased by the fact that Alice wasn't responding.

Golden markings were slowly appearing around Alice's wrists and ankles.

"Seems like our time has come to an end. The knowledge you have given me has been... Delectable."

As the voice spoke the word Delectable, it began to shift and mutate.

"Even after erasing your sense of self, you continue to walk, heeding the warnings. But most importantly of all, the foundation of your being is the culmination of centuries worth of work. A foundation that not even I can fully perceive the depths of even with this trickery.

"So heed my name fabricated one. I am Zal-Ka'Rith, the Outer God of the Writhing Script. I will be keeping a close eye on you." Zal-Ka'Rith grinned as the world began to collapse with golden chains manifesting around Alice.

Little by little, her eye regained its clarity.

###

*Crack

Pausing briefly, Nyer glanced down at the pen that broke apart suddenly.

An omen?

Furrowing his brows, he could sense the eldritch energy surrounding his... subject. The swirl of an ominous ritual and the influence of several Outer Gods. But he wasn't going to intervene.

There were moments where he should accelerate the growth but this was not one of them.

He was planning on loosening the restrictions but the Will of the Abyss handled it for him. A strange action no doubt.

The use of the Inverted World to access the world's memories, to read what he had concocted and even forcefully applying it to the subject.

Nyer had to admit, he was angry at the actions of the Will.

It could've caused everything to go to waste but thankfully, the subject held strong. And now, the Eldritch energy around her was now forcing a different type of adaption.

Just as he was about to continue his work, he suddenly raised his hand and clenched his fist.

The space around him locked as a tome slowly manifested with a sharp grin on the book's surface.

"So it was Zal-Ka'Rith." Nyer narrowed his gaze, understanding who it was that was tampering with his subject.

Thankfully, this Outer God wasn't one to intervene while it was on the pursuit of knowledge. His experiment can proceed unhindered.

Everything was still within his expectations.

Chapter 636 - 636: The Shattered Architect

[Velouria's chains might be working for now but don't rely on it. We're not entirely sure of the full functionality.] Cayla warned as Alyss crouched behind another set of rubble.

Not far from them, two priests could be seen praying before a single statue.

'I know. I don't intend on using it unless absolutely necessary.' Alyss agreed.

Neither of them knew the full activation of the chains. Only that if it comes into contact with a large excess of Eldritch energy, it'll lash out to suppress the energy.

Taking a deep breath, Alyss narrowed her gaze and calmed her mind.

Since there were two, she had to take care of one immediately. A sneak attack with everything she's got!

Absolute Zone!

Expanding her boundary, she was careful not to expand it too far as it might alert her targets.

Right now, she needed an attack with absolute speed, precision and power in order to kill one before they noticed that they were being hunted.

And thankfully, she had the foundations for all three. The martial arts that she stole can be combined to achieve her desired effect.

She had already performed it earlier.

The threefold strike.

An attack that includes three attacks at once, overlapping a singular point. Naturally, it included the foundations of the Instant Draw to maximise the power she could generate along with its speed.

When adding the Void Flux – Cleave into the mix, it was now one of her fastest and hardest hitting strikes!

Phantom Shift!

Exploding into action, Alyss activated her Resonance as her black limbs shot out of the priest's shadow, holding them in place.

She couldn't use the Violet Flames since the last time they tried it, it got assimilated. Meaning it wasn't strong enough yet. Therefore, there was only one power she could access for now that would achieve the same effect.

Tiamat!

They had already switched out the Sigils earlier so it was prepared and ready!

Threefold Strike!

Appearing behind the priest, Alyss drew her blade as the colour of the world seemed to be sucked away in an instant, turning it into a monotonous realm. The only colour that remained was that of crimson from her blade.

Two diagonal slashes in opposite directions followed by a vertical slash. However, Alyss only furrowed her brows after feeling no sign of resistance from her strike.

She missed!

Danger roared out in her senses as she immediately raised her guard.

From her own shadow, two large hands burst out, slamming into her body and causing her to crash across the ground.

Quickly flipping herself upright, Alyss's eye darted around the arena with her Absolute Zone at full force. Next to her, a woman with bandages over her eyes smiled as a corrupted halo manifested behind her body.

Clasping her hands together, the feeling of weightlessness overwhelmed Alyss.

What was up was now down. Left was right, right was left.

It was different to the trick they would pull using duality. Instead, it's as though the laws of this realm had completely flipped on its head and she was now doing everything wrong.

Gritting her teeth, Alyss had to offset this immediately otherwise she'd be in danger!

Duality!

The Sigil of Duality manifested on her back as she forcefully changed her own controls. That way, she's still adhering to the new functionality of the realm while still performing how she would normally.

Mirage Step!

Immediately retreating before the hands could get her, Alyss sheathed her blade.

Instant Draw – Soul Chaser!

*CLANG!!!

Widening her eyes in shock, she watched as her attack was blocked by a series of hardened black energy in the form of hands.

She could feel the vibration running up her arm as the blood blade was shattered by the impact.

[Dodge!]

Shifting her weight, she narrowly ducked under a grab before pulling her arm back.

Reinforcing her arm, she gritted her teeth and punched up.

Destruction point!

*CRACK!!!

Blood burst out from her arm as the impact of the punch broke it.

However, a crack began to spread through the crystalised hand. Not letting this chance go to waste, Alyss twisted her body, unleashing a roundhouse kick into the weak spot and shattering the hand!

Creating a blood blade using her own blood, she threw it at the priest controlling the arms!

At that moment, Alyss noticed the sightless priest smiling once more.

"!!!"

Quickly shifting her body to the side, she dodged the blood blade that was sent back towards her!

Rather than being sent back, she noticed her initial target now standing where she was earlier.

Their position swapped!

[I know who one of them is. Tha'Zirr also known as the Shattered Architect. It's an Outer God that twists space and manipulates certain laws within.] Cayla rummaged through a pile of notes.

'Okay great, then you know how to counter it right?' Alyss asked while trying to create some distance between them.

However, the Icon of Tha'Zirr simply smiled, allowing the other priest to run towards her. All of a sudden, Alyss's position was swapped and she had to hastily parry the punch that sent her tumbling back.

[Normally it would require you to have spatial abilities to counteract its manipulation. But right now we're in the middle of a ritual so I don't think the Ruinous Void can help.] Cayla frowned.

'Better to give it a try than to dismiss it immediately!'

Slamming her hands down, limbs shot out to grab the Icon of Tha'Zirr but the space seemed to stretch infinitely, never letting the limbs reach its target.

"Tch!" Clicking her tongue, Alyss gathered energy into her blade.

Before using the artifact to destabilise the local region, she'll use the lance form to attack the connection between the icon and the realm itself.

Threefold Strike!!

Overlaying the artifact with her sword, she slashed up.

No matter how this woman manipulates the space, this attack is guaranteed to hit!

*CLANG!!!

Looking up in shock, Alyss noticed the countless crystalised hands that manifested to block her attack.

Gritting her teeth, she wanted to break the hands when the other priest rushed towards her.

"Gotcha." Alyss grinned.

Fractured Form!

*CRACK!!!

The space around them immediately began to crack as the Icon of Tha'Zirr lost her smile.

With just the space around them now destabilised, the Outer God couldn't exert its rules anymore!

Alyss didn't let this brief gap go to waste as she immediately rushed towards the second priest.

Threefold Strike!

*KRK!!!!

Shredding the priest's arm, she followed up with a slash against the chest, a stab from the stomach and through the spine before plunging her hand into his mouth.

*BANG!!!

Hardened blood and metal exploded from her arm, destroying his jaw as the golden chains that came into contact with his body began to burn his flesh.

Void Flux!

*BANG!!!

Detonating a Void Flux inside the man's body, his body exploded into countless chunks as his lower half fell limply onto the ground.

Not wanting to let him regenerate, Alyss stomped down as the countless darkened limbs began to tear away at the lifeless corpse, consuming and assimilating it into her shadow.

Flinching slightly from the pain of the chains, Alyss ignored the pain for now. What matters the most was eliminating as many of these host bodies as possible so that Alice could come back.

"You're next." Alyss aimed her blade towards the Icon of Tha'Zirr who stared at the hands without a smile.

Looking up at Alyss, she reached for her bandages and removed it.

"!!!"

What was covered by the bandages was an endless non-Euclidean space that stretched on infinitely within the confines of her skull.

A constant spiral of staircases that continued deeper until there was nothing but darkness.

Once Alyss found herself staring into this spiral, she noticed the world around her had changed!

Even after using Ruinous Void to destabilise the space around her, she was still captured!

Around her, a myriad of paths coiled and diverged. Paths that shouldn't make sense began to combine in ways that defied the laws of space. The irregularity of gravity that is pushing and pulling on her body.

*Sss!

Sucking in a sharp breath of air, Alyss gritted her teeth as she collapsed on one knee.

The golden chains around her limbs were now erupting with a blinding light, searing into her flesh.

She felt as though her hands and feet were about to be torn off as chains burst out from her shadow, piercing into the realm around her.

"ARGHHH!!!" A hysterical scream that sounded as though countless voices has been synthesised into one cried out.

Alyss noticed that she was out of the strange realm.

In front of her, the Icon of Tha'Zirr kneeled with her head looking up at the sky. From the cavity of her face, mutated geometry and buildings spewed out with her body twitching beneath its mass. Her lips trembled but she couldn't say any words.

What was clear however, was that the chains caused a backlash of her power just like what happened to the Icon of Ith'Zir!

Threefold Strike!

Ignoring the pain in her limbs, Alyss rushed forward, eviscerating the priest's body.

Little by little, the constructs faded to ash as the statues they were praying returned back to a blank slate.

Alyss wanted to say something to lift up the mood but the pain of the chains prevented her from enjoying the situation.

Blood rolled from the wounds and her regeneration refused to kick in.

'Where's the next location?' Alyss managed to squeeze out but Cayla had a frown.

[We ca-]

'Alice is waiting for us! This bit of pain is nothing. Compared to what the Zenia's did, this is nothing at all.' Alyss forced a brave smile as Cayla hesitated before nodding.

Letting Alyss know of the next location, Cayla watched as Alyss made her way over with a slight limp to her step.

Chapter 637 - 637: Alyss's Determination

The Whispering Codex, The Unfurling Mind, The Ink That Sees, The Blooming Filth.

Alyss continued to cut down the Icons of Outer Gods one by one as the statues all returned to blank slates one by one.

But with each battle, with each unintentional consumption of the Icons, Alyss could feel the chains binding her limbs becoming tighter and tighter to the point where she couldn't even execute her threefold strike anymore.

All she could do was basically throw herself at them with whatever she could still do and watch as the chains caused a backlash.

Once that happened, she just needed one final strike before her limbs would consume them.

At this point, she had lost a lot of blood and her face was pale.

The chains that bound her were now restricting her regeneration even on her main body as tiny black limbs struggled to stitch her wound together.

There were three more islands left.

Just three more.

'Come Alyss, don't give up now.' Alyss thought to herself as her vision was blurred.

However, she continued to push on while using her sword as a support.

Parts of her body were breaking down, rotting even and revealing the bones beneath the surface.

###

Kazira felt her patience running thin.

"Seven! Seven icons are dead! There are only two left and you're still telling me to sit still?!" Kazira shouted, punching the armrest of her throne. She stood up in anger as her aura lashed out in a chaotic fashion.

At this point, she didn't care if the b*stard in front of her was telling her to wait, she'd rather deal with this vermin before more icons die.

"Do you even comprehend how much I had to do to have all ten of you b*stards gain an Icon in the main realm with the barrier still intact?! Do you?! Because last I recall, you were begging me to get you more Icons!

"So what now? Watch them die and have my ritual foiled?!"

Listening silently, Kazira suddenly let out a roar of laughter.

"As expected, no wonder you couldn't breach the barrier despite having all the advantages. Your brain simply isn't functional." She curled her lips into a deep smile, sending chills down whoever was looking at her.

"Let me ask you this, have you truly gauged what I'm capable of or have you merely assumed? By me 'needing' your strength, I looked incapable to you?" She asked, taking a single step forward.

***BANG!!!!**

A crushing aura descended upon the location as divinity exploded forth.

At that moment, a figure came into view, kneeling on the ground.

Its body seemed as though it was made from cosmic space while golden markings stretched across the surface. Its hair was made from strange tendrils that tried to fight against Kazira's oppressive power but failed to do so.

This time, the burst of energy was so much stronger than the first instance where she simply seemed to be warning the entity. Now, it was directly crushing it with overwhelming force!

Countless eyes opened across the being's body but Kazira simply grinned and flicked her finger.

*KRK!!!!

Countless swords exploded out of the eyes, blinding them in an instant.

Reaching forward, she strangled the being and lifted it into the air with one hand.

"Since you think you have everything under your control, why don't you guess what I'm about to do?" Kazira giggled as her smile grew wider.

Before the being could even respond, countless strands of energy lashed out, destroying it in an instant.

But Kazia wasn't done. Flicking her wrist, all of the energy within the surroundings began to converge above her palm, including the eldritch energy that belonged to the unknown Outer God.

In the next moment, the being was brought back to life.

"I can send you away just as easily as I can bring you back. So tell me again that I should just sit still and have everything done for me." Kazira narrowed her gaze as the being paused before disappearing.

Scoffing in disdain, Kazira made a circle with her index and thumb before glancing towards where Alyss was heading.

The anomaly's body was extremely strange. More so than what she initially expected.

While her usual power is indeed impressive for someone who seemed to have five Sigils, it wasn't enough to take care of the Icons. In fact, she should've died during the first fight if that was the case.

But there was something else within her body.

Something that's helping her against the Eldritch powers. Not only that, but it held traces of Divinity.

The more Kazira thought about it, the stranger it became. Her initial theory that Enris might've been the one to send her was now becoming less and less credible.

If so, who was it?

Solaris wasn't one to bother about the east and neither is Lumiria. She was more concerned about her followers than the happenings in the east.

'If it's not the Sun, Moon or Enris... then Who?' Furrowing her brows, Kazira decided to observe for a quick moment before stepping in.

So long as one ritual site remains, things can still progress. She just needed to make sure the last one wasn't taken.

After all, in war, information was one of the most important keys to winning.

###

Leaning against some rubble, Alyss's breathing was laboured as blood continuously poured from her wounds. She needed a short break before stepping on the island.

As it stands, even if the chains were to restrain the enemy, she didn't have the physical strength to cut them down.

"Why are you even going this far? She's the one that stole your body, stole your life. You're the original, you're the one being trapped in here. Think about it, if she disappeared, doesn't that mean you can get your freedom back?" A shadow questioned in front of her.

"Or are you content with being stuck inside your own body, unable to escape? A prisoner. A slave. You're only being used for the flames and a scapegoat. Have you forgotten how she would always trade places with you when the experiments were happening? Sure she may have suffered some of it but you suffered the brunt of the damage."

Hearing this, a soft chuckle escaped Alyss's lips.

Looking up at the chaotic mishmash of energy that acted as the barrier of this realm, Alyss let out a sigh.

Indeed. If it was anyone else, she would've probably fought to get her body back.

But Alice?

She wouldn't do that to her. They may call each other twins but Alice was younger. She only existed during the 10 years they were confined.

In that aspect, she was like her older sister.

Therefore, if she was to be asked the questions again, her answer would only be that Alice is the only family she had left.

Even though she took the brunt of the experiments, she treated it as shielding her younger sister from the pain.

And it wasn't as though Alice was keeping her locked up.

Whenever she got the chance, Alice would let her enjoy life as well. Both of them were in this predicament together.

She never stole her body, never stole her life. She never asked for any of this.

Alice was simply thrust into the situation without a single clue of what was happening.

The first thing she experienced, despite having her memories, was the betrayal of family. The brothers who abandoned her and left her to rot. The scientists who tore them apart bit by bit.

She could still remember Alice's tiny frame hugging her knees in the white room, crying all by her lonesome self. Wondering why her perceived family was doing this to her.

For a soul that had just been born by Nyer's experiments, this was cruel.

Of course, that's not to say that Alyss hadn't had thoughts about what would've happened if she could live freely. If she could control her own body without having these bindings on her.

But if the cost of getting her freedom meant that Alice was going to disappear, she didn't want it.

In this life, they were closer than family or lovers. They are two people stuck in one body, suffering the actions of others.

If they couldn't rely on each other in this life, who else could they trust?

She was confident that Alice would find her if she was to go missing and therefore, she'd do the same for her little sister. The helpless alcoholic that becomes goofy once she drops her guard.

A cute little gremlin that was easy to bully.

Thinking about this, a smile appeared on Alyss's face before overwhelming determination burned in her eyes.

Forcing herself to stand up, Violet Flames burned across her body in a desperate attempt to repair her body as she limped towards the island.

Awaiting her arrival was a white haired woman with several wings covering her eyes and around her head.

"Shall we make this easier for the both of us? Why don't you stick your neck out so I can kill you faster. My dear twin is waiting for me." Alyss aimed her sword at the figure. There was barely any strength left in her but her will burned strong.

After getting this far, she won't fall here!

*RUMBLE!!!

Countless golden spikes fell from the sky as Alyss gritted her teeth and slashed away at the ones targeting her main body.

"URG!!!" Letting out a grunt, she ripped a spike that had pierced her thigh.

From her wound, tendrils of corruption whipped out but the chains fought back.

Her blood began to take on a golden sheen, expelling the Eldritch energy as Alyss collapsed on her knees.

She felt as though her body was burning itself from the inside out. What's keeping the energy out was also damaging her!

Just as the next wave of spikes was about to hit, Alyss closed her eyes and prepared herself for the pain.

Yet in the next moment, she found herself within the mental space.

Looking up in shock, her body relaxed in an instant as a smile appeared on her face.

'What took you so long?'

"Let's just say I had a long, long walk."

Chapter 638 - 638: The Weeping Halo

"Let's just say I had a long, long walk." Alice smiled before turning her attention back to reality.

Personal Artifact + Space Lock!

Through using Nyer's technique that he revealed in the Inverted World, Alice forcefully froze the spears before they could hit her. And to make sure the lock wasn't broken, she reinforced it with her artifact.

Glancing down at her body, she could see the countless wounds inflicted onto Alyss as a vein bulged on her neck.

*RUMBLE!!!

Blood converged onto her location, healing the wounds now that the chains were no longer there. All of her blood now gained a slight golden shimmer but Alice didn't pay it any attention.

What she needed to focus on right now was dealing with the threat in front of her.

Her confusions regarding what she saw, about her... past as a sample and Nyer's actions. That can wait for later.

'Got any information for me Cayla?' Alice asked as Cayla nodded her head.

[Ylth'Vaenor the Weeping Halo. Might be outdated info but if you get hit by her spikes too much, she'll be able to make them explode your body from the inside out. If she unfurls her wings, don't match her gaze otherwise, you'll start turning into one of her minions. Not much else is known since she was expelled rather quickly.]

'A troublesome one then huh? Alright.'

Not wanting to draw things out, Alice immediately activated the resonance between her first Sigil, Tiamat and Duality.

Void Steps!

Appearing behind the Icon, the pattern in Alice's eyes shifted to that of a singularity.

Artificial Resonance!

Energy whipped into a singularity above her hand, digging up the ground from around her.

Just as she was about to slam the attack into the Icon, the sense of danger overwhelmed her senses and she immediately dove back into the Void.

Escaping the Void not far from the Icon, she could see several spikes and chains where she was a moment ago.

Twisting her body, Alice launched the Singularity before following up with a Void Flux!

Energy coiled into amplification coils as the wings of Tiamat unfurled behind her.

*BANG!!!

A torrent of energy shot forward, blocked by a spear, which surprised Alice as the durability of the spear was much higher than she thought. Recording the information in her mind, she snapped her fingers.

Expending 15 single cells, sparks crackled around the Icon as 15 Void Fluxes using Tiamat's power as base manifested into reality.

*BOOM!!!

From the cloud of smoke that appeared from her attack, a spear pierced forth with blinding speed.

Flicking her finger, Alice created a portal, swallowing the attack before sending it back into the cloud, hoping to hit the Icon.

As the cloud cleared, Alice saw the Icon with no visible damage at all.

"Well aren't you the sturdy one." Alice muttered before taking a few steps back to prepare some countermeasures.

[They're extra weak to the chains that Velouria left on you. But the chains are also restricting your regeneration.] Cayla spoke up after tending to Alyss.

'What do you mean?'

[When we were fighting these hosts, they all received a kind of backlash whenever they tried to overwhelm Alyss with Eldritch energy. Once they get hit by the backlash, they become vulnerable long enough for Alyss to finish them off.]

Furrowing her brows, Alice was about to say something when more spikes were launched towards her from all directions.

Thankfully, she had already set the condition for her triggered cells!

Triggered Cast!

Void portals activated accurately around each spike, swallowing them and launching them away.

However, to her surprise, it took more energy than expected for this. Each of the spikes were becoming harder to swallow than the last. As though an extra coating of energy had been placed around them, making it harder for them to be transported into the Void.

But there was another issue.

Alice couldn't access the golden chains!

It was always something that was used to restrain the energy within Alyss, not something that she could consciously manipulate.

Plus, with Alyss in her current state, she wasn't in the form to help out.

She had to figure out a way to counter Eldritch energy on her own.

Thankfully, that wasn't necessarily the only option that Alice had to rely on.

Slamming her hand down, a cage of blood began to expand, lashing out and forcing the Icon to retaliate with chains of her own.

Whenever her attacks touched the blood, it gained a golden sheen which concerned Alice.

She wasn't sure what this would do to her body but she certainly didn't want too much of it in her.

Reaching into her pouch, she pulled out a vial of blood. Old Man Mo's blood sample!

Drinking the whole flask, Alice could feel the surge of power through her body. The increase in strength and change in physique.

'Seems like he had Sigils that focused on physical reinforcement rather than active attacks.'

Regardless, Alice didn't need his power. What she needed was simply Sigils that she could switch out. Swapping the sixth for Allura's power of severance, Alice narrowed her gaze and activated Void Steps.

Void Flux – Cleave!

*BANG!!!

Slashing down from above, Alice watched as her blade slashed through the spike without any issues. However, what she saw inside these spikes caused her to frown.

A coiled up skeletal structure!

The foundation of these spikes was people!

As though realising that Alice was disgusted by the spikes, a twisted smile appeared on the Icon's face as she summoned more spikes towards Alice, wondering if she would hold back now.

However, to her surprise, Alice unleashed a net of slashes around her, all imbued with the power of severance.

Alice knew that there was no point holding back against victims like this. She couldn't save them, she couldn't turn them back to normal.

But what she could do...

Was kill the b*tch that turned them into this!

Single Cell Cast!

Snapping her fingers, countless Void Fluxes using Tiamat's power as base appeared around the Icon once more.

There was a hint of mockery in the Icon's smile, but Alice ignored it.

This time, this cast wasn't aimed at killing her.

Instead, it was aimed at fulfilling the final conditions for her Triggered Cast.

Ruinous Void!

Summoning her personal Artifact in its entirety, Alice activated the artificial resonance!

Ambient energy sufficient, field has been prepared.

All conditions met!

Triggered Cast – Lance of Tiamat!

*BANG!!!!

A raw torrent of energy crashed down from above, surprising the Icon by the cast time as this kind of power shouldn't be possible to be activated immediately!

She wasn't able to put up the resistance she needed in time so her body took the brunt of the impact!

Unfurling the wings covering her eyes, golden tears streamed down her face.

[Don't look at her!]

'I know!'

Closing her eye, Alice began to circle the Icon with rapid uses of Void Step.

After activating Allura's Sigil of severance, she hasn't only been using it to cut away at the Icon.

In addition to everything that she's been doing, she had been actively using her power to cut away at the strands of energy holding this space together!

To clear her vision and see what's truly important and attack the tether connecting this host to her Outer God!

And finally, she found the twisted strands buried deep within the folds of this space.

Creating a singularity in her hand, a disk of energy began to whip at her surroundings, cutting anything and everything.

Twisting her body, she compressed the energy into a single arrow and activated the Ruinous Void's lance form!

Guaranteed hit!

*RUMBLE!!!

Flames, blood and metal converged to form a bow as Alice pulled back the arrow and took aim.

Coils of energy formed in front of the arrowhead as she fired!

*BANG!!!

Shooting through the coils, the arrow disappeared from view as it collided with the strand before exploding into a raging vortex of destruction, swallowing and shredding everything around it!

Immediately, the vile pulse of Eldritch energy began to decrease around the Icon as she widened her eyes in shock.

She couldn't summon anything!

Before she could react, Alice had already appeared behind her using Void Step!

*CRACK!!!

Without hesitation, she grabbed the two wings that had been covering her eyes a moment ago and tore them off!

Golden blood poured from her wounds, but Alice wasn't done.

Wrapping her hands around the Icon's head, she snapped the neck before pulling the head back.

From above, a spear of destructive energy pierced down, shredding her spine and tearing her body in half.

Flicking the golden blood from her hand away, Alice frowned after seeing the golden sheen not disappearing from her blood.

*Clap Clap Clap

"!!!"

Immediately jumping forward and turning around, she saw a strange woman standing not far from where she was just now.

"Dear lass, not bad at all. I thought you were going to rely on those strange chains again but that doesn't seem to be the case. In fact, you are awfully strange, aren't you? I thought I had trapped your soul in the Labyrinth of the Writhing Script, but you actually got out." Kazira clapped her hands before walking up to the corpse of the Icon.

Flicking her finger, she disposed of the body immediately.

"But it seems like my mistake was not confirming how many souls reside within one body." She sighed, making a circle with her index and thumb.

"Not even a crack of fear. Just wariness and hints of anger. I like it." Kazira was rather impressed.

After all, most people would hold some fear inside them when facing her yet Alice wasn't afraid. Instead, she was looking for ways to deal with her right now!

The kind of person Kazira enjoyed.

"Kazira, the Apostle of War. Care to tell me your name, fearless one?"

Chapter 639 - 639: Kazira's Power

Upon hearing that the woman in front of her was an Apostle, Alice's pupil constricted in shock.

Fighting Lords was one thing.

But an Apostle at her prime!?

'Cayla, I'll be honest with you. What are the odds of us running away from this place?' Alice furrowed her brows.

[. . . Zero.]

'And fighting her?'

[You already know the answer, don't you?] Cayla's smile twitched as she couldn't believe an Apostle would appear on her own.

'Yeah... Yeah I do.' Alice swallowed her saliva nervously.

Thanks to Old Man Mo's blood, she was able to access more Sigils than normal. But against an opponent like this, she needed something more familiar.

Therefore, Alice replaced the last two Sigils with her fourth and fifth Sigil that she switched out.

"Don't you think it's a little rude not to reply with your own name? After I was generous enough to introduce myself too." Kazira tilted her head while examining Alice's emotions.

She could see a slight panic after hearing who she was but she hadn't given up.

If it wasn't for the fact that she already seemed to be affiliated with a Divinity, Kazira would've been extremely tempted to recruit her into the Eclipse.

She was the kind of person who would thrive in chaos and combat.

"Sorry, just talking to the voices in my head." Alice forced a smile while using her Absolute Zone to try and figure a way out.

But as though reading her mind, Kazira flicked her finger and a cage manifested around the area.

"So who sent you? You have divinity and Eldritch energy in your body. Was it Enris? But knowing my Goddess, she wouldn't do something in such a roundabout way. You don't match the actions of the Sun nor do you match the Moon. Well... that's debatable." Kazira wondered while leaning towards Alice.

Since she had multiple souls in one body, assuming she was affiliated with the Moon wasn't too far fetched. But that was the only real similarity she had with them.

"How about none of them? What if I just naturally have Divinity in me?" Alice shrugged.

Since she was still being civil with her, Alice didn't want to make any unnecessary moves just yet.

She was trying to read the strands of energy around Kazira to figure out if she was here in her true body or using a host body. Ideally, it's the host body so she could just cut off the connection.

If not. . . She didn't even think about it.

"That's a possibility. The lass in the North playing Queen in her nation is trying just that. Sneaky one she is." Kazira chuckled as Alice couldn't help but frown.

If Verona was now on their radar, her attempt at reaching the divine throne could be in jeopardy.

It was already bad enough that the Zenia was now keeping an eye on them but the gods as well?

"Seems like you're not part of any faction after all. If you were part of the Eclipse, Enris would've told you if she entrusted you with divinity. And neither the Sun or Moon know of the North just yet." Kazira narrowed her eyes with a wide grin.

Just seeing Alice's reaction was enough for her to confirm some of her suspicions.

"So you must be a fourth unknown faction. And of all the factions I know... A potential fourth one with your level of divinity can only be... Abyss."

*CLANG!!!

Immediately creating a sword and overlapping it with her Shard of Kara, Alice barely managed to parry a sword slash from the right as her body slammed in the wall.

"A remnant of a forgotten faction. Seems like you guys are trying to gather together again. Lucky me that I managed to find you first." Kazira chuckled.

Taking several deep breaths, Alice gritted her teeth as that hit hurt a lot more than what she thought it would. In fact, it felt as though she was slammed by an immovable object that she couldn't even hold back for one moment.

'*Cough! Let... Let me. I can help out a little bit.' Alyss forced herself, but Alice shook her head.

'Get as much rest as you can for now. I'll see what I can do.'

*BANG!!!

Quickly rolling out of the way, Alice managed to dodge a barrage of rusted weapons before Kazira appeared in front of her.

Twisting her body, she kicked towards Alice's chest as she tried to block it with the Shard.

Once more, Alice widened her eye as an immovable wall of force slammed into her, sending her crashing into the rubble.

She couldn't figure out what the hell was going on but it was clear that she couldn't block Kazira's attacks!

"I can see that brain of yours trying to figure out my attacks. But how about this? I'll only tell if you if you interest me enough." Kazira smirked, flickering in front of Alice and punched towards her stomach.

Triggered Cast!

*BANG!!!

Right before the punch was about to land on Alice, a portal opened, redirecting the punch back at Kazira as her body was thrown back.

*Putu!

Spitting out some blood, Kazira pulled herself up from the rubble as a grin appeared on her face.

"That's right, it wouldn't be enjoyable if the prey just rolled over and accepted their fate. I was lacking a bit of divinity anyways, I'll simply take yours."

Meanwhile, Alice healed her wounds and furrowed her brows.

If she had 10 cells that she could use for that triggered cast, redirecting her fist alone took 9! The power and force behind her punch was almost enough to break the pathway to the Void.

Had she put more power behind it, Alice doubted her Triggered Cast would've been enough to deal with her.

At that moment, Alice saw a faceless figure in her peripherals.

A complete white silhouette with a toothy grin, mouthing certain words before disappearing.

"!!!"

Widening her eye, cold sweat began to drip down her back as Kazira suddenly froze in her step.

Veins began to bulge on her arm and neck as her eyes became bloodshot. Her anger was now clearly visible as a chaotic storm of crimson energy raged around her.

"Oi. Oi oi. What the f*ck do you think you're doing? Did you really think you have a chance? You dare? ANSWER ME WORM!!!" Kazira shouted, appearing in front of Alice in an instant as she unleashed a horizontal slash with the intention of killing her!

Artificial Resonance!

Using the power of the Void and her artifact, Alice immediately folded the space where Kazira was slashing!

It was similar to what Feris did to the Outer God's minion but at the same time, it was different. Simply put, it allowed the slash to phase through her body!

*BANG!!!

Quickly turning her body, Alice detonated a Void Flux between them, hoping to push Kazira away. And while she was pushed away successfully, Kazira wasn't moved at all! In fact, she maintained her momentum towards Alice!

Crimson vein-like patterns emerged across her arm as Kazira's eyes locked onto Alice's personal artifact.

Sensing danger, Alice activated her defence, overlapping both the Shard of Kara, Violet Flames and the Void.

*CRACK!!! SHATTER!!!

The instant her fist came into contact with the Shard, cracks began to form across the surface as the relic was broken apart! Alice immediately felt the connection between them being sundered as she could no longer control the shield!

'Sh*t!' Quickly creating a portal to create some distance between them, Alice watched the raging storm of energy increase as Kazira was truly livid.

With good reason too.

After all, outside of Cayla's control, the Will of the Abyss has designated the Apostle of War as Alice's sixth target for her Sigil!

*RUMBLE!!!

Feeling the ground tremble beneath her, Alice glanced up and watched as energy converged around Kazira's body.

Resonance!

Kazira's outfit began to shift as a pair of horns manifested on her head. Behind her, a halo of obsidian shards and wings of rusted weaponry unfurled. Strange black energy crawled up her arm, turning into a kind of glove despite containing Eldritch power.

Black tears streaked down the sides of her face as the marking bearing a resemblance to the icon of the Eclipse disappeared. Only to be replaced with a hole containing a floating icon in the same pattern.

The jutting pieces of obsidian that could be previously seen across her body now fully manifested into a set of armour.

"Law of Conflict." Kazira spoke plainly yet filled with rage.

Around them, space began to contort as Alice immediately felt her connection to the Void falter.

It wasn't that she couldn't use the abilities, but rather she couldn't teleport outside of this location!

She was locked into combat with the Apostle of War.

"I will now let you know the full weight behind your insult. To dare proclaim the Apostle of a God as prey, to dare even dream of claiming my power. I will burn that fear into your soul." Kazira glared as she disappeared from her spot.

Absolute Zone!

'Behind!'

Gritting her teeth, Alice activated her Physical Resonance!

Duality + First Sigil + Third Sigil!

The instant Kazira's attack was about to hit, Alice's body transformed into blood and shifted out of the way.

*BANG!!!

Watching her attack miss, Kazira clenched her fist and activated her Sigil.

Immediately sensing an attraction force from Kazira, Alice felt a wave of danger and deactivated her Physical Resonance before attempting an upward slash.

*CLANG!!!

Retaliating with a downward slash of her own, Kazira managed to push Alice back.

Sliding back, Alice narrowed her gaze.

She was slowly figuring out Kazira's abilities but things weren't looking good!

But she had to admit...

If there was no way for her to escape...

Why shouldn't she try to kill an Apostle?

Chapter 640 - 640: Fighting The Apostle Of War

Seeing the grin that appeared on Alice's face, Kazira had a new sense of anger rise up in her chest.

This mortal, this cretin, actually believes she could kill her?

HER?

The Apostle of War?

Retainer of the God of the Eclipse?

Gritting her teeth in anger, Kazira disappeared from her location and appeared behind Alice.

Countless rusted weapons hovered around her as she took aim and fired!

Physical Resonance!

Turning her body into blood once more, Alice barely dodged as she created a wave of blood mist.

However, Kazira's control of energy wasn't affected!

Sanguine Tribute!

Clenching her fist, Kazira tried to gather the blood only for Alice to deactivate her state and jump back.

"Rat!" Kazira cursed, seeing Alice continuously run away.

Grabbing a rusted sword, she plunged it into the ground before pulling it out.

There was now a strange crimson energy coating the surface of the blade as Alice's senses were overwhelmed by the sense of danger.

Yet before her Absolute Zone could even pick up the attack, in the next moment, she felt a slash through her stomach.

"!!!"

Widening her eye, she glanced down and saw that she had been cut. Everything in a horizontal line had been cut!

Blood converged towards her wounds as darkened limbs healed the slash.

"Yeah, that's what I thought. You shouldn't even dare dream of killing me without being able to survive that slash." Kazira grinned as crimson energy began to escape from her body. Cracks formed across the surface as divinity began to leak.

This sense of suppression, Alice felt a chill down her spine but she couldn't stop here.

Just as Alice was about to attack, another slash was sent towards her as Alice instinctively turned to the side.

*BANG!!!!

Her arm was separated from that slash.

"Fancy that, I was thinking of cutting you in half down the middle."

Appearing in front of Alice, Kazira tried to grab her by the throat only for her hand to phase through, but she was prepared for this.

Stomping down, rusted weapons exploded from the ground around them, forcing Alice to create portals in order to avoid them.

"Get back here!"

Reaching out with her hand, Kazira summoned rusted chains that lunged after Alice.

'Let me!'

Swapping out with Alice, Alyss narrowed her gaze and created a pair of dual blades.

*CLANG!!!

Unleashing a net of slashes, she was able to fend off the attack only for the golden chains to bite into her wrist, causing her to hiss out in pain.

"Gotcha!" Kazira grinned, appearing above Alyss.

In her hands, a pair of infernal chained dual blades like the one Jin used appeared as she twisted her body and slashed down.

"Right back at you!" Alice took over with a grin.

In an instant, the wings of Tiamat unfurled behind her as the conditions for her Triggered Cast were met!

Coils of amplification manifested between them as a singularity spun to life above Alice's palm.

Duality + Tiamat + Severance!

*RUMBLE!!!!

A line of raw energy pierced forward in an attempt to destroy Kazira's head, but she managed to block at the last moment!

Her body was sent crashing back into the wall but Alice didn't let up on her onslaught!

This was the time, the chance!

'Unleash everything you got!' Alice motivated herself.

Physical Resonance!

Artificial Resonance!

Resonance!

With all three versions of her resonance now activated, Alice could feel the surge of power pulsing through her body but she wasn't done.

The ability that she held back on using because she was afraid of the consequences.

At this point, she had no choice but to use it!

Scarlet Wings, Demonic Descent!

Blood coagulated around Tiamat's wings, mutating and transforming them into a pair of demonic dragon wings, tattered and leaking with energy.

Abyss Artifacts!

Alice could feel the beat of her heart, pulsing with Abyssal energy. Each beat formed a stronger connection to the realm as obsidian shards began to gather above her head, forming a twisted crown.

She could feel the pain in her right eye, a slight tremble but the seal didn't undo itself.

However, this much was good enough.

Halo of Ruin!

Around the obsidian crown, a crimson halo spun to life, fusing with the crown as energy began to siphon towards Alice from her surroundings.

From her wings, strands of energy that was usually invisible to people were fully manifested. Tendrils that latched onto her surroundings with pulses of light entering through them and into Alice's body.

She could feel the Sigils lightning up with a glow, a large influx of energy that coursed through her veins.

Bloodline Release!

Behind her, a spectral image of her soul manifested.

And the final nail in the coffin...

Crimson Immolation!

*BANG!!!

A berserk state where all of her abilities are automatically raised to the next level. During this state, the timer of her exile will burn much faster in exchange for unyielding power!

This was everything that Alice could activate. All of her knowledge, all of her powers, all of her preparation.

Void Steps!

"Do you think turning yourself into a glorified light show will save you?!" Kazira shouted, bursting out from the smoke with a wild laugh.

Twisting her body, she spun the chains and threw the blades towards Alice who clasped her hands together.

Void Erasure!

*BANG!!!

The energy of the Void collapse around the space they resisted as Kazira widened her eyes.

*CRACK!!!

A singularity spun to life with Alice in the centre, a maelstrom of destructive energy whipped out with countless slashes being thrown in all directions, all imbued with the energy of severance!

The cage that Kazira created showed signs of fracture as a vein bulged around her neck.

Second resonance!

Throne of the Warborn!

She wanted to forcefully drag Alice into her personal realm so that she could end this fight!

However, to her shock, Alice appeared in front of her using Void Steps.

Fractured Form!

Activating her personal artifact, the space around them cracked like glass as even her artifact was upgraded thanks to her Crimson Immolation!

Grabbing Kazira by the face, Alice twisted her body and threw her towards the walls of this cage.

Energy converged around Alice as she fired off a barrage of Void Fluxes towards Kazira!

Authority of War!

*BANG!!!

From the dust, a spire of flames erupted as Alice immediately felt her power being suppressed!

"The drums of War beat to my will. Conflict is inevitable, Struggle is eternal. I am the blade that ensures it never ceases. I am the general, I am the warrior, I am the battlefield! I. Am. WAR!" Kazira roared as her giant armoured form burst out of the flames with a giant blade in hand.

Widening her eye in shock, Alice had to dodge!

But where?!

The blade was far too big and even its thinnest edge dwarfed her in size!

Forcefully taking over, Alyss ignored the pain from the chains and glared at the Apostle of War.

Since everything has been forcefully levelled up, so has her own powers!

Gritting her teeth, violet flames erupted from her body as Alyss lunged towards the sword slashing down on their location.

Destruction Point!

She could see the convergence of energy around the blade, the weakness that she can exploit.

'Body don't fail me now!' Reinforcing her arm with as much energy as she could, Alyss pulled her fist back as flames hissed around her fist.

***BANG!!!!**

Punching the face of the blade, cracks began to form but Alyss wasn't done. She couldn't stop here. Just hitting one point wasn't enough to break the blade, she needed to hit all of the points!

Phantom Shift!

Destruction Point!

Transforming into a streak of crimson that dashed up the blade, Alyss continued to unleash a barrage of punches reinforced with everything she's got. As she arrived at the final node, she created a blade of blood and metal.

Void Flux – Cleave!

*KRK!!!!

Breaking the blade in half, Alyss wanted to continue but an invisible force slammed into her from above, sending her crashing into the ground.

Alyss felt as though the weight of the world was crushing down on her as she could barely move a finger never mind her whole body.

"How does it feel? The weight of war? The souls lost and the countless slain. To take up your sword means to bear its weight. Heavy isn't it?" Kazira asked as she grabbed another giant blade from the graveyard and raised it above her head.

However, as the blade was falling towards Alyss, Kazira couldn't help but notice movement.

Golden chains disappeared as Alice took over with energy roaring around her body.

"Honestly, it's lighter than some of the sh*t that Allura hit me with in the past." Alice chuckled as she decided to gamble.

She switched out to a Sigil she wasn't familiar with.

Originally, switching out to his power only allowed her to summon certain beasts.

But if it was a fragment of his soul, it should give her access to something more.

Darkness began to spread from Alice's shadow as raven feathers fluttered in the wind.

Her hair turned pitch black while a layer of energy overlapped the wings on her back, turning it into a coat of sorts.

The crown and the heart began to form a resonance with the Sigil that Alice had just replaced.

From the resonance of these three, Alice could feel a connection digging deep into the archives of the Abyss.

A tether linking to a dormant authority.

She seen it before.

She seen him perform it before.

She seen his artifact. Right now, she felt like she could do it.

Snapping her finger, darkness began to converge into a single corrupted grimoire.