

Abyssal A 70

Chapter 70 The Old Driver's Past

Finding herself back in the strange realm where she saw projections of the different beasts she could hunt, Alice felt a chill run down her spine. She immediately turned around and saw the eye staring back at her.

Sensing it judging her, Alice wanted to leave. However, she was unable to. Her body was rooted in place and her mind was imprisoned within this realm, a helpless subject to the whims of the eye.

Unable to utter a word, she could only stand still as the eye slowly scanned her up and down.

[Weak... Strange... Abnormal?... Impossibility...]

A voice rang out in her mind. It was the sound of a woman speaking to her.

[No one should be able to drink deep of the Abyss's strength and come out unscathed...]

[But you? How does the Abyss have no hold over you? Why?]

[Strange... Very strange...]

Squinting towards Alice as though trying to see something within her, the eye closed itself before opening once more.

[My slumber encroaches once more... But the time of my awakening is nigh, try to stay alive till then, my strange new master...]

[Leave.]

"!!!"

Snapping her eyes open, Alice realised that she was now back at the camp with Ria next to her. Both of them had some rudimentary first aid performed on their body. They were still wearing their damaged clothing, however.

Looking to the side, she noticed the old driver sleeping by an extinguished campfire.

Realising that he must've saved them, Alice couldn't help but wonder about what happened to the other Cultists. Shaking her head, she wanted to stand up but felt pain shoot through her body.

Looking down, she saw some blood seeping through the bandages as she looked under the layers and saw that her skin was suffering from large rips and tears on the surface.

Glancing into her bag, she saw that she only had one vial of blood left — the berserk vial — and her extraction kit was completely destroyed.

"Hng... Oh, you're awake." The old driver grumbled as he was woken up from his sleep by all of the noise.

With both Alice and Ria taken out of commission, he had to keep himself in a state of light sleep so he could react to any changes in their surroundings.

"Mhm, did you see what happened? Was there anyone else?" Alice asked, but the driver shook his head.

"All I saw was you two passed out and a beast running away. It looked like a fight took place, and I didn't want to stick around if I could help it, so I carried the two of you and drove away. I don't know if there was anyone else, but they never paid me, so they're not high on my priority list." He chuckled while making himself comfortable.

"Thank you."

Alice didn't want to ask if he had taken anything as he did save their lives. But she couldn't help but wonder why he didn't just loot their body and then run away.

"What's with that look, lass? I can't read minds so just ask me whatever you want." The driver sighed.

"Erm... why didn't you take our money and leave? It was more dangerous if you stayed." Alice asked.

"Is that the situation you hoped would've happened?" The driver raised an eyebrow in confusion, but Alice shook her head.

"Well... Even for me, there are bottom lines I don't like to cross. If there was a big danger to my life, then I won't show myself. However, I judged that there was no issue at that time. So, I did what I could. Young hunters like you die early because they don't judge the danger they are in and pass out." The driver sighed while tilting his head back.

"I was a hunter like you, many... many long winters ago. I was out hunting with my wife one time, and got forced into a hard battle. Both of us were pushed to the edge but we survived and passed out before we could get to safety. But because we passed out, we couldn't stop another beast from taking us away. She was eaten and I was saved as food for later.

I was lucky to survive and played dead until I could run away." The driver smiled bitterly as he unbuttoned his shirt and revealed his chest to Alice.

There was a gruesome scar across his chest with several deep grooves where his ribs should have been. But, it had caved in. Those were scars that couldn't be healed by healing blood due to the passage of time.

Seeing this, Alice couldn't help but wonder what the driver's condition would have been when he first received those wounds.

"I doubt a young lady like you would like to have wounds like these. So, next time, learn to run to safety even if you're about to pass out. When you're out in the wild, danger is lurking around every corner." He chuckled while sighing softly.

Giving the old driver a nod, Alice felt grateful that he took them out of the forest. Just as she was about to lay down, she noticed something flicker above his head. Focusing her eyes on that, it slowly revealed itself to be 4 markings that resembled Sigils.

'What is that?' Alice wondered to herself.

"Erm... You said you were a hunter before, right?" Alice asked as the driver nodded in response.

"How many Sigils did you have?"

"My Sigils? I have four of them. Though being a driver rarely requires their uses. I hardly use them anymore, unless I need to defend myself." He chuckled.

Hearing this, Alice nodded her head, wondering if the thing she was seeing turned out to be accurate.

'The eye mentioned that it was waking up soon... Does that mean more of its abilities were unlocked? What did I do to- ah... perhaps borrowing other Sigil powers caused the eye to wake up sooner...' Alice thought with a frown before glancing at Ria.

Focusing her gaze, she noticed 3 markings above her head, signifying the power of three Sigils.

'Slowing down perceived time, choosing Sigils and being able to obtain information on others that would normally be impossible... And this is before the eye wakes up.' Alice thought to herself in disbelief.

With that information, she wondered how strong the original owner of the eye was and what it could do at full power.

'Kaden gave something like this to me... What do he and Allura expect from me?'

With questions in her mind, Alice decided to sleep for now and recover her strength.

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In an unknown area, Allura was sitting atop a mountain of corpses, all with strange scars freshly carved into their backs.

She was covered with splashes of blood but nonetheless pulled out a cigarette.

Taking a large breath, she sighed in annoyance.

"What the hell is happening over at Alice's area..." She frowned. As much as she wanted to leave, she could not make it there in time. She was too far away for that. Even if she was to go at her full speed, it would be too late.

During her mission, she sensed Alice's connection with the Abyss and the Eye waning before reaching a level where the Eye almost woke up, only for her to fall back to the verge of death.

With constant fluctuations of such a degree, Allura had several questions for Alice when she returned.

However, her main concern was what she was dealing with now.

The strange blood rituals that were happening all over the Abyss concerned her. Their faith and belief did not belong to any of the major religions she knew of.

"This isn't the work of Famine or War. Preservation wouldn't do something like this, nor would Protection. Those two are too far up their arse to bother with something like this. Immortality and Spirituality wouldn't go through such a roundabout method to achieve their goals..." Allura muttered. None of this matched the behaviour or beliefs of any Apostle nor did it match their gods.

The God of Eclipses would reject this kind of suffering devoid of War or Famine. Sun rejected the methods involving blood to this degree. Moon enjoyed enforcing her mask of benevolence and would never allow her followers to perform such demonic rituals.

Scratching her hair in annoyance, Allura snapped her finger and set the pile of corpses beneath her aflame before walking over to the leader of the corpses. She had kept him alive in order to interrogate him and find out what he knew.

'I don't have any interrogation Sigils. I didn't bring anyone over either. Tsk, I doubt he'll survive long enough for me to take him to an interrogator.' Allura spat out before standing before the man.

He was currently chained against the wall with his limbs bound and broken. He was hanging onto the edge of his life as Allura had stopped him from committing suicide not long ago. With no healing blood on hand, this was the best she could do.

"Oi, answer me. What were you doing here?" Allura asked while lifting his head with a hand.

"Hehehe, I didn't tell you earlier... I wouldn't tell you now... Stay in your world of confusion while everything you know changes before your very eyes." The man laughed weakly while Allura could only glare at him with frustration.

It was in moments like these where she wished she had obtained an interrogation style Sigil instead of going full battle junkie.

'If Kaden, that bastard, was here, he would be able to sort out this sh*t easily.' Allura scratched her head.

They had balanced each other out, while she focused on combat he worked from the shadows.

"Last warning, either tell me or die." Allura said coldly.

The man smiled at her.

"Tsk."

Grabbing his head, she crushed it with her hand before flicking the flesh away. Just as she was about to walk away, she froze in place.

There was a faint trail of energy in the air, barely distinguishable, but Allura could never forget this feeling.

Veins bulged on her forearm and neck as she could feel her blood rushing through her entire body. Her eyes were bloodshot and a rage from long ago flared up in her heart. She immediately turned back to look at it.

The trace of energy belonged to the body of a dead god.