

Abyssal A 701

Chapter 701 - 701: Voruth'Zals Goal

Astrelya hovered in the air. Her expression was one of pure, untainted bliss. The blush on her face akin to a young maiden experiencing her first love.

Despite the ghastly wound on her chest, she closed her eyes to savour this emotion.

The rivers of time have long since frozen her heart. No pleasure stirred her, no pain moved her.

Her world dulled to a grey.

She lost everything that gave her world colour.

But now, the passion, the possibilities, have thawed this cage of apathy that had entombed her soul. Once more, she could feel life in her veins.

A spark, a heartbeat.

Finally, she's obtained a new target for her affection.

Across from her, Alice stood still, frowning.

The realm that Astrelya had constructed, one of starlight and the stellar sea was collapsing around them. Through the gaps, they could now see the fortress of Zhenha.

Astrelya made no move to attack and Alice wanted to believe that she finally satisfied this eccentric Lord. That this monstrous girl was content, for now.

But no satisfaction stirred in her chest. Only dread.

Her eye traced the wound that she left on Astrelya's chest. The way it slowly vanished, how the flesh folded in on itself, skin stitching shut as though time was rewinding on the damage done.

By her calculations, this shouldn't be possible.

That last slash. . . It was unleashed with the intention of stopping the regeneration of a Lord through corruption. The space her body 'occupied' should've been fragmented, her form disrupted by several layers of energy. Corruption that ate away at the flesh, stopping the regeneration.

Yet that didn't happen.

The wound regenerated all the same.

'I think this IS her hindered regeneration. The original speed is just insane.' Alyss spoke out with a slight frown.

Hell, even the mutations were being driven back.

Alice's breath faltered for a moment. She took a closer look and saw that Eldritch energy was indeed working, corroding and fighting Astrelya's regeneration.

But it simply couldn't keep up.

'Do you think. . .' Alice furrowed her brows. 'It's a contract with an Outer God? To gain some form of resistance to Eldritch energy?'

If not, Alice couldn't see how Astrelya could achieve this kind of result. However, even if this was the most likely theory, Alice couldn't sense a speck of Eldritch power from Astrelya.

It was completely Abyssal in nature.

Once her wounds have healed, Astrelya glanced down and clenched her fist a few times to make sure it was fine.

Then she looked up at Alice and smiled.

"!!!"

Before Alice could even say anything, Astrelya was already in front of her. One blink and the space between them was crossed, bypassing her Zone!

Alice's pupil constricted. Much like Kaine, Astrelya also had a method of bypassing the Zone! To deceive one's senses even though she was right in front of her!

Astrelya reached out with her arms as Alice tried her best to prepare a Void bomb. To return things back to zero and erase Abyss energy for a moment.

But the attack never appeared. Instead, Astrelya hugged her.

"Eh?"

A tight embrace wrapped around Alice. Warm and uncomfortably firm, one that Alice couldn't shake off.

"Ahhh! How did you do it?" Astrelya sang in a delighted tone, spinning the split haired girl in her arms around like a child with her favourite doll. "How did you bypass that attack with just five Sigils? There's Abyssal. . . Eldritch, Void running around in this tiny body of yours. And what's with all those Resonances? One from Sigils, one from that artifact of yours and another from the harmonization of energy. As expected of my darling~"

Alice was struck by sheer bewilderment.

There were no signs of hostility or flowing energy. No killing intent.

Astrelya was simply excited and happy.

But most surprising of all, despite the lack of energy, her physical power was monstrously high. Alice felt like she was being tossed around like a ragdoll, unable to fight back.

If she was any weaker, Alice felt like her neck might've snapped from the force being applied to her body right now.

"Ahh~ So many things I want to do with you. But. . . *Sigh, your full attention isn't on me. You're breaking my poor heart~" Astrelya lamented, letting Alice go.

Quickly jumping back, Alice watched as Astrelya rest her cheek on her palm.

"My dear, what's on your mind?" She asked, her voice soft and intimate. "During the fight you didn't put your all into it, and it doesn't seem like it's something we can deal with immediately."

Alice's smile twitched.

How can a woman go from unleashing an attack that could kill her to talking as though they were a couple.

"Before that, can you tell me why you were even in the fortress? If you were looking for a fight to entertain yourself, can't you just fight against other Lords or hell, even Apostles if you're stronger than average Lords?"

"My dear, I've already told you before. Normal Lords can't satisfy me, they have too many things going on in their heads to give me the fight I want." Astrelya shook her head with a pout. "Apostles. . . Well, either I get killed quickly or by chance I win, their Gods will be after my neck. That's not the kind of transcendent death that I want."

"W-wait! There is. . . One I guess. But don't misunderstand my dear! I'm not cheating on you okay?" Astrelya panicked with Alice holding back the urge to facepalm.

"Though this is no place for us to talk, I'll get embarrassed if people see me fawning over you my dear. At the end of the day, I'm still a Lord." Astrelya squirmed with embarrassment.

Alice sighed and looked up at the sky. It was going to be a long. . . long day.

###

Suyin sat stiffly at the table within Fortress Zhenha.

In the past week, she has seen many things she never thought possible. Her thoughts and common sense had been rewritten. Theories shattered, experiments showing her the new ceiling of power.

Even strange beasts not of their world, the corruptive properties of their blood.

And at the source of it all, the catalyst for these changes and discoveries, is Alice.

A split haired girl housing four different energies. A miracle of life itself and a walking calamity. One that can somehow casually ascend to the realm of Lord.

Yet it seems like breaking Suyin's common sense once wasn't enough for her. No, every time Suyin thinks things can't possibly get worse or perhaps 'better'? Alice decides to one up her.

To prove her wrong.

To shatter her common sense once more.

On her right, Jin was speechless.

On her left, Isolde watched with the same smile as always yet Suyin could see the sweat on her neck. Not even Isolde knew how to react in this situation.

And as for the scene in front of her. . .

Alice was sat down in a chair with Astrelya sitting on her thighs. The Lord of stars was kicking her legs back and forth in giddiness while trying to feed Alice some food.

Meanwhile, Alice stared blankly as though she was a dead fish. Not even she knew what was going through Astrelya's head.

"My dear are you not hungry? Hmm, perhaps I should make something for you to eat instead." Astrelya tilted her head.

"Please don't. But can we please get back on track?" Alice was almost begging as Astrelya was pretty much lost in her own world. Her own fantasy.

Yet she was the best source of information that they could get right now.

Seeing Alice speak to a Lord like this, Suyin didn't dare to make a single sound.

"Fineeee~ If you say so my dear. The one who convinced me to wait at this fortress is Voruth'Zal, the Outer God responsible for this invasion." Astrelya pouted as she hopped off from Alice.

"What he desires is simple. It's not territory, not power. You can't even say he wants to wipe you guys out. What he wants is casualties." Astrelya took a look at the map that Suyin laid out.

"He wants as many casualties as possible on both sides. Either at your fortress or the battle in the south. He even wanted my corpse on the off chance that my dear fulfils my desires and fights me with all her heart. But her love is turned elsewhere right now." Astrelya shed a silent tear.

No one responded.

Not phased by the silence, Astrelya continued.

"Kazzie is being helped by him. Apparently to make a suitable vessel since her current body is falling apart."

"Wait, Kazzie? Who's that?" Jin asked curiously.

"Kazira, Apostle of War. I was tempted to ask her for a fight when I heard that she lost the favour of her God. But her focus is entirely on my darling here. She wants you dead more than anything." Astrelya clarified. "She won't be able to give me the Elysium I desire."

Listening to this, Alice folded her arms.

Voruth'Zal wants casualties? Why?

And more than that, he wanted Astrelya's corpse? Was it so that Kazira could have a vessel? If her form is falling apart, she won't be able to put up a proper fight.

If so, a vessel is absolutely necessary.

"Wouldn't he be complaining that you didn't fight me to the death? Or that no casualties occurred because we began to fight." Alice asked curiously but Astrelya shook her head.

She saw on the table facing Alice.

"My death would've been preferable but not an absolute. He received quite a few high quality casualties a while ago apparently." Astrelya shrugged.

While her collaboration with Voruth'Zal was a temporary one, he didn't seem to mind the fact that she was overhearing a lot of his conversations.

Meanwhile, Alice froze after hearing Astrelya's words.

High quality casualties. . .

The massacre she caused against the Zenia's in the Void.

Chapter 702 - 702: Preparations Against Voruth'Zal

If Astrelya's words were correct, then Alice might've express delivered the materials that Voruth'Zal has been wanting.

Corpses of Hybrids and the forces of the Zenia's all for him to use without care.

On top of everything, Alice doubted that Feris would be kind enough to erase all traces of them. She had already isolated that part of the Void after all. What goes on in there was no longer her business.

However, even if Voruth'Zal wanted a lot of corpses, a vessel only required one.

[Unless he's planning on merging them together.] Cayla suggested as Alice nodded her head.

That was the other option, to merge vessels together and achieve a body with the best compatibility with Kazira.

If her body isn't suitable enough, she won't even be able to showcase half of her strength.

Apostle or not, having a vessel that can't contain their power was. . .

Clenching her fist, Alice now understood the seriousness of Allura's wound.

The sneak attack from Famine that caused irreparable damage to her vessel.

[Don't think too much about Allura's case right now, Kaden is sorting that out. Right now, we need to figure out how you can kill Kazira without exposing yourself due to the nature of the bounty. If you are knocked out while enemies are still around, Voruth'Zal can easily steal you away.] Cayla reminded.

They couldn't afford to have Alice distracted right now since killing Kazira meant a halt in the fight.

She cannot avoid the modifications brought forth by obtaining her bounty.

Therefore, there has to be a specific order to how she does things.

Kazira absolutely had to be the last thing she killed otherwise the chances of death increase drastically.

"Do you know when they are planning to attack next? Or are they going to keep retreating?" Suyin asked hesitantly.

She didn't want to annoy the Abyss Lord with her questions, no matter how infatuated they may seem with Alice right now.

"Dunno~" Astrelya stuck out her tongue.

"Be serious." Alice let out a sigh.

"Fine. If you say so my dear. Voruth'Zal shouldn't be retreating any more. I'm not sure when he'll attack but attack he will. There's no question about it. I wouldn't be surprised if the boorish fellow attacked tonight when everyone is resting." Astrelya played around with her nails.

"As for Kazzie. . . she's got a leash around her neck courtesy of Voruth'Zal. She won't do anything he says she shouldn't. At least for a moment.

"But if you're so worried about it, do you want me to make a move? I'm sure that I can handle any Lord that they throw at me." Astrelya chuckled, leaning towards Alice.

However, Alice shoved her face away.

"No thank you. It'll be stupid to escalate things further. Since you made a move, it's confirmed that a Lord has intervened. Do you still think it's safe for common soldiers to fight right now?" Alice rolled her eye.

"I don't think you have to worry about that for now. To my knowledge, I was the only Lord nearby. The north hasn't sent reinforcements and neither has the south. Though news has certainly travelled." Astrelya pouted with Alice pushing her away.

But she didn't mind. In fact, she preferred this kind of chaotic push and pull between them. Having Alice relent would make things too boring.

There were two sources of enjoyment that she could extract from this relationship. First was simply being around Alice and see what she brings to the table. The second was love in death, the one that Astrelya preferred.

Patience is a virtue. Alice wasn't wholeheartedly devoted to her yet, love in death won't occur.

Therefore, Astrelya will wait. She wait, wait and keep waiting. The target of her affection is alive and next to her. Her chance will come, this time she won't let her fun end so soon.

"How likely is it for Lords to interfere in the next battle? If let's say. . . An Apostle was to die?" Alice asked.

Blinking her eyes, Astrelya let out a charming laugh before sitting up straight.

"If Kazzie was to die in the next battle, Lords will definitely appear for two reasons. One, to kill whatever is strong enough to end an Apostle. Two, to see if they can siphon some power for themselves." She held up two fingers.

"And which side are you?" Alice furrowed her brows.

If there was even the slightest chance that Astrelya could become their enemy the moment Kazira dies, Alice would rather end things here and now.

Hearing Alice's silent threat, Jin and Suyin felt their hearts slam against their chest as cold sweat filled their back.

They were screaming questions and bloody murder towards Alice but dare not make a single peep.

Beneath the surface, Isolde was also preparing to fight if it came down to it. With a Lord being this close, even if she wasn't the main target, there was a high chance that she'd get caught in the crossfire.

With this kind of risk, she'd rather make the first move!

Astrelya was silent. Her fingers twirled her hair, bringing it up to her smile. Her eyes focused on Alice. She allowed the silence to drag on before bursting out in laughter.

"Pft! My dear, I'm on my own side. I care not for the power of an Apostle nor do I wish to kill whatever is strong enough to kill one. A transcendent death is all I want. And right now, you're the only one that can give it to me. However. . ." Astrelya leaned towards Alice.

"Don't keep me waiting too long okay? Someone more suitable might come along."

"If they do then congrats, you'll get your wish fulfilled early." Alice shoved her face away once more, not afraid of the silent implications that she was giving.

Seeing this, Astrelya shivered in joy as she wrapped around Alice and hugged her from behind.

"Kya~ So cold! But that's what I love about you!"

"Is there anything that you don't love?" Alice clicked her tongue in annoyance as a vein bulged on her neck.

"Nope~ As long as it's you I love everything." Astrelya smiled.

Letting out a groan, Alice tried to break free but failed.

"Since you have such overwhelming affection, why don't you do me a favour and make sure the other Lords don't think your intervention is a ticket for them to join. Keep things between non Lords for now."

Tilting her head for a moment, Astrelya smiled.

"Nope."

"What do you mean no?" Alice raised an eyebrow in mild surprise.

"If Lords join, you'll be forced to grow even faster. And if you grow faster, you'll reach my level soon. Once you do, we'll be able to have our fight to the death."

"And if I die because a bunch of Lords joined?" Alice frowned.

In the pursuit of a perfect death, there was more than a few screws loose for Astrelya.

"Then you're not the one I'm looking for in the end. It'll simply be a shame but I'll restart my journey searching for a beloved that can deliver onto me the death I desire." Astrelya shrugged.

"So you're just going to be a perv that keeps watching what's going to happen to me then?"

"Iya~ So mean. But I suppose I am crossing the line a little. Just for you my dear, I'll hold back a little okay?" Astrelya winked as she stepped away.

Stars started to form around her with constellations expanding with each step.

"I'll give some of the Lords a talk and keep them at bay as much as possible okay? But if they decide to intervene in the end, I'll let you sort it out." Astrelya winked before disappearing in a mass of starlight.

Staring blankly, the group was silent.

The Lord completely left this space, off to do her own thing.

Now that they were left alone, Suyin snapped her head towards Alice.

"What. The. F*ck. Why is a Lord calling you her dear?" Suyin asked, holding back the urge to throw a table at Alice.

"it just happened." Alice shrugged.

"F*ck off. A Lord doesn't just, 'happen', to call you her love." Suyin's smile twitched furiously.

"Do you think I want a Lord stalking me and calling me her other half? I already got one pervert watching everything I do. I don't need another one." Alice pointed towards Isolde who simply shrugged.

"Yeah well you're the abnormal one attracting freaks to your side!" Suyin felt as though she was losing her mind.

"Aren't you just insulting yourself with that?"

"Did I ever say I wasn't a freak? Have you seen my experiments???" Suyin rolled her eyes.

[She's not wrong.]

'She's got you there.'

Both Alyss and Cayla were surprised by Suyin's honesty. But if they thought about it, she has always been rather upfront with her thoughts and didn't hold stuff back.

Alice was stunned for a moment, unsure about what she could even say in this situation.

"Alright, let's calm down for a moment." Jin decided to be the voice of reason.

"Now that we know what we know, are we still making camp here? I feel like if Voruth'Zal is going to attack anyways, we should do prepare as best we can." He suggested.

Hearing this, Suyin raised an eyebrow.

"Explain."

"Well we know Kazira is solely focused on Alice more than anything. Even with Voruth'Zal holding her back.

"What if we cause a disagreement between the two using Alice?"

Hearing Jin's suggestion, Alice was about to respond before pausing.

She repeated his words in her mind before realising something.

"Are you suggesting your master become bait for an Outer God and an Apostle?" Alice cracked her knuckles.

"Your words, not mine." Jin coughed.

Plus, it was a slight revenge for strapping a bomb to him during the bridge chase.

But for Suyin, his words held some merit. . .

Chapter 703 - 703: Baiting Out Kazira and Voruth'Zal

Standing upright with her arms folded, Alice had a blank expression on her face while her hair fluttered in the wind.

She thought back to the discussion she had with the group and the. . . experiment they did conducted afterwards.

Alice only had one thought in mind.

'I can't f*cking believe it worked.' She thought flatly, resisting the urge to slam her face into her palm.

Never in her life did she think that the Will would actually agree to such a thing and yet, here they were.

[Honestly it's probably easier to try and guess what the Outer Gods want than to figure out the intentions behind what the Will does.] Cayla sighed.

'I mean if you really think about it, it's technically ours to begin with. He's the one who took it away without consent.' Alyss shrugged her shoulders.

Nodding her head in agreement, Alice glanced up at the sky and let out a deep sigh.

In order for her to be a good bait for Voruth'Zal and Kazira, they needed something that'll force them to move.

Just having Alice on the field wasn't enough. There needed to be something. . . more.

Something that Kazira will absolutely have to move for. Something that she couldn't pass up the chance to get.

Something to push her over the edge and fight against Voruth'Zal's decision no matter the consequences.

Unfolding her arms, Alice activated her Sigils and blood threads manifested from her body.

Beside her, a portal split open. She reached inside with the threads, grasping at something beyond the rift.

"Kazira!" She shouted with a mocking tone. "I know you're watching. How does it feel? To run away with your tail between your legs? To run away from a weak little five Sigil mortal?"

"You want to take the divine throne? Don't make me laugh! And here you are calling yourself the Apostle of War! Why don't you change your name to Apostle of Cowardice!? Maybe that'll fit better!" Alice grinned. With a vicious tug of the threads, she ripped her prize from the portal.

***RUMBLE!!!**

From the portal, a figure began to emerge.

Red threads weaved through the limbs with Alice becoming the puppeteer.

Her threads dug through the flesh like hooks, pulling the prize into position.

And the moment its full form stepped into view. . .

A tsunami of killing intent slammed into the area!

In the sky, energy began to take the shape of Kazira who glared at Alice with a pair of enraged eyes.

The clouds parted, energy crackled across the firmament.

Veins bulged around her temple and neck, looking as though they could burst at any moment.

"ALICE!!!" Kazira roared with the earth trembling beneath her.

But Alice simply grinned. Wide, vicious, mocking.

As expected, to someone like Kazira, this was the biggest insult they could hurl towards her.

Someone who had abandoned everything to live, someone who had lost everything.

To Kazira, this was probably her last straw.

After all, beside Alice, suspended like a puppet on display, stood the corpse of Kazira that was being crudely used as a puppet. An insult and violation of her mortal vessel.

###

A day ago.

"Alright, say I do agree to your point of becoming a bait for the Outer God and the Apostle. I still don't think it's enough to draw them out. They want casualties and I've already shown myself quite a few times.

"Kazira hasn't yet made a move while Voruth'Zal has been lurking around in the shadows." Alice leaned back on her seat.

She wasn't too against the idea of becoming bait but more so the fact that it hasn't proven to be useful yet.

She's shown herself more than once but Kazira was silent all the same.

Jin was about to counter but paused, realising that it's as Alice had said.

Kazira hasn't made a move.

No matter how much she might want to kill Alice thanks to what she did, Kazira has been awfully patient.

"Maybe she knows that she can't beat you with an incomplete vessel?" Isolde spoke up.

"True. As angry as she is, she's no fool." Alice lamented.

If Kazira was stupid, it would make things a lot better.

But she's already revealed a lot of her cards last time they fought. Kazira knows that Alice can forcefully upgrade her strength.

Then there's also the Grimoire of Sin that she made use of last time.

[If it wasn't for the Grimoire or Feris stepping in for a moment, I don't think we would've been able to come close to fighting her properly.] Cayla admitted begrudgingly.

The grimoire practically severed Kazira's strength in half.

First was the Curse of the Black Shroud that Alice had used.

Requiring both Severance and Corruption, the Curse of the Black Shroud was one that severed the connection between a God and the Apostle. To suppress Divine Authority, stripping away their power until they become a 'strong Lord'.

And what truly balanced the fight was the next curse.

Curse of the Shackled Scale.

A curse that forcefully balances the combatants within a given area. Of course, it didn't work on Apostles since they have the protection of Divine Authority.

By forcing Kazira to lose her divine authority using the first curse, Alice made it so that she lost the protection against the curse. Thus forcing them to be on the same level.

'Now that Kazira knows you can access both Severance and Corruption to some extent, there is no doubt that she would've made preparations to counter it. Though we probably can't count on Feris to help.' Alyss reminded.

They were already stretching Feris's patience thin. Anymore and they might turn Feris from somewhat having good terms to being enemies.

And with so many of their strategies being based on controlling the Void, Alyss wanted to avoid that.

"So we have nothing to force their hand?" Suyin sprawled out on the table.

"Not quite." Isolde suddenly spoke up, surprising the group.

"My Lord has mentioned that Alice is in possession of one thing that'll force her to move."

"She has something like that??" Jin blinked his eyes.

"I have something like that??" Alice was baffled.

"You have her vessel do you not? The original body that she abandoned when she fled for her life."
Isolde reminded as all eyes turned to Alice.

Scratching her cheek, Alice coughed.

"Kind of? After the fight, I didn't retrieve her body. Rather. . . The Will of the Abyss is keeping it safe? I guess?"

"The f*ck is the Will of the Abyss?" Suyin creased her brows.

If it's what she thinks it is, then are they the reason why she can't even have a single bounty?

Thinking about how to explain this, Alice simply summarized it as one half of the authority that controls the Abyss. How he was the one who set Kazira as Alice's sixth bounty.

Ignoring the second half of her explanation for now, Suyin was hung up on the fact that Alice was talking with basically the ruling authority of the Abyss.

At this point, who WASN'T she talking to?

"So can you get her body back from him or not?" Jin asked curiously.

"I'm not sure. Give me a second." Alice furrowed her brows.

'I know Velouria probably could've contacted the Will at certain points. But is there a way for me to do the same?'

[Kinda of? But also not really.] Cayla frowned. [In the past, he just showed up whenever he wanted and Velouria didn't actively seek him out either.]

Facing a dead end once more, Alice let out a sigh.

'Wait a second.' Alyss suddenly spoke up.

'Twinnie, you injected your blood into Kazira's body right?' Alyss asked as Alice nodded her head.

'Can't you. . . Just use Ruinous Void Lance form to target it? Overlay it with the power of the Void and force open a gateway? That way you can go directly to the corpse.'

Alice blinked.

Cayla blinked.

'Holy f*ck. You're not wrong.' Alice sat up in shock.

Ruinous Void's lance form overlays it with the power of the void for a single guaranteed hit. It's what they used to fight against divinity and it's also what they used to guarantee a hit against Kazira.

Since they've always used it to target their enemies, they never thought about using it as a method of transport.

As long as she leaves behind a marking, can't she just target that a rip a hole through the Void no matter the distance or realm?

By using the Void as a medium, a transport in other words, she's able to travel anywhere she wanted.

'Let's just hope Feris isn't too pissed about me ripping a hole directly to the Will.' Alice forced a smile as she stood up.

"You might want to step back, I got a bit of an idea." Alice warned.

"Oh sh*t." Suyin's pupils constricted, knowing that if Alice has an idea, it was going to be bad. Without hesitation, she stepped to the door, ready to evacuate at a moment's notice.

Summoning her artifact, Alice took a deep breath.

Resoannce!

Artificial Resonance!

Abyss artifacts!

Feeling the beat of her heart, Alice established a connection with the realm itself as the lance hummed with power.

She searched for Kazira's body, a thread connecting the two of them together.

A singularity manifested on Alice's eye as her smile faltered.

"Coordinates locked on."

Getting Alyss to swap out one of her Sigils for Severance, Alice stabbed the lance forward.

Void Flux – Cleave! Realm Severance!

*BANG!!!!

In front of Alice, before her lance could stab into the Void, a hand grabbed the tip, stopping it from going further.

A pure white hand with no details.

At that moment, Alice found herself in the endless white. Not in soul, not in mind state.

Her own physical body was here.

"Don't you agree that it's rather rude to try and break into someone's home?" The Will of the Abyss grinned.

Chapter 704 - 704: The Major gods

"Don't you agree that it's rather rude to try and break into someone's home?" The Will of the Abyss grinned. The sudden. . . intrusion was surprising to put it bluntly. But he couldn't deny that he was amused.

Alice's smile twitched.

"Don't tell me you're the one who taught Feris that line."

"Who knows? But I will say I did not expect you to breach this place with what you have currently. Colour me both surprised and impressed." The Will flicked his wrist, forcefully grabbing Alice's artifact.

As the weapon hovered in front of him, he examined it in amusement before giving it back to her.

"Since this is the first time it's happened, I won't comment much about it. I'll even offer you some help regarding the consequences of you breaching my realm. But know that next time you do it, I will stand idly by and watch as your realm crumbles apart." The Will chuckled.

"What do you mean?" Alice furrowed her brows but the Will declined to answer.

Instead, he snapped his finger and gestured to the corpse behind him.

"This is what you're looking for right? Take it." He grinned deviously. "But a word of warning before you go throwing the corpse of an Apostle around without a plan."

"If you allow Kazira to synchronise with her flesh once more, she'll regain power back to her peak. Once that happens, I doubt you'll be able to kill her. Only death will follow."

Alice hesitated for a moment, suspicious of his sudden generosity.

"You're just. . . giving it to me?"

"Of course. It was your reward to begin with. Unless you want me to impose a fee for breaching my realm?" The Will shrugged, sitting lazily on an invisible chair.

Shaking her head, Alice grabbed Kazira's corpse with her thread and quickly left the way she came.

If the Will was giving it to her for free, she wasn't going to pass up this opportunity.

Watching Alice scramble away from his realm with the corpse of an Apostle in tow, the Will couldn't help but chuckle in amusement.

###

"You actually did it." Suyin muttered in disbelief upon seeing the corpse of Kazira on the operating table.

"The Will was surprisingly. . . generous when it came to handing her over."

"Is he planning something?" Jin asked, shivering at the sight of Kazira.

Not long ago, this woman was his worst nightmare. The one responsible for cultivating him into this Eldritch vessel.

Had things gone her way, he would be dead and his body piloted by her. And now. . .

"Dunno. But we have the corpse now. He did warn me saying that if we let Kazira synchronise with her vessel, she'll get her powers back." Alice folded her arms.

"How do we avoid that?"

A moment of silence passed before Alice realised they were asking her.

"Huh? Oh, yeah I don't know. I forgot to ask as well since I was more focused on leaving the place than staying around." Alice blinked.

". . ." Suyin face palmed.

If they have the corpse of Kazira without knowing how to stop her, wasn't it just delivering what she wanted to her doorstep?

"Synchronization aside, My Lord has suggested something else on top of everything." Isolde suddenly spoke up as Alice glanced over.

"What if you allowed me to modify the body a little so that you can control it? Perhaps there is still some power we can take advantage of. Remnants of her authority." Isolde smiled.

If they could make use of Kazira's body, that's another weapon at their disposal. In fact, it might even be the best weapon so that Alice can deal with Voruth'Zal first before killing Kazira.

"Are you sure you're not just going to modify it for your own use?" Alice frowned.

Zal-Ka'Rith would only lend a hand if an equal payment had been given. And even then, it's mostly restricted to just information rather than him making a move.

Yet here he was suggesting through Isolde that he helps them out for basically free?

Yeah, something was up and Alice wasn't about to let him do what he wanted without finding out.

Isolde paused momentarily, communicating with Zal-Ka'Rith before giving them a graceful bow.

"My Lord has requested only one thing. One thing that has now become possible due to the fact that you have acquired the corpse of Kazira. He wishes for the 'data' of Voruth'Zal, the Silence Beyond Death." Isolde explained, confusing Alice.

If he wanted to Voruth'Zal's data or power, he could just try and take it for himself. Yet he's only now wanting it because they got Kazira's body?

"How and why." Alice frowned.

"Because of Kazira's authority. As you are aware, one of the authorities belonging to War is that your attack will always follow through. No defence can halt your momentum." Isolde began to explain.

"Even if Voruth'Zal is the vassal for a Major Outer God, he will not be safe. No protection will be able to protect Voruth'Zal and his death is all but guaranteed. As for whether or not he can flee, Kazira's authority to force one into combat will naturally resolve that issue."

While Isolde was explaining Zal-Ka'Rith's desires, Alice was hung up on one key point.

Protection.

That 'something' which stopped Zal-Ka'Rith from taking Voruth'Zal was in fact a Major Outer God.

Perhaps to them, Minor Gods and Major Gods are similar to the relationship between Apostles and their Gods.

However, between the two, Alice realised that they were severely outnumbered.

Culling the opposition was naturally a welcomed surprise but at the cost of making Zal-Ka'Rith stronger.

He desires Voruth'Zal's power, his. . . 'data'. As the Outer God representing the Silence Beyond Death, his powers were one that Alice was entirely unfamiliar with.

But it's this very thing that's making Zal-Ka'Rith make a move.

[On one end, we get the chance to kill Kazira. On the other, Zal-Ka'Rith gets what he wants. As much of an observer he may be, in the end, he's still an Outer God. His values are fundamentally different to ours.] Cayla sighed.

She had to remind Alice of what kind of being Zal-Ka'Rith is, even if he's shown favour towards them along with his relationship with Isolde.

"Zal-Ka'Rith. Wouldn't helping you put us at odds with the Major God behind Voruth'Zal?" Alice frowned.

Knowing how Gods react when their followers are taken, Alice could largely assume that there was a high chance the Outer Gods would be the same. She was already struggling with Minor Gods, she didn't need Major Gods chasing after her as well.

"My Lord has mentioned that it's not quite the case as Voruth'Zal was largely working on his own. His Major God will not leave his home undefended in order to deal with a roach that acted on his own."

"Yes but wouldn't breaking through the Major God's protection using Kazira's body be a slap to his face?" Alice honed in on the main issue. It was one thing to kill Voruth'Zal, but another to do so while disrespecting the God behind him.

Isolde paused for a moment before Zal-Ka'Rith decided to directly take over.

"Cleaver cleaver~ Yes, you are right. If you used Kazira's power to breach his hold over Voruth'Zal, he would indeed be rather annoyed. Enough so that he'll put more focus on what's happening here." Zal-Ka'Rith admitted as killing intent erupted from Alice.

"However, that is also why I desire Voruth'Zal's data. Think of it as. . . A bargaining chip of sorts for me to use. With it, I will make an exchange with one of the Major Gods." He chuckled, brushing off her glare.

Resting her head against her hand, Alice contemplated for a moment. Zal-Ka'Rith has already expressed his intent to observe her 'story'. Therefore, the likelihood of him terminating it early was low.

"Will this exchange of yours bring any negative effects towards this realm or myself? Take a moment to think about how you want to answer." Alice warned.

Zal-Ka'Rith stared at Alice and Alice stared back. The two locked in a confrontation of gazes as he was the first to turn his away.

"It will not bring you harm in any way shape or form. In fact, the chances of giving you something good will only increase instead. Let's say. . . the Major God I'm planning on bargaining with is one that dislikes the faction that Voruth'Zal belongs to."

However, he could see that Alice was still distrustful of what he said. Therefore, he decided to relent.

"As a show of my sincerity, I will give you information. In exchange, I hope you will believe my words and allow Isolde to operate on Kazira's body." Zal-Ka'Rith shrugged his shoulders with a sigh.

"As a race, we Outer Gods are composed of three Major factions. The Formless One, the Dreaming One and finally, the Ascended One. While I am neutral, I am protected by the Dreaming One. Voruth'Zal on the other hand, is protected by the Formless one. These Great Ones are the same as what deities are to you humans.

"Not all Major Gods are Great Ones but all Great Ones are Major Gods. Now I believe this is sufficient as a show of good will." Zal-Ka'Rith smiled helplessly.

Dwelling on these words for a moment, Alice let out a sigh and nodded her head.

"Alright. Let me know if you need any help when it comes to adjusting Kazira's body."

Hearing this, Zal-Ka'Rith smiled and bowed.

"Naturally."

Chapter 705 - 705: Forcing Voruth'Zal's Hand

If Kazira fights, she loses. Voruth'Zal wants Kazira to fully merge divinity and eldritch together so that they can fight Enris.

"She's simply trying to anger you, calm yourself Kazira." Voruth'Zal stood in front of Kazira.

"You think I don't know that?!" Kazira glared back.

Her current vessel was. . . to put it nicely, less than optimal. Stitches filled her body, desperately holding pieces of the flesh together.

"Give it a bit of time, the new vessel is almost done. For now, just ignore her." Voruth'Zal was firm in his voice.

Kazira clenched her fist until blood seeped through her fingers.

She knew it as well. That this current body couldn't handle fighting Alice.

However! If she was given a chance, just a small one, she could reclaim her old body! It doesn't matter what Voruth'Zal makes for her. Her original body was still the most compatible! One that was forged through countless battles, bathed in the blood of many.

One that she had spent hundreds of years to perfect for herself.

"One moment, that's all I need to reclaim my old body." Kazira frowned as Voruth'Zal loomed over her.

"Say I do give you that chance, what next? In case you need a little reminder, if I hadn't stepped in, your soul would be her's for the taking."

His words cut deeper than any blade. Veins bulged on Kazira's neck with Voruth'Zal hitting where it hurt.

"It was a trick and you know it! She can't replicate it. The Grimoire that she used is something beyond her capabilities. Using it once was already her limit. As for Feris, she won't intervene anymore." Kazira replied in disillusion while Voruth'Zal shook his head.

"And what will you do if Feris jumps into the battle once more? Give may have shown her cards in the last battle but what makes you think she won't have more? You cannot face her with what you already have. You need something more." Voruth'Zal grabbed her shoulder firmly.

"And that something is what I'm preparing for you so if you just give it a second, maybe we can make some meaningful progress." Voruth'Zal narrowed his gaze.

Gritting her teeth, Kazira shook his arm off before turning around.

"KAZIRA!!!"

Alice's voice shouted out once more with Kazira glancing back one last time.

But this time, her pupils constricted in a mix of anger and shock.

Little by little, Alice was stripping her corpse bare while violet flames crackled around her.

Not only was she humiliating her body, she was also threatening to destroy it!

"What do you think?! Do you think I'm able to completely destroy your original body before you get here?" Alice shouted, flipping her middle finger towards the sky. "You think your body as immortal, don't you!? Why don't we put that to the f*cking test!?"

Kazira wasn't convinced. She knew her body well. There's no way that Alice coul-

*KRK!!!

A crack manifested across Kazira's old body. It wasn't a simple wound. Streaks of energy could be seen seeping out of the wound. A clear sign that the damage was far deeper and one that couldn't be regenerated!

A wound similar to the one that Allura sustained!

"DON'T YOU F*CKING DARE YOU SWINE!!!" Kazira screamed with bloodshot eyes.

Not even Voruth'Zal knew how Alice was able to damage Kazira's body to this extent but it was clear that he could no longer hold her back.

Gritting his teeth, he was forced to accelerate his plans.

Had Astrelya and Alice properly clashed, he would have the last corpse needed to finish the vessel early. But because they didn't, there were two options given to him.

One, stall things out for a little longer so that the vessel is ready.

Two, fight with an incomplete vessel.

Now that Alice was forcing their hand, they could only choose option 2!

Before Kazira could leave, Voruth'Zal grabbed her wrist.

Seeing that he was still intent on stopping her, Kazira spun her body around ready to fight if needed.

She wasn't about to sit back and watch Alice destroy her body!

*BANG!!!

Catching Kazira's punch, Voruth'Zal clicked his tongue.

"If you truly want to reclaim your body then take the new vessel with you. It's not perfect but it should help you." Voruth'Zal relented.

There was no stopping Kazira from fighting Alice right now.

Since that was the case, they might as well try to make the most out of it.

###

Alice could see a torrent of black wind spiralling down from above, blocking out the sun as darkness descended onto the battlefield.

'Seems like it worked.' Alyss chuckled.

'Yep. I doubt someone like her can stand seeing her precious body being broken like this. Even if Voruth'Zal tries his best, he won't be able to stop her.' Alice nodded as this was within expectations.

[Let's just hope Zal-Ka'Rith can keep his end of the deal.] Cayla sighed.

She still wasn't happy with the fact that they needed help from an Outer God but at this point, she couldn't be picky about it.

'Let's be a little more optimistic about things considering everything he's done so far.' Alice chuckled.

Naturally, that didn't mean she was going to trust him wholeheartedly. But rather it's more like nodding in agreement when their goals align. If their goals are different however, then they'll fight.

[There's being optimistic and then there's being careful.] Cayla massaged her eyes in fatigue.

'It'll be fineee. And if things get really bad, we have the backup plan no?' Alice chuckled.

Turning her focus back on reality, Alice could sense the energy in her surroundings increasing with each passing moment. The goosebumps forming on her skin.

Even she had to admit it, this was an absurd amount of energy being brought forth by Kazira's arrival.

At the heart of the storm, clouds began to form a spiral downwards. Lightning danced around the edges, forming a maelstrom hidden in shadow.

"ALICEEE!!!" Kazira's voice raw with fury echoed out while flames burst out, forming a demonic pillar connecting the sky and the ground together with one single vertical line.

"Aren't you a big late?! But please, if you keep calling my name it'll get rather boring, you know? Why not change it up a little." Alice grinned seeing Kazira fall for the bait.

*RUMBLE!!!

Breaking out of the pillar of fire, Kazira stood with her new vessel.

Her skin was pale and almost porcelain like in nature, an unnatural bleaching of the hues that made it feel. . . 'dead'.

Her eyes matched the chimeric nature of her body. One radiated a radiant gold, warm like the setting sun. The other dark like the infinite Void, all encompassing, all consuming.

Most notably, there was a third 'fake' eye in the middle of her forehead. A marking of sorts that represented the look of an eye with a single glowing crimson iris surrounded by black markings.

Two dark horns protruded from her forehead, arching upwards and glowing a menacing crimson around the edges and the tip.

She wore a jet black plated armour that hugged around her body in a strange organic fashion. Pieces of it twitching with parts writhing as though it was alive.

A mix of Sigil like patterns, Ritual markings and even splotches of Eldritch energy could be seen all over the surface, representing Kazira's current state of being. A chimeric lifeform of Divinity, Abyssal energy and corruptive Eldritch energy.

A lesser state compared to what's going on inside Alice's body.

"You know, recycling old corpses of those I've already killed aren't exactly a good strategy. Especially considering I've already killed them before." Alice pointed out, noticing that Kazira's 'new head' belonged to that of Alana.

While she wasn't sure whether or not Kazira could make use of Alana's power that she had in life, she didn't want to write off the possibilities of it happening.

But despite her taunts, Kazira didn't say anything.

After all, different to what she saw a moment ago, her body was unharmed.

There was no wound, it was not undressed either. It simply stood by Alice's side, held up by the threads weaved through her old flesh.

Confusion filled Kazira's mind before realising what happened.

The same power that tricked her during their fight, the one that made her ignore the damage building up within her body.

"Seems like you figured it out. Clever girl~ Want me to give you a pat on the head? Maybe some uppies~?" Alice laughed, as Kazira clenched her fist.

Never in her life has she met someone so insufferable that she wished nothing less than to tear them limb from limb and mount their head for all to see!

*BANG!!!

Flames burst out from Kazira's back, forming a pair of demonic wings charred black and burning with a hybrid of Divinity and Eldritch energy.

"I'll make you regret everything that you've done. I will erase your worthless existence from this realm!"

*RUMBLE!!!

Charging forward, Kazira created a rusted greatsword overlayed with a layer of fire.

Despite her Goddess abandoning her, the authority of War still roars within her!

No strike of her's shall be stopped! All will know the cruelty of War!

*CLANG!!!

"!!!"

Widening her eyes in disgust and disbelief, Kazira felt the backlash of her power travelling up her arm, almost making her drop her weapon.

An unstoppable attack met an unstoppable attack!

"Do you like it? This gift of mine." Alice asked.

Her personal bodyguard, Kazira's old body!

Both sides had the authority of war, both sides couldn't be stopped. Therefore, both were forced back!

Stomping down, a crimson circle expanded around them.

Kazira was very familiar with this ability. It was one of her favourites, one that prevented people from running away.

Yet this mortal was now using it against her?!

"Can't blame a girl for preparing now can you? You ran away last time after all." Alice giggled before opening her mouth.

"Like a lil'~ . . . B*tch."

"I'LL F*CKING KILL YOU!"

Chapter 706 - 706: Rematch Against Kazira

Kazira's anger reached its peak as her figure disappeared from her spot.

This urge to kill, this violent desire. This was the first time she felt such heights. Just the thought that Alice lives sent a burning desire through her veins!

Her bloodlust had never been higher!

"I am Kazira! Apostle of War! Tyrant! Unbroken! Disciple of the Blood Truth! I have stained the lands with the blood of the weak! I have tainted the skies with the ashes of the unworthy!

"And now! I swear upon every wound I have ever received! YOU! ALICE! ARE THE ONE I MUST DESTROY!"

Resonance!

To Kazira, who had already lost to Alice once, this was not a fight where she could take it easy.

No matter how impressive her titles in the past were, this was a fight where she had to put everything on the line.

She had to reclaim her old body, even if it meant fighting dirty. Even if it meant fighting in a way that doesn't befit an apostle.

She'll do everything she can to erase this moment of humiliation from her history!

Three Sigils lit up on Kazira's body but she wasn't done.

Second Resonance!

*CRACK!!!

Before her second resonance could even take form, Alice had already disabled it with her personal artifact.

But that was fine! Kazira wasn't looking for the full unleashed potential of her Second Resonance.

What she was doing was forcing Alice to manifest her artifact!

Authority of War – Weapon Mastery.

Crimson chains whipped around the artifact as Kazira tried to steal it from Alice.

But to her shock, it wasn't a normal Artifact.

Personal Artifact!

Even if she can't steal a personal artifact, she can at least seal it away for the time being!

Intercepting Kazira was her own body. The way it moved the sword. . .

"Disgusting!"

Never has Kazira seen such a disgusting sword path before. Her carefully crafted body over years of training was displaying such weakness under Alice's control. Kazira hated it.

Looking at a version of herself being so weak.

"Release my body! Fight me one on one in honourable combat!" Twisting her body, Kazira cleaved up with her blade, clashing with her old vessel.

Taking this chance, Alice appeared behind her through the Void.

"You should've thought of that when you ran away the first time."

*BANG!!!!

"!!!"

Widening her eyes, Alice found herself being flung high into the air. That invisible force that clashed into her body. . .

'Vector manipulation!'

"So you did take their powers. Let me guess, that eye of yours on your forehead is Analysis right?" Alice grinned, creating a blood platform for herself.

Flicking her wrist, she was about to pull back Kazira's old body when dark limbs grabbed the legs.

"Oi oi oi! What happened to fighting one on one in honourable combat?!" Alice laughed upon seeing Voruth'Zal emerged from the shadows to retrieve Kazira's old body.

"If you want one on one combat, shouldn't it be better for you to fight each other in your best form?" Voruth'Zal retorted, reaching towards Kazira's old body.

"I agree wholeheartedly with that old friend."

"!!!" Snapping his gaze down, Voruth'Zal noticed Kazira's body operating on its own.

This tone, this gaze. . .

A vein bulged on Voruth'Zal's neck.

"Zal-Ka'Rith! Are you betraying the Outer Gods!?"

"I'm neutral! Neutral you know! That means I'm not on either side!" Zal-Ka'Rith grinned.

When they performed an experiment on Kazira's body, it wasn't just to determine whether there was residual power that could be used. But rather, whether or not Zal-Ka'Rith can borrow that body to keep Voruth'Zal occupied!

Kazira's body had already been modified to a certain extent using Eldritch Energy. Therefore, it made it a lot easier for Zal-Ka'Rith to take over. In fact, it had greater compatibility than Isolde's body.

Even if it didn't, it had the durability of an Apostle!

Grabbing Voruth'Zal by the head, Zal-Ka'Rith conjured a grimoire before dragging both of them to an alternate realm.

With Alice and Kazira now left in their own arena, Alice massaged her neck.

"Ahh finally. A proper one on one. This time, you don't get to run." Alice grinned, reaching into her pouch and grabbing a vial.

Understanding that the vial was her key to reaching Lord power, Kazira burst into action!

Vector Manipulation!

Accelerating her body towards Alice, her form flickered as her blade shattered the vial in Alice's hand along with her arm.

"Gotcha~ Did you think I wouldn't drink that sh*t beforehand!?!?" Alice laughed. Her severed hand began to regenerate, trapping Kazira's blade within her flesh.

Resonance!

Bloodline Release!

Draconic wings erupted from Alice's back as divinity coursed through her veins. Since they realised that they could 'borrow' Kazira's power from her corpse, Alice naturally extracted a portion of Kazira's powers by drinking the blood.

All she got was remnants since her soul had left already. But what little she could get, Alice took!

Including the fact that War's attacks can't be stopped!

Severance + (False) War!

Void Flux – Cleave! Realm Severance!

The ground beneath her tore in half as space collapsed in on itself. A slash of absolute void, erasing everything within the heart of the attack. Severance that pierced through defences and War's authority that removes all opposing motions.

A cut that can't be blocked, an attack that can't be stopped. Kazira could only ensure it with all her might!

Facing this attack, she felt as though the world was screaming. Every part of her new vessel screamed at her to run, to avoid death.

Even after everything, all her preparation, she was still underestimating Alice.

She couldn't look at this girl like she was prey. No, she was an adversary. Someone she must surpass.

Between them, Kazira wasn't the mountain. It was Alice and Kazira was the climber. She had to overcome this disaster in human form.

This calamity.

It may not be worth much considering her state. Even in her anger, Kazira admitted it! Alice had her respect!

Alice made the Apostle of War fall to her knees and abandon her body!

She will no longer see herself as an Apostle. No, she'll see herself as a mortal facing her own tribulations.

"ARGGGG!!!!" Pushing her newly acquired vessel to the limit, Kazira glared at the attack with bloodshot eyes.

The power that coursed through her body merged three sources in one.

Abyssal, the power she held as a Lord.

Eldritch, the power bestowed upon her by the Outer Gods.

Holy, the divinity and authority granted to her by her Goddess.

Abandoned she may be but her powers have not yet been revoked.

Analysis!

The eye on her forehead hummed to life, analysing the powers within her body along with the powers held within Alice's attack.

She saw Alice for what she is.

A monstrosity of four sources, a disaster of adaptation and the chaos that Enris desired. She is the ruin that Enris hoped for, the end of all things.

Vector Manipulation!

A pulse of energy rippled across her skin as another layer of armour wrapped around her arm.

As powerful as Alice's attack was, as unblockable as her authority was, it was still an attack that could be manipulated!

As the original, Kazira understood full well the powers and drawbacks of her authority!

Diversion!

Twisting her body, she slammed her fist into the side of the attack. Around her neck, blood converged into a single scarf, erasing a majority of Alice's power. Her own authority hummed, the two clashed.

She did not seek to fight head on, she did not seek to cancel it out. All she needed, all she wanted, was to push it to the side!

Even if it's two unstoppable objects, as long as it's not being faced head on, it can still be moved!

*BANG!!!

The impact rang out like roaring thunder. Kazira tumbled back while Alice did the same.

But things wouldn't end here.

Kazira knew it. Alice knew it.

A fight to the death.

No surrender, no retreat.

The path of war is one that treads onward without stop.

'Do not lose yourself in anger Kazira.' She chanted to herself as energy crackled across her body.

Slamming her hands together, black ritualistic markings spread across her arm reaching all the way to her chest.

From the tips of her fingers, a chaotic clash of deep crimson and radiant gold began to spread.

"Each clash, each exchange, my powers will grow. These flames are my desire to fight, these flames are the essence of my life. These flames are my defiance. To my greatest foe, I will put my all on the line."

*Badum!

From Kazira's chest, a golden flame began to spread from her heart.

"Then do your best to entertain me. Your powers are bound to be mine after all!"

"Gladly!" Kazira clenched her teeth as flames manifested within her eyes.

War God's Advance!

Stomping down, Kazira's form flickered.

*CLANG!!!

Golden chains whipped around Alyss's wrist as she took over. Matching Kazira's footwork, she countered her punch using a pair of gauntlets, a blade and the Authority of War!

This exchange was one where the first to fail the parry will lose as both of them wielded unblockable strikes!

Soul Chaser!

Adjusting her grip on the sword, Alyss expanded her Zone!

"Loath am I to admit it but the techniques of the Sun are truly one to behold." Kazira opened her mouth.

Shifting her centre of gravity, her own Zone expanded, clashing with Alyss's!

Sword Catcher!

Grabbing Alyss's true attack hidden within the trickery, Kazira pulled herself closer for a gut shot.

Vector Manipulation!

She will stop Alyss from running!

Physical Resonance!

*BANG!!!

Kazira's punch missed as Alice turned a portion of her body into blood! The resonance between Duality, her first Sigil and the third to allow herself a body that can avoid attacks that can't be dodged!

"Finally came down from your high horse huh? You should've put your all into it before you lost that damn body of yours!" Alice narrowed her gaze.

From within this mass of blood, energy converged into a single shining spark aimed towards Kazira's chest.

"That I agree. Arrogance had tainted my veins, corruption in my mind. A fool's belief that halted my growth, my fighting desire. But no more."

One by one, Sigils lit up across Kazira's body until all nine manifestations linked up into one large pattern! A grand design, the pinnacle of Lordship.

Third Resonance!

Chapter 707 - 707: Third Resonance

Resonance, the power that manifests with the harmony of Three Sigils.

Once a Hunter receives three Sigils of the same classification, they link together to form a new power.

The first Resonance grants the Hunter armour or a modified body. A catalyst to further enhance their abilities and bring out dormant potentials within the Sigils.

A power that modifies itself based on the Sigils and understanding of the user.

For Alice, her first Resonance has two states due to the two souls that share one body.

First was Alyss's resonance. With this Resonance, she gained two major abilities. As long as she had blood to burn for the flames, it would keep her alive. The flames will mend any wound she receives. The second was that she could use her enemy's attack to fuel her own.

It effectively allowed her to fight a war of attrition without too much issue so long as she's not exhausting herself faster than the enemy could attack.

The Second was Alice's own resonance, one that caused red spider lilies to blossom. Rather than the tenacity afforded by Alyss's resonance, Alice's was one of raw offensive power. A state that forgoes all defence in favour of ending the fight in overwhelming fashion.

In this state, all of her attacks gain a new level of speed thanks to compressing blood mirrors to accelerate the slashes across space forcefully.

If the first Resonance gave the Hunter a garment or body suitable for their power, the second granted them the land they needed to perform.

A personal realm that harmonised with their output.

Unfortunately, most of the information Alice had on second Resonances was mostly outdated since she rarely allowed it to go through. After all, allowing it to deploy was detrimental as it essentially erased her control over the battlefield they fought in.

And with most of her abilities being tied to the Void and teleporting, that was not something Alice was willing to give up.

Then there was also the special case of Qiu Qiu who could converge the power of her Second Resonance into her own body, further amplifying the First Resonance.

If the First gave a body suitable for power and the Second gave a realm suitable for power, what was the Third?

The Third Resonance is the last step before becoming an Apostle. The last step, the pinnacle of mortal power.

Law of Death, Law of Execution, Law of Shadows, Law of Duality. The Laws that a Lord unlocks upon obtaining their ninth Sigil is one that harmonises with the title that the Abyss grants them.

Much like Authority granted by becoming an Apostle, unlocking the Law allowed one to control whatever their title governs.

The abilities afforded to them are not something Sigils can simply contend with.

Around Kazira, spectral patterns of her Sigils started to lift from her body, floating behind her and transforming into a halo of sorts. The halo itself was segmented into thirds, one for each Resonance.

With all nine Sigils now lit up, a 10th began to manifest within the centre of the Ring.

The icon of a single blade within a crown.

[I know her Lord title now.] Cayla muttered in dread. [Kazira – Abyss Lord of Tyranny.]

'Okay well isn't that just f*cking ominous. Pray tell, what kind of ability does the Law of Tyranny give her?' Alice's smile twitched as she slashed a circle around her before conjuring blood mist to offset the oppressive aura around her.

[I don't know! The Laws the title bestows are different for everyone. Kazira is not the same holder of the title as the one in the past and I doubt their Sigils are the same. Just play it by the ear and I'll try figure something out!] Cayla scrambled as she needed to finish her experiments and fast.

If Kazira was now using the Law of a Lord against Alice, it wouldn't be something that she could copy.

Authority was different, it acted as a passive power that activates with certain gestures.

Meaning that authority could be copied by Alice.

But a Lord's Law? That was Resonance. And in all of their experiments in the past, Alice had never been able to copy someone else's resonance. It has always been her own, even if she gets nine Sigils from people.

With Cayla not being able to help, Alice didn't hesitate to try and create some distance between them.

However. . .

"!!!" Alice's pupil constricted.

She felt as though her body was sealed by an immovable force. A constant pressure crushing all her limbs, preventing her from increasing the distance between them.

With Alice now being locked in place, Kazira flashed forward. Her blade in hand and divinity coursing through the weapon.

Alice couldn't dodge this!

Now that Zal-Ka'Rith borrowed Kazira's old body, Alice needed to face this unstoppable strike herself!

Gritting her teeth, Alice took a step forward and adjusted her grip on her blade.

*CLANG!!!

It was a haphazard guard that she put up at the last moment.

With both Authorities of War clashing, Alice's body was sent crashing back. Tumbling across the ground before slamming into the walls of this barrier that kept them in combat.

'Sh*t! Okay I know you have no information on the Law of Tyranny but can you at least give me more information on how the base thing works?! How many abilities do I need to figure out? Is there a counter?' Alice shouted while Cayla didn't even bother glancing up.

[Three! Unlike Authorities, the Laws of a Lord are limited to three Laws per use and this usually applies to everyone in range! Usually! There are some exceptions. They have certain commands to choose from granted by their Sigils and powers.]

'It's probably safe to assume the first Law is one where you can't retreat or choose to take a step away. When we took a step forward, the pressure disappeared.' Alyss frowned.

'Then there's two more we need to watch out for!'

Tagging in, Alyss gripped her sword and stood a step forward.

*CLANG!!!

Bridging the gap in an instant, she tried to slash at Kazira's neck only for her blade to be parried off to the side.

Vector Manipulation!

Alice took over and the portion of her body seized by Vector Manipulation instantly turned to blood!

Her main body was still in front of Kazira!

Void Flux – Cleave!

Using the blood that was flung to craft another sword, Alice then swapped their locations using the Void and slashed down from behind!

Yet her blade changed path in mid air, unable to reach Kazira.

With Alice being surprised that her attack wasn't able to hit, Kazira grabbed her by the ankle and tried to pull her into the air.

But with Alice's body now modified with Physical Resonance, it was easy to separate that portion of her body.

'That's probably the second Law. Can't strike from behind or some sh*t.' Alice clicked her tongue.

She couldn't retreat nor could she advance with her strike.

'It won't be that simple. Otherwise, the Authority of War would've overridden the Law. It's probably something closer to attacks from behind will miss.' Alyss furrowed her brows.

Tagging back in, Alyss shifted her body to the side in an attempt to hit Kazira with another slash.

*CLANG!!!

Once more, their weapons clashed head on, forcing both sides back as a gap was created once more.

'Unintentional retreat is accepted. Attacks from behind won't work.' Alice summarised.

Taking a deep breath, Alice noticed that the halo behind Kazira was shining in all three parts.

There's a good chance that the third is already in effect and it was up to Alice to try and figure it out.

Clenching her fist, motes of blood began to manifest around her as Alice slammed her palms down!

Briar thorns and metal pillars burst out from the ground, changing the environment they were in!

*KRK!!!

Unleashing a horizontal slash, Kazira cleaved the pillars in half as energy pulsed out around her.

"!!!"

In front of her, Kazira saw needles of blood and understood that Alice was resorting to poison.

During their first fight, it was her arrogance that blinded her to the illusion that Alice had cast.

This time, she won't fall prey to the same trick. After all, she had already abandoned that arrogance.

One by one, she will break down Alice's tricks.

Analysis!

Rusted chains slapped away the needles while Kazira shifted her body and parried an invisible strike from the right!

*CRACK!!!

"TCH!" Clicking her tongue in annoyance, Alice didn't think Kazira would be able to pinpoint where she was while using the Mirror Jester.

She wanted to make Kazira believe that she was going to rely on poisons once more to bridge the gap.

However, Kazira wasn't hasty.

Unlike before, Kazira was now respecting and reacting towards Alice's movements.

In this battle, she was no longer the aggressor. Their roles had switched.

Both of them were on a timer.

Would Kazira's vessel fail her first or would Alice run out of the Authority she siphoned from Kazira.

Twisting their bodies, both of them took this chance to clash weapons once more to create the gap between them.

Kazira adjusted her grip on her sword and stared at Alice.

This wasn't an opponent she could defeat with fanciful attacks and abilities targeted towards large crowds.

This was a duel, a battle of souls.

A clash of willpower and the desire to live. To see tomorrow.

Kazira discarded the notion of using abilities that wouldn't bring her victory. She didn't need anything fancy, just the reliable options that brought her this far!

Abilities and attacks that will help her win this duel!

Alice was the same.

She could sense the change within Kazira.

This oppressive aura. . .

Perhaps it is only when she lost her body did the Apostle of War truly appear.

In front of her was an opponent who knew full well how dangerous she is and Alice couldn't find any gaps in her defence.

Closing her eyes for a moment, Alice calmed her mind and steadied her blade.

Her gaze fully focused on Kazira and Kazira alone.

Since there were no gaps in defence, she'll create one!

Chapter 708 - 708: Zal-Ka'Rith's True Power

"Seems like the battle between the Apostle and the anomaly has started in full. Don't you agree that it's a rather interesting sight? To see the arrogant one discard her arrogance and face a foe with all her respect." Zal-Ka'Rith chuckled, snapping his finger.

Around him, several grimoires appeared, swallowing the attacks that Voruth'Zal sent towards him.

However, Voruth'Zal didn't respond. He simply narrowed his gaze at Zal-Ka'Rith who was temporarily borrowing Kazira's body.

"No words?" Zal-Ka'Rith tilted his head to the side playfully. "I thought the humans said that the mouth becomes loose in battle. A conversation between two people who are about the fight. Yet here you are, not responding at all."

"What is it that you are after? As a neutral party, I refuse to believe you would move for free." Voruth'Zal spat in anger.

"Now now, don't you think it'll be a little rude of me to disclose such important information so freely? Just know that I'm here to keep you occupied. No matter the outcome of this fight, you will not intervene." Zal-Ka'Rith grinned.

Clasping his hands together, the world around them began to shift.

"What happened to giving us a hand when we first performed the ritual? I thought the offer I gave back then was sufficient for your cooperation." Voruth'Zal flicked his arm upwards as demonic claws tore apart the boundary that Zal-Ka'Rith was trying to summon.

"Do not get me wrong, it was more than enough. And cooperate I did. But during the cooperation I found. . . something amusing. Hence why I am now here." Zal-Ka'Rith smiled while stepping to the side. Each step he took would morph the world around him.

A realm of fire, a realm of ice. A realm of blades and a realm of shadow.

Each time the realm shifted, a new attack would be sent towards Voruth'Zal. Yet he was able to block them with relative ease.

Both of them were being cautious with how they approached this fight. Neither committed to a full on assault as one misstep was all it took for catastrophic losses.

"Then don't you agree that you're going against our agreement by trying to fight me now?" Voruth'Zal questioned as he could barely hold back his anger.

"Hmm. . . I suppose you can say that."

***RUMBLE!!!**

Spectral shadows and wraiths burst out of Voruth'Zal's body and swarmed towards Zal-Ka'Rith who grinned.

Conjuring a book, he opened the pages before slamming it down.

"A tale about holy knights exorcising the dark."

With the book as the centre of the array, radiant runic signs and silhouettes manifested around him, pushing back the darkness.

The silhouette standing directly behind Zal-Ka'Rith raised her sword. Glimmers of starlight converged towards the blade before bursting forth with radiant energy. A single slash to cleave the darkness in half!

From the cleave, dark tides crashed in from around them while Zal-Ka'Rith conjured another book.

"A tale about a fisherman crossing the ravaging storm."

A barrier of sorts formed around Zal-Ka'Rith, shielding him from the tide.

*CRACK!!!

However, large tentacles wrapped around the barrier in an attempt to crush it.

Seeing the cracks forming, Zal-Ka'Rith leaned back for a moment before smiling.

"A tale about the Abyss Lord of Seas slaying his eighth Sigil."

Tossing the book into the air, three azure blades slashed around him, forming the spectral image of a dragon.

Claws that tore the tentacles apart, maws that clamped down on the main body of the beast and flung it away.

"Tch." Voruth'Zal clicked his tongue in annoyance.

Zal-Ka'Rith's power as the Writhing Script was one where he could repurpose the tales that he's witnessed.

Everything he's seen, everything he's come to understand, he's able to summon it using his grimoire. There are certain restrictions on what he can use as the requirements must be fulfilled before he can use it.

But once the requirements are fulfilled, no matter how strong the original holder may be, Zal-Ka'Rith can use it!

And as a being that has lived for a long time, there's no doubt that he has an army of counters for everything he does.

"Why don't we take this time to relax and watch the fight old friend? There's no reason for us to go at each other's throats now is there?"

Voruth'Zal didn't respond. Doing so would fulfil another condition within Zal-Ka'Rith's grimoire. One that Voruth'Zal has seen in the past.

Accepting the moniker of Old Friend was a trap in itself. Once that happens, his body will be cut in half!

However. . .

As the Silence Beyond Death, he was not someone who Zal-Ka'Rith can kill easily!

The reason why Kazira was able to get a new vessel, the reason why she can use the abilities of the materials that he collected, was because his dominion was one of death.

Aiming his finger towards Zal-Ka'Rith, Voruth'Zal tapped down.

*KRK!!!

The realm tore in half as a scythe crashed down from above. A skeletal figure draped in tattered cloth ripping through the boundary between realms and descending upon the battlefield.

Furrowing his brows, Zal-Ka'Rith turned his grimoire into a blade.

"A tale about a holy sword hidden within the lake."

*CLANG!!!

Fighting back with the authority of War, he watched as the skeletal figure stumble back. But the blade in his hands was already corroding away.

"Abyss Lord of Death it seemeth." Zal-Ka'Rith chuckled.

"I had the honour to watch him fall many years ago. As someone who holds a similar power to mine, I had to make sure I extracted it properly from his corpse." Voruth'Zal narrowed his gaze.

Controlling the avatar of death, gravestones began to appear around Zal-Ka'Rith whom weaved through them without care.

His goal was not to kill Voruth'Zal. But the data he represents. The potential in death.

For Zal-Ka'Rith, the Writhing Script, allowing Voruth'Zal to perform simply means that when it's time for extraction, the tale he receives will be simply sublime.

After all, the more he knows, the broader the 'tale' becomes when he uses it. Each extraction only works once and once he's gained a story from them, he can't do so anymore.

Therefore, with this opportunity, the tale that Zal-Ka'Rith wanted to obtain was as such.

A tale about Voruth'Zal, the Silence Beyond Death.

Just thinking about it caused Zal-Ka'Rith to droll as his lips curved up into a twisted smile.

Since the start, he was a reader, voraciously consuming the tales and stories that heroes and villains write with their actions. Every decision, every motivation, he consumed with unending greed.

And at the end of it all, he will become the library of the realms. A being who can peer into the history of all things and record it for his own satisfaction.

But the one he looked forward to the most, was Alice Agnelia.

Even now, the tale was still being written, the potential is boundless.

What kind of title would she give him? He wanted to see it to the end.

###

To create a gap within the defence of Kazira was not an easy one.

It was already difficult in the past but now? It felt borderline impossible.

Not only was Kazira blocking it with her own Zone but she was also respecting the moves that Alice was doing.

To not overestimate herself and take things one at a time.

She was not the one in a rush, Alice was.

Alice needed the gap in defence, all Kazira needed to do was to survive the barrage.

*CLANG!!!

Parrying another one of Alice's strikes, Kazira shifted her body to the side and raised her sword.

Downward slash!

Alyss took over, parrying the slash and allowing it to travel up the sword. Redirecting it with a flick of her wrist, she took a step to close the distance between them and aimed for a pommel strike!

Yet before her slash could connect, Kazira released her sword and aimed for a punch to the stomach.

Alice tagged in, transforming the portion of her body that would've been hit into blood. But it was a feint as Kazira began to gather the blood toward her hand!

Since her physical resonance turned her body to blood, it was practically a guaranteed grab attack!

Void Flux!

Forcefully detonating a Void Flux in front of her chest, Alice coughed up a mouthful of blood as the two of them were pushed back. There was a cavity around her stomach as the flesh stitched itself together.

At this point, she'd rather take a hit from her own attack than to let Kazira grab her!

Looking at the wounds that she sustained as well, Kazira adjusted her grip on her blade and narrowed her gaze at Alice.

Keeping her calm and maintaining the distance, only moving when necessary.

And to make matters more annoying, they couldn't attack from behind, each exchange had to be from the front!

A direct confrontation leaving hardly any space for trickery. No blind spots, no sneak attacks, no circling around the back. Just two warriors locked in an exchange of blades.

However, that didn't mean Alice was stuck at a dead end.

No, she had been preparing something to break Kazira's guard!

She's been testing the limits of what she could and couldn't do, to understand the laws that Kazira had put into place.

Taking a deep breath, Alice focused her gaze. She rested her blade above her left arm, using it to aim towards Kazira. Her stance was low as every muscle in her body relaxed.

Since she wanted a head on confrontation, Alice obliged!

*BANG!!!

Alice's body snapped into action like an arrow fired from a bow.

Void Step!

Stepping on a manifested layer of Void, Alice's body shot forward as she appeared in front of Kazira!

Kazira felt a chill and instinctively tried to parry Alice's attack.

Vector Manipulation!

Alyss grinned.

Mirage Step!

Dodging Kazira's Vector Manipulation, Alyss ducked into Kazira's range.

'Cayla!' Alice shouted, gritting her teeth and energy flooded into her weapon.

[I know!]

Counter Seal!

The weapon that Kazira forcefully seized at the start, to keep it out of the fight. At that moment, the chains around Ruinous Void snapped apart as Alice summoned it to her side.

Lance form!

Artificial Resoannce!

A guaranteed hit bolstered by the power from the Authority of War!

With this strike, she'll break Kazira's guard!

Chapter 709 - 709: Eclipse Axis

Upon summoning the personal Artifact to her side, draconic wings burst open behind Alice. Within her eye, a singularity spun to life.

All of the ambient energy within the surroundings and in her own body were forcefully seized by Tiamat's Physical resonance and directed into the weapon!

Yet despite this calamitous energy storm before her, Kazira was not flustered. In fact, a smile even appeared on her face.

*CLANG!!!

"!!!"

Alice's eye widened. Her lance that should've been a sure hit attack was parried!

Kazira had twisted her body at the last second, redirecting the lance to aim towards her back and the Law countered the attack, pushing it off to the side!

Alice was stunned. This certainty now became uncertainty as Alice could no longer rely on what she believed to be a guarantee

With her sure hit attack now forced to the side, she found herself with her guard open.

She couldn't retrieve her weapon back in time nor could she shift herself into blood form.

"I was sure that I kept the weapon sealed. But knowing you, there is always the possibility that you would've been able to recover it. I'm glad you verified my thoughts." Kazira stated as a smile crept up on her face.

With her blade by her side, she gritted her teeth and took a step forward.

The veins on her arms bulged as crackling crimson energy surged on the blade edge.

Alice could sense it. This next attack, even with her regeneration, was going to be dangerous!

Desperate times desperate measures! She recalled the warning Allura gave her the first time she used Void Flux and a crazed smile appeared on her face.

Void Flux!

*BANG!!!

The detonation ruptured her shoulder, obliterating it in the process. But in that same instant, bones and flesh began to regrow as a new blade was forged in her hands. Energy surged and she overlayed it with War's Authority!

Void Flux – Cleave!

*CLANG!!!

Despite both weapons clashing in mid air, the slash still went through albeit barely! A thin red mark slid across Alice's chest as blood began to seep through the wounds.

The slash wasn't a deep one but one that her regeneration was struggling to stitch together. It was similar to how Alice prevented regeneration only Kazira was having this crimson energy attack her body constantly.

Using the force from that exchange to create some distance, Alice tried to reset her stance. But to her shock, her legs buckled and she almost tripped backwards.

Catching herself before falling, she took a deep breath and almost choked.

Her lungs were screaming. Every inhale felt like she was breathing in shards of glass or countless daggers. Her heart slamming against her chest, far faster than what she was used to.

The sweat soaking her tattered outfit, sticking to her skin.

The strands of hair that stuck to her face.

Even her Zone, the boundary was faltering.

Was she. . . exhausted?

Glancing down at her trembling fingers, Alice felt as though something was wrong.

She shouldn't be this exhausted. In fact, she couldn't quite recall when was the last time she ran out of stamina like this.

Her resonance was one that helped her fight continuously and she hadn't been taking that much damage outside of her own self inflicted ones.

'Is it the third law?' Alyss asked with a frown.

She too was confused as to why they were running so low on stamina.

'Kazira had been spending most of this time defending while we've been the ones attacking. Do you think the third Law is something along the lines of attacking takes more stamina while defending takes less? Or maybe even just one where stamina consumption increases drastically.'

'Maybe. Let's go on the defensive for now. Even if the current authority runs out, we have more vials we can use.' Alice frowned.

The only issue was finding a gap to use it since Kazira definitely wouldn't let her ingest the blood for free.

Not only that, but there was also her control over blood that Alice had to worry about.

"Seems like you're finally feeling the aftereffects. I will say, most would've fallen long ago. But you are not like the others. Your stamina is truly monstrous." Kazira smiled seeing Alice now pulling out a defensive stance.

She had been waiting for this moment!

"Now. . . it's my turn!"

*BANG!!!

Closing the gap in an instant, Kazira's speed shocked Alice to the core as she hastily countered with a slash.

During their previous exchanges, she had been holding back, making sure to only use what was necessary!

'Let me!'

Tagging in, Alyss ducked under Kazira's slash before climbing onto her back.

She wanted to make sure Kazira had a hard time hiding them while they recovered stamina but she wasn't about to make it easy.

Pushing Alyss off her back with her wings, Kazira twisted her body and adjusted her footstep for a horizontal slash.

Destruction Point!

Alyss honed in, her eye flashed momentarily as she locked onto the weak point. The mass of red in a monotone world.

But the blade's range extended mid swing! Kazira had released the grip before catching only the pommel, disrupting Alyss's attack as it missed the weak point!

Seeing the blade inches away from her face, Alyss gritted her teeth and tagged out once more.

Duality!

Kazira suddenly pulled back her blade, much to her surprise.

The controls in her body were jumbled!

Using an ability on its own was just as important as mastering the Resonance!

With Kazira now stumbling over her controls, Alyss went in for a slash towards the neck.

Right before her blade could hit the neck, blood blossomed around Kazira!

A scarf manifested once more as the powers of Duality was dispelled and Kazira went in for the grab.

Only this time, she wasn't the only one seeing steps ahead!

Alyss shifted her footwork. A one to one copy of what Kazira performed and parried the attack by letting it target her back!

With Kazira's arm now forced to the side, Alice took over.

The personal artifact shifted as energy compressed into a single spark.

Speed and power! That's all she needed!

She didn't care for the efficiency!

Void Flux!

Using her body as a cover, Alice fired the spark through her own stomach!

This moment of cover blinded Kazira to what was happening as the spark dug into her flesh.

Her pupils constricted as the spark threatened to detonate.

Gritting her teeth, she plunged her own hand into her body.

Analysis!

Void energy converged around her hand as teleported the spark away.

In the time it took for Kazira to teleport the spark, Alice had already made the next move!

Her legs wrapped around Kazira's head as she pointed her index finger between Kazira's eyes.

There was another spark charging!

Abyssal Artifacts!

Halo of Ruin!

Crimson Immolation!

Activating all of her powers at once including what she had already activated, Alice forcefully upgraded the attack using her berserk skill!

Both the crimson halo and the crown of the Abyss merged while Eldritch energy corrupted her spider lilies.

This spark started to mutate. Within the mote of light, darkness crept forth like ink.

"Bang~"

Alice fired the attack.

The world was drowned in light before darkness cut through the radiance.

A line of raw destructive energy tore through the realm.

'It missed! Keep going!' Alyss shouted in a panic.

Vector Manipulation!

Alice's body was flung up into the sky as she quickly adjusted herself and glanced towards Kazira.

Analysis!

She could see Kazira in the same stance. Her fingers pointed towards Alice's general direction.

Her gaze focused as the energy flowed through her body.

Unlike Alana, Kazira wasn't just using it as a direct method to copying.

No, she was using Analysis to understand how Alice fought. What worked well, what didn't. What she relied on, her habits and even her casting method.

What she found useful, Kazira assimilated it into her own movement. What she didn't find useful, she discarded.

And this attack? The concepts behind it were far too advanced for a relatively new Hunter to understand.

But to Kazira who's had centuries of experience, she understood the underlying theories.

The method of utilising the power and the direction she should take her casting.

She could tell that this method was tailor made for someone. No matter how Alice tries to hide it or adjust it to suit herself, the original was not intended for her.

It was intended for someone with a much stronger body, a much higher energy output.

Someone with Authority and Lordship.

A method to fully take advantage of a Lord's body and the power that the Abyss has granted to them.

To Kazira, this was the tutoring she was missing. The key to the next step of her evolution.

Just as how Alice was learning from her, she was also learning from Alice.

This lesson. . . She'll put it to use!

Analysis!

The flames on her arms have now reached her chest as a flaming aura wrapped around her body.

With her current skillset, her current powers, the abilities that she stole from corpses, this was the strongest attack that Kazira could imagine.

Vector manipulation!

One half surged forward, the other half recoiled backwards. A line of conflict down the middle.

An attack that stretches across the realm, bisecting it in an instant. Unavoidable thanks to her authority. One that transcends both realms through borrowing the power of the Void.

This was neither an attack that attacked from in front or behind. It's one that encompasses this entire space. With an attack like this, the Law that she put in place will not help Alice!

This attack, she only had one name for it.

Eclipse Axis!

Chapter 710 - 710: Holding Back Lords

Alice was at a loss.

Countless times before her, her senses have saved her. Moments of clarity where she would understand where an attack would come from, where it would land. The kind of damage it would produce, she always had an answer for it.

A route, a way out, a single thread towards survival.

Even when it's an attack that encompasses the entire area she was in, she could usually find a way out.

But this? This was different.

This wasn't an attack she could run from. It was a line of absolute destruction as though engraved in the laws that make up their realm. A statement of absolutes. A fate that can't be changed.

This attack WILL hit her.

It's an attack that centred around her very existence, one that she couldn't dodge.

Yet strangely, this moment of realisation made Alice pause.

There was nothing else in the world except for herself right now. The time to think.

This attack, born from the powers of Eldritch, Abyssal, Holy and now Void that was stolen via analysis. Was it not similar to herself in a sense?

The power of four sources of energy working in harmony.

But unlike Alice, Kazira wasn't truly a vessel for his power.

Eldritch was grafted onto her body, Holy and Abyssal onto her soul.

And as for Void, she was only temporarily guiding the power rather than allowing her body to become the storage.

So while she was utilizing three sources of energy, she was technically lying about the fourth.

A slight of hand even.

But this was exactly what will give Alice her way out! Her path to survival!

What she had to do was simple in theory. But when put to the test, it would prove harder than anything she would've done in the past!

What she was going to do right now was deconstruct the attack in its entirety! To break down and counter each of the forces held within until it was at its bare minimum.

Only then, would she be able to survive the attack.

###

"Ahh~ I'm so jealous of Kazzie. It should've been me!" Astrelya pouted, kicking her legs in frustration.

In front of her, three Lords stood with a frown on their faces.

All three of them could sense that an Apostle was fighting in the distance and was beginning to lose their patience.

With her aura weakening by the second, killing her now was the best chance. But Astrelya was stopping them.

How often do they get a chance to kill an Apostle and find out more about their power? To perhaps reach a new realm outside of getting the blessing of a God. Hell, the fact that the Apostle was weakened to this extent yet a God has not made a move was proof that this was their best chance!

"Astrel-"

*BANG!!!

Before the Lord could even finish his sentence, a mote of starlight burst apart near his head, forcing him to step back.

"Shh~ You can't just say my name casually like that anymore. I'm only allowing my beloved and the people she accepts to say it." Astrelya held her finger over her lips.

The three Lords were clearly annoyed by Astrelya but fighting her. . . To them, there was an easy way to get past her. But actually doing it was another matter.

To focus solely on her, to clash against her with everything they have. It meant abandoning the chance of witnessing an Apostle's downfall or even being the one to kill them.

None of them was that generous to help the other two while sacrificing themselves to entertain Astrelya.

"Lord of Stars, why must you keep us here? We hold no grudges against one another. Or is this another bid to get the fight you desire?" One of the Lords questioned while trying to find a way to get past Astrelya.

"Hmm, because my beloved asked me to. You see, there had been a slight mistake during the previous battle. Maybe it's because I joined in but they really don't want to escalate it further." Astrelya held her hands behind her back.

There was a soft smile on her face, far different to the aura baring down on the three Lords.

"Then again, I suppose it's also part of my fault so I'm here making up for it." Astrelya chuckled, sticking out her tongue playfully while one of the Lords gritted his teeth.

"If you want a fight sure, we can have a fight but at least wait till after we deal with the Apostle!" The second one suggested but Astrelya shook her head.

"Ah that won't work for me. Since you old folks refused to entertain me, even after I tried to reason with you, I gave up you know? Even if you were to give me your full attention, you three won't give me the fulfilment I desire.

"Simply put, I find you revolting. You won't be able to please my maiden heart." Astrelya giggled before clasping her hands together.

Around them, motes of light converged overhead to form a cage of sorts. All the arrows trained on the three, preparing to fire the moment they make any suspicious movements.

The first to make a move was Zeirak, Abyss Lord of Reflections.

Clenching his fist, glass like fractures appeared in front of every mote, deflecting the attacks.

Resonance!

His form immediately shifted with him activating his Resonance! An iridescent shimmer flickered across his body, transforming it into a mirror like surface while chromatic armour wrapped around his limbs.

A white halo appeared above the back of his hands and head.

Aiming his hand towards Astrelya, he snapped his fingers and the realm around her shattered.

The second to move was Feng Zhi, Abyss Lord of Wind.

His body appeared above Astrelya as cyan blades manifested near his arms. The airspace collapsed around her, making sure that she couldn't escape!

The last to move was Wen Yu, Abyss Lord of Rot. Strands of flesh coiled between his hands, compressing into a single bullet with an ominous aura. He took aim and fired! An attack to inject the festering rot into Astrelya's body!

Similar to how Famine functions, his power of Rot was one that continuously ate away at the user, making it near impossible to recover from!

Seeing the three with such hostility, Astrelya's body trembled with anticipation but she controlled herself.

As happy as she was, this was only momentary. Their focus were still on something beyond her.

"Ah~ Disappointing. How very disappointing." Astrelya sighed as she closed her eyes.

Tapping her finger down, a constellation flickered into existence.

Around her, the attacks began to ripple. The three Lords found themselves frozen in place.

Tapping her finger down for a second time, another ripple disrupted reality with attacks beginning to fade.

Before they knew what happened, the three found themselves back at their original spot.

Their resonances haven't been activated yet and the fight has yet to begin.

However, the only thing that didn't change was Astrelya as the constellation floated around her.

"So aggressive, almost made my heart flutter. Just a teenie tiny bit. If only you were like this when I asked for a fight in the past~" She sighed with regret.

Clasping her hands together, starlight began to form.

*RUMBLE!!!

In an instant, the skies were blocked out by dark clouds and a single crimson moon. The four paused, glancing to the side and noticing a magnificent black castle atop a mountain.

The owner, stood on the tallest spire with a white parasol on her shoulders.

"I do believe the agreement that Lords shouldn't fight was accepted because of the damage we can do to this realm. Or are you saying that the four of you don't mind the destruction that follows?" A calm voice echoed out.

Yet beneath the calm, the four of them could sense a silence fury.

Astrelya's eyes trembled before a wide smile appeared on her face.

###

Rosalyn felt a chill from the way the white haired woman was staring at her.

She wasn't actually planning on moving at all, especially since she sensed a large amount of divinity in the distance. One that belonged to the Eclipse at that.

However, the signatures of four Lords wasn't something that she could easily ignore. Hell, if she didn't make a move just now, the energy that Astrelya was gathering could prove to be rather dangerous if it was allowed to explode.

Thus she took the initiative to drag the four of them into her own realm, even if it meant potentially making all four of them her enemy.

"Who the f*ck are you?" Zeriak spat out, causing Rosalyn to almost fall over.

Which made sense since she didn't really operate in the East.

Not many knew of Rosalyn, Abyss Lord of Scarlet Ruin. But she thought with Kizen being there when she ascended, surely her name should've been passed around! Right?!

"It doesn't matter who I am. What matters is that a conflict between Lords is one that should be avoided." Rosalyn decided to hide her embarrassment by changing the topic away from herself.

And if a fight does break out, Luke can buff her in order for her to fight against these four.

"If you weren't focused on the two little ones in your blood, I would've been tempted to see if you were worthy to be my darling." Astrelya smiled, cupping her hands around Rosalyn's cheeks.

"!!!"

Widening her eyes in shock, Rosalyn wasn't even able to react to Astrelya. The moment she recognised how close Astrelya had gotten, she was about to attack using her artifact when Astrelya disappeared once more, returning back to her original spot.

Just as Astrelya was about to express her intentions, the words were stuck in her throat as her head snapped towards the left. Her gaze shooting past the boundaries of Rosalyn's barrier.

"Kazzie. . . Kazzie! Ah! You surprise me! Truly!" Astrelya laughed as a constellation shimmered behind her.

A single bisecting line slashed broke through Rosalyn's barrier!

They weren't the main target but the attack still reached them!

Hidden within Rosalyn's blood, Ria and Luke froze. They glanced at one another while Rosalyn gritted her teeth.

Mixed within that monstrous surge of energy was something all three of them were deeply familiar with.

This unique aura that couldn't belong to anyone else.

Alice!