

Abyssal A 71

Chapter 71 Seeking Help From The Church

Waking up in the morning, Alice noticed that they had been moved onto the carriage and were now on their way back from the ruins. Alice wasn't sure how long they were on the road for, but she felt it wouldn't take them long before they were back in Zadash.

Looking to her side, she noticed that Ria was still asleep with a frown on her face, suffering from the effects of drinking too much Abyss Blood.

"You're awake. Your friend woke up a few times, but it didn't last long before she fell unconscious again. I'm not sure what kind of blood you drank but you probably want to go see a Moon cleric upon reaching Zadash. They might have some medicine or Abyss Blood to offset the side effects." The driver suggested while glancing back at Alice.

"Thank you, I'll keep that in mind." Alice nodded.

Alice wasn't familiar with these medications since she never needed them. Even now, she was no longer feeling the effects of the Abyss Blood, only the wounds it left behind. If she had any Abyss Blood left, she could drink that now and heal her wounds.

But that was not the case for Ria.

Just glancing at her bandages told Alice that she still hadn't healed from her wounds.

The duo tried to rest up as much as they could for the rest of the journey. They stopped occasionally, for the driver to get them some food. Ria was unable to eat properly due to remaining unconscious the whole time. The best Alice could do was feed her small parts while hoping she would swallow the food.

Once they were back at the city, the driver didn't hesitate to lead them towards the Church of the Moon.

While Zadash was primarily a Hunters' city, there were still small branches of the churches within. However, their sphere of influence was smaller than that of other cities.

Arriving at the Cathedral, Alice was shocked by the sheer scale of the building despite it being a small branch.

'Allura didn't seem to like any of the churches. But this is all we can do for now.' Alice thought with a frown as she followed the driver inside the Church.

Entering the Cathedral, Alice noticed a large open area with rows upon rows of benches facing an altar. Behind the altar was the statue of a woman whom she figured to be the Goddess of the Moon. Behind the statue were massive stained glass windows. Above it was another of the same windows. However, it seemed to focus the radiance of the moon upon the statue itself.

There were a few people praying by the benches, but the group didn't bother them.

Standing at the altar was a priestess adorned with delicate black robes. Silver cuffs around the waist, neck and wrists embellished her attire. A silver mask covered the upper faces of the people inside, while a ring of metal signifying the moon hovered behind their heads.

She had long gray hair peeking out from her hood.

"A driver and two esteemed Hunters. How may this Reverend assist you today?" The woman smiled softly as she glanced at Alice before looking down at Ria.

"This young Hunter is suffering from the side effects of Abyss Blood due to an incident. The blood in question is Black Blaze Blood." The driver explained. Alice had informed him about the blood on their way back.

"Ah... If I recall correctly... that blood increases one's weakness to flames after consumption, yes?" She asked while the driver nodded quickly.

Walking down, she lifted one of Ria's bandages. Her skin had been split apart with red embers inside her body, still burning away slowly at her.

"She must've been in quite some danger for her to consume so much. May I presume you will be able to pay for the treatment?" She asked as the driver hesitated for a moment.

"How much is it?" Alice asked.

"For this level of injury, I'm afraid it will cost 3 Platina. Naturally, we can write up a tab with no interest as I believe this is our first encounter." The Reverend offered.

'3 Platina... That's about 300 Gold if I remember correctly...'

"After the treatment, will she be cured?" Alice asked with a frown.

"Yes, she will be, to a certain extent. However, as you know, side effects of this scale are usually permanent. While we can reduce the impact as well as the effects, she will forever be weak to flames."

Hearing this, Alice nodded.

"Alright, please go ahead with the treatment. I'll figure out a way to get the money."

"Fantastic. Please take the young Hunter to a treatment room with this sister while I prepare the contract with the Hunter besides you."

Just as she said this, a nun approached the group and gestured for the driver to follow her.

Glancing back at Alice momentarily, the driver took Ria and left the main hall with the nun.

"Now then, I would require an ID. The Hunter's Guild will work with us on this. They will take a portion of your reward from each successful hunt to repay this debt." She explained as Alice nodded her head.

Rummaging through her pockets, she brought out the card that was her Hunter's Guild ID.

"Please, follow me while I get the contract."

Following behind the Reverend, Alice walked through the halls of the Church in a mix of awe, curiosity, and hesitance. While she did have some knowledge regarding the Church of the Moon, it was only surface-level and rudimentary at best.

'When I was locked away, the Zenia family had trades with the Church of the Moon. But it was only in medicine. They knew what kind of Abyss Beasts to look for since my body told them of the effects. As much as I am loath to admit it, it is true that they do have superior healing blood that can help Ria.' Alice thought to herself.

The sooner she left this place, the better it would be for her. She was just glad she hadn't seen any Zenia family markings around this place yet.

Upon arriving at the Reverend's office, the woman searched for a scroll before presenting it to Alice.

"Here is the contract. You will be paying 20% of your commission fees every time to pay back the debt. Naturally, you can pay it back in full whenever you want. You merely need to tell the Hunter's Guild and they will forward it to me. There are three copies of this contract; one for you, one for me and one for the Guild.

When you fulfill the terms of the contract, the Guild will mark it off and it will naturally be updated on my end. You may read through the Contract if you wish to make sure everything is correct." She smiled while offering the contract to Alice.

Picking it up, Alice read through the clauses, which seemed OK to her. She wasn't sure what some of the things meant but Ria needed help and she wasn't sure if they had the time to spare.

'There's no time limit for this... It should be fine. I'll ask Allura about it later when she comes back. I need to learn more about the language used here.' Alice thought to herself while signing the contract with a bloody fingerprint.

Feeling something reach out from the contract and connect with her, Alice furrowed her brows. Before she could dwell on the feeling, it faded away.

"Perfect. I will send a copy to the Hunter's Guild right away."

"When will Ria be healed?" Alice asked curiously, as the sooner they got to leave the place, the better it would be. Just being in the church reminded her of the Zenia Family.

"Hmm, the process should only take about an hour or so. If you wish, you can wait outside the treatment room." The Reverend offered.

Naturally, Alice accepted.

Following her to the treatment room, she noticed the driver sitting down outside.

"Ah, you're still here." Alice uttered in surprise. She thought he would've left by now.

"Well, I'll feel guilty if I just left. The least I can do is to see if she's fully healed or not." He shrugged.

The two sat down while waiting for news regarding Ria's condition.

"So, I don't think you told me about why you became a Hunter, young lass. A girl like you should have quite a few jobs you can do other than risking your life, no?"

Hearing this, Alice fell silent for a moment before opening her mouth.

"Because being a Hunter makes me stronger. If I'm stronger, others can't control me or do stuff to me." Alice shrugged.

At first, she wasn't sure, but the opportunity that Kaden and Allura offered to her allowed her to see a future where she could take down the Zenia family. If she grew strong enough, they would no longer be able to threaten her.

All she needed now was time, time to foster her own growth and time to collect more Sigils.

Allura mentioned that people can only have one set of Sigils, but this rule did not apply to her. If she consumes someone else's blood, she can take their power for herself, albeit temporarily. It gave her an edge that others didn't have, even if the Abyss Blood they consumed permanently boosted their power.

"Strength and freedom, huh? That's one of the reasons why most Hunters exist. In this world where the blood of beasts gives you power and hunting them down gives you Sigils, it makes sense that people will want to protect themselves. Without power, what's stopping them from taking all that you hold dear?" The driver chuckled as this was his reason to work as a Hunter in the beginning as well.

"It's an endless pursuit that few can walk to the end. I never dared to keep going."

Alice agreed with his sentiment. But for her, she had no choice to keep going. She wouldn't be satisfied otherwise.