

Abyssal A 711

Chapter 711 - 711: Coronation

To break down an attack, one must understand it. Its structure, the intention, its purpose.

What did the attacker envision when unleashing this move?

What powers did they use to achieve this attack?

How does the world respond to this attack?

These were only a few of the questions that Alice needed to ask in order to fully comprehend what Kazira was doing.

Unbeknownst to her, a synergistic phenomenon had begun to take shape within her. A triggered effect thanks to the stolen powers of Analysis that resembled Cayla's power.

Weaker than Cayla but one that allowed Alice a similar state of focus.

Alice could already see the strands of energy that floated through the air. The way the world reacted to the sudden influx of power and authority. But now that Analysis was added into the mix, she understood the intent behind the attack.

The composition and how it functions.

She also understood the true benefit of Analysis.

The benefit didn't lie in stealing an opponent's attack.

No, the benefit lie in the fact that through Analysis, one could eventually spot the weaknesses within the attack.

To break it down into digestible chunks and heighten one's understanding of it. To deconstruct the attack in its entirety. A raw, unfiltered dissection of an attack and ability.

Just like how Kazira broke down the secrets of Void Flux and created her own attack Eclipse Axis, Alice was now breaking down the constructs of Eclipse Axis.

How did Kazira enhance this attack further?

Alice could see four sources of power. A state similar to herself but. . . undeniably inferior.

Kazira's body was already teetering on the brink of collapsing.

She could not handle four sources running rampant within her. In fact, it was only because of Analysis 'borrowing' the Void was she allowed to unleash an attack of such devastation.

Holy power that stirred within her soul, merged with the powers of the Abyss.

Eldritch that clung like a parasite to her body, barely forming a bridge to the other two powers.

A triangle of balance.

And held within the centre, Void.

Fresh inspiration was filling Alice's mind, methods of casting that she couldn't have imagined before. Methods of manipulating the energy around them.

She could see the finalisation of her personal skill. A crystallisation of all her experience in manipulating the four sources of energy within her.

It is only when seeing it from a third person perspective did she truly understand.

And for that, Kazira had her gratitude.

In order to counter the shifting of the realm, Alice utilized the power of the Abyss and Holy.

A stinging sensation filled her eye, the crown that manifested above her head and the heart that throbbed with a newfound vigour.

She could sense the weakening of chains, the gate that barred her power slowly creaking open.

[It's not a perfect solution but it's a solution nonetheless.] Cayla spoke up, placing a hand on Alice's shoulder.

Cayla's right eye began to shift!

From the edges, dark shadow crept forth like ink in water and Alice's mind was flooded by an influx of knowledge.

Kaden's seal, one that not even he could choose to break apart.

One that will loosen over time.

But now that a crack has appeared in the seal, a slight gap, they were going to force the door wide open!

Cayla had been channelling nearly all of her focus into analysing the seal via Analysis! To understand the constructs of Kaden's authority. It was also during this did she develop the skill Counter Seal. An ability that hinders the formation of sealing abilities and even breaking them in some cases.

It's an ability that helped Alice break Kazira's hold on her personal artifact and now, it'll help Alice break the Kaden's seal!

*Badum. . . Badum!. . . BADUM!. . .

The rhythm of the Abyss echoed in her chest. The resonance between Alice, her inherited divinity, the artifact and the realm itself.

Above her, the Abyssal crown pulsed with a new life, each shard glowing, radiating with power.

And then. . . The seal began to hum.

*Krkkk. . .

From the edges, the threads of Kaden's seal frayed like silk burned by flames. As each fibre snapped, the light of the world began to falter. The winds ceased its endless song, the realm paused in recognition.

The skies trembled, clouds parted not by wind but by the invisible surge of authority. Currents of unseen power, strands of energy that was pushed away.

The surge of Abyssal might that echoed through the land. Fissures of the Abyss cracked open, allowing the malevolent aura of the Abyss to burst into the realm of man.

A convergence of raw energy centred around a single point.

Alice.

*RUMBLE!!!

The Eye of the Abyss, long shackled in silence flared open.

She could feel it.

A pulse of life. Of clarity.

Like a swimmer finally breathing in a gasp of air after a long dive, a wanderer finding his oasis in the desert.

The sudden relief of burden.

She could feel the weave of energy through this realm, this shifting of strands. It was now clear to her.

In the past, her senses were far too dull. She was the hindrance of Cayla's potential. She had eyes that could see yet she was blind. Ears that could hear but she was deaf.

But now?

Everything was clear and the realm responded.

From the corners of the world, strands of energy bowed to her presence. The Abyss itself cried out. The surge of acknowledgement.

As above, so below.

The heavens split to reveal a laurel of radiant gold, a corona of divine light.

The earth tore asunder, revealing a yawning chasm and from within, shards of deepest darkness.

With the two halves now fusing together, a new crown manifested before Alice.

A coronation of the new Queen.

At long last, the three artifacts of the once beloved Goddess have truly recognised a new owner.

Alice reached out and the crown responded.

Recognition and devotion to the new Queen.

If Velouria's crown was that of gold and black, Alice's crown wore a shade of crimson.

The colour of blood.

The colour of sacrifice.

The colour of death.

Yet. . .

It is also the colour of life.

For within blood, comes life.

A duality of two halves, of two souls.

The hand that gives and the hand that takes.

Then Kazira's attack struck.

The Eclipse Axis, an attack that bisects the world.

But Kazira felt no triumph. All that filled her mind was an overwhelming sense of foreboding. Of dread.

Her hands trembled.

It wasn't her own fear.

It was the energy that stirred within her.

The Abyss.

As the Apostle of War, she was privy to information that many others did not know. That the three Gods kept silent about.

The existence of the fourth, the one who ruled over the Abyss.

As the dust parted, Kazira saw it.

Alice unharmed.

And in front of her, the Eclipse Axis being restrained above a single weapon. A mass of obsidian, ever shifting, ever changing.

Letting out a deep breath, Kazira glanced up at Alice who landed not far from her.

"So that's the truth. . ." She muttered with a weary smile.

Fatigue filled her body.

In front of her was no ordinary girl. In fact, even calling her abnormal wouldn't do her existence justice.

If Kazira had to describe it, then Alice would be a cocoon. A cocoon of divinity, waiting for the right moment to hatch.

The vessel for a new God upon this land.

Right now, even if she had her old vessel, Kazira found it unlikely for herself to win.

The path to victory now shrouded in uncertainty.

She missed her best opportunity to end this fight.

"Tell me, was this all part of your calculations?" Kazira couldn't help but ask.

"Far from it."

Eclipse Axis, a truly terrifying attack that had Alice questioning whether or not she could survive it.

Perhaps if Kazira had more time, she would've been able to perfect this attack.

"I see. . . Humour me one more time before we end this clash. What do you intend to do as a God?" Kazira asked, glancing up at the sky.

She knew her end was near. Her long treacherous path finally reached the cliff edge. And now looking back at everything she's done, she couldn't help but let out a deep sigh.

One that she wasn't sure of herself. Was it regret? Satisfaction? She didn't know.

"I don't know. I'm still unsure of what I want to do in this life for myself, outside of what I promised to do for others." Alice shook her head.

Kazira raised an eyebrow.

"You're just like a newborn. Unsure of what you want to accomplish."

Hearing this, Alice chuckled and shrugged her shoulders.

"I was born roughly 10 or so years ago."

Blinking her eyes, Kazira couldn't help but let out a resounding laugh.

"So the Apostle of War, the Abyss Lord of Tyranny lost to a kid that's yet to reach adulthood. Though I doubt there are any kids as freakishly strong as you.

"The philosophies of the Eclipse are simple. Enris was never one to govern much after all. An adrenaline junkie who's never reached the same high ever since she lost the Goddess of the Abyss centuries ago." She hoisted the blade onto her shoulder.

"But there is one thing that she taught me. One thing that I find rather suitable for this moment. Life in life, die in death. Disciples of the Eclipse will live life to its fullest, burning the candle of our essence to shine as bright as we can until the moment we extinguish.

"We will sear our mark of existence into this world, to imprint ourselves into the memory of another. To prove that we walked this land! Breathed this air!

"That is how we live in life, and die in death! As the Apostle, as the one who follows the principles of War. . ." Kazira paused and revealed a smile.

"I, Kazira, will meet my end in battle!"

Gathering all of her energy, Kazira's body began to crack apart. Her vessel unable to contain the surge in power.

But Kazira didn't care about surviving this fight. Right now, all she wanted to do, was showcase her all against the one who would carry her memory!

This was her redemption! This was her chance to prove that she is a disciple of the Eclipse!

Facing Kazira, Alice aimed her blade.

Void Fang's first victim after a long slumber, shall be an Apostle!

"Goodbye Kazira."

Chapter 712 - 712: Kazira's End

"Ah. . . The sky is so. . . very beautiful." Kazira whispered, her voice a fading echo in the wind.

She lay on her back, her eyes dulled but still open, stared towards the sky.

The firmament above her was like an endless painting, layered with hues of crimson, gold, purple and blues. Twilight streaks merging together to form bands of light, the clouds that drifted slowly like waves on a quiet sea.

She could feel it, the warmth of her life seeping out of her body, soaking the soil beneath her.

The numbness creeping in from the limbs, starting from her fingertips.

This. . . cold sensation.

This was finality.

Her heartbeat, once thunderous was now slowing down.

Each beat softer than the last, a final farewell.

During their first fight, Kazira found herself afraid of death. She ran from it, betrayed her beliefs, abandoned her body like a wretched being.

But now, she reflected in silence.

Perhaps this liberation, this sensation. . . This was what Enris was chasing after this entire time.

After a life of adrenaline and one final moment of bliss, came the moment of peace.

A moment of silence.

A liberation from duty, of burden.

"You should be careful..." Kazira muttered, her voice strained.

But towards the one who bested her, towards the one who gave her clarity in her mind, she had to say one last thing.

Alice stood next to Kazira, listening.

"The Outer Gods. . . I don't know. . . what you did to strike a bargain. But do not trust them. Even if it seems logical to us. . . the same does not apply to them." Kazira took a deep breath.

She needed to warn Alice about Voruth'Zal, about Zal-Ka'Rith.

She needed to warn her about their nature.

"As. . . As we speak. Perhaps Voruth'Zal and Zal-Ka'Rith have already. . . come to an agreement. They are only. . . loyal to one thing and one thing alone. Ignore. . . ignore everything else they say." Kazira's words began to slur.

"Their titles. It. . . it is both a blessing and a curse to them. It tells you. . . what they truly desire. Their heart's secret that they. . . cannot conceal. For that. . . they will do anything. . .

"And everything."

Glancing down, Alice was silent as her eyelashes trembled for a moment.

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Raising her hand, a woman glanced at the flickering mote of light dancing above her palm.

A small smile appeared on her face.

"Kazzie, my dear Kazira. May your next journey be one of joy and fulfilment. Your soul will not be mine to claim nor will it be consumed by the Abyss." Enris muttered softly.

Unlike her usual self, her voice was now filled with a sense of tenderness.

She gently caressed the edges of the soul as markings of the Eclipse manifested around it.

Little by little, she extracted the power that Kazira held until her soul was pure and untainted. Raising her hand, she allowed it to drift into the air, scattering into countless particles.

Enris spent this moment in silence before looking down at the power she extracted.

Had Kazira refused to change, had she continued to present this vile version of herself, Enris would've claimed her soul as they had originally agreed upon.

But seeing that kind of ending, the satisfaction she felt as she finally died, Enris couldn't bring herself to do so. Instead, she relinquished her hold over Kazira's soul.

"Thank you for giving me a moment to grieve." She smiled, glancing back ever so slightly.

She could see a faceless silhouette standing not far from her, watching silently.

"Of course. It's a show of respect towards the holder of a Divine Throne." The Will of the Abyss chuckled with his hands behind his back.

"Take it and leave me be." Enris threw the condensed orb at the Will who caught it with ease.

Looking at the orb, he smiled before glancing back at Enris.

"Are you enjoying yourself?"

Enris's eye twitched in annoyance for a reason as she looked back coldly.

"That wasn't an invitation for you to strike up a conversation."

"Oh I'm aware. But when the spectator becomes a player in the game, don't you think it'll raise a few questions?" The Will curved his lips up to a twisted grin.

Enris narrowed her gaze.

Just when she thought the Will was going to provoke her further, he turned around.

"Keep playing your game dear actress. Let's hope your end is as beautiful as you envisioned it." The Will waved his hand twice before stepping through the portal.

Left alone, Enris glanced up at the sky.

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With Kazira now dead, Alice could sense the fulfilment of the bounty. She could sense the sudden urge of drowsiness.

However, she couldn't fall yet.

Kazira's final warning. . .

She knew that Kazira didn't say it to form a rift between her and Zal-Ka'Rith.

In fact, there were plenty of grounds to be suspicious of Zal-Ka'Rith. The best lies are those mixed with the truth.

If so, his goal using Kazira's body might not match what he said.

"What a shame. Seems like Kazira's vessel couldn't handle it after all. But more importantly, it seems like you've developed something rather. . . interesting." A voice echoed out with Alice feeling a chill down her spine.

Widening her eyes, she wanted to fight back but collapsed on her knee.

Unlike the other times, the reaction towards a completed bounty was far stronger.

Was it because Cayla became fully unsealed? Or was it because her bounty target was a Lord.

Alice didn't know but this was no time to pass out.

If Voruth'Zal was here then. . .

"Where did the parchment go? Don't tell me you two struck a bargain?" Alice forced a smile as she looked up and glared at Voruth'Zal standing in front of Kazira's crumbling vessel.

Now that Cayla was fully unsealed, Alice could see the dark twisted strands of energy around him, tainting the ambient energy.

Leaving behind corruption with every step he took.

"A bargain? Hmm somewhat. But he's what I call an opportunistic fellow. His alliances don't last, he simply does what's in his best interest. And if a better situation comes along, he'll take it." Voruth'Zal smiled.

"So now, he's no longer here to keep me busy. Shall we talk about how we should deal with you?" He narrowed his gaze.

Kazira's body crumbled apart with the power that he bestowed upon her returning to him.

Through the Eye of the Abyss, Alice could see his movements slowing down ever so slightly.

Enough so that she could respond in time!

Void Fang!

*KRK!!!!

The weapon in her hands disassembled itself before reconstructing into a shield of sorts, pushing Voruth'Zal back.

Pausing momentarily in surprise, he was stunned by the weapon in her hands.

However. . .

He did promise Zal-Ka'Rith that he'd give him an 'entertaining tale' in return for his favour.

Therefore, he'll naturally follow through!

From within his body, human parts began to appear as his form started to shift.

Next to him, a single page appeared.

"Let's see. . . For this vessel, I bestow the name Lilith. And here is the tale I shall write." Lilith grinned as the shadows around her burst apart, revealing her form.

It was a prototype that he designed for Kazira but ultimately, one that didn't match her fighting style or desires.

It's a vessel that had low compatibility but arguably better performance!

Lilith had long black hair flowing past her waist. She stood amidst the shadows, pale like moonlight, ominous like the shifting shadows cast by withering trees.

She had eyes of blood red fire, emotionless yet filled to the brim with power. Around the edges of her eyes, the skin was slightly uneven, revealing the withering flesh beneath the porcelain cover.

Twisted demonic horns curled around her head and around her throat, pulsed a crimson stitch line. It pulsed with a malevolent power and each rhythmic beat would cause the writhing mass of corruption to extend further from this demonic collar.

Chains that dug into her flesh, ritualistic carvings across her chest and the living mass of shadow that acted as a dress.

Since Zal-Ka'Rith derived power from tales that he witnessed, he will do so through this 'living vessel'. At least then, he can still gain power from his true name of Voruth'Zal.

Alice scanned Lilith. Immediately she could tell that she was a casting type due to the energy flowing around her rather than in her body.

Physical types usually have energy reinforcing their bodies more than the air around them.

While casting types were the opposite!

Taking a step forward, Lilith curved her lips up into an ominous smile despite the eyes not showing emotion.

Plunging her finger into her neck, she pulled and the collar activated!

Seeing this, Alice understood that Voruth'Zal must've stolen Zenia technology as well!

Clicking her tongue, Alice shifted back to create some distance between the two of them. Alyss was already knocked out while Cayla wasn't any better. She was trying to stay away but couldn't utter a single word.

Alice's mind scrambled for answers when she noticed a certain presence.

"Just you wait Voruth'Zal. Your time will come. Retribution for interrupting my first fight with Kazira and even now." Alice gave her the middle finger before collapsing forward.

Right before face planting into the ground, a single parasol supported her weight.

"Make it quick. That puppet has power but the durability isn't worth sh*t. Think of this as a last minute test for you two dipshits." Rosalyn scoffed in disdain towards Lilith as a pool of blood began to expand beneath her feet.

From the blood, crackles of lightning flickered as a chessboard expanded, encompassing all of them.

Dashing out of the lightning, Ria was already in her Resoannce form as her blade was inches away from Lilith's head!

Two fold lightning!

Chapter 713 - 713: Alice's Sixth Sigil

Returning to the white void once more, this time in her soul form rather than breaching it using her physical body, Alice looked at the Will who was clapping his hands.

"Quite the honourable duel at the end I must admit." He chuckled, his voice echoing through this endless expanse of white. Alice only sighed at his theatrics.

"But to unseal Cayla while you were at it. . ." He trailed off, tilting his head slightly before grinning. "Not the wisest choice. Now that the Abyss has recognised a new inheritor, your fate is now tied to this realm. All the Lords sensed it, even the old ones.

"Quite a few eyes will be on you now, do you think you can handle that kind of attention?"

Alice didn't answer. Instead, she turned her gaze towards the realm that he inhabited. The Will's domain of sorts.

In the past, whenever Alice or someone else was to receive a Sigil, it had always been their own mental space. A private realm unique to the Hunter. But once the Will started to interfere with the bounty system, it had always been this realm.

She had punctured a hole to this place before and the Will said that he did her a favour before expelling her, warning her not to do it again or else he'll simply sit by and watch. Now that she was looking at it again with her eye unsealed, she could see why.

This location. . . the abundance of Abyssal energy that was laying dormant around the walls and even the floor beneath her feet. Should it spill into the realm of man, it'll become an unstoppable tsunami that speeds up the mutation occurring within people's bodies thanks to Abyss Blood.

Noticing Alice's curiosity, the Will decided to humour this girl who kept ignoring his words.

"Much like your blood, this energy is rather potent in its mutation. Just a single droplet of this is enough to kill a normal person. But I'm keeping dormant within this realm." He walked towards her. "It is also this energy that helps me expand the boundaries of the Abyss. As for its properties. . . Coming into contact with another realm causes a rather violent reaction." He chuckled, placing his hand on Alice's shoulder.

"So the fact that I kept it calm and sealed the breach last time, shouldn't you be grovelling at my feet and thanking me?" He curled his lips up into a twisted grin.

A grin that would send shivers down the spines of most people but not Alice.

She simply gave him a disgusted side eye before smacking his hand away.

"Thank you? For what? Keeping a vessel you got your eyes on in good condition? We both know even if I pierce into this realm again, you would keep it contained no matter what."

The Will lost his smile.

He realised that Alice could see the countless strands connecting him and this realm together.

Leaning closer to her, he peered deep into the Eye of the Abyss.

"What have you done to that Eye of yours?"

"Nyer has already stole half of it. And I doubt I can make the eye normal if I were to take it back right? Why not make some changes like I did with this Heart of mine." Alice grinned.

It was a bluff.

She didn't know what the Will was talking about but it seems like Cayla had experienced some changes.

Changes that the Will wasn't too pleased about.

Staying silent, the Will took a step back.

"I suppose that is fine after all. Nyer's fake heart becoming the real deal, the crown reforging itself to coronate the new Queen. And the Eye of the Abyss evolving to match the growth of the other two relics. Indeed, keeping things the same would be foolish in the end." He shrugged his shoulders.

Now then, I presume you want to talk about what kind of power you want to get now right?" He glanced back with a grin.

Flicking his hand, an orb of concentrated energy appeared above his palm.

Alice froze at the sight of the orb.

The calamitous energy that stirred within, a mix of Abyssal powers and Holy.

"This orb that was extracted from Kazira is one that holds a fragment of Divinity due to her status as an Apostle. Divinity that you can take advantage of to some degree but be warned, it is the Divinity belonging to the Eclipse. Accepting that kind of power. . . Has its own consequences."

Splitting the orb in two, the Will now held an orb of swirling black and purple while in his other hand, rests an orb of crimson with strange black mist rolling off its surface.

"Take it, what you do with that is up to you. Keep it, use it, toss it away if you want. It's only a fragment in the end, a seed."

Catching the crimson orb that the Will threw towards her, Alice frowned.

Before she could continue with her questions, the Will crushed the black and purple orb in his other hand.

*RUMBLE!!!

In front of her, nine Sigils flared into existence with two more floating above the nine. Far more complex and refined, one even had a silhouette that looked like it could be Kazira.

"Targeting a human who's been blessed by the Abyss works a little differently to taking Sigils from a beast. In that most of the time, you can't do so. But I'm making this exception. Your choices are to take one from the existing contracts she has established or the two that she has cultivated herself.

"The powers she obtained as a Lord, merged with her Resonances." He grinned, presenting them all towards Alice.

"Take your pick and obtain your Sixth contract."

Folding her arms, Alice glanced over at the options. If she had to be honest, some of Kazira's early choices didn't impress her.

They were straightforward. Functional, but straightforward regardless. It didn't leave much room for innovation or expansion since they focused on enhancing Kazira's original body.

Alice didn't need that kind of power. Sigils five and six were a little better as they were focused on using weapons and certain techniques. More versatile than the first four but again, it's not a very hard task to accomplish.

It's the same as saying running is better than walking. Yes it's better but the first wasn't exactly a difficult task.

And once again, it's not something she desired.

Instead, what caught her attention was the 10th option. A power that Kazira made herself.

If the other Sigils were more direct and upfront with their powers. . . This one held unlimited potential depending on how it interacts with her power.

Specifically, her second Sigil and her innate abilities.

A smile appeared on Alice's face.

"Yo, Will. This one, does it work the way I think it does?" Alice pointed at the 10th.

Circling around, the Will folded his arms and smiled.

"Seems like you prefer something conceptual rather than upfront. I might have to adjust my thoughts about your potential Lord title now." He chuckled. An amused smile appeared on his face.

However, it wasn't a no. Which meant that what Alice had in mind was indeed possible!

But as her brain caught up with what she heard, she froze up at the last part of the sentence.

"The f*ck? You can choose my title for me???" She pulled the face of disgust, realising that her fate might be in the Will's palms.

"I have some control over the decision." He shrugged, flicking his hand and dismissing the other options.

"For your reference, Abyss Lord of Mead was on the table for one of the choices."

Alice was stunned. Her mouth slightly open in disbelief.

Abyss Lords, the pinnacle of power for mankind. The last step before becoming an Apostle.

Out of all the titles she's seen or heard, they have always been awe inspiring. Titles that showed off their strength or potential power. Duality, Inferno, Corruption, Death, Stars and so on.

The majesty that comes with attaining the status of Lord.

And yet. . .

Within all the possible options. . .

There is the Abyss Lord of. . . Mead?

"That's a f*cking thing???"

What kind of ability does being the Lord of Mead even give you?!

She needed answers!

The Will didn't respond and snapped his finger.

The option for the 10th Sigil began to break apart into streaks of light, flying into Alice's body.

A burning sensation shot through her body, causing her to collapse on her knee.

"I hope you enjoy this new power of yours. Perhaps you'll even show me something interesting."

Clapping his hands together twice, he expelled Alice from his realm.

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"M*therf*cker tell me what being a Lord of Mead means!!!" Alice shouted, sitting up.

Blinking her eyes in confusion, she noticed that she was in a bed. Not far from her, in the same room was Ria and Luke.

Both were staring at her in shock after she suddenly started to scream. They seemed to be. . . playing chess with some snacks on the other table.

Sitting opposite them was Rosalyn who had a face of annoyance. The parasol in her hands moments from being released and thrown like a hammer towards Alice but she held herself back at the last moment.

But they weren't the only ones in this room.

To Alice's left, tucked away in the corner was Isolde. She was bound by chains and secured to a blood chair, a smile no longer on her face.

And in the last remaining corner, Jin was in the same situation.

Digesting everything she saw, she massaged the bridge of her nose, feeling as though her brain had just short circuited.

"What the f*ck is going on?"

Chapter 714 - 714: Catching Up With Rosalyn

"What the f*ck is going on?! What the f*ck is going on???" Rosalyn's veins threatened to burst as she lunged forward.

"You think you can say that sh*t after everything you caused?! Let me go! I'm going to smack some sense into her!" Rosalyn shouted with Ria and Luke hurriedly restraining her with all their might.

Alice coughed awkwardly, trying to play it off.

"Ahem, I dunno what you mean. I'm just tryin-"

"Showcasing the power of a Lord then fighting one! Do you think I'm blind and deaf?! If things escalated further without that chick stopping the other three, this place would be a hellhole right now!" Rosalyn clenched her fist in anger along with a glare that could kill a man.

"Gods give me patience! If they give me strength you'll be six feet under! Sh*t! You're just like Lua and Kaden, giving me random crap to clean up!"

Hearing the mention of Allura and Kaden's name, Alice couldn't help but smile.

But more than that, she was a little surprised about Rosalyn's appearance. Last she checked, Rosalyn looked just like Allura. Though it seems like she managed to resolve that issue in the time they haven't seen each other.

And on top of everything, Alice saw a sight she's missed for a while.

[Rosalyn – Abyss Lord of Scarlet Ruin ♦♦♦♦♦♦♦♦]

As for Ria and Luke, both of them had markings of six Sigils above their heads.

"At least the f*cking Apostle is gone." She sighed, barely managing to calm down. "I know you two were fighting but-"

"Erm about that. . ." Alice coughed awkwardly. "I killed her for my sixth Sigil." She wanted to stop Rosalyn before she had any misconceptions.

All three of their heads snapped towards Alice. Their pupils constricting in shock surprise and disbelief.

They knew that Alice was fighting an Apostle beforehand but when they arrived, only Lilith was there. They assumed that Alice had run out of steam before passing out, barely entertaining the idea that an Apostle lost.

After all, it's an Apostle. A level beyond that of Lords, the retainers of a God.

"YOU WHAT?!" Rosalyn appeared in front of Alice, shrugging off Ria and Luke.

She lifted the girl up by the back of her collar.

"You killed a what again?!?! Say it! I f*cking dare you!" Rosalyn was positively seething with rage as Alice could practically see steam escaping her nose with each deep breath that she took.

"Ahem. Kazira – Apostle of War and Abyss Lord of Tyranny. I killed her for my sixth Sigil since the Will forced the bounty on me." Alice squirmed under her gaze, poking her fingers together.

*SNAP!!!

Rosalyn felt as though something in her brain just broke and a tsunami of rage burst forth.

"So you're telling me, the most BATSH*T INSANE God has just lost her Apostle?! I should kill you right now."

Pulling Alice closer, Rosalyn opened her palm in front of Alice.

Tilting her head to the side, Alice wasn't sure what Rosalyn was asking for. She blinked her eyes, confused and gently placed her hand on top of Rosalyn's palm.

*SMACK!!!

"What are you?! A dog?! I'm asking for your pouch not your f*cking paw!" Rosalyn smacked Alice on the head, causing her to yelp out in pain since it was unexpected.

"Why do you need my pouch for?!" Alice held her head in pain.

"Your mead dumbass! I'm confiscating it. It's either that or death! Pick one!"

"I choose death!"

"Then die."

"Wait wait wait wait!" Ria panicked seeing Rosalyn about to act.

"Let's be civil and talk about this okay?! We haven't seen each other in a long time and I'm sure there's plenty to discuss! Let's not get violent here!"

After all her training with Rosalyn, she knew that the Abyss Lord wasn't kidding around.

She will literally kill you and then revive you if she has to!

"Actually, I got a question of my own. Why is Jin and Isolde tied up in the corner?" Alice pointed at the two.

Luke facepalmed.

"You just had to remind her of it."

At this point, he couldn't help but wonder if Alice was addicted to getting a scolding considering she kept on stepping on landmines.

Incomprehensible shouting exploded out with Alice being waved around like a ragdoll despite her injured status and Ria pleading for mercy.

Standing outside the door, Suyin debated for a moment before deciding to retreat. A wise general knows when to push and when to retreat. This is a moment for retreat.

###

It took great effort and even a bottle of Ayrian mead to appease Rosalyn, much to Alice's sadness. And more than that, she wasn't even allowed to drink while Rosalyn enjoyed it by herself.

Rosalyn had Alice explain everything that happened during the time they were gone, why she had two Eldritch beings with her, what happened in the North and why she was fighting an Apostle.

Alice didn't hold anything back minus a few key details that the three already knew. Information that Isolde didn't know yet.

Ria and Luke had reactions towards the Zenia family interfering in the north, the existence of Hybrids and now the cooperation between the family and the Eldritch beings.

Rosalyn showed visible displeasure at the fact that such a large scale ritual was held in the east during an anniversary, Jin having his body modified and now shipments being sent out to the world.

She thought she was keeping things contained but the operation was far bigger than what she had expected.

And once they were caught up with everything that happened, no one had a smile on their face.

"Sh*t. . ." Was all Rosalyn could say before letting out a deep sigh.

Her brother was already concerned by the growing levels of Eldritch energy in this world and this doesn't make the situation any better.

In fact, it makes it 10 times worse.

"Even outside of what the Outer Gods are planning, we got a different problem at hand. Your awakening, every Lord felt that. Every single Lord, man or beast, knows that a new inheritor for the Abyss has appeared. We felt a heartbeat, an innate feeling that filled our mind." Rosalyn stared at Alice with a serious expression.

"I don't know how most people will react to that but let's just say finding someone being happy about it outside of people we already know will be hard."

"Yeah I figured. But it can't be helped, it had to happen sooner or later." Alice showed a reluctant smile.

"And I'd preferred it to be later. Lua was working hard to keep battles from escalating and Kaden is. . . Well. You already know what he's busy with." Rosalyn took another drink of the mead.

"So let's focus on what we need to focus on. First, Eldritch energy. We need to get rid of the shipments and the main storage facility in the East. My brother should be able to handle that to some extent or at least give us a bit of help." Rosalyn held up one finger.

"Second, we should crack down on the shipments that have already left the East. If it's allowed to spread, who knows what it'll do to another nation."

Alice understood this fact deeply. The fact that even Feris was forced to erase a portion of the Void to keep it contained spoke volumes of its danger.

"Third, I'll need to contact someone I know for them to clean up the corruption that has spread in this place already." Rosalyn scratched her hair.

This was the most annoying thing.

Having normal people handle Eldritch energy was a death wish, even for Lords. They cannot escape the corruption and even if they could, remnants will still be left behind.

That's why Rosalyn needed her. . . acquaintance to clean it up. He's the only one who knows how.

"Actually I think I can sort that out soon. I've already been making the crystals needed to absorb the corruption." Suyin spoke up, poking her head around the door.

"Eh?" Rosalyn blinked her eyes.

"She's not lying. I showed her some stuff about Eldritch energy and she managed to solve it pretty quickly. She's a genius." Alice chuckled.

"But she's just-"

"A normal human. I haven't gotten a single bounty from the Abyss." Suyin nodded her head, closing the door behind her.

Reaching into her pouch, she pulled out a single Eldritch crystal that she made before.

"Don't worry, it's safe to handle in this form. But I still need to figure out a proper way to dispose of it."

Receiving the crystal, Rosalyn observed it for a moment, using her blood to poke and prod around the edges before handing it back.

She didn't show it on her face but she was impressed by it.

"Seems like I don't have to talk to the guy after all, good. Well, that's point three sorted out all that's left is point four." Speaking up to this point, she turned her gaze towards Isolde.

"According to your words, This Zal-Ka'Rith was sponsoring her to a certain extent. But after taking the corpse of Kazira, he skedaddled away and left her behind. What do you want to do with her now?"

Turning to Isolde, Alice was silent.

She could see that Isolde was in deep thought considering her smile had faded away. However, she was still their only connection to Zal-Ka'Rith so she didn't want to be hasty about her choice.

"Leave her be for now. We can talk about it later." Alice sighed.

"Then that brings us to point five, which I've just added. Shouldn't we take your new Sigil for a test run? I'm quite interested by what kind of power you got from killing an apostle." Rosalyn grinned as Ria agreed.

After hearing these words, Alice paused momentarily before nodding. Her fighting spirit was invigorated as she too wanted to demonstrate what she got. And if it worked as planned, which it had a high chance of, this Sigil would unlock countless possibilities that she hadn't even thought about before.

Possibilities that were once closed off to her.

Chapter 715 - 715: Demonstration Of Alice's Sixth Sigil

With the group arriving in an empty plot of land, Rosalyn took a step forward and tapped her parasol against the ground.

Second Resonance – Crimson Walpurgis!

Unleashing her Second Resonance, scarlet energy rippled out, transforming their surroundings.

Rosalyn prepared seats for them so that they could watch the battle comfortably.

Of course, giving them seats wasn't the only reason why she unleashed her personal realm. The key reason was that she didn't know what level of destruction Alice might cause!

She had already seen some signs of damage in the aftermath of their battle but it was hard to tell how much she was actually responsible for.

Therefore, the best option would be to contain everything inside her realm!

Giving her body a lazy stretch, Alice felt rather energetic. Her vision finally returned to normal though she had to admit, it still felt a tad weird.

Regardless, the benefits far outweighed the cons and in addition to everything, she finally got her beloved Void Fang back.

Flicking her wrist, black obsidian began to shift and solidified into the form of a black blade. Briar thorns acted as the guard and wrapped around her hand.

This feeling, this connection with her weapon, it's something she couldn't feel with the blades that she's been crafting all this time. At long last, she felt whole.

"Any specific rules I need to be aware of?" Alice asked while twirling the Void Fang in her hands.

"Just entertain me you brat." Rosalyn rolled her eyes.

Hearing this, Alice curved her lips into a smirk and took an offensive stance.

Void Step!

Her form shifted forward in an instant, traversing the gaps through the Void and appeared behind Rosalyn.

She tightened the grip on her blade, the energy coursing through the material unleashed a violet sheen to the edge.

*RUMBLE!!!

Slashing down, Alice watched as the attack was stopped by Rosalyn's parasol.

"Starting off with your main attack already?" Rosalyn raised an eyebrow. "Aren't you being a bit too hasty?"

"Pft, you thought THAT was Cleave? Nah, this is." Alice grinned menacingly.

Resonance!

Energy erupted from her body as a white dress with spider lily patterns wrapped around her body.

Like before, Void Fang adjusted its form to match the resonance!

This circuit of energy forming between her and the weapon. . .

As expected, nothing could beat Void Fang when it comes to durability and adaptability!

Much like how it could change its form to become a different weapon, the internal structure shifts to match the optimal flow of energy. A flow that enhances it in its entirety rather than having a standard path.

Violet flames and briar thorns appeared around Alice as she tightened her grip.

Void Flux – Cleave!

For a moment, Rosalyn's realm faltered as the slash swallowed the energy in its path.

Snapping her fingers, Rosalyn furrowed her brows and conjured a wave of blood to counter Alice's slash. She replenished the wave as much as she could to exhaust the attack but it seems like it's better to just simply dodge it.

"Don't just focus on my attack now, I'm still here." Alice appeared behind her.

"I wouldn't even dream of such a thing. Losing sight of a freak of nature like you is asking for death." Rosalyn chuckled, tapping her finger and forcefully transporting Alice away from her using blood.

Looking at the blood that soaked her body, Alice chuckled for a moment before bringing her finger up to her lips and gave it a lick.

Rosalyn felt a chill.

"Are you a pervert? Why are you licking the blood. Ew. If you're going to drink at least use a cup." She sighed, aiming her finger at Alice.

But then she paused.

She noticed Alice doing the same motion.

*BANG!!!

Her attack shot out, motes of blood bursting open with crimson lights towards Alice.

Yet it felt as though there was a mirror in the middle since the same attack was flung back towards her!

With both attacks clashing in mid air, Rosalyn couldn't help but furrow her brows.

Something was off. An unnerving feeling as though Alice was looking right through her.

Like having a spectator always over your shoulder, it felt as though every move was being captured and comprehended.

Both of them slammed their hands down at the same time. Since they both had blood related powers, it wasn't a surprise to see Alice create her own blood pool. But what was truly surprising was the fact that every single blood weapon was identical.

For a moment, Rosalyn felt like she was staring at a mirror reflection of herself.

Before she could contemplate this issue further, a pair of blood jaws appeared around Rosalyn, forcing her to counter while Alice struck down from above!

Void Flux!

Blocking the attack using Crimsaria, Rosalyn noticed Alice's reflection in her blood pool!

She dove in!

Stabbing her parasol down, thorns tore through the blood while Alice simply smiled.

"Are you reading my moves and habits?" Rosalyn asked with a twitching smile.

"Maybe maybe not. I'll tell you after the spar. Unless. . . You want to give up now?" Alice taunted.

A vein bulged on Rosalyn's neck.

"Oh hou~ Seems like the brat is now all grown up. You might be able to read my abilities but can you do the same with my weapon?"

Adjusting her grip on the Crimsaria, Rosalyn slowly unsheathed a thin blade from the handle. The crimson silk on the parasol slowly turned white with the blood being transferred to the blade.

Right before her blade could escape the sheath, Alice had already appeared in front of her.

She twisted her body and slammed her heel into Crimsaria's pommel, forcing the blade back into the sheath!

Widening her eyes, Rosalyn glanced up.

This movement. . .

*CLANG!!!

Quickly parrying a strike, Rosalyn was forced back a step with Alice resting her blade on her shoulders. There was a relaxed aura to her movements, someone who wasn't taking things seriously.

"Ah~ It just doesn't feel right if I don't bite on something." Alice let out a sigh, creating a small cigarette stick out of metal and placing it between her mouth.

Of course, it wasn't the real deal, simply something to 'feel' more in sync.

"I can't believe this is part of her 'experience' but so be it. Maybe it's because she's fought like this for a long time." Alice shook her head helplessly.

Taking a lazy step forward, her movements exploded with energy as flames crackled around her first.

Rosalyn no longer had any doubts. This movement, the habits and even that method of using fire. That's no doubt Allura's movements!

Rosalyn felt as though Allura's silhouette was overlapping Alice, the movements were completely in sync!

"Hehe~" Revealing a confident grin, Alice shifted her leg ever so slightly in order to push her centre of gravity forward! Lunging forward, she dove into Rosalyn's guard with frightening nimbleness, keeping herself low to the ground.

At the lowest point, her body snapped upwards, releasing a devastating cleave that forced Rosalyn to split her body into blood to avoid the attack.

Her eyes flashed for a moment and stomped down.

From her feet, blood erupted into a wall!

Hidden within the wall of blood were motes of light that flashed with a dangerous shimmer and fired off a barrage of Void Fluxes towards Rosalyn.

"Sh*t! Raven b*stard too?!" Twisting her body, she swiped the parasol horizontally, matching every attack that Alice threw out.

But the whiplash of facing a chimeric copy of herself, Allura and Kaden was beginning to throw her off.

Each fighter had their own rhythm, own habits in a fight. Some fight fast, some fight slow.

But right now, Alice was jumping all over the place, sometimes fast, sometimes slow. It was hard to properly predict and get a grasp on what Alice was planning on doing.

However, that wasn't the end of the barrage. From the blood, limbs climbed out with blood beasts mimicking Kaden's shadow beasts.

They swarmed around Rosalyn while Alice dismissed Void Fang for now and brought her palms together.

Abyssal energy surged, swirled and converged into a single radiant spark. A mote of light that cast the deepest of shadows across the battlefield.

Rosalyn felt a sense of danger.

She couldn't play around any more than this.

Alice was no longer a student of her academy but someone who killed an Apostle with just five Sigils! And now that she's gotten her sixth, she's one step away from Lordship!

Resonance!

Coating herself in blood, Rosalyn harmonised herself with the personal realm around her in order to crush Alice's next attack.

"I suggest you try your best to dodge the next one." Alice suddenly spoke up.

The spark between her hands started to tremble as the image of a singularity spun to life in her eye. Void energy converged around her and the spark transformed. A disk of raw energy began to form around the spark.

This was Alice's respect towards Kazira. An acknowledgement of her power and the attack she showed at the end.

An attack inspired by Kazira's understanding of Allura's skill crafted by Kaden's own hands.

The Eclipse Axis.

However, that attack was something she created with her own power, an attack using her own authority as a base. Alice didn't have that. Instead, she repurposed it, modified it and merged it with her own skill.

And since it was inspired from Kazira, it was only right to dedicate half of the name to her.

Therefore, Alice could only call it one thing.

Aiming her finger towards Rosalyn, Alice slashed down.

Void Axis!

*RUMBLE!!!

At that moment, Rosalyn's personal realm was cut in half.

Chapter 716 - 716: Revenant Recollection

No one at that moment could make a single sound.

Ria was frozen by the power exhibited by Alice's attack.

That sense of danger. . . Even though she was in the spectator stand, she could tell just how terrifying it was.

The underlying concepts hidden within that attack, concepts that twist the very air they breathe, the realm they exist in, the feeling like the whole world suddenly turned against you.

But more than that, it was the fact that she knew this wasn't Alice's full power.

There were too many abilities she hadn't fused with the attack to truly call it her strongest strike. And if that's the case, how terrifying was the whole thing?

Clenching her fist, cold sweat dripped down Ria's back. She felt a fire igniting in her chest, the competitive spirit. She needed to master Nyzel's Three Fold lightning soon. . . No, she couldn't stop at just mastering. She had to go above and beyond.

Luke was in a similar situation.

If Alice was this strong yet she's struggling with opponents now, what kind of threat would they face in the future? He knew that the opponent was an Apostle but with the gap between them being so big, it was hard to truly comprehend how much danger was involved.

There's a significant difference between hearing about something dangerous and experiencing it firsthand was a chasm. He couldn't grasp it, not in its entirety.

Can he truly help them as a friend if all he can do is give buffs? He can't protect himself properly, a liability. Even with his tricks and second Resonance, if something were to happen without him having time to react. . .

Luke saw a vision of himself bleeding out on the floor with no chance of rescue. Taking a deep breath to calm his mind, he understood what he must do. It was time to reinvent himself, break himself down and rebuild from the ground up.

What must he do outside of simply buffing to survive. He has to break down this weak mindset and focus properly.

And despite the fact that Luke felt as though he's already tried to rebuild himself, clearly it wasn't enough.

In moments like this, he can't help but recall what Gin and Allura had taught in the past. The mindset makes the Hunter. Everyone's a little crazy on the inside. Even if Ria seems composed, there's no doubt that her past at the eclipse is gripping her deep within.

That's her fuel to push for greater heights, no matter how traumatic it is.

Luke might not have the same level of trauma, he barely remembers his time in the eclipse. But what he can do now, what he wants to do, what he wants to protect.

What if he saw it all broken before him? What if he saw the people he's been relying on fail? What then? As the sole person alone, what can he do? What can he wish he could do?

He closed his eyes. Envisioned a moment where. . . Ria is bleeding out in his arms. Veins bulged on his neck as he clenched his fist, a sense of determination, a fire in his gaze.

If someone was to do that. . .

He'll tear out their f*cking throat with his bare hands.

No matter the cost.

###

Alice stood amidst the smoke and debris. Rosalyn's personal realm was cut in half and slowly disintegrating by the edges.

And even with Cayla back, at that last moment, Alice lost sight of Rosalyn.

Just for a split second.

For that second, the Lord perceived her as a true threat.

For that second, Alice found herself unable to comprehend what had just happened.

Behind her, Rosalyn stood. The parasol blade pressed against the throat with an orb of energy ready to detonate on her back.

She was aware of Alice's regeneration.

So if this was a real fight, Alice figured she probably had a way to resolve that issue.

But this glare from Rosalyn. . . Alice felt like she was being targeted by a blood starved beast. Desperate and in a frenzy like state, willing to go through any means to survive even through sacrifice.

'I suppose it only makes sense for a Lord to have a few screws loose. Some just hide it better than others.' She thought with a sigh.

Raising her hands in surrender, Alice glanced back.

"It's my loss. How did you even dodge that? Not even this eye could track you down." She asked, pointing at her eye.

"Dodge? You think I f*cking dodged that? Who the hell throws out an attack that can cut everything out of nowhere and expect them to dodge???" Rosalyn snapped, smacking Alice on the head.

Blood was still hovering around her as it slowly reconstructed her dress.

"I f*cking died dipsh*t." Rosalyn admitted in annoyance. "I simply reconstructed myself using the blood behind you."

She was this close to losing herself for a moment, to indulge in her bestial instincts and walk towards survival, even if it meant harming Alice. The amount of restraint it took not to make another move. . .

Scariest of all was actually 'dying' once to that attack. The concept and understanding behind it. . .

"So what the hell is your power? You just casually mimic everything I do to perfection same with Allura and Kaden." Rosalyn asked, adjusting her sleeves once her dress was reconstructed.

Alice grinned smugly. "You wanna know? Hehe~ I bet you do huh? Why don't you take a few guess-BLERG!!!"

Rosalyn cut her off with a kick to the stomach.

"Why don't we confiscate a few more bottles of that mead. It was pretty tasty." She narrowed her gaze as Alice stood up straight with an awkward cough.

"Let's not get hasty here." Dusting herself and adjusting her outfit, Alice cleared her throat.

"The Sixth Sigil I got from Kazira is one that was cultivated with her own power. Revenant Recollection, that's what it's called."

Turning around, she lifted the back of her hair, revealing her neck.

She injected a bit of energy into the Sigil and it began to appear on her nape. A coffin with an upside down cross surrounded by a circle of flames.

"It's not a very complicated power and one that's somewhat derived from her Authority of War." Alice began casually.

"In essence, I can read the history of a battlefield and extract the lingering echoes of souls for my own use. It's a little restricted in terms of what I can extract so I can't just kill someone and read all of their memories, I'll go insane. But their combat experience can be 'overlayed' to either myself or an ally.

"For Kazira, that means giving a makeshift army a bunch of real combat experience immediately. Turning a ragtag group into a trained elite army. The effects differ based on the battle and the intensity of it since it affects the echoes of the soul. But for me. . ." Alice trailed off before pointing at her own tongue.

"It's a little different." She grinned.

"I steal a bit of a person's soul when I consume their blood, it lets me use their Sigils. Of course, what I can do with their Sigils is entirely limited to what I know. Even if a Sigil could do amazing things, if I don't know about it, I can't tap into that kind of power at all.

"But once I tap into that 'experience' and overlay it with myself, habits and combat experience become part of my own. When I drank your blood, not only did I temporarily gain seven Sigils, I also got an idea on how you fight and control your casting, how you made the most of your power. Overlaying Allura helped me with fighting using a sword, Kaden with going further in fine tuning casting controls."

This wasn't everything though.

This was simply the surface level understanding that Alice gained from a single glance. Outside of this, there was still the possibility through Physical Resonance. How will this Sigil synergise with mirror jester? How would it synergise with using Tiamat's Resonance? Or maybe even Duality?

By choosing Revenant Recollection, Alice had now opened the doors to the key portion of her powers. The portion that lets her steal Sigils and swap them out.

Now, it's not a simple case of stealing and using, it's now a case of taking, using and understanding. And it is through this understanding can she unlock the full power of the Sigils she steal and even take them to a level beyond their original owner.

Revenant Recollection is what allows her to truly make that power 'hers'.

Rosalyn listened in silence.

The way Alice was calmly talking about her power. . . Rosalyn understood. Alice doesn't see how truly terrifying it is.

It wasn't done out of cruelty or arrogance, but something else is changing. Her mindset.

Lords are insane yes.

But this? This was something that even gave Rosalyn shivers. The implications of what Alice could now accomplish.

Rosalyn tightened her grip around her wrists.

Not only could she take your powers and a portion of your soul, but she could now also take your experience. The hard work of others becoming a foundation for something. . . unnatural. Chimeric in nature.

A blend of four powers, adaptability and even mimicry.

If it reaches a point where she could also read memories? Doesn't that mean she can replace someone in your life and you'll never know that something was up?

The powers will be the same, the memories are the same, everything.

The closer Alice comes to reaching the pinnacle of power, the more Rosalyn understood the underlying dangers.

The weak hides in shadows, using trickery to reach the strong. But what if the strong could make use of trickery far better than the weak?

To put bluntly, this was a monster in the making.

If she reaches the peak and becomes a tyrant, who can stop her?

Doubts blossomed in Rosalyn's heart.

Chapter 717 - 717: Solaris And Lumiria's Arrangements

Sunlight bled through the stained crystal ceiling, streaks of iridescent radiance cast down from above. Rays of violet, gold, rose and azure yet none of it reflected what Solaris was feeling.

The shadows of impatience and annoyance cast a shadow over his face as his eyes glowed a molten gold. The bubbling lava in his veins matching his rising fury.

Then, at last, a sliver of moonlight manifest in the corner of the room. Soft and gentle compared to the seething wrath incarnate that is Solaris right now.

"How long did you intend to keep me waiting? Or are you simply unaware of everything that has transpired?" Solaris glared towards the portal.

Lazily taking a step out from her portal and drifting over to her seat, Lumiria twirled her hair around her finger and smiled.

"Oh I'm aware." She chuckled. "But I was simply taking care of my own place before coming here as a proper God should. Surely you understand the importance of maintaining one's domain?"

"Or does the look of impatience suit us better? If so, I shall get my sculptors to make some modifications on your statues and don't worry, it's free of charge." Lumiria tilted her head back even so slightly, revealing a mocking smirk.

"We can trade words back and forth just like how I can mention your little boy toy not being interested in you."

Lumiria's eye twitched ever so slightly.

"Do you think I'm blind to the fact that you're trying to play house and yet he's not interested? But there is a bigger issue at hand." Solaris rolled his eyes.

"You felt it as well. The Abyss stirs. A new Queen was crowned, Velouria's successor. Every single Lord felt it without exception. This is not something we can hide Lumiria. And you two mocked me when I brought it up in the past." Solaris stated as Lumiria fell silent.

She knew it as well. That kind of phenomenon wasn't one that could be ignored. While the ignorant masses may not be knowledgeable in what's happening, the Lords are already beginning to question.

What caused this reaction? What was going on?

"Then there's also the missing Apostle. I don't know what killed her but Enris suffered quite a bit in the East." Lumiria brought up as Solaris nodded his head.

Usually, if this happened in the past, he would be tempted to immediately make a move.

But with a significant jump in Eldritch activities, a new Queen and other factions in the dark, it has made it rather difficult.

Then there's the Zenia family in Extalia. The movements they've been making. . .It's suspicious.

For a God to move. . . There were certain restrictions they need to work around, restrictions that none of them could fulfil right now, at least not in their true forms.

But through proxy, there was still a possibility.

"So what's our first plan? Take everything Enris has got? Though from the look of your face, she still has some uses."

"As insane as she is, she'll do her job if needed. She's not someone we can get rid of just yet. The Outer Gods are more of an issue, especially the Great Ones. Velouria's barrier is now weakening from both the inside and the outside." Solaris let out a sigh, massaging his eyes.

"However~" Lumiria interrupted, knowing what Solaris was talking about.

"Tch. Yes, we need to deal with the young queen." He clicked his tongue. "Even though the Outer Gods are an issue, having the queen appear now is worse. We don't know if it's through the Will's orchestration or if it's someone new. If it's someone new, there's a high chance that Kaden and Allura are deeply involved."

"And if they are, it's only naturally they'll aim for our necks considering what we did in the past." Lumiria laughed, sitting up.

"Yes. This is a problem that can be solved quickly and I'd rather not let it fester. We've already allowed it to reach this stage since you two ignored my words. And with them being in the east, let us enforce some security around the ports and have our followers find her." Solaris suggested.

"Alright, I can lend you my dear children for that. As for whether or not I'll lend my Apostles in this matter, they're not making a single move until we figure out who the hell managed to kill dear Kazira." Lumiria gave her body a stretch.

The death of an Apostle is a big matter no matter who it is. Because it meant that either another Apostle made a move or that an anomaly has appeared.

Someone with enough power outside of the Divine Thrones to affect those within. And that kind of anomaly need to be dealt with immediately.

No exceptions.

Nodding his head, Solaris watched as Lumiria left the space before departing as well.

He needed some time to properly figure out what's going on with the mortals. He has been too relaxed when it came to his followers, it was time to make use of them.

Meanwhile, Enris kicked her legs back and forth on the roof of the building. Neither Solaris nor Lumiria noticed her but she was there.

Bobbing her head side to side, a smile appeared on her face.

'Seems like they don't know Alice is the one that killed Kazira and that she's also the successor. Then again, it's not like the birth of a Queen and the death of an Apostle must happen at the same time or the same place.' She mused to herself.

Naturally, this gives Alice's group a bit more leeway when it comes to how aggressively the two pursue her since even now, Solaris and Lumiria are keeping each other in check.

Lumiria's final line was probing to see whether or not it was Solaris who lent a hand in killing an Apostle while Solaris was worried that Lumiria was making big moves.

If it was Solaris, Lumiria sending help would simply be delivering her dear children to a butcher.

As long as the two continue to test each other, they'll never be able to catch Alice.

They're too preoccupied with their own chess game, to figure out who has the most power in this situation and what they could get away with.

What they don't realise is that the rest of the players are playing a different game, especially the Outer Gods.

If it was her in the past, Enris would be inclined to help the current Gods. Even if she likes chaos, what use is a jester when they don't have an audience?

However, this audience has long lost their flavour for Enris. Instead, her attention was focused elsewhere.

People deserving of the chaos she brings, people who can take her place.

Therefore, she will work to ensure that the knife coming for her neck is properly sharpened.

She doesn't fear death, she doesn't fear the coming tribulations. She welcomes it with open arms and when Ria or anyone else finally arrive at her doorstep, she hopes they can meet her expectations.

Her collaboration with Nyer, with the Outer Gods, was all for this.

No matter what, there will come a time when the jester must step off the stage. So she'll orchestrate her final act. A grand performance that will scorch the very land they walk on.

She'll plan the most magnificent curtain call, and step away from the main stage. And as the final lights turn off, a thunderous applause for the God of the Eclipse.

Thinking about this, her smile faltered as she gritted her teeth.

Conflicting emotions shot through Enris' mind as she felt the urge to destroy everything around her.

"Don't make that kind of face Enri~ If you do that I'll feel sad."

A gap appeared in her shadow, a smile of sorts.

"Don't use her voice. You're not her, you'll never be her. You're just a f*cked up hallucination my brain conjured up because Velouria isn't here anymore." Enris cut her off before anything else could be said.

Her shadow laughed ever so slightly before creeping up Enris's body.

"Since you were in such a mood, I couldn't help it you know?" The shadow chuckled.

"Now I must ask, where were you? Shedding your divine body for a while made me rather upset. I couldn't find you anywhere I went." The shadow sighed.

"My business not yours. I'm simply looking for someone who can fulfil the role that Velouria left behind. Someone to kill me and end this endless charade." Enris stood up.

This time, her eyes weren't filled with the bright light of the shimmering stars. It wasn't full of joy or maddening chaotic love. Instead, it was filled with a deep loneliness. An exhaustion that couldn't be concealed no matter how hard she tried, the emptiness that she couldn't recover from.

A dulled edge of the blade. Like walking through life with a blurred view, not focusing on anything and simply going through the motions.

But things were beginning to change.

Enris wanted to get her hopes up but if. . . if the two didn't match up to what she desired?

What kind of darkness awaited her? Would this void in her chest become even greater than before? Will she be forced to end things without achieving the curtain call she envisioned?

No!

This is what all of her preparation was for.

No matter what, no matter the circumstances, her final show will succeed! The last and glorious curtain call!

Jumping off the roof, Enris' body dissipated into an array of crimson and gold.

Chapter 718 - 718: Out Of Time

The hall echoed with the sound of his crawling. The grating sound of his nails scraping against the shattered marble.

Behind him, one of his legs twisted unnaturally, ripped off from below the knee. No matter how he tried to regenerate, no matter what skills he used, the wounds remained.

His armour, torn open like paper with parasitic creatures crawling in his flesh, eating him slowly.

Slowly, a shadowed figure approached.

"I! – Please! I d-don't know! Have mercy!" He gasped, shouted with desperation. His eyes wide in fear and delirium. "I really don't know where the Apostle is!!! She goes where she pleases!"

Tears of blood rolled down his cheeks with the parasites now climbing up and into his face.

The figure said nothing. No words, no expression, only a pair of cold eyes staring at him. His boots clicked softly across the floor, his approach unhurried.

"L-let me live! I'll be a spy! I'll try and find the information you need!" He begged but the man didn't stop.

The man lifted his leg, placed it against the begging man's trembling skull and began to push.

No matter how the begging man tried to punch, claw or push the leg away, it was a firm unmoving pillar.

Slowly pushing down with an even pace, unable to be stopped.

He could hear his skull cracking from the pressure, the blood pouring into his eyes. The flailing of his limbs as he could feel his end approaching.

"P-please! I really don't know! F*ck! Say something! I can't! I can't die like thARGHHH!!!--"

And then his screams were cut off with a sickening crack that echoed through the rooms.

What used to be a Lord now lay lifeless on the floor, his head caved in by a single footstep. Brain matter and flesh smeared across the floor with pieces of bone added into the mix.

Lifting his foot, Kaden didn't say anything and continued forward. His expression was dark as his trails leading to the Apostle of Famine had now been cut off.

Like a lizard that realised she's being hunted, Famine has been cutting off her tails and escaping.

The longer this drags on for, the worse it'll be and Kaden didn't have the patience to play this waiting game.

"Don't you just look like you can kill a man with that expression of yours alone." Nalem spoke up, following behind Kaden.

At first, his killings were quick and swift, getting as much information as he could. But now, they were, slow, brutal, a way for him to vent out his frustrations.

A side that he usually keeps concealed unless in moments like this, where he couldn't make any progress at all.

"If we can't track famine down at all with this method, why don't we change our approach?" Nalem suggested as Kaden glanced over.

"The Apostle of War has died. Enris only has one Apostle left and I'm not sure if she'll be finding another one soon. But don't you think that's a good place to start?"

Turning his eyes away for a moment, Kaden contemplated before shaking his head.

"No, Enris wouldn't do something like that. A God she may be but one that's on the verge of losing her mind. Truly." He furrowed his brows. "She'll welcome any form of challenge to her. If Famine dies, she wouldn't care either. If anything, I'd wager she'll be happier knowing that with her now on the edge, people will swarm in to kill her."

Nalem paused as he couldn't quite comprehend why a God would act that way.

But then again, he's not the one that's been chasing after revenge all these years. He's been locked up in his own bookshop, monotonously drifting through life.

"Then what do you plan on doing?" Nalem questioned, wondering how Kaden was going to lure out the Apostle of Famine.

"How else? I'm going to snatch everything and anything she's gathered in the years that she's been alive. And what I can't take I'll destroy. Do you think she can still run away from me if I keep doing that?" Kaden grinned.

". . . Are you a burglar or are you an Apostle?" Nalem's smile twitched.

"Who said they were mutually exclusive?" Kaden shrugged.

He had to draw Famine out as soon as possible. Otherwise. . . No, he didn't want to think about it.

Time was short, he didn't even have time to congratulate Alice on unsealing the eye and weapon. The sooner he resolves this issue, the faster he can meet up with the little mead goblin.

He had to admit, he was curious about how she is now.

###

*COUGH!!!

She dropped on one knee, coughing violently with each one tearing through her chest like broken glass. Black and red blood splattered against the third, her vision swirled and the world began to tilt.

Taking several raspy breaths to try and calm herself, she braced against the wall.

With trembling fingers, she fished out a cigarette and lit it with her finger.

Bringing it up to her lips, she didn't smoke it immediately. She simply held it there, watching the smoke curling up in the air. The medicinal smell that she had gotten used to long ago no longer had any effect on her body and a weary smile crept across her face.

The medicine was no longer working.

It doesn't matter how many cigarettes she smokes, none of it was even alleviating the pain at this point.

"You should take a break. Stop fighting for a while, your body can't handle it anymore." Gin's voice echoed out. "Just look at your blood, it's even turning black for Gods sake."

Allura didn't turn to look at him. She simply took a slow drag of the cigarette and exhaled.

"Maybe it's time we went back. Back to the Alice, Ria and Luke. You can't keep pushing your body like this otherwise. . ." Gin held his words.

"Otherwise the great Apostle of Severance will die to a sh*tty Lord?" Allura let out a small chuckle.

"You're running out of time Allura, stop being stubborn. At least. . . You can still use the rest of it with Alice and the others." Gin frowned.

The recent fights were taking longer and longer, each one becoming more dangerous than the last.

Even in her weakened form, Lords can't kill her but the wounds will pile up. And at a certain point, she won't be able to protect herself.

Thinking about Alice and the other's, Allura's eyelids trembled momentarily.

She could still remember the moment she saw the split haired girl in the arena. . . What Alice was like when they first met in that room.

How the little girl hid under the blankets with a candle holder, ready to attack the person that'll approach her.

Allura remembered how Alice awkwardly navigated conversations with her limited vocabulary, how her eyes would shimmer when she discovered something new.

How proud she looked when she was able to perform a skill that should've been outside her skill level.

Thinking about this girl that was forcefully put into her care by Kaden, Allura couldn't help but smile despite the pain flooding her body.

"I can't go back Gin. Not yet." Allura finished the cigarette and crushed it in her hand.

While the effect maybe gone, her habit of smoking was one that strangely helped settle her chaotic mind.

"This crumbling body of mine will be used to pave a path forward for her. That's what a guardian does." Allura chuckled but Gin stood in front of her.

A deep frown on his face along with a glare.

"And what then? When she finds your corpse pierced by spears and arrows? The lifeless eyes of someone who she depended on? You're like a mother to her, you're the foundation in which she finally managed to pick herself back up to face the world." Gin gritted his teeth.

"Did you even think about the despair she'll feel if you were to disappear?! You're running out of time, I know that! But rather than using what little time you have left away from her, why not fill her with memories of you rather than the time without you?! You're just going to leave her with a bunch of regret she'll never be able to resolve!"

Allura faltered for a moment. She knew what Gin was aiming at and understood why he was saying what he was saying.

She too wanted to spend the rest of her time with them if she could. . . To laugh with Kaden again like in the past.

But. . .

"If I were to see myself as Alice's guardian and mother, is it not a parent's duty to make the world a better place for them? A parent works hard so that the child can enjoy what life has to offer." Allura smiled.

It's because she placed Alice in her heart that she did this.

"I will walk until I cannot walk anymore. I will fight until I cannot raise my hand. And at the end of everything, if Alice blames me then so be it. I'm not greedy for much. But as long as Alice can be happy in this world I'm content." Allura walked past Gin who grabbed her arm.

"Stubborn b*tch. Alice will be happy if you're next to her." Gin spat out in annoyance as he lifted her arm over his shoulder to help her walk.

He didn't say anything else but Allura knew that he was helping.

"Sorry for taking you away from Ria." Allura chuckled causing Gin to release a string of curses.

"Don't remind me otherwise I'm going to leave you here and go back on my own!"

If he takes too long to get back, he might become a great grandfather before he knew it. And if that were to happen. . . He'll give Luke a proper chat regarding his darling grand daughter.

Chapter 719 - 719: Ayla

"My my~ I thought you would've gotten more out of it. Instead, don't you think this tale is rather. . . half baked?" Zal-Ka'Rith asked with a raised eyebrow.

In his hands, he held the Tale of 'Lilith' that was meant to be a show of sincerity from Voruth'Zal.

However. . . By the end of the fight, he was far more interested in the three that arrived instead. Rosalyn the Abyss Lord of Scarlet Ruin, Ria and Luke.

"There's only do much I can do with a rushed vessel that fulfils the conditions to become a tale for you." Voruth'Zal frowned but didn't deny the fact that it was a little lacking.

"Sigh~ I even had to take a step back from observing my favourite tale right now. How will you compensate me?" Zal-Ka'Rith smirked but Voruth'Zal shot him a warning gaze.

"We both know you still have your eye on her. You simply can't talk to her since doing so will make her turn on you."

As an Outer God, Zal-Ka'Rith had the most vessels by far. While his vessels may not be the strongest, they are numerous in number.

Collecting tales for him and increasing his power day by day.

The girl next to Alice right now was simply one of many, dispensable.

"That's how it should be to begin with. A reader shouldn't interfere with the story.

"However, I simply had to make sure my eyes have a way to observe this tale. Otherwise, even if I have her follow the girl, it won't take long for her to die." Zal-Ka'Rith laughed. "But I'd rather keep things brief between us. I may have agreed to your offer but we are still enemies in the end."

"I'm very much aware. We'll simply use each other until we deem it fit to aim for one another's throats once more." Voruth'Zal nodded his head.

With Voruth'Zal understanding things, Zal-Ka'Rith smiled and followed behind without a single word.

Alice's tale was going to be a long one, one that he wished to witness till the end. Therefore, certain preparations need to be made.

But if there is one regret. . . Zal-Ka'Rith wished he could talk a little more to Isolde. His departure was a hasty one and there's no doubt that Isolde realised that he was gone.

Knowing what she is like, she definitely isn't pleased about that.

Unfortunately, he couldn't make himself known anymore. At least not yet.

That final awakening Alice did to seal the deal. . . That eye of hers. If he showed up now, she'll definitely sense his presence.

'Stand strong Isolde, I haven't forgotten our agreement.' Zal-Ka'Rith smiled.

###

Isolde sat motionlessly in the room. Her limbs were bound with cuffs of blood that Rosalyn had placed earlier.

Not that she was planning on escaping in the first place.

Her eyes were hollow, her hair dishevelled.

A smile no longer on her face.

Zal-Ka'Rith has left. Did her Lord abandon her? Like all the others before this point?

No matter how she called out, no matter how hard she tried, she couldn't sense him at all. Not even the faintest whisper.

He would talk to her often, recounting certain tales that he heard while she listened intently. But now there is only deafening silence.

His powers remain, the contract between them are unbroken. She could feel the Eldritch energy pulsing in her veins but he was not here.

It felt like yesterday that they were still talking about the coming fight, how he'll be away for a short while since he'll be borrowing Kazira's old body.

And yet, he never returned. In fact, he betrayed them since Voruth'Zal was unharmed. But if that was truly the case, why does she still have the contract?

So many questions yet no answers. Just cold empty silence.

She felt truly alone.

Isolde looked down at the floor. . . Perhaps it was because she couldn't make a move, that Zal-Ka'Rith didn't talk to her, that she began to remember the past.

What life was like before she embarked on this path of vengeance.

A life where before these hands were soaked in blood, she would cradle the children that lived in her orphanage.

Stitching clothing, making toys under the moonlight. They didn't have much but under the blessing of the Moon Goddess, they felt content.

Isolde believed in the gentle moonlight cast down from above. A gentle voyage where all souls drift. . .

She was allowed to accept any child that has been abandoned by the world. Regardless of how many side effects they showed on their body, she accepted them all without prejudice. She believed that what she did was right, that the goddess expected this of her.

Like the gentle moonlight that illuminated the night sky, her mercy will extend to everyone.

But that was a mistake.

She remembered that day when one of the priests of the Moon came to the orphanage. Clad in fine white robes trimmed with silver thread, their faces hidden behind pale moon masks.

They requested some children to be taken to the capital with them, to receive the blessings of the moon mother.

She thought it to be an honour. A blessing granted by the moon mother herself? That was the greatest thing to have happened to them.

The children were bitter, they didn't want to leave her. But according to the priests, they could come back here if that's what they wished. Once they had been blessed, they were allowed to come back.

How foolish of her to believe their words.

The thought that the Goddess was cruel never even came across her mind. After all, why would a Goddess stoop to such a level?

Her faith was unwavering.

Days, weeks, months.

Nothing. She believed that the children probably lived better lives with the church. After all, they were chosen to be blessed by the Goddess.

If they were blessed, then that surely meant the church treasured them right?

They would occasionally ask for more and Isolde didn't question them. She complied despite the growing doubts in her chest.

"Momma... I don't want to go." A young girl tugged at her sleeves with tears in her eyes.

Alya, the youngest and the one that loved Isolde the most. A shy girl who didn't want to leave Isolde's side regardless of what happened. A young girl who was abandoned on her doorstep.

Even if she adopted everyone in the church, Alya was perhaps the closest to a daughter to Isolde. One that she raised since she was young, one that wouldn't leave her side. Always helped when she could. . .

Isolde wanted a better life for the girl.

Isolde gave the young girl a hug, she wanted to suggest that maybe she didn't have to go but the priests shook their head.

This was an order from the Moon Goddess, one that they couldn't refuse.

It took a lot of convincing but in the end, Alya agreed to go. But they will keep exchanging letters no matter what. After all, they could only live this life thanks to the Moon Goddess. Rejecting her summons and blessings would be biting the hand that fed.

But Isolde was glad they'd be exchanging letters since she was a little worried about the other children.

At first, the letters came frequently. Talking about how they showed her around the church, how nice things were.

A lot of the time, the contents were rather similar but perhaps it was simply a case of not knowing that many words.

Isolde didn't find it weird. . .

Then the final letter came. Alya said that she needed to focus for a bit, saying thank you for everything. That she loved her.

It was strange. Too strange. Alya wasn't one to say goodbye like this.

Isolde made a choice.

She wanted to see Alya no matter what.

She entrusted the orphanage to a friend and made her way to the church, she asked about the children that were brought here. Her children.

She asked about Alya, her daughter. She asked about the priests that requested the blessings but she got pitying gazes instead.

On the third day, a priest came for Isolde. He told her that he'd bring her to Alya, that she's been looking forward to seeing her.

Hearing this, Isolde felt reassured, nothing bad happened. Why would it?

She was taken down to the depths of the cathedral, a strange place for the blessed to be. The unnerving atmosphere sent chills down her spine.

. . .

Remembering up to this point, tears began to well up in Isolde's eyes. She never wanted to remember what she saw at the bottom of the cathedral ever again. The sight of 'Alya'. . .

Why couldn't she have figured it out? Why couldn't she have see the patterns? The signs?

Alya was a smart girl, she loved puzzles. She often made puzzles with Isolde and the two would solve it one by one.

If she had read her letters carefully, if she had read between the lines. Maybe, maybe she could've stopped it.

[Momma help me. They're doing weird things. I'm scared. Help me momma.]

All the letters that Alya had sent, they were calls for help. Written to make sure the priests didn't know what she was saying.

All of them.

Without exception.

Why?

Why?

Why?! WHY?! WHY??? WHY??????? WHYWHYWHYWHYWHYWHYWHY?!

Why couldn't she have seen it? Why did she sent her precious children to be killed?!

Why did Alya have to die like that?!?!

Her daughter cried out in such pain yet she was deaf to it!

Holding back her tears, Isolde bit her lips. Zal-Ka'Rith hasn't taken back his powers yet. She can still do something.

Alice Agnelia.

A girl who managed to kill an Apostle.

This will be her new path to revenge.

Chapter 720 - 720: A Talk With Isolde

Having finished her light sparring with Rosalyn, Alice decided to head back to the room alone for now. She wanted to have a personal one to one talk with Isolde.

There were still many things she wasn't sure about, why Zal-Ka'Rith decided to leave them be. Why he ran away with the vessel?

Thankfully, his. . . choice didn't lead to any disastrous consequences otherwise she wouldn't be this calm.

The door creaked softly as Alice entered the room. Once again, she was reminded of the fact that Isolde no longer wore that mask of hers. The smile to remind her why she was doing all of this. Instead, she seemed to be deep in thought, only snapping back to reality once she noticed someone was in the room.

Even though she wasn't showing it, the rage and sadness she was trying to hide was far more evident than before.

Closing the door behind her, Alice dragged a chair towards Isolde and placed it in front of her. For a moment, neither of them said anything as Alice sat down. She simply stared at the nun for a long moment before opening her mouth.

"I'm not gonna blame you for what Zal-Ka'Rith did since he's his own person and so are you." She sighed. "But I do wish you can tell me anything you might know. After all, if it wasn't for my friends coming to help cover me, I'm pretty sure I would be dead or close to dying."

Isolde's eyelids trembled for a moment.

"My. . . Lord didn't say anything. No goodbyes or anything of the sort. But the power he granted me still flows through my veins."

"I can see that. There's no trace of him but a connection is still there." Alice nodded, pointing at her eye.

Hesitating for a moment, Isolde decided to ask a question of her own.

"My Lord mentioned in the past that your body holds Divinity. Does that mean. . . You can become a Goddess? Or perhaps kill one?"

The question caught Alice a little off guard. She studied the seriousness in Isolde's eyes and saw a burning hatred. Alice only had one description for her right now. Wrath Incarnate.

"Hmm. . . I'm not entirely sure yet." Alice admitted truthfully. "But that seems to be what lies at the end of my path. As for whether or not I can kill a God. . ." She shrugged. "Dunno. But I do one know thing."

"Gods can die."

Isolde froze. She had always known who she wanted to destroy. But to carry it out, to see a Goddess fall and beg for mercy, it had always felt like an impossible dream. A dream out of her mortal reaches.

She was going to be satisfied with just dismantling the religion but if the Goddess herself can be killed. . .

Why should she try and settle with anything less?

"The Moon Goddess, Lumiria. . . Can she be killed?" Isolde asked, spitting out Lumiria's name with a seething hatred.

"She presides over Immortality and Spirituality. Killing her will be harder than the rest but not impossible." Alice folded her arms.

Despite this claim, Alice wasn't sure herself, a small doubt blossoming in her mind. She knows that killing her is most definitely possible, the only issue comes with the method. Immortality and Spirituality, it wasn't the kind of physical immortality either.

It's one that cultivates the soul, meaning to truly kill them, she needed a method to erase the soul. To make sure there was no way for them to return. Not even a speck should be allowed to remain otherwise they can easily come back.

Without finding out more, even trying to simulate the possibilities was impossible.

"If you can kill Lumiria, if she can die the most painful death there is, I'm willing to do anything. I'll give you all the information I have. No matter what you want me to do, I'll do it. As long as she dies!" Isolde gritted her teeth. Her face warping to show her anger, unbecoming of a nun.

Alcie was going through a whiplash right now as the Isolde currently was far too different from the Isolde she came to know. The one that kept everything hidden behind that false smile was now holding nothing back.

"There's no need to go that far. We're aiming for the same thing anyways." Alice waved her hand. It was nice to see Isolde being so enthusiastic about things but they can't just charge forward in anger.

For targets like this, they needed to sit back and observe. To craft a plan so that their victory was assured.

"Though if I do have one request, why don't we act a little more comfortably with each other. It's hard to trust when everything is hidden behind a veil." Alice chuckled.

Isolde felt hesitant.

Was that. . . truly everything this girl wanted? For her to simply drop her mask?

Alice wasn't the first she tried to bargain with. Even her Lord, as generous as he is, asked for something in return.

There's no free food in this world and yet. . . Alice simply wanted her to be herself.

"Are you sure? Is there nothing more that you want?" Isolde found it suspicious.

Folding her arms, Alice closed her eyes.

'She's not wrong, it does sound suspicious as f*ck if you simply ask her to be herself and in return you'll kill a Goddess.' Alyss added groggily as she had just woken up.

'Morning sunshine~' Alice gave her a small wave as Alyss rolled her eyes.

'When we got the Eye from Kaden, we also asked what kind of price. Granted, the price is negligible since it was an eye for an eye but you get the point. If we understood that nothing is free in this world, then it's only natural to believe that Isolde understands the same.'

'True.' Alice sighed. 'But I'm being honest here, I'd prefer her to be herself and help us here and there. If she doesn't that's fine as well. All in all, I just rather not have her as an enemy.'

She saw how Isolde cared for the children back in Fusha. Her care for them was genuine, even if her methods on the battlefield are brutal and twisted.

If Alice could choose, she'd rather someone like Isolde to be looking after people than taking their lives. Her hands are far better suited for that than anything.

'Then be honest with her. I suppose if we show our sincerity, it'll get through to her eventually. Don't hide anything and tell her what you want.' Alyss smiled.

Between the two of them, Alice was more of an optimist. Even if she doesn't know it herself. She prefers to see the better things in life than the dark reality. Someone who knows how harsh life can be but still chooses to see the better side.

For Isolde, this kind of person was probably what she needed.

On the other hand, Alyss felt differently about herself.

If it was up to her, she'd probably ask Isolde to stake a majority of her soul so that the guarantee was there. To make sure she could put this nun to use if the Parchment was to show his face again.

To utilize Isolde as a method of gaining an upper hand. But that's just her.

Scratching her hair, Alice let out a deep sigh.

"There's nothing more that I want. This path of mine is one that will be littered with the blood of Gods in the end. Whether or not we met, I would've targeted Lumiria eventually. None of the Gods are innocent." Alice glanced down, her eyelids fluttered for a moment as she recalled their battle against Velouria.

How the three chose to turn against her for their own goals due to fear.

"It doesn't matter if you believe me or not. But having you alive will probably do more good for this world than bad. So I prefer if I don't have to make you my enemy."

Leaning back, Alice paused for a moment before opening her mouth.

"If we overlook a lot of things and judge you as you are. . . You remind me a little of my adoptive mother. Like her, you comfort people who lose themselves in grief or uncertainty." She chuckled with a nostalgic smile.

Much like how Allura hugged her tightly and reassured her when she saw the Zenia family again, Isolde did the same for the children back in Fusha.

Beneath all that rage, Alice could see that Isolde only wanted the best for the children that grow up in this f*cked up world. For them to experience as much happiness as possible before they have to confront the dark reality.

In that aspect, Alice could see the shadow of Allura over Isolde.

"Arg! I know there's no free food in the world but it's still embarrassing to say things like thisahaha." Alice laughed with an awkward smile. "So my only request is that I hope you won't be my enemy and continue doing what you've been doing."

Seeing this kind of awkward honesty, Isolde smiled helplessly. Not a false smile, not a mask.

But a genuine helpless smile she reveals in front of the children she takes care of.

"Honestly. . . You're a strange one. You can fight with such ferocity and yet you have such a childish side to you." Isolde shook her head.

"Alright, I'll accept your words. My I- No, Mr Parchment seemed quite interested in you so I don't think he'll be your enemy. While he may have plans of his own, he'd rather not turn against you." She chuckled.

Hearing the way Isolde was calling Zal-Ka'Rith, Alice's eyes glimmered. She had been holding herself back simply because Isolde respected the Outer God.

But if Isolde was calling him by the name Parchment, then surely that means she was allowed to do the same right?

"Grr fair point but even so, I wish the f*cking Parchment gave us a heads up right? Bah forget about the piece of paper. We can rant about him over a few cups of mead!" Alice grinned, snapping her finger and undoing Isolde's bindings.

"You're drinking?" Isolde blinked her eyes.

"Of course! I finally reunited with my friend after being away from each other for so long. Tonight we partyyyyyy~!" Alice laughed, grabbing Isolde by the wrist and dragging her out of the room.

Seeing her excitement, Isolde laughed and followed behind her. Tonight, she'll enjoy the atmosphere to the best of her abilities.