

# ABYSSAL AWAKENING

## Chapter 8: Visions Of The Past

With the main attraction dead and bids rolling in, Hunters poured into the arena to subdue the leftover beasts while helping those who needed assistance.

Ignoring the call for bids, Alice kept her eyes on Lars. The power that he demonstrated with the Sigils, the way he could conjure their might at will; it was a whole new world for Alice, a world of power she had no knowledge about.

'How does someone get a Sigil? What's the limit? If I can get my hands on Sigils, would it be enough to defeat the Zenia family?'

Countless questions passed through her mind. However, the biggest question that dominated her thinking was how one could obtain a Sigil.

'Is there a specific monster that needs to be killed? Regardless, I need to get my hands on Sigils. If I can master the power of Sigils along with Abyss Blood, I'll have the tools necessary to get my revenge.' Alice thought to herself, clenching her fist in determination.

"Did you get hit in the head? Hello?"

Hearing the voice next to her, Alice turned her attention away from Lars and saw a Hunter crouching next to her.

They wore a large cloak that hid their body shape. Yet, their voice revealed their gender. The coat had a hood that covered the Hunter's head while a black mask covered his face, except the eyes.

But her focus wasn't on their identity. She was concerned whether or not they noticed the abnormality with her body.

'If things went wrong, it'll be the past repeating all over again!' Alice panicked in her mind.

"Seems like you can hear just fine. That, there, was a haphazard job, young lady. But if it wasn't for that, you might be in a worse state than you are now." The hunter explained while pointing at her thigh.

"But, you're pretty impressive, if not a little reckless." The Hunter chuckled.

Alice wanted to say something, but she felt drained of energy.

'Seems like he didn't notice anything strange with my side effects.' She sighed in relief.

Now that her biggest concern was dealt with for the time being, all her fatigue rushed forth along with the side effects of using the Abyss Blood.

Alice estimated the effect of the blood she drank had something to do with reinforcing her physique momentarily, since her muscles spasmed due to strain.

Seeing Alice remove the claws from her thigh that held the flesh in place, the Hunter couldn't help but feel shocked in his heart. Not only did she not wince or cry, she even seemed unperturbed by the gruesome sight.

"Uh," Shaking out of his reverie, the Hunter spoke. "I suppose congratulations are in order. You've been sponsored. I won't patch up your injury completely since you've been granted a vial of high-quality Vampire Lily. It'll heal your injuries without too many side effects." The hunter explained as he gave Alice a fresh set of bandages for her wounds.

"Can you stand?"

Hearing this, Alice shook her head.

With Alice unable to walk, the hunter thought to himself for a moment before carrying her on his back.

"I'll take you back to your cage. The next round of competition is starting soon. It wouldn't be good for people to linger." He explained as Alice nodded her head.

Hearing that, Alice finally realized she did not spot Lilia once in the arena.

'I hope she's fine.' She thought as fatigue warred against her mind.

Feeling her eyelids drooping, Alice felt sleep take over, but not before she said one thing to the Hunter, "Erm. Thank... you."

Raising an eyebrow in surprise, the hunter looked back and noticed that Alice had passed out.

Letting out a weary smile, he shook his head and felt pity for the girl.

After all, being sponsored is the last thing you want in this Colosseum.

###

Wandering the streets, a man clad in a raven feathered cloak reached out with his hand to receive a small bird.

Claiming the letter in the bird's grasp, he couldn't help but laugh at the message.

"She's the same as ever, still pissy that I'm leaving everything to her." He laughed out loud. He wasn't afraid that Allura wouldn't look after Alice. After all, despite how she was on the outside, the woman was a huge softy inside.

She would pity Alice's situation and help her out in the end, especially since he gave the eye to the girl.

"Yo, wouldn't you say this is a good occasion? I've managed to change a brat's fate by sending her to an old friend of mine. With that brat's strange body, she'll make a fine partner for the Eye I planted in her. Look at me doing some good for the world!" Kaden laughed while glancing at his right.

He was currently holding a man by his head as a light flickered through his eyes. The man's gaze quivered in fear, streams of sweat dripping down his head.

"Since I'm in a good mood, I'll let you off easy. Generous, aren't I?"

"P-Please, let me go! Stop, you fiend—"

Crushing the man's head, Kaden watched his body squirm with satisfaction before it fell limp.

Shaking the blood off his hand, he walked away from the area while the letter slowly disintegrated into ash.

Kaden recalled the moment he laid his eyes on Alice. At that time, he used an Abyss Beast's ability to hypnotise her so that she wouldn't get in the way of his search.

Yet strangely, the effect only lasted for a short moment before fading away.

'That brat is resistant to the effects of the Abyss. If Allura does what she's good at, this'll be a chance for both of us to break free.' He thought to himself with a smile.

###

Alice didn't know what happened afterwards. She was in a state of semi-consciousness. She felt like her mind was drifting off in a body of water where all that existed were her own thoughts.

Visions of her past, before her 10th birthday, flashed before her. All of the happiness she felt, the joys of life — it was all a lie.

After that day, all she could see was the ugly truth. The needles, the experiments, everything. Their family's history was built upon a mountain of corpses as far as the eye could see. Every breakthrough, every innovation, they sacrificed everything and nothing! They sat upon wealth given through blood and tears.

The laughter of the head scientist as he tore away at her body. The gruesome sights of her blood splattering against the lights, basking the labs in a crimson hue.

Echoes of his voice ringing through her mind, praising her tolerance and tenacity while tearing out her organs.

"Show me more! Can you still breathe and live if I remove your lungs? What if I feed you blood that gives you gills?! Show me your secrets, o gift of the unseen gods!"

His haunting voice cornered Alice to a door behind walls, the final bastion within her own mind.

How many times has she tried to lash out against him? How many times has she tried to use the blood against her captives? How many times has she failed? When did she stop fighting back? Why did she stop? Why did she begin to wait eagerly for the experiments, before that feeling too died and all that was left was numbness?

Why did she stop feeling anything? Yet it was futile with each attempt. They were nightmares that lost their meaning, questions that held no significance once their circumstances ended.

Her blood boiled, her flesh carved and her bones broken.

Each flash of light in her mind showed a different torture, a different vial of blood that tore away at her body.

Behind the scientist, Alice could see her father, his cold eyes watching her torture without any emotion. Was her life a lie?

She reached out with her hands, but they weren't hers. Her flesh bulged under the skin, strange limbs exploded out of the arms and insectoid legs crawled across the bones.

Alice felt herself splitting into a myriad different beasts, a moment when her resistances disappeared and the Abyss tore her to pieces.

The sudden fear she felt towards such a fate snapped her out of the nightmare. With wide, dazed eyes, Alice looked around frantically. Once Alice noticed she was back in the cage, a relieved, grateful sigh escaped out her lips. However, the cold sweat coating her back remained a sombre reminder of the nightmare.

Trying her best to sit up, she was surprised by the lack of pain. Her body had been bandaged up and there were several patches of dried blood on the fabric. Feeling no pain from her thigh, she peeked through the bandages and saw that her flesh had been completely healed back up. Alice realized she must've been fed the vial of blood given by her sponsor upon passing out.

Looking down at her dress, she was happy that it was still holding together despite the beating it suffered. The torn portions were covered by bandages hiding her body. Looking at the damage, Alice estimated that it could hold on for another fight or two so long as she limits the damage taken by her body.

With furrowed brows, she felt the uncomfortable metal choker around her neck, secured tightly with no signs of being removed.

"You're up. It seems like we both survived today." A voice rang out as Alice glanced over, seeing Lilia grinning happily in the cage next to her.

There were visible blood stains around her clothes, but it seemed as though she had also gotten a vial of blood.

"How long I... sleep?" She asked.

Alice wasn't sure how long she was out. If Lilia had fought her own event separately, after her at that, then it must've been a few hours.

"Hmm... I'd say about 3 or 4 hours? I finished my battle after your batch got escorted out of the arena. I'm surprised you lived though. Not that I'm saying I hope you died, but fighting those dogs isn't easy. They're pretty vicious b\*stards." Lilia sighed out while leaning against her cage.

"Luck. But why so happy? Fighting makes you happy?"

"Eh? I mean. Not really. I'm just happy I get to live another day. I'd rather stay and fight for a bit if I can instead of being sold off to a bad buyer again." Lilia smiled bitterly while holding her arms tightly.

Shaking her head, she looked at Alice.

"It seems like both of us got sponsored. I heard a bit about that when I was coming back but it seems like they want us to stay and fight in this place for a bit longer. Maybe to train us into better combat slaves since sponsorships are usually reserved for those that show potential. For now, just get as much rest as you can while they're filtering through the other slaves.

"I'm hoping we get a full day's break." Lilia said while stretching her body.

Making herself comfortable in her cage, Lilia glanced over.

"If we survived the first day the other days shouldn't be too hard."

Hearing her optimism, Alice couldn't help but nod her head.

She was still a little confused as to why she was sounding so happy and being nice to her since there was nothing free in this world. Her own family taught her that. But for the time being, it was a nice company to have.

'It's better than going insane by myself I suppose.' Alice thought to herself while hugging her knees.

Thinking back to her visions earlier, she could feel an all-consuming rage flooding her heart. She had wondered many times during her imprisonment about how she should feel towards her family. If they had a chance to sit down and talk, if everything was a misunderstanding.

If her family asked for her forgiveness, could she give it?

"Never." Alice muttered coldly as pure killing intent flooded from her gaze. She would never forgive them for the harm they caused onto her. The pain she felt when her father watched on coldly as his 10 year old daughter was torn apart by blades.

They don't deserve her pity, they only deserve her hatred.