

Abyssal A 831

Chapter 831: The Ferryman And The Bard

"Yo~ ho~ Yo~ ho~ On the Abyss we go~" The Ferryman sang while his spear steered the boat.

"Where the black tides churn and the dead winds blow~

"Pay the toll or lose your soul~

"The Ferryman takes all who seek his boat~"

During this silent journey, Alice found herself tapping her finger along with the song he was singing.

"The waters whisper of lives undone~

"Of broken vows and the setting sun~

"Yet onward he rows with a steady hand~

"From shadowed shores to the no-man's land~ Yo~ ho~ Yo~ ho~ On the Abyss we go~"

"Did you compose this song?" Alice asked curiously as the Ferryman didn't turn.

"Nay, a passing bard composed it for me. I took him on a journey, the only time I made an exception to make multiple stops along the ride. You see, he was a little lost in the maze called life." The Ferryman chuckled.

"At first, he wanted to drown himself in the Abyssal Waters then I appeared. I told him my fee and proclaimed that I could take him wherever he wanted in the Abyss. Where the Abyss Waters lead, I could guide, for I am the Ferryman of these dark tides.

"And do you know how he responded?"

Alice shook her head.

"Surprise me. I've seen a myriad of sights. The highest peaks and the lowest depths of mankind. What is left for me to see but to die and see what's in the afterlife?"

"Bit of a dramatic fellow don't you agree?" The Ferryman laughed.

"So I made an exception. Dead men have no use for coin do they? So I proposed to take him around the Abyss. To see the sights he has not seen before, to witness the flow of life in these depths. To lay his eyes on Terminus and return unharmed." He grinned.

Alice sat up at the mention of Terminus. A place that should be sealed off until recently. Yet... he could access it?

"For each stop that we made, I would take two coins from him."

The Ferryman closed his eyes, recalling that month long journey he had with the bard.

"During that month, we drifted past ancient ruins, lands of treasures and the prisons of the Old Lords.

"I showed him an orchestra of sirens who sang in the depths, whales that flew in the sky, inverted islands that hovered beneath the waves. I showed him the cosmic sea sealed in a cover, the silken bands of light that painted this perpetual darkness.

"I took him to the golden city that lost its lustre, the folly of kings and the beauty of art that transcends time.

"We sailed past hollowed monasteries where believers and monks of no faith chant prayers from day till night. Fields of glass that trapped souls of those that wandered too far.

"I sailed and he played his tunes. Then, at the end of the month, he gifted me this song. His eyes now found purpose and his mind cleared. It was an enjoyable month." The Ferryman chuckled.

"Though I hadn't expected to hear his name long after he departed from another client. He recognised the song I sang. Turns out the bard had made a name for himself in a city next to the ocean. His songs about our journey painted a picture of the Abyss like no other." He sighed.

"Isn't that a good thing? You seem sad." Alice frowned.

"Aye, for he was killed. You see, his songs earned him the favour of the Lord's daughter. She was enraptured by his tales and fell in love. The Lord, seeing this, proclaimed him to be a beast, a siren, and ordered his execution." The Ferryman shook his head.

Alice fell silent.

"So I drowned the city in these waters and for it never be heard from ever again." He cackled.

"Huh?! It was just the Lord, so why the city along with it?" Alice widened her eyes.

Why did he have to drag the innocent in his revenge?

"Pft, lil' miss, you're more gullible than I thought. Do you think I can still enjoy myself if I wiped out a city like that? The other Lords will be going after my head, hahaha!" The Ferryman laughed from the pits of his stomach.

After a moment to calm himself, he smiled.

"I killed the Lord in the most brutal way. Filled his lungs and stomach with Abyss Water. Watched him mutate, transform and beg for help.

"He flailed his arms, splashing Abyss Water to his surroundings. Soldiers that tried to help, those with low resistances and low Sigils died almost instantly. Those who had more power managed to hold on, fighting off the corruption. You can think of it as an outbreak." He shrugged.

"The Lord refused to die alone so he dragged others into the mess. Naturally I left. While the destruction of the city technically wasn't my doing, I suppose I had a part to play in it."

"That... You could've stopped them, couldn't you? Stop them from spreading the Abyss Waters." Alice creased her brows.

"That I could. But why should I?" The Ferryman revealed a sadistic grin.

"Bystanders they were when my friend was accused. They so easily believed the lie of him being a beast, crafting stories such as him wanting to drag them into the Abyss. So now that the Abyss had come to them, why should I help them avoid it? My vengeance was satisfied, what follows I care not!"

"Or does that disturb you lil' girl?" He glanced back at Alice who closed her eyes.

Each person had their own circumstances.

With the Zenia family, there were those who knew what's going on and actively helped. But there were probably also those who were reluctant.

In the situation where she wipes out the family, how will she differentiate those who are guilty and those who are simply a victim of the circumstances?

If Alice had to be honest...

Those who were truly disturbed by what the Zenia family did would've left already. So they who remain will become the victims of her wrath, even if they felt guilty.

As for those who didn't know the true face of the Zenia family... She could only apologise for what she will do!

"Nah, it doesn't." Alice shook her head.

The Ferryman was a little surprised. This clarity in her eyes, she was serious.

A smile appeared on his lips as he let out another laugh.

"Indeed! It doesn't! We each have one life so why not live being true to yourself? I have climbed to the position of Lord because I sought freedom. I will not bend my way of life to satisfy another. So this city disappearing from the map weighs not on my mind."

"I think it should still weigh to some degree." Alice's smile twitched.

"Nay it does not!"

Shaking her head, she gave up arguing with him. But she has to admit, his talk of showing the bard around has her interested.

"Do you think you'll be able to show me around like you did with the bard? I'm rather curious as to how you even enter Terminus." Alice asked.

"I'm afraid I cannot do that. One journey per meeting! No pauses between stops."

"Didn't you make an exception for him?"

"That's why it's called an exception. One time thing. Repeat the exception and it becomes the norm." He shook his head.

"Even if that means travelling a month with a pretty gal like me?" Alice flipped her hair.

[Okay calm down narcissist.] Cayla rolled her eyes.

'Heh.' Alyss simply smirked.

Yet that smirk spoke a thousand words.

Alice felt embarrassed but she too wanted to see the sights that the Ferryman talked about.

Hearing her words, the Ferryman glanced back and stared at Alice.

"Sorry but you're a little short for my tastes." He scratched his chin.

*Puchi...

"And your assets are a little... lacking."

*Puchi!!!

"So no, I don't think you classify as a pretty gal by my tastes." He laughed, turning around to focus on the steering.

"I'll have you know my assets are average!" Alice protested.

Sure she might be a little short but she was pretty proud of her figure!

[You sure about that? I'd say they're closer to below average if anything.] Cayla folded her arms, pushing out her chest.

'...'

'You know that's an insult to me as well right?' Alyss's smile twitched.

'We still have time to grow! Plus too big and they'll be annoying to manage in combat!' Alice retorted.

'I'm pretty sure our growth period is over a while ago.' Alyss mumbled as Alice collapsed onto the floor.

She'll stay this short forever...

She didn't ask for much! Just a few extra inches! Being 5ft 2 inches has its issues like reach!

But alas a girl could dream.

[All of your height disappeared into your love for mead.] Cayla smirked.

'If that's the case don't you think she'll be shorter?' Alyss smirked.

[Hm... You're right...]

'What the hell is today? Is today a bully me day?!' Alice wanted to cry.

[Isn't that just everyday? You're too dumb not to be bullied.]

Cayla's words felt like a drop kick from beyond the sky as Alice gave up.

She still has hope! Surely becoming a Lord or perhaps even the Abyss Goddess will reshape her body!

When the time comes, she'll do everything in her power to gain a few inches in height!

No matter what!

She couldn't let Allura, who was tall as hell, have a short daughter after all!

Sobbing internally while sitting on the Ferryman's boat, they soon reached their destination after two days or so of travelling.

Chapter 832: Nethril

"Here we are lil' gal, you wanted the closest city that'll lead to Extalia right?" The Ferryman grinned, resting his chin on the side of his spear.

The boat rocked slightly before sliding onto the beach. Raising his lantern, the mist began to disperse.

In the distance, the toll of a bell could be heard.

"Welcome to the Port City Nethril. They call this the last bastion of fools and dreamers. Those that descend from the south anyways."

He stabbed his spear into the sand and hopped off before gesturing for Alice to follow.

She peered past the retreating mist and saw jagged towers piercing towards the night sky. Flickering windows of orange hues while lanterns lined the streets.

Most of the city was veiled in fog so Alice couldn't make out the details.

With Alice now off the boat, The Ferryman prepared to leave.

"Ah, actually, is there a way for me to meet you again? In case I want to visit the places you mentioned." Alice asked.

It would be a shame to lose contact with such a man.

"I wander where I wish. Drift along the seas with no destination in mind! If we are lucky, we will meet again." The Ferryman waved his hand without turning around.

But since he made an exception for the Bard, it's clear that he's someone who prioritises whatever he finds amusing.

If that was the case...

"What if I have something that'll definitely convince you?" Alice asked, folding her arms.

"Not interested!"

"Even if your passenger is someone who'll take over the Abyss? If you sail these waters, shouldn't you pay some rent?"

*RUMBLE!!!

Alice conjured the three relics and the realm began to react.

The Ferryman paused in his steps and glanced back.

A small smile appeared on his face.

Seeing the way the realm was reacting, it was similar to when he became a Lord.

A clear favouritism. Though in this case, it was far stronger.

In fact, it wouldn't be an exaggeration to say that the Abyss was bowing down to her.

"I'll be damned." He let out a laugh and brushed his hair back.

Reaching into his coat, he pulled out a single golden coin with a skull on it.

Placing it on his thumb, he flicked it towards Alice.

"One time. That's all I allow. More than that and I'll even give up these waters that I enjoy sailing! So don't push your luck lil' gal!" He held up his index finger before jumping onto his boat.

With a single push of his spear, his figure retreated into the mist.

The song that the bard had given to him echoed faintly before silence descended on the beach.

[Quite a strange fellow. Though I suppose he's the kind that values his freedom over someone chaining him down. The fact that he gave you one exception could be respect towards your position.] Cayla folded her arms in amusement.

'True. Though I'm already grateful for one exception.' Alice nodded.

Tossing the coin up into the air, she caught it and threw it into her pouch.

For now, she'll stock up a little in this city before making her way to the surface. She couldn't deny a part of it was so that she could delay going to the Zenia family for a little while.

Entering the city from the beach, Alice could hear the shouts of Merchants standing around the streets. They hollered their wares, presenting all sorts of trinkets and merchandise to those that passed.

Pearls from deep beneath the waves, premium goods from the surface. Whatever you want, one of them would have.

In the distance, giant boats veiled in fog waited by the docks, each one bigger than even giant beasts that Alice had seen.

Children dressed in different clothing darted past her.

Some had outfits unique to the Abyss, partially practical merged with fashion. Leather wraps, belts around the waist with different components and tough yet flexible cloth.

In some aspects, it reminded Alice of her first hunting attire. One that was given to her by Sera.

But among these people were no shortage of those that had just arrived from the surface. They were pale faced and clearly not used to the faint hints of miasma that floated in the air.

In some sense, it was similar to living in a heavily polluted city, lacking any form of clean air.

Stuffy and uncomfortable for those who aren't used to the environment.

Alice paused at the sight of a tavern located just off the main road. A sign marked with a goblet and grapes on the side.

She checked her pouch.

Indeed, she was running a little low on mead. Lower than she preferred.

Before even buying rations or other things that she may need, Alice decided to first restock on mead.

As she stepped inside, she saw the bustling tables packed with customers. People drinking and laughing by the side, playing dice games and some messing around with cards.

Some glanced over at the new arrival before carrying on with their day.

Alice approached the barkeeper. A stout woman with dirty blonde hair tied up into a bun.

"Gonna need some ID. Unless I'm wrong, I can't be serving kids 'ere." She rested her arm over the counter and glanced down at Alice.

Rummaging through her pouch, Alice eventually found the worn out ID that Allura had made for her a while back.

The woman squinted, her gaze darting back and forth between Alice and the card.

In the end, she accepted it and tapped her finger against the wooden board behind her.

"Menu. Give me a shout when you want to order." After saying so, she moved over to one of the regulars.

He grunted his order and she filled a jug with a strange, thick black mead. Almost tar like in viscosity yet the man's eyes lit up like stars.

Thanking the woman, he grabbed his drink and walked away.

Alice decided to try the meads one by one. She wanted to find her favourite before buying in bulk.

Not only that, but the taverns were the perfect place to hear about rumours.

Since this is the closest city before reaching the surface, Alice guessed that there would be some news about the Zenia family.

And even if there wasn't, she should be able to get a rough idea of what the surface was like right now.

The stories she overheard varied in nature. Most of it monotonous.

The kind that spoke about day to day life. Wives meeting up with old friends, fishermen boasting about their catches. Mothers praising the success of their children and even ambitious young men who couldn't wait to embark on their next hunt.

Alice sipped on her mead, enjoying the flavours. The Mead of Nethril focused more on the... texture rather than taste. Of course, there were a few hidden gems that Alice made a mental note of.

She leaned back.

Since most of the chatter wasn't useful, she decided it was about time to finalise her order before leaving.

But right before she was about to order, she overheard an interesting rumour.

"...I tell you, he's no ordinary man. They say he laid his hands on a boy who accidentally dunked his foot in and the corruption disappeared like magic."

"No way..."

"Yes way. No scars, no aftereffects. No invisible side effects either. The lad was unharmed, as if he never touched the waters in the first place."

Alice raised her eyebrow.

Now this was a tale worth listening to.

She placed her lips on her mug and focused on their conversation.

"They call him a divine healer, better than most. Enough where he could even rival the Gods themselves. A miracle worker who can fix you no matter what. Powers that no priest, no alchemist and no Hunter can perform."

The man's companion scoffed, clearly not buying the tale.

"Bullsh*t. Isn't that just heresy? Rival the Gods? Sounds to me he wants Solaris' spear up his arse!" He rolled his eyes, finishing his drink. "The Abyss Waters are the worst corruption this realm can grant ye. It's not something that can just be undone like that. Only mitigated but never undone."

"You're saying that but why do you think a bunch of people 'ave come 'ere? They're looking for him, the healer. Heck, one even said a Lord is planning to visit."

Their conversation later devolved into a conversation about Lords which Alice quickly lost interest.

She placed her mug down, amusement on her face.

'What do you think?'

[Hmm... it's certainly an interesting one. It's as the guy's companion said, Abyss Water can only be mitigated not undone. You're the first and only case aside from Velouria that can just shrug it off like nothing.] Cayla replied, intrigued by this 'divine healer'.

'Do you think it could have something to do with the Zenia family? They are trying to reproduce something with a similar potency to your blood after all.' Alyss spoke up.

'No clue. But it's worth checking out. Depending on who they are, I might even be able to recruit them as a healer that we need.' Alice grinned, clearly optimistic.

Finishing her drink, she placed a large order of her favourite mead from this establishment.

Hearing the quantity that Alice was requesting, the barkeeper was sceptical but that doubt faded away instantly after Alice handed over the coin.

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"We're almost there dear. Just hang on a little longer." A well dressed gentleman spoke while reading a book. He sat next to a bed, unbothered.

Writhing under the covers, a woman dressed in bandages gripped the bedframe.

She glared at him. Her mouth was disfigured, unable to speak a single word but her bloodshot eyes spoke a thousand.

"Lord Merias, we're about to reach the city." A guard spoke from outside the door.

Closing his book, Theron Merias nodded.

He had been searching for a potential cure for his wife's condition after a little incident. Hopefully, after all this time, a solution will be found with this 'divine healer'.

Chapter 833: Divine Healer

Having made up her mind, Alice decided to delay her entry into Extalia for the time being.

She wanted to see who this healer was and so she booked a room at the inn for a few nights.

'Where do we even begin the search?' Alice let out a sigh.

Currently, she was sitting on one of the tallest towers within this city. Nethril wasn't small by any means, but due to the fog that would wash over the city, it was difficult for people to see the full scale of this place.

From this spot, Alice could barely see the streets. Just a blanket of fog with buildings poking out from the mass.

[I think the strangest part is that even with all the rumours circulating the city, the healer doesn't seem to care. He shows up, heals, then leaves. No more no less.] Cayla folded her arms.

'You'd almost think he wants to get found.' Alyss leaned back.

Since he wasn't revealing himself properly, it's clear that he's someone who doesn't want people to know who he is.

Yet despite the rumours, he didn't shy away from performing his task.

'There's also the rumour of the Lord coming to the City. They're probably keeping their aura under control since I can't sense them at all.' Alice furrowed her brows.

Sitting at the highest point wasn't just to enjoy the sights.

Similar to how Gwen would map out the city using her Vision, Alice was using Cayla to memorise the movement of energy.

If he's someone who could undo the effects of Abyss Water, then whenever he performs his miracles, Alice would be able to spot the sudden surge.

###

Stepping off the boat, Theron held one hand behind his back while guards carried the box his wife was resting in.

He glanced at the fog covered city and took a deep breath.

"This fog... When did it arrive?" He asked a nearby attendant.

"The fog has been present for the past month Lord Merias." The attendant bowed.

The city Lord had tasked her to serve and guide Lord Merias during his stay here. As a well established Lord and governor, offending the man in front of them was a death penalty.

No matter what he asked, what he wanted, she had to offer.

Even if it was her own body.

"A month... So around the same time the rumours began." Theron narrowed his eyes.

"What's the latest rumour on the divine healer? Where did they appear and what did they do?" He asked as the attendant calmly bowed.

She had been prepared for this. Lord Merias was visiting for one reason and one reason alone.

The healer.

"Word on the street is tha-"

"Spare me the words and just get to the point." Theron shook his head.

"West side. Monger's market, cured a fisherman who had Abyss Water seep into a wound on his arm during fishing."

"Did anyone actually see him or was it simply a rumour? And what about the fisherman? Is he still around." Theron raised an eyebrow.

"Four witnesses. The fisherman was seen speaking about it. But due to him not having any scars, it was hard to believe. Some say all five of them are in on it." The attendant replied immediately.

"No scars? Impressive. Have all the previous cases been like this or is it just this one?" Theron praised while gesturing for the attendant to lead the way.

Behind him, the guards followed while carrying the carriage with his wife.

"Unfortunately, all of the cases have left no scars. He doesn't go for patients who have suffered for a long time, but rather those who have been recently afflicted."

Theron was silent.

Based on this information, it was a safe assumption that his power probably had a time limit attached to its activation. Of course, there was also a chance that the healer simply ignored those who suffered for a long time.

"Has anyone tried to prove it by risking their own life?" He asked.

He's seen all kinds of stupid people in his life. It wouldn't surprise him at all if an idiot drank Abyss Water wanting to prove it's real or even disprove it.

Idiots don't think about consequences after all.

The attendant scratched her cheek.

"Unfortunately there have been a couple. People purposefully wounding themselves using Abyss Water then crying about it on the streets. The healer never showed up and the lucky ones simply got an amputation."

It was embarrassing to have citizens like this, especially when a Lord was visiting their city.

Their impression of this place would naturally decrease.

"Why such shame? There are always people like this. If anything, it's simply natural selection at this point. But at least they've proven themselves useful." Theron shook his head.

With this, it's proven that the healer wouldn't just show up whenever there's an injury. Certain conditions must be fulfilled for him to appear.

Just as he stepped into the gates of the city, he froze and frowned.

"Can I assume that's the City Lord's method of tracking down the healer?"

"Pardon?"

Either the attendant didn't know about this or it was someone else.

And with a detection range this big...

Theron decided to check it out.

###

'Hm? Someone's coming.' Alice glanced towards her right.

She could feel a pair of eyes staring at her, their presence approaching rapidly.

They didn't seem hostile but Alice wasn't going to risk it.

Snapping her finger, a disguise washed over her in an instant.

Her height stayed the same. Instead of split hair between black and white, Alice's hair was now light maroon.

Her bangs were a lot longer and covered both eyes. A large scar covered the upper half of her face, a disguise to act blind to justify the large detection range.

And as for her outfit, she wore a loose fitting white shirt with a black long sleeved undershirt. A pair of shorts with belts holding a few vials and a pouch along with some tights.

And finally, a pair of black boots.

Snapping her fingers, she swapped out a few Sigils and created a giant web of threads, preventing anyone from approaching unless they wanted to trigger her traps.

Stopping by the boundary of this network, a well dressed man traced his finger along the thread.

"How may I help a fine gentlemen such as yourself?" Alice smiled, adjusting her voice.

Compared to her usual tone, her voice was now soft and gentle, unhurried and calm.

Like a gentle breeze or the calm waves, not a speck of emotion could be detected with the exception of what she wanted to show. That being amusement.

"Apologies for the interruption. I was simply curious as to the source of this gaze was I sensing. And to think it was a beautiful lady at that." Theron bowed politely.

"My my, you have quite the sweet tongue. But I doubt you came here just to see me." Alice chuckled while internally she was screaming.

After all, the man in front of her had nine f*cking Sigils!

[Why do you keep finding Lords!?!?] Cayla shouted, preparing to figure out the title if a fight was to break out.

'Do I look like I have the answer? If I can avoid f*ckers like this I would! I didn't even know he was a Lord until I saw the Sigils!' Alice screamed back.

She couldn't help but feel a little nervous since she wasn't prepared to see a man that's reached the pinnacle of power.

"Indeed. I came to this city in search of a healer. Judging by the scars across your eyes, may I assume you are of the same mind?" Theron asked.

Through the gaps of her bangs, he could see the scars that have destroyed her face. Her eyes that have lost their light.

She was facing him yet looking past him.

No... Saying that she was looking at him was a stretch. He couldn't feel her gaze, only the strange net of detection she had spread out that felt similar to an eye looking at him from another realm.

"Perhaps. But you... You're not injured are you? For what reason do you have to seek the Healer?" Alice laughed elegantly while hiding her mouth.

Her heartbeat was beginning to calm down. He seems to be here for a conversation, the reasonable kind of Lord rather than someone who did whatever they wanted.

And if that was the case, she could reason with him and avoid a fight.

Maybe he's someone like the Ferryman. A person who did whatever they wanted without caring about the world.

"I seek his power to cure my beloved. She has been ravaged by a strange condition for many months now and even the finest healers in the Abyss have struggled with her condition." Theron shook his head.

"So perhaps a man of miracles such as himself would be able to help heal her condition."

"Oh my~ how romantic. A man of your power seeking out a healer for your beloved. She must feel blessed to have someone like you by her side." Alice clapped her hands as Theron nodded his head in thanks.

"It's rude of me but I must ask, have you found any clues on the man's whereabouts? Perhaps we can join hands and work together." Theron offered.

Even if it wasn't for the fact that he's here for the divine healer, a Hunter with a detection range this large was someone worthy of his attention. Someone he wanted to recruit to work under him.

Though... despite hinting that she knew of his power, she didn't seem interested.

So Theron had no desire to push for recruitment. Instead, he'll settle for a collaborative effort in tracking down this illusive healer.

Alice scratched her chin.

Collaborating with a nine Sigil Lord wasn't an opportunity she got often. No matter how often she ran into Lords. And since he's doing this for his wife, it could also be a chance for her to make him owe her one.

A favour that she could cash in with a nine Sigil Lord... Now that's something Alice wanted.

"Very well, let us find this healer together."

Chapter 834: Kaine Veyr

Now, Alice couldn't directly say she wanted to see his wife. Who in their right mind would allow such a thing?

Even if he's a nine Sigil Lord, the safety of a close one was still something he needed to be careful of.

Instead, Alice figured it was better to put her entire focus into finding the healer for now.

"So have you discovered anything while searching up here?" Theron asked curiously, walking past the threads and standing next to Alice.

"Sadly, I haven't been up here for long." Alice shook her head with a helpless sigh.

"Perhaps you can investigate the west side. His last known activity was healing a fisherman who got infected. Four witnesses, no scars left. A few theories saying that it's faked but it's worth checking out."

"Oh my, seems like you're already well informed on the matter. What use is there to pursue me for help?" Alice narrowed her eyes.

A little suspicious.

"Just the benefits of visiting from afar. The City Lord was gracious enough to provide me with an attendant who is well informed on rumours." Theron dismissed it with a shake of his head.

"I'm suppressing my energy right now in case the healer is wary of me. So my movements will have to be minimal for now."

"Heh~ Then I must ask you this to make sure. My approach towards the healer may change based on what you want." Alice leaned back slightly, exposing the scars on her face.

"How aggressive do you want me to be with regards to tracking him down? If you want, I can spread a net across the entirety of this city." Alice offered, creating a bundle of threads between her hands.

Of course, the real detection was something else. This net was simply a disguise.

Theron scratched his chin.

When it came to tracking people down or finding things out, he wasn't the best.

All of his abilities were only there for the act of killing.

Nothing more, nothing less.

"Would that not offend the healer? If they truly hold the capabilities of reversing the effects of Abyss Water, I'd rather not make them an enemy." Theron furrowed his brows.

He's survived this long based on the connections he's made. Therefore, he knew the importance of the first impression. And if the healer's first impression of him was someone who did whatever it took to achieve his goal, then it might not be a great outlook.

"Ohya?" Alice smiled.

Inwardly, she was rather surprised by the way he was acting. She thought that someone of his status would've tried to force others to obey his words.

Yet instead of that, he's seemingly respecting the healer's desire to remain unknown.

Granted, he still wants to find the healer but he's not forcing the issue.

[Seems like a pretty stand up guy.] Cayla praised as Alyss nodded her head in agreement.

"In that case, shall I simply lay down a few threads to search for rumours?" Alice suggested.

Theron contemplated his options.

If it was simply rumours then the healer shouldn't take offence to it.

"You can do that?" Theron glanced over in mild surprise.

He thought that the blind girl would at most be able to detect presences. But to gather information through her threads...

"Are you perhaps in need of work?" He asked but Alice shook her head.

"Shame. I would love to have someone like you working under me." He smiled helplessly.

"I appreciate the offer. Perhaps I'll change my mind once we find Mr healer."

Nodding his head, Theron took a step away from her and dropped towards the ground.

"I'll find you if I have new information."

"And here I thought he was a gentleman. Didn't even leave a name." Alice sighed while weaving a net between her hands.

She was going to thread her blood into the weave and use it as a catalyst to gather information.

In a sense, it was similar to her Vision but focused more on 'listening' than seeing.

With this, sight, energy and hearing were covered by her weave. Finding the healer shouldn't be an issue.

###

Landing on the ground gently, Theron could see the guards and the attendant rushing over.

"Lord Merias, please warn me before you leave, otherwise I won't be able to explain it to the City Lord." The attendant smiled helplessly as Theron nodded.

"Apologies. Shall we pay the City Lord a visit? It would be rude of me not to see him after coming to his city." Theron suggested as the attendant nodded her head.

He had the guards take his wife to the accommodations for now.

Following the attendant, they arrived at the main office.

The guards around the place were relatively well trained based on Theron's evaluation. But their level of power left much to be desired, especially for an important Port City near the entrance to Extalia.

For a city like this, ideally there should be one Lord keeping it safe if not more.

Making his way to the top level, he finally saw the City Lord of Nethril.

Sitting behind the desk, a man with short black hair and piercing crimson eyes stared at him with a small smile.

There was a circular tattoo on the side of his neck, different to the ones made in the image of Sigils.

Perhaps it was simply his aesthetic tastes.

He wore a militaristic suit of black and gold with a white T-shirt. A pair of black gloves and a military cap.

Off to the side, a fur collar jacket with medals could be seen.

"Welcome Lord Merias, I hope my dear attendant hasn't been rude to you." He smiled.

'Kaine Veyr, new City Lord of Nethril. Six Sigils and known as the Guard Dog of Extalia.' Theron thought to himself while giving Kaine a nod.

He has his merits from the battle towards the North, and despite only being six Sigils, he was spoken of in the same line as those who are crowned the strongest beneath Lordship.

People like Rosalyn before her ascension as well as Darrow the Pirate King.

But there was one strange thing.

His rise to fame was far too fast. Constructed even.

Yet Theron ignored the suspicious factors as it wasn't his job to pry. He was only going to be here for a brief time so making unnecessary enemies should be avoided.

"Have you taken the time to look around the city yet? Due to the rumours of the 'divine healer' we've been getting quite a few visitors. The merchants are loving it." Kaine smiled, standing up in greeting and waited for Theron to take a seat.

"Not yet. Though I'm only going to be here for the healer. You see, my wife dislikes outings." Theron sat down, crossing his legs as Kaine took a seat after him.

"Oh? I heard that Lady Merias was all for the social life. She was quite the big name in the Slaughter Docks after all. In fact, I was even prepared to host an event in her name. What a shame." Kaine shook his head with a sigh.

"I'm sure she'll make up for what she missed once we find the healer."

"Indeed. Happy wife, happy life haha." Kaine nodded.

"Do you require extra hands when it comes to finding the healer?"

"No need." Theron shook his head.

With how long the rumours have been around... Theron guessed that Kaine was struggling with finding the healer himself.

"If anything, I must ask you this. How come the cases for Abyss Water corruption have skyrocketed? A month ago, a large outbreak occurred with a fishing vessel, did it not?" Theron skipped the pleasantries.

With the rise of a new suspicious cult, a few Lords were trying their best to track down and find out who they were.

Their actions inside the Abyss have put a lot of people in danger and he wasn't going to sit around waiting for things to happen.

Kaine leaned back.

Opening his drawer, he pulled out a file and placed it in front of Theron.

"I know what Lord Merias is thinking about but that's not the case. Simply a coincidence." Kaine smiled.

Keeping a neutral expression, Theron opened a file and read the contents.

Off the shores of Nethril, a Lord level beast rests. It had descended into the depths not long ago and disrupted the ecosystem, causing the beasts to go on a rampage.

Had it not been for this Lord level beast, the cases of Abyss Water corruption would be far lower.

"Do you think the Healer is here because the beast had settled down?" Theron asked curiously, flipping through a few witness testimonies.

Fisherman who were out at sea and saw a colossal beast dive into the depths.

Kaine shook his head.

"The healer is a presence that's appeared in the surrounding towns and cities for a while now. Occasionally helping out with most assuming him to be solving issues using Abyss Blood as a counter. However, due to the surge of injuries related to the Abyss Waters, his fame has skyrocketed thus propelling his rumours to the forefront." Kaine explained, pulling out another file.

This time, it had rumours of the healer dating back years ago. They were few in number but was similar to the reports now.

"So there's the chance that he may have moved to another town by now?" Theron glanced up.

"Rest assured that if he does, I already have my informants on the lookout for his news."

Closing the files and handing them back, Theron glanced out of the window and out to the sea.

Since he was here... perhaps he should do what he's best at doing.

Killing the Lord level beast so that the ecosystem can go back to normal.

Talking to Kaine for a little longer, Theron excused himself and left the main office.

Chapter 835: Searching The Sea

After leaving the main office, Theron scratched his chin.

Trying to kill a beast that's dwelling beneath the waves wasn't going to be easy. Especially since the Abyss Waters were in the way.

There were... items he could use to shield himself early on. But using it during battle was off the table. They were mostly used to push out the waters, not defending him against attacks.

Although...

'If that girl can help me track it down, I'll be able to land a solid blow against it.' Theron thought to himself.

Even if his attack loses a bit of power from the distance, it should still be enough to wound an Abyss Lord.

'Ah... but if I do so the tidal wave will swallow the city.' Theron sighed.

A troublesome situation.

Just as he was about to step away, crimson threads dropped down from above.

A message from the blind girl.

Catching the thread, he felt it tremble and heard her voice.

"You look rather troubled. Was the meeting with the City Lord that annoying?"

Glancing up at the sky, Theron located where Alice was and shook his head.

"He didn't ask me to do anything. Just an annoying situation. If you're contacting me, does that mean you found some information?"

"Well I have some good news and bad news. Which one do you want to hear?" She asked.

"Bad news first."

"Ohya? Well the bad news is that some of the rumours are indeed fake. I have my methods and let's just say... one of them wasn't tampered with at all. They probably faked the rumour to get some attention and money." Alice chuckled.

"Visitors would pay them quite a bit of money for even a morsel of information. Naturally, the man split that amongst the friends that agreed to do this with him. They even constructed a rather believable story."

Theron strolled towards the city, deep in thought.

"Then the good news?"

"Two of them were real. While the scars are gone, there are signs of tampering. One to the east and one further south. Though the method he used to reverse the corruption is strange, I'll need more time to figure things out." Alice sighed.

While she was able to get clues using Cayla, the exact method was a mystery to her.

Theron blinked his eyes.

He was only in the main office for a short period of time, yet the girl had already gathered this much information?

"How far is the range of your detection?" Theron asked curiously.

He wanted to track the limit of her threads but even after pushing his perception to the max, the threads kept going. It was no exaggeration to say that the entire city is under her watchful eye right now.

"Fufu~ Depends on whether or not I have time to set up." Alice chuckled.

Without the threads, she wouldn't be able to pull off something similar to what Gwen had done.

"Do you think you'll be able to help me track down a beast?" Theron asked.

With how far Alice's range extends, finding a beast hidden in the waves shouldn't be too difficult.

In fact, he might even go as far as to expect precise coordinates for his attack to land.

"Oh?"

"Turns out the surrounding waters are in chaos right now because of a Lord level beast hiding in the Abyss Waters. If you can help me track it down, I'll kill it and the situation should go back to normal." Theron explained as Alice fell silent.

"I'm surprised. Wouldn't killing the beast harm our chances of finding the healer?"

"Perhaps. But finding a healer shouldn't come at a cost of risking the civilians." Theron shook his head.

His reply surprised Alice as she didn't think he would prioritise the people of the city like this.

Hell, this wasn't even his city, it wasn't his responsibility.

Yet he was going out of his way to make things safe for them.

Thinking about it for a moment, Alice smiled.

"Very well. Tracking the beast down in the sea shouldn't be hard. I just have to be a little careful. As for my protection, am I right to assume that you'll be responsible for my safety?" Alice chuckled.

"Naturally. How much would you like for the fee?" Theron asked.

"Pft, if someone like you is offering to kill the beast for free, who am I to ask for a fee?" Alice shrugged her shoulders.

Since he was doing the public a service, Alice figured she might as well do the same.

Theron scratched his chin.

"Even though I'm suppressing my power, it seems like you've long found out how strong I am."

From above, bundles of threads began to form as Alice hopped down from the tower.

"Was I being too obvious? I'm rather proud of my perception as ironic as that may sound." She laughed, pointing at her eyes.

Of course, the truth of the matter was different. But her current disguise was a blind girl.

"Somewhat. Though I couldn't be sure since most people are rather respectful of me when they realise who I am." Theron let out a laugh.

"You don't seem like the kind to just kill random people. Plus... Not to sound arrogant but I have a few ways to escape." Alice skipped a few steps with her hand behind her back.

"Hou? Seems like you don't know everything then. Few have the gall to say they can escape me when I want to kill them." Theron narrowed his eyes.

As the Slayer, he has yet to fail a hunt he decided to pursue. Whoever he wanted to kill, he will kill without exception.

No if's, no buts.

Blood will flow.

"Really? By all means, we can do a little gamble if you wish to test me now."

Theron froze in his steps.

Her tone... she wasn't kidding.

She was fully intent on taking on one of his attacks if he was to agree.

Was she really that confident in her ability to escape? Or was it something else?

Perhaps she was even trying to figure out his Lord title.

A game of information.

But there was the inherent risk that she indeed miscalculated things.

If that was the case, the gamble might be too dangerous.

"Rather than testing it on you, don't we have a better target? I'm sure you'll be able to judge whether or not you'll be able to survive once we hunt down the beast in the sea." Theron chuckled as Alice shrugged her shoulder.

"Fair. Do you perhaps have a boat we can use? Some crewmates or will it just be us two?" Alice asked as they were currently approaching the docks.

"A small boat will be fine. No need for crewmates." Theron shook his head.

Alice raised her eyebrow.

Did he have something similar to the Ferryman? A method of keeping the beasts away?

Since he was confident, Alice didn't see a need to correct him. Instead, she followed and they soon borrowed a small boat roughly the size of a carriage. It was big enough to carry both of them easily.

As for the defensive properties...

Even a stray two star beast, hell even a one star beast will be able to shred this boat apart.

But Theron didn't say anything so Alice followed without another word.

Alice controlled the boat using a mix of her energy and threads, sailing out to sea.

Immediately, beasts began to swarm.

Silhouettes slicing through the Abyss Waters, circling them and finding the perfect angle for an attack.

Theron took a step forward.

***RUMBLE!!!**

"!!!"

A burst of aura, condensed into the area around them.

Beasts who were unprepared were knocked out from fear while those that managed to retain their mind scrambled away.

The 'scent' of death lingered in the area.

Raw, unfiltered killing intent.

Alice looked down at her arm.

Goosebumps.

'I suppose I should say it's as expected. But this level of killing intent... Isn't it more than mine?' Alice thought inwardly.

Alyss was also on guard.

Just in that split second of exposure, they felt as though they were submerged into a bath of blades.

A killing intent so vile and dangerous that it felt like it'll chase them down to the ends of the earth to secure the kill.

'I can see why he said few have the gall to say they'll escape. If this is just his killing intent...' Alyss furrowed her brows.

"We should be relatively safe now. I don't have coordinates for where the beast is so the rest is up to you." Theron glanced back with a smile.

He could see that his little performance has rattled Alice somewhat.

"I suppose I should do a good job then." Alice smiled, wrapping her right hand in her threads.

Without caring about the Abyss Waters, she plunged her hand into the sea, shocking Theron.

Even if she wrapped her hand in thread, this was still a dangerous action that could mutate her!

But strangely, she was unharmed.

He could sense her threads spreading like roots through the sea, energy rippling out and tracing the silhouette of beasts.

In a sense, it was similar to echolocation. Alice would send out pulses of energy that bounced back whenever they collided with something.

As she traced the ocean, Alice picked up on a peculiar strand of energy.

Far stronger than the others yet sneakily hidden and perfectly camouflaged.

'The Lord doesn't want to be found.' Alice smiled.

Had it not been for Cayla's power, she wouldn't have been able to find a single trace.

Following the energy towards the source, Alice found their target.

Chapter 836: Nehzura

Using her energy, Alice managed to trace the outline of their target.

From the depths of the Abyssal Waters, countless tendrils curled around something large. Each tendril thicker than even the biggest towers, some were smaller than carriages. But they were numerous in number.

They swayed with the waves, concealing the beast beneath the writhing mass.

Peering through the gaps, Alice saw the main body.

A beast that's part leviathan part abyssal terror. A giant head that dwarfed the size of cities, a jagged maw that could swallow an island whole. Iridescent eyes that glowed in the dark dotted its head while a layer of pulsing lights rippled across its skin.

These lights weren't there for fashion though, they camouflaged the beast from detection, allowing it to blend in with the waves.

[Oh sh*t he's still alive...] Cayla muttered in disbelief upon seeing the beast.

'You know who he is?'

[Erm... yeah. He's... Hmm] Cayla scratched her hair.

[He's old enough to be a sealed Lord I suppose. He managed to ascend to Lordship right after the Lords were sealed, so he avoided the fate of being sealed.

[Nehzura – Abyss Lord of the Forgotten World. If there is a manifestation for gluttony, aside from your mead drinking habits, he would be the picture perfect definition. Anything he eats, he transports into the 'forgotten world' inside his stomach. I thought he would've died long ago but he's still alive and kicking.] Cayla frowned.

Nehzura wasn't a particularly aggressive Lord though a dangerous one regardless. So long as he's satiated, he is well behaved. The issue arises once he gets hungry...

There had been several islands in the past that were erased thanks to Nehzura's hunger.

Funnily enough, Kaden had actually come across an Artifact that was retrieved from Nehzura.

A staff that could absorb energy and enhance the user. Though... it was more so a cursed equipment than anything.

Despite the power it gave the user, a feeling of hunger would always gnaw at the edges of their mind. At first, it can be satiated with normal food.

But the more they use the spear, the hungrier they got. They would find themselves consuming more and more food until hunger drove them mad.

They would stop caring about what they would eat so long as the hunger disappears.

Human flesh included.

Throwing the weapon away didn't stop the curse either, it only made it stronger.

As for the fate of those that wielded the spear made from one of Nehzura's spikes... it would be death in battle.

Or...

The consumption of their own body by the spear. Once they were 'consumed', a second spear would stand in their place.

This was the cursed equipment known as Nehzura's Desire.

A powerful weapon with a powerful curse that far outweighs the benefits.

[When Kaden found the spear, he used his grimoire to track down the rest. Can you guess how many of them were spread throughout the realms?] Cayla asked as Alice folded her arms.

Surely it couldn't be THAT many right?

'Maybe three hundred?'

[Twelve thousand two hundred and eighty eight. That's how many spears Kaden sensed spread through the Surface, Abyss and Void. If he had waited longer, the number would only keep growing exponentially so he dealt with them all within two months.] Cayla sighed.

'I'm guessing it's not a beast we should keep around then?' Alice narrowed her eyes.

[Nope. It's practically a walking calamity after all. But there is one thing that's confusing me.]

'Oh?'

[With how long it's survived for, I'm sure Nehzura understands the dangers of coming this close to human society. Make too much of a commotion and Lords will come to deal with him. Yet he's decided to rest in the depths. Camouflage or not, this is too strange.]

'Then do you think perhaps he ran over here?' Alice suggested.

If a long living Lord like Nehzura found his way next to a human settlement then perhaps it's because danger was chasing after him.

[It's not impossible.]

'Hmm... well thinking about it won't solve anything for now.' Alice shook her head.

###

Theron stared at the girl in front of him.

The myriad of expressions flashing across her face. Surprise, concern, interest, back to surprise again.

Not only that, there's also the case of her dunking her arm into the water and remaining unphased.

"Well I found the beast." Alice smiled, removing her arm from the water and shaking off the excess.

"But... It might be a little troublesome." She sighed.

"How so?"

"Size and type of beast. I'm not sure if you know who it is, but the beast resting below is Nehzura, the Abyss Lord of the Forgotten World." Alice explained but Theron seemed confused.

In the end, Alice decided it was better for him to 'see' the danger than to hear it.

"Give me your hand." Alice gestured.

Placing his hand on top of her hand, he watched as crimson threads wrapped around his fingers while she sent the other side down into the depths.

Before he could even say anything, the image of the beast appeared in his mind.

She was synchronizing her senses with his! Transferring the image directly into his consciousness.

With this, he saw the full scale of the beast and how large it is.

It's as she said. Fighting it here, a beast of that size, was troublesome. Any movement it made could potentially cause a tsunami.

If they wanted to fight, it'll have to be far out into the sea.

But how would they even transport the beast?

“You’re still intent on killing it after seeing the size?” Alice raised an eyebrow.

“Leaving it be is not an option. I’m trying to think if there’s someone who can transport the beast. So long as we lead it away from here or forcefully move it elsewhere, I can kill it without an issue.” Theron scratched his hair.

Seeing this, Alice couldn’t help but chuckle.

Indeed, he was a little different from the usual Lords. Others would’ve just opted to fight the beast and care about things later. But him? He was thinking about the impact of his fights.

“Just a little further from here right? I can bring the beast to the surface if you wish. But I’m not sure whether or not you can handle it...” Alice smiled.

“I can kill the beast without issue. That I’m confident about.”

“No no, I don’t mean that. I mean the ‘price’. If you don’t mind, may I have a vial of your blood?” Alice pulled out a small vial.

She felt a little guilty using this chance to sample his blood and take his power. But giving up the abilities of a Lord, a reasonable one at that was a huge waste.

If anything, this was simply a transaction.

[Poor guy being scammed by Alice. All his hard work condensed into a bottle.] Cayla shook her head.

‘Shuddap. I would hit myself if I didn’t take this chance to drink a bit.’ Alice grumbled.

“You need my... blood?” Theron raised an eyebrow.

Even if he is a Lord, he wasn’t a Abyss Beast. Drinking his blood shouldn’t do much. Especially since he didn’t drink a lot of Abyss Blood when he was younger.

But she seemed serious and fully intent on this ‘price’.

“What are you going to do with it?” He asked, clearly on guard.

“I’m going to drink it. It’ll help me with transporting the beast.” Alice smiled.

While it wasn’t the full truth, it was still the truth. Drinking his blood would allow her to add some additional Sigils and swap them out for Tiamat’s power.

That way, she could gather the energy needed for a portal large enough to throw the beast out from the depths.

Furrowing his brows, Theron eventually nodded his head.

He rolled up his sleeve before making a small cut. Draining his blood into the vial, he handed it over to her before tensing his arm and stopping the bleeding.

After a split second, the wound was already healed.

“Damn...” Alice muttered before turning around and drinking the blood.

She could feel the influx of power surging through her body as she was forcefully boosted up to nine Sigils.

Giving her body a light stretch, Alice smiled.

“I’ll pull the beast up and teleport us over. Try to make the fight quick. If it thrashes around too much, it’ll still affect the surrounding ports.”

“Naturally.”

Receiving confirmation from the man, Alice snapped her finger and created a platform of threads upon the water surface.

Taking a deep breath, she activated Tiamat’s Sigil!

*RUMBLE!!!

A storm of energy immediately burst out around Alice as draconic wings unfurled. Theron widened his eyes in surprise, not expecting such energy to explode from Alice’s body.

Clasping her hands together, void energy began to gather as the seas began to tremble.

Nehzura sensed Tiamat’s power!

‘Don’t get too excited now. I can’t have you going on a rampage here.’ Alice narrowed her eyes.

Tethers shot out from the wings, attaching themselves to the realm as the world started to lose its colour.

In this monochrome world, Alice slammed her hand down!

A pulse of energy.

Void energy.

Rippling across the depths as the beast began to uncoil its tendrils. But with its location already marked, it couldn't escape.

'Gotcha~'

Pulling her arms apart, Alice forcefully ripped open a portal as the beast began to 'sink'!

In the centre of the ocean, storm clouds spiralled as a singularity formed above the sea.

*BANG!!!

Bursting apart, Nehzura was dragged from the depths and spat out to the surface!

Not far away, another set of portals opened and Theron stepped through with Alice.

There were hundreds of questions flying through his mind but dealing with Nehzura was more important.

Since Alice had shown her power, Theron couldn't be stingy.

He'll fell this beast and demonstrate the power of the Slayer!

Chapter 837: Slayer

"Young lady, do you know the Lord of Death?" Theron asked as he stepped towards the beast. Beneath him, energy began to converge lifting him above the Abyssal Waters.

"I've heard of him." Alice nodded.

Of course, she wasn't going to expose the fact that she knew him very well.

"The Abyss Lord of Death presides over the dominion of death. What he kills stays dead. The avatar of death that descends upon his command. All regeneration null as Death is the end of all things." Theron spoke.

"With these things in mind, I suppose my power is simply a tool to bring my enemies towards death." He chuckled.

Reaching out with his hand, he pulled out a single blade.

"!!!" Alice felt a chill.

It was a simple weapon with no guard crafted from a strange silver and black material. A constant swirl trapped within the metal. And from where the guard should have been, black and white energy coiled and crackled.

"This was an artifact bestowed to me when I first ascended to Lordship. You see, my title is a little unique compared to the others. I am not known as an Abyss Lord despite having nine Sigils."

Theron wasn't one to talk about himself, especially to people he had just met.

But considering Alice's abilities, this was a show of sincerity. If he wanted to get something, he must first introduce and make an offer. He couldn't simply expect others to just bow down to him.

So for Alice, he will tell her a little about himself. To pitch the idea of working under him.

"Now, what do you think it means to kill something? For good that is." Theron glanced back, not caring about Nehzura who was clearly livid at the two invaders who dragged him out from the depths.

Rearing its head above the waves, countless tendrils shot out in an attempt to grab Theron.

"To kill something for good? Hmm, wouldn't it just be to cut off their regeneration and end their life?" Alice tilted her head in confusion.

"Yes, you are right. It is both as simple as that yet also much much more." Theron smiled.

With a single wave of his sword, the entire area in front of him, filled with tendrils, disappeared.

"???" Alice widened her eyes.

What just happened?

"The pursuit of those focusing on life is immortality or the act of reversing death. To achieve the realm beyond simple healing. And on the opposite spectrum, those who pursue the act of killing desires the realm beyond the horizon...

"Oblivion. All paths lead to either of these extremes. Some can tap into it more than others. But even if you are a God, even if you are an apostle, unless you truly understand this realm and harmonize with it, you cannot access it." Theron explained.

"The current Lord of Death lacks this power, a missing catalyst. But... I know a woman who is able to tap into this realm at will. An old drinking buddy of mine who taught me the essence of killing." He closed his eyes, reminiscing on the old times before sighing.

"If the pinnacle of life is immortality, then she is the pinnacle of death. A woman who can terminate everything, even concepts and history. If only she weren't wounded..."

Shaking his head, he turned to Alice.

"My title is a unique one. Slayer. I am the one who leads my foes towards Oblivion."

To be the Slayer is to be a killer.

To terminate, extinguish and bring finality.

But what lies beyond slaughter? How was one become the perfect killer?

When all things that can die have perished and only the immortal monsters remain.

When the blade fails to reach their neck, when the heart continues to beat.

What can the Slayer do?

He can tap into the realm of Oblivion.

A world where there is nothing left to end for all things have come to their finality.

The absolute silence that even death itself must kneel.

The ultimate authority of severance is one that bisects the connection to life. Thus she is the wielder of Oblivion.

As for the Slayer...

He is the boundary between existence and erasure. The gatekeeper who pushes his enemies towards finality.

Tightening his grip around his sword, he dove towards Nehzura.

The beast of gluttony, Abyss Lord of the Forgotten World.

He who has persisted for generations, voraciously devouring everything he wished.

Everything he leaves behind is a curse thus Theron will end this cleanly.

A tendril shot up from below. Theron twisted his body, dodging it before slamming his palm against the flesh.

*BANG!!!

An entire section of Nehzura's tendril turned to ash as Nehzura opened his maw in an attempt to swallow Theron into his personal realm.

Yet despite this action, Theron noticed that Nehzura was trying to flee.

"Such gluttony, such cowardice. I will do this world a favour by erasing you."

Jumping back, Theron raised the blade in front of him.

*RUMBLE!!!

Energy converged as a ritual circle spun to life beneath his feet.

Above and below Nehzura, larger variants of the ritual circle appeared as black and white energy formed a cage around the beast.

The tendrils that tried to break out were erased from just touching it!

Theron raised his blade above his head.

"Oblivion."

With a single swing, all sound was erased.

For a split instant, a fraction of a second, a pillar of black and white erupted, splitting the world in half.

Once the pillar disappeared, all that remained was an empty cavity in the ocean with the Abyssal Waters rushing to fill the gap.

Theron dismissed the sword and massaged his neck.

Every use of this skill was exhausting as always, no matter how much he trained. It was a wonder how Allura could even pull this off consistently without much issue. Though... Considering her condition over the years, Theron wasn't sure if that was the case anymore.

Meanwhile, Alice had cold sweat fill her back.

The power of Oblivion...

She didn't need Cayla's data to know that she probably won't survive something like that!

In the split second she felt the power surge, the instinct to run didn't even trigger.

It had no time to trigger.

'I think we played with fire long enough. Getting his favour is good but... Depending on what happens becoming an enemy would be disastrous.' Alyss frowned.

'Yep I agree. I am not ready to f*ck with whatever power Oblivion is right now!' Alice nodded her head furiously.

Considering the fact that he knows Gin and even spoke of an old drinking buddy who taught him this power, Alice could guess that it was most probably Allura that he was speaking about.

Even if they knew each other, that didn't mean they were automatically allies. With someone as dangerous as Theron, Alice had to be careful.

No, she NEEDED to be careful.

"So what was that before that you said? How you seemed confident at surviving?" Theron smiled.

Even though Alice wasn't saying it, he could tell that the demonstration shocked her.

It's to be expected after all.

What she just saw was the absolute pinnacle of power. The realm of Oblivion.

A realm that he can only access every now and then unless he wished to be swallowed whole by the power he wielded.

"They do say that assuming things are bad after all. Simply another case of that being proven." Alice shrugged.

"Have you had a change of mind then? I don't treat my employees badly." He asked as Alice opened a portal back.

"Will you force me if I say no?" Alice smiled bitterly.

If Theron wanted to force things, then she'll have to fight for her life.

"I will not."

"What a shame." Theron sighed.

He couldn't force talented people to work under him. Doing so would be inviting danger to those around him.

Instead, the best he could do was build a good relationship with them.

"Now that the beast has been dealt with, the surrounding sea should go back to normal. Though... It'll certainly make it harder for us to track down the healer." Theron was a little apologetic since this'll mean more work for Alice to do.

"I'll forgive you since you did it for a good reason. I'd rather find the healer slowly than to have injuries and incidents pile up." Alice dismissed with a wave of her hand.

Of course, there was the option of having her treat the injured.

But doing so was risky in its own right.

Especially since they were pretty much in Zenia family territory.

Attracting too much attention onto herself would cause the family to send investigators over before she can get a grasp on the situation in Extalia.

And that was a situation Alice wanted to avoid.

It's a one vs many situation and information was her best weapon.

[Do you still want to make him owe you one?] Cayla asked as one of Alice's reasons for helping him was to earn a favour.

But with such a dangerous Lord, perhaps it's better to keep the distance until she was confident enough to save her own life.

'Hmm... I'm on the fence right now. On one side, he seems like a pretty stand up guy. But on the other, the power of Oblivion is worrisome. If we do offend him, escaping won't be easy.' Alice furrowed her brows.

There was also the case of him knowing Gin and possibly Allura.

Alice decided to test the waters.

"When you spoke about your old drinking buddy, were you perhaps talking about Allura? And the Lord of Death being Gin." Alice asked as Theron paused in surprise.

"You know of them?" He didn't think Alice would be acquainted.

"I do. And I owe them quite a bit." Alice nodded with a smile.

"So here's what I'm thinking. If you don't mind, could you show me to your wife? I might be able to figure something out if I have a look at her condition." She offered.

Thinking about it for a moment, Theron eventually nodded his head.

"Alright, follow me."

Chapter 838: Complicated Circumstances

"So can you tell me a little more about her condition?" Alice asked, following behind Theron with a nonchalant smile.

Scratching his chin, Theron contemplated for a moment.

"As far as I know, she was poisoned by Abyss Waters. Or at least something close to that level of potency."

"As far as you know?" Alice raised an eyebrow.

"I was unfortunately not around when she got injured. And when she did... well. I was too far away to stop it. I've taken her to a few doctors in hopes of getting her condition solved yet none of them gave me a positive answer.

"All they said was what she was afflicted with rather than a solution." Theron shook his head with a sigh.

'Was it done by someone with a grudge against you? Targeting your loved one when you're away." Alice asked curiously.

Who would even think about harming the family of a nine Sigil Lord?

Not to mention the fact that he can use the power of Oblivion.

Doing so would just be suicide.

"I believe it was a personal vendetta." Theron scratched his hair.

There was a troubled expression on his face. Almost as if he didn't know what he should do.

"Ohou~ Seems like your personal life is rather complicated." Alice laughed, patting him on the back.

"Even if I'm a Lord, I'm still human."

"So what are you struggling with? Perhaps I can give you some counselling." Alice suggested.

[Pft, as if you can give any worthwhile counselling when you haven't even kissed.] Cayla smirked.

'Shuddap!'

Theron scratched his chin.

"My wife has always been rough around the edges. And... She's not exactly a good person."

Alice raised her eyebrow.

"If that's the case, then why are you doing so much for her? As a Lord, I'm pretty sure you can find anyone you want."

It may not be the right approach but as the pinnacle of humanity, even if he was a little forceful who could say no?

But in response, Theron flicked Alice on the forehead.

"Hey! Ow!"

"It's complicated. But if I abuse my position as a Lord, do you think Allura and Gin would sit by after teaching me so much?" Theron sighed heavily.

Though... Considering what Gin said last time they met...

"I owe my wife too much. Even if she's done something bad, I'll make up for it."

Despite being a Lord, the chain around Theron's neck was his wife.

When Gin delivered the message of Bella being injured, he was livid. He wanted to get Gin to tell him who did it but Gin refused to budge.

His words from that day were still clear in his mind.

"Theron, I know your wife is important but brace yourself. We're not going to help."

That day, he felt a sense of betrayal. From the two people he looked up to the most and the fact that they turned their back towards him.

But after all this time, he understood their perspective. Yet despite all of that, he couldn't simply turn away from her.

Not when he owes his life to her.

"That's... a little idealistic, don't you think?" Alice raised an eyebrow.

Theron paused.

"Everything she's done, you'll make up for it? If she takes a life, how will you bring it back? Or if she ruins something so precious there is no replacement, can you simply just shrug it off by giving the victim something else?"

"Doing more good for the world doesn't justify the acts she's committed. Sometimes there is no redemption and you can only spend your life trying your best. But you trying your best doesn't give her the ticket to do bad things." Alice shook her head.

"Since you're a good person, I'm telling this to you straight knowing you won't just blast me to pieces. What you're doing is just selfish gratification and avoiding the responsibilities."

". . ." Theron was silent.

His eyes slowly turned to Alice who began to sweat.

"You're not going to suddenly decide to kill me now right?"

"Didn't you say you were telling this to me straight because you know I won't blast you to pieces? What happened to that confidence?" Theron chuckled.

"It still doesn't change the fact that you're a Lord!"

"Haha, seems like this is your true personality after all. The first meeting was just an act wasn't it?" Theron smiled.

"Urg... you knew?" Alice grumbled.

"Of course I did. How many people do you think I've met up till now? I can tell when someone's piecing together something. Of course, the hardest disguise to see through is one where they mix a bit of themselves into it. But when they become relaxed, the truth always comes out."

Alice scratched her hair.

To be found out at the very start... She had dropped her guard since her off handed disguises had always worked rather well.

"Bah, forget it. I'll make a better disguise next time. So what are you planning with your wife then? Are you going to get her healed then let her do whatever she wants again?" Alice asked.

That was her biggest issue.

From the sounds of it, Theron wasn't a bad guy. But his wife on the other hand... If he allows her to roam free, even if he was a good guy, Alice couldn't accept healing someone like that.

Theron was silent once more.

Indeed...

Even if he finds the healer for his wife, what then? He can't simply allow her to continue with her antics.

But...

"I'll think about that when she's finally healed I guess."

"For a Lord, you are rather indecisive wouldn't you agree?" Alice sighed helplessly.

"Well... it's complicated."

Soon, they arrived at a mansion provided by the City Lord. Guards could be seen around the estate patrolling the area and making sure it was safe.

They weren't really there for Theron's safety but rather his wife's.

*SHATTER!!!

A vase was thrown out of the window.

"Oh dear..." Theron muttered, seemingly unphased.

"Oh dear???" Alice widened her eyes.

"She's not in a good mood today." He sighed.

Not long after the vase, a table was tossed out followed by a mattress.

Then... the bed frame.

Alice turned to Theron who continued to walk without care.

'He's used to it!?!?'

[I mean if you think about it, just throwing crap out the window is far more acceptable than the stuff you do.]

'I mean... yeah but still!'

Entering the mansion, Alice could hear furious screams coming from upstairs while Theron was talking to one of his attendants.

He was mostly asking about how she was doing.

According to the attendant, the madam's mood has been especially bad after coming to this city.

"She probably thinks it's a waste coming this far for just a rumour with no proof." Theron scratched his chin.

Ever since the incident, she hated going out, especially when there's a risk of people seeing her face.

So coming this far, increasing the risk of exposure for a rumour, was probably wasted effort in her eyes.

Regardless, Theron wasn't going to stop. Guiding Alice to the second floor, Theron had the attendants prepare a spare room if Alice wanted to stay a little longer.

"When we go in, try not to react too much to her wounds. She's a little self conscious about it." Theron smiled helplessly.

While he didn't know why Alice wanted to see his wife, a part of him believed that she had a method to cure her. Or at least alleviate the effects.

The people Allura and Gin know aren't exactly normal to begin with. Having extra talents that go beyond common sense was rather standard.

"Don't worry, I've seen plenty of f*cked up sh*t in my life. A small mutation isn't going to put me off."

"Seen?" Theron raised his eyebrow at Alice.

"So you're in disguise?" He asked, causing Alice to cough.

"And before you say it's a figure of speech, it didn't sound like one. It's not the same kind of joke when blind people say 'I see'."

"Safety okay! It's just for safety since I can't exactly have more people see what I look like." Alice rolled her eyes.

"So you're probably wanted by quite a few people if you're taking a disguise. Either that or you were trying to take advantage of me but didn't want to expose yourself."

Alice grumbled.

He was spot on with both guesses.

"Don't worry, if you can help my wife, I'll do my best to fulfil any wish you have."

"You probably shouldn't hand favours out like that you know? That's how you get taken advantage of in the first place." Alice pointed at the door.

Behind it, they could hear more things being thrown around.

"I'm aware. I'm only saying so because you're acquainted with Allura and Gin. Let's wait a little longer, she rests for a moment before throwing one last thing." Theron suggested.

And as predicted, a moment of silence stretched on before the wardrobe was thrown against the ground.

Raising his hand, Theron gave the door a slight knock.

"Bella, I'm coming in." He spoke, pushing the door open.

Following behind Theron, Alice saw the mess around the room and her smile twitched.

If she hadn't known any better, she would've thought a beast ran through this room.

But as she stepped out from behind Theron, her entire body froze up.

Ice ran through her veins. Her pupils constricting in shock and anger.

Through the dishevelled hair, through the bandages, Alice recognised that face.

"Pft! HAHAAHAHAHA!!!" Alice leaned back, howling in laughter from the pits of her stomach, confusing Theron.

A surge of killing intent erupted from Alice's body as she curved her lips up into a maniacal grin.

She had injected Bella with her blood as a last ditch effort, thinking she would die.

A shame but it was the best she could do.

Yet now fate has served her up in front of her! Even if Theron was here, so what?!

In front of her was the enemy who took away the life of her first friend.

Snapping her finger, Alice dismissed her disguise. Her bloodshot eyes glared at Bella.

"Yo b*tch! Remember me?! Did my blood feel f*cking good!?" Alice roared in laughter.

Bella, turning around, widened her eyes.

Her pupils trembled as she saw the familiar hair and face.

Nightmares flashing through her mind.

"You..." Theron put the pieces together.

Alice was the one who poisoned Bella!

Chapter 839: Alice Vs Theron

Without hesitation, Alice clenched her fist as blood mist erupted in the area, nullifying any abyssal abilities that Theron might try to use!

Void Step!

Unleashing Void Fang, Alice appeared behind Bella and slashed down!

*CLANG!!!

Theron reacted in time, using pure physical power to block her strike.

"F*ck off!!! Do you even know what she did to me!? To my friend!?" Alice shouted, twisted her body and unleashed a sequence of kicks.

Theron blocked while grabbing Bella by the back of her neck, tossing her towards the guards who rushed towards the area.

"You're not going anywhere!" Alice shouted, snapping her fingers and creating a garden of briar thorns that lunged after Bella.

"Calm down! Let's talk about this!" Theron shouted.

He didn't know why he couldn't use his abilities right now but he had to keep Bella safe!

"Calm!? CALM!? Let's see you be calm when I RIP OUT HER F*CKING SPINE!" Alice roared, swapping places with Alyss.

Destruction Point!

Theron quickly turned his head to the side, avoiding a devastating strike at the last second but Alyss didn't stop.

As the master of hand to hand combat, she transformed Void Fang into a set of gauntlets and broke Theron's guard.

Gritting his teeth, Theron was pushed back.

With no other choice, he prepared to break a blood vial but Alyss was faster!

She lunged into his range, kicking the vial from his hand.

'She's fast!' Theron creased his brows.

Just as he was about to grab her, he felt his body controls invert, causing him to stumble!

*BANG!!!

Before he could react properly, Alyss kneed him in the face following up with a spin kick to slam him into the walls.

"My twin's first f*cking friend, brutally mutated and forced into a battle. And you want her to stay calm? F*ck you." Alyss gritted her teeth, veins bulging on her neck.

Sliding forward, she placed her finger against his stomach before forming a first, slamming a wall of energy into his organs.

"!!!"

Grabbing her wrist, Theron threw Alyss away while blood seeped from his lips.

"Did you think that would be enough?" Alice appeared next to him.

Her eyes cold with blood lust.

In front of her, a single spark was formed.

Theron froze. He recognised this attack.

Nova Core, one of Allura's signature attacks.

'No, that's not right. This one is a bit different, modified.'

Regardless, he couldn't allow himself to get hit by that while his abilities were still returning!

Theron aimed to poke Alice's eyes in order to throw off her aim.

But unfortunately for him...

Physical Resonance!

A portion of Alice's body transformed into blood!

Void Flux!

*BANG!!!

Theron was thrown back as Alice reconstructed her body.

Even though she had disabled Abyssal Abilities temporarily, she understood that it wasn't enough to kill Theron.

No, a nine Sigil Lord wouldn't fall this easily. Not to mention the fact that he was still taking it easy on her.

Maybe it's because of her relationship with Allura but regardless, Bella was dying today!

Void Step!

Jumping into the air, Alice activated Vision and scanned the entire estate.

"Found you." Alice's eyes snapped towards a moving figure within the mansion.

It's been a long time but there were still traces of her blood inside Bella.

He must've used quite a lot of expensive medicine and treatment to keep it contained, preventing the mutation from worsening.

But since there was still a little left in her body, tracking her down was easy!

And if she wanted to...

Alice curved her lips up into a sadistic grin.

Snapping her finger, she forcefully established a tether between her and the blood within Bella.

She can't force it to mutate but she can cause Bella a lot of pain!

Creating a portal, Alice stepped through and saw Bella writhing on the ground, clutching her throat in pain.

Tears gathered in the corner of her eyes as she glared at Alice.

"Did you think your husband could save you? Your life is mine." Alice spoke slowly.

The guards around Bella tried to attack Alice but what could they possibly hope to do?

A lesser version of Void Axis.

The prototype she had shown Feris long ago.

Alice had made it into an array and all she needed to do was inject energy. And before the guards could even react, a horizontal arc of energy decapitated all of them.

Their bodies crumpled next to Bella as she shrieked in horror.

She struggled to form words but Alice could tell Bella was telling her to stay away.

Despite the pain, she tried her best to crawl away.

"If you had behaved yourself, this wouldn't have happened, you know? Karma works in wondrous ways." Alice smiled.

Making a small cut on her finger, she created a thin needle.

The most potent blood she could create that wouldn't kill her immediately.

She controlled the dosage as well so that she wouldn't transform and lose her mind.

No, Alice wanted her to suffer.

Suffer like Lilia did.

When she could barely speak, trapped in that monstrous body. Forced to move against her will for Bella's enjoyment.

Her tears that fell during the final moments when Alice was forced to take her life.

Gritting her teeth, Alice felt her throat tighten.

***BANG!!!**

Just before she could stab Bella with the needle, Theron smashed through the wall and threw Alice into the air.

"Dammit!" Theron gritted his teeth upon seeing the guards dead.

All of his abilities are focused solely on killing.

So even if his powers are back, it'll be difficult to restrain Alice with brute strength alone. Especially since it seems like she's been personally trained by Allura.

Suspending herself in the air, Alice brushed her hair back. Her emotions had calmed down a little but there was still this seething rage inside her chest.

To kill Bella, she would need to deal with Theron.

She didn't know his full story but it's clear that he owes her a great deal.

"Are you still insistent on keeping your wife safe? You're a good man. So why must you fall to such a level?" Alice asked, violet flames crackling around Void Fang.

"Because without her, I wouldn't be here. What I owe is the debt of life." Theron smiled bitterly.

"And so that justifies you saving her despite all the people she's killed?" Alice clicked her tongue.

Theron couldn't respond.

Indeed, if he had been more focused on her, he might've been able to stop these things from happening.

That was a mistake on his part.

But even so, he couldn't allow her to kill Bella.

"When you said you wanted to see her condition, was it because you could deal with it? If it's your blood that did this to her, can you remove it?" Theron asked as Alice tightened her grip on her blade.

"I don't want to kill you. Especially if Allura and Gin are acquainted with you. But if you force my hand, I won't hesitate." Alice glared.

Theron felt a slight chill down his spine.

This killing intent... It's hard to think that such blood thirst could come from a delicate looking girl like Alice.

Enough to rival the killing intent of his own, proving how big of an issue Bella had caused.

"I don't want to kill you either. I know that this is Bella's fault. But even so, we can come to a compromise."

"Compromise?! COMPROMISE?! How do you make up for the death of my friend huh?! Are you going to turn back time? Bring her back?! Undo what she did to her?!" Alice glared.

Resonance!

Spider lilies formed as a singularity spun to life in her eye!

Theron felt the threat of death and immediately summoned a sword.

Slashing the area around him, he destroyed the invisible sparks that Alice had prepared!

"I can't bring back your friend but I can stop her from doing more in the future." Theron jumped away as a singularity erupted where he stood.

Behind him, Alice appeared using Void Step.

Void Flux – Cleave!

Hastily parrying the arc of energy, Theron was about to counter when he held himself back.

His small hesitation couldn't escape Alice's notice.

"Holding back? Now? Oh you must feel great being a nine Sigil Lord right? Let's see if you can keep holding back after this."

Vision!

Injecting energy into the array, Alice lunged forward, weaving between spells and physical attacks from Alyss.

Theron was forced on the defensive with wounds starting to stack up.

But despite all of that, he still didn't fight back.

Snapping her finger, Alice created a network of portals and unleashed a series of Void Flux – Cleaves after forcing Theron back.

Parrying the dangerous ones while ignoring those that would only leave a small mark, Theron could only hope for a prolonged battle.

When Alice finally calms down, they can have a conversation.

"You really want to force my hand. Fine... Since you're so insistent on protecting her I'll kill you both at the same time. Let's see if you can still block it."

Slamming her hand down, an array erupted beneath Alice. Energy converged towards her location as she aimed her hand towards Bella.

Her artifacts, her resonance, the entire Abyss injecting energy into Alice's body.

All for a single attack that can bisect the space they reside.

Theron felt danger.

Not from a single direction but from the world itself.

He couldn't hesitate anymore. If he did...

Gritting his teeth, Theron summoned his unique artifact bestowed by the Abyss.

Standing in front of Bella, he swung his blade towards Alice.

Within the confines of the estate, two attacks were fired off at the same time.

Chapter 840: Good Person

". . ." Alice clenched her fist.

Her fingers tightened around the blade in her hand.

That last attack...

As the two collided, she could clearly sense that the power of Oblivion was not targeted towards her.

No, it was simply focused on offsetting the damage she would do with Void Axis.

He didn't have the intent to harm her.

Even if it came at the cost of himself.

She stared at the man with his back against the ground.

A giant diagonal slash across his chest, blood pouring from his wounds and staining the floor.

His eyes were on the verge of losing their light as his chest slowly heaved up and down.

As a nine Sigil Lord, killing her should've been easy.

But Theron held back till the end.

"Is your life really worth hers? Is the life of someone who does good for this world worth the wench that takes the life of others?!?!" Alice shouted, demanding an answer.

It was illogical to her in every way.

She couldn't accept it.

She's seen what kind of person Theron is. What he wants to do for the people even if it's at his own expense.

Which is why she couldn't understand why he gave so much for Bella.

Why would he accept such a vile woman who did nothing but harm those around her.

Two rights don't justify a wrong. No matter how much he tries to do, unless he stops Bella from doing more, the number of victims will only grow.

His good deeds don't erase the lives that have been lost.

Theron opened his mouth with a bitter smile.

"Because... I owe her too much. This... Life of mine... Would not come to be had it not been for her. My achievements... My everything... At the source, at the foundation, it begins with her."

He hated it but he couldn't deny her existence. Had it not been for her, this world would've never seen the current Slayer. Theron Merias would not exist.

It is because of this sole reason that he will continue to protect her, cover for her.

Yet... Despite saying this, he has turned a blind eye to her actions. Everything she had done, he thought doing more good would cover for it.

But when faced with a demon of her own making, the vengeful girl who's come to avenge the life of her friend, no amount of good would be able to appease that anger.

The burning fire roaring in her heart.

"This life of mine... I will give back to her. Take it... But should you do... Leave her be."

Alice gritted her teeth. Anger flooding her veins.

"You... Stupid! Stupid! Why would I want your life?! Why!? She's the one who killed Lilia!" Alice grabbed him by the collar.

Dismissing her sword, she balled her hand into a fist and punched him across the face.

"Why do you keep covering for her! You're a Lord dammit!" Alice punched again.

Seeing Theron give her no reaction, not intending to explain himself, Alice glared towards Bella.

Flicking her finger, blood grabbed her by the ankles and tossed her over.

Lifting Bella up by the throat, Alice glared back at Theron.

"What's stopping me from killing you both?! What's stopping me from killing her and ignoring your plea? What's stopping me from ignoring everything you just said that ending this right now!? So why are you still offering your life in place of her's?!"

"Because you're a good person. Even now... You're still talking rather than acting." Theron smiled.

". . ."

Gritting her teeth, Alice tightened her grip around Bella's throat.

Theron simply stared at her without another word.

Even if he wanted to stop her, he lacked the strength to do so right now.

There was something strange about Alice's attack.

One that penetrated deep into the core of his being. Hindering the gathering of Abyssal energy while also burning away his regeneration.

The biggest issue one has when facing her is to be hit. Once she lands a single attack, a countdown to defeat begins.

Theron's body was desperately trying to piece together the wounded flesh but Alice's flames continued to burn.

Alice continued to tighten her hand around Bella's neck as she struggled to break free from her grasp. Her eyes rolling back as tears formed on the edges.

Then Alice paused.

"You said I am a good person. But... what proof do you have?" Alice glanced down.

"We have only just met. You don't know me. You don't know what I value... You don't know my morals. You don't know how far I would go to drench this world in the blood of my enemies." Alice bit her lip.

Glancing up at the sky, she took a deep breath and sighed. As though a weight had been lifted off her shoulders.

For a moment, Theron felt hope. But that hope was quickly extinguished as he saw the cold merciless light in her eyes. She brought Bella's head to her eye level and smiled.

Bella widened her eyes... Alice wasn't going to let her go.

"NO-!"

Before Theron could even finish his shout, Alice dug her finger deep into Bella's eye sockets, hooking her finger against the skull and twisted Bella's head from her body.

The spine followed suit as organs hooked against the vertebrae.

Blood and innards spilled out, drenching Theron's body as his mouth was filled by blood.

He watched as Alice showered herself in Bella's blood, a sad yet relieved smile on her face.

"Ah~ You would've made a great ally. You said that I was a good person because I was talking rather than acting. That was simply because losing you as an ally would've been a waste." Alice sighed regretfully, tossing Bella's head into the air.

From her blood, lilies began to bloom as Alice closed her eyes.

Her revenge for Lilia was finally over.

While it wouldn't bring her back... Her killer would no longer roam free in this world.

No more victims.

No more ifs or buts.

"But since you wanted to protect her till the end, I have no use for you." Alice shook her head.

Standing up, she stomped her foot and activated her sixth Sigil.

While Bella may be dead, her soul would still remain. But Alice refused to let such a thing happen. Alice didn't care about Bella's redemption, she didn't care about Theron's sob story.

Right now, right here, what she wanted was blood!

"Gotcha." Alice grinned.

Pinching the air in front of her, she pulled back and ripped out a single strand of luminescent white.

*BANG!!!

Before the soul could even form into an orb, violet flames violently erupted around her hand, burning the strand until there was nothing left.

Bella will never get a second chance. Not on Alice's watch.

Theron gritted his teeth.

He forced himself to stand up as he glared at Alice.

"Why... WHY?! Aren't you Allura's disciple?!" Theron shouted as Alice threw her head back and let out a laugh.

"Calm down~ Let's talk about this shall we?" Alice twisted her lips into a smile.

"Remember my words? Let's see you be calm when I rip out her spine. Ohya? Oh my~ Seems like there's a lot of pent up rage right now? Hard isn't it? Seeing the killer of someone you treasure in front of you." Alice taunted.

"You want to kill me don't you? Rip me to shreds, tear me limb from limb." She grinned before losing her smile.

"Go f*ck yourself. Don't use your rules with me. I'm not a good person. I'm selfish and vengeful. This life of mine, I set out to do two things. First is freedom, second is revenge." Alice glared at Theron with a mix of disgust and anger.

"This life of yours I'll spare. Only because you know Allura and Gin. It might be a mistake but that's my courtesy towards a 'good natured person'. But next time..." Alice narrowed her gaze.

"Just like Bella, no one would be able to save you." Snapping her finger, Alice retrieved all of the blood she spilled and summoned before walking away.

She could sense city guards rushing over but that's only because of the large commotion.

The people with a lot of Sigils stood by and did nothing. This battle wasn't one they could interfere with.

Including the City Lord.

"And here I thought you would've spared her. Quite the brutal girl aren't you?" A voice rang out as Alice furrowed her brows and glanced towards the walls of this estate.

Atop the walls sat a single man with a large umbrella.

Beneath the umbrella, Alice could see a deep crimson coat contrasting the dull monotone colours of the city. Short black hair and a pair of black eyes hidden behind round tinted glasses.

A confident smile was worn on his face, exposing the sharp teeth behind his lips.

"And you are?" Alice asked.

He was using a trick similar to what she would use against Gwen when hiding her presence.

But now that Alice had laid her eyes on him, his signature was memorised.

Hiding again would be difficult for the man.

"I'm the healer that everyone has been scrambling to find. I thought it would've been good to curry a favour with an esteemed Lord by treating his wife." He chuckled, rubbing his chin. "Yet the moment I

make that decision, I come to the scene and see you brutally rip off her head. What a shame. A favour of a Lord is priceless, don't you agree?"

"I disagree. I have no use for the favour of a Lord like that when my enemy is right in front of me. But if you're going to lie, at least make it believable. You're just here to see what kind of blood was f*cking her up aren't you?"

"!!!" The healer widened his eyes.

Alice had used Void Step and in that split second, she was already standing next to him.

"Hah! Seems like I'm busted. Yeah there's no way I would've healed the Lord's wife." The Healer laughed, spinning himself around and standing up.

"But out of all the people who've tried to find me, you're not looking for me because you need healing." He grinned.

"Oh?" Alice raised an eyebrow.

"You want to know how I do it... right?"