

Abyssal A 88

Chapter 88 A Change In Training

The training lasted three days, with Alice succeeding in approaching Allura but lacking the damage needed to finish the job. Every time she approached, she would be a step too short or have sacrificed power for speed.

No matter how Alice went about it, she was unable to take the last step needed.

Understanding that there was no use in trying the same thing over and over while expecting different results, Allura opted for a different type of training, one that tested Alice's reaction speed and kinetic vision. She had to practice keeping her Eye activated as long as possible to aid her in battle.

The issue of landing the final blow could be compensated with tools or external help. After all, the Abyss allowed assistance so long as the contribution did not exceed half of the Hunt.

Allura explained that having her or Gin help would instantly tip the scales and Alice would fail the hunt simply because they were too strong and even the smallest assistance during the fight would change things.

However, the same couldn't be said for Ria. She was allowed a maximum of three assists during the fight. Depending on the actions she takes, however, the opportunities could be much lower.

Thus, they wanted to limit her assistance to once only, unless Alice couldn't handle it anymore. It was the best way to ensure Alice successfully claimed her second Sigil.

And while it may be unbelievable, Allura understood that having Alice do it entirely solo was going to be difficult. If she was in the same situation, not even Allura could guarantee completing the hunt, especially with Alice's limited experience.

"Learn to use your peripheral vision! You can't just focus on what's in front of you. Make sure to turn your head and eyes to capture as much of the world around you as possible to make the most of your abilities.

As it stands, your tools are limited, so you must make the most out of each one!" Allura spoke aloud as Alice was made to keep a certain distance while she fired flaming needles and spears at her.

Alice's goal was to either dodge, block or counter them and stay 'alive' for as long as possible. While that was happening, Ria's goal was to find the perfect opportunity to assist Alice, whether it be helping her destroy some of the attacks or launching one toward Allura. It was up to Ria to choose whichever suited the moment.

Flicking her hand, two spears shot out to the right of Allura. She glared at Ria.

"Too soon! You've just wasted a big opportunity and warned the beast of your presence. Now, you must also dodge her attacks. Just because she has an optimal range doesn't mean she can't extend it by sacrificing her power.

If enough attacks hit you, how are you supposed to assist Alice in killing her?!" Allura shouted ruthlessly as she snapped her fingers and sent 10 needles flying towards Ria, who panicked and tried to dodge, but failed.

Three hit Ria's right arm, which she used to throw the spears, two to the chest and stomach, one on the right leg, and the rest fortunately missed.

"You died. Now, Alice is preoccupied and unable to help you. What was your plan?" Allura frowned as Ria had no response for her.

Just as Allura was about to open her mouth once more, she sensed a thick wave of killing intent. It was enough to suffocate a grown man. Allura snapped her head towards Alice's direction just in time to ward off her spear while using the flaming wings behind her.

"Good try, but you make yourself too obvious!"

Overwhelming Alice with a barrage of flaming attacks, Allura pulled out a cigarette and lit it with one of her flowers.

Blowing out a cloud of smoke, she looked at the duo.

"The two of you have gotten a little better. Ria, you need to observe your target more and pick out a good opportunity to actually help Alice. If you take a wrong step, you'll actually make the fight harder for her as she'll then be forced to worry about your safety.

"Alice, you did well, but as I said, you made yourself too obvious. Even without turning my head, I felt my warning bells screaming out at me, and that's not just because I'm experienced. Humans, and especially beasts, have a keen sense of danger. Some are better than others, but when there's killing intent, you can feel the surface of your skin prick up before your mind warns you of danger.

"With such killing intent, even a child would be able to feel something is wrong. Intent is good, however, misuse of it will only lead to things becoming harder for you. Control yourself and focus your mind. You need to understand the source of your killing intent and control it," Allura explained.

Alice took a deep breath and sighed.

The source of her killing intent was simply her hatred towards the Zenia family, her father, and the injustice she was subjected to. Everything she did was to simply avoid such a fate once more.

'How should I hide this intent...' Alice thought to herself as she healed her injuries with some healing blood while Ria did the same.

"Take a break for now and gather your thoughts before we go at it again. There has been big improvement over these three days, but it's far from enough. If I send the two of you out to fight this beast, even if you kill it, one of you will most likely die," Allura ordered as both Alice and Ria collapsed onto the ground to catch their breath.

While the two were resting, Allura simulated the possible options they could go with.

'I don't like leaving things up to chance... but as it stands, I don't see how Alice can kill it without Ria stealing the contribution and making the Hunt fail. Abyss Blood can help, but augmenting her strength this way will make the future more difficult as the side effects pile up.' Allura thought with a frown.

Then, there was one unknown factor.

Alice could borrow power.

She neither knew how the power worked nor the restrictions in using it, including how long it normally lasts and what it could accomplish.

However, if what Alice said was true, and that she could borrow their power momentarily, it would make her resistant towards the Blood Widow's powers and maybe... even use it against her.

That would be the boost of power they needed, the final step Alice needed to take.

But it was a gamble.

'I want to prepare her as much as possible before she chooses to take this gamble. Plus, she's keeping a lot of things from me. I don't blame her, though... Everyone has their secrets. It just makes my job a damn lot harder.' Allura scratched her hair in frustration.

She didn't know why Alice was so against the idea of drinking Abyss Blood despite her actions, but she assumed it was partially due to her old family, one that she shed some light on but hid a lot of truths about.

'She didn't say much about her family, only what they did. But there are only a handful of noble families that can accomplish what she's mentioned, so they must be rather important. If I wanted to, I could probably find out the truth by asking the main branch of the Underground. But, having that information out is pretty bad... Argh, who the hell did Kaden drop me with.' She thought.

Shaking her head, Allura gathered her thoughts and prepared for the next training session. With things as they were, she wanted to try out a few more ideas before sending Alice to hunt the beast down.

External tools were helpful, but relying too much on them would hinder her growth.

She had asked Gin to get them the bare minimum, yet very effective, tools for the hunt. Using those tools, with some luck, and a gamble, Alice should have a 50/50 chance of clearing the battle with minor injuries.

'The first few Sigils are always the most difficult when setting down a foundation. But once they're done, things will only get easier.'

Finishing her cigarette, Allura walked up to Alice.

"I'll be honest with you, Alice, so I want you to be honest with me. Right now, including uncertain elements like you borrowing an opponent's power, how confident are you at killing this beast?" Allura asked as Alice paused.

"I want you to envision your optimal preparation. Everything you think you need, you have. If you were to enter battle with the Blood Widow, how likely are you to come out victorious?"

Hearing this, Alice fell silent.

In an optimal scenario, she would need access to a few vials of healing blood, her own blood, some foreign blood where she could borrow powers from, and a kit where she could gather the blood of the Blood Widow and turn its powers against itself.

With all that available to her, it would come down to how long she could keep the Eye activated and how long she could keep herself alive against the onslaught of blood needles.

"I can probably inflict some wounds once every 4 or 5 attempts. I'm not sure if the damage will be enough to hurt her deeply. It also depends on how the beast reacts," Alice admitted as Ria was surprised.

If it was anyone else, she would've said that they were bluffing. A one Sigil user beating a three star Abyss Beast? Impossible. But she had seen it personally, how Alice was improving with each day, how she dodged the onslaught of attacks and counter the spears.

"Hou~ So you think you have a 20 to 25% chance to inflict some wounds on her. That's certainly a start."
Allura chuckled.

'You can never be fully prepared for anything. There will always be a change in plans. I just need to teach her how to adapt and this hunt should be her's for the taking. A make-or-break moment to see if she matures her mindset of a Hunter.' Allura mused to herself as her plan is to have Alice face this beast by the end of the week.