

Abyssal A 92

Chapter 92 Blood Widow's Awakening

Before Alice could react, a pulse of energy pushed everything away from the Blood Widow as she clawed at her face while letting out a gut-wrenching scream.

The trees twisted in response, and the skies were suddenly dyed a deep red. It was as if they had been transported to a different realm. Above her, a crimson moon glowed ominously while countless tendrils of blood exploded out of the Widow's body, shredding her dress to pieces while revealing the ghastly body hidden beneath the fabrics.

Black and red blood hovered around her like a strange mix between a serpent and a cloak while the world graced her appearance.

Crimson orbs slowly opened up on her body as they seemed to act like eyes, focusing their gaze on Alice.

"!!!"

Widening her eyes in shock, Alice felt something pierce through her body. The next thing she knew, she was flung back and had smashed through countless trees. The air was forced out of her lungs while the world spun in her vision. She could vaguely hear the distant roars of thunder striking down against the Widow, who conjured countless spears to fight against the lightning.

Looking down, Alice could see the blood spear embedded into the right side of her chest. She had been struck before she could react.

[Well, what do you plan to do now, o' master of mine?]

[How will you finish a pseudo-four star hunt?]

'Why does it matter to you?' Alice asked softly as she could feel her consciousness fading in and out.

[Because you are now my new master, whether I like it or not. We have already formed a connection. Finding a new host will be difficult... After all, Kaden took 120 years before he planted me into your eye socket.]

'120 years... Damn, he must be pretty old...' Alice forced a laugh in her mind as she slowly sat up.

'Say, were you responsible for me being able to borrow the powers of those Cultists last time?' Alice asked while trying her best to focus her mind.

She could see Ria jumping out from her cover with several nodes hovering around her, helping her reach maximum charge whenever she released an attack to ward off the Widow.

[Had I been awakened, I would be inclined to say yes. But, that is not the case. All the blood that runs through the Abyss is accursed ambrosia. Man or beast, they are all the same. Man simply gained the favour of the Abyss, allowing them to augment their blood. In other words, they become beasts with the skin of men, but do not lose to the hunger of the cursed blood.

As for you... you are a strange one. I have no answers.]

'I see... Can I assume you're my ally?'

[If you prove yourself worthy.]

'Then, watch carefully. The real hunt is about to begin.' Alice smiled as she grabbed the spear with her hand.

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"Allura, if you're not going to step in, then let me go instead. What the hell are you doing right now?!" Gin furrowed his brow.

Allura had stopped him from jumping in the moment the Maiden struck Alice using an attack clearly far above her level.

"Have patience-"

"Patience?! You want me to be patient when your new student is on the verge of death and my granddaughter is covering for her?!"

Before Gin could continue, Allura glared at him with a side eye, forcing Gin to shut up. He gritted his teeth and drank a mouthful of alcohol from his flask.

"That beast has long surpassed what a three star hunt is supposed to be. She's not there yet, but it's bordering on the edge of four stars. I don't see how they can finish this hunt without us interfering." Gin sighed.

"Let the two figure that out for themselves. They grow fastest when they're staring death in the eyes. You never know, Alice might even surprise you." Allura narrowed her eyes.

She could see something changing within Alice's aura.

A familiar feeling, a pang of nostalgia. Scenes of an age lost to the rivers of time, an era that no one remembered. She could remember that confident smile, that fearless nature. It felt as though she was seeing it being reborn within Alice.

'The Eye wouldn't bring about such a change... This is Alice's nature from the start. It was merely suppressed under her current personality, after what she experienced early on in life.

"It's not too late to interfere later," Allura reassured Gin, who had no choice but to accept her decision.

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'What the hell is this beast?! I thought it was supposed to be a three star hunt?!' Ria screamed in her mind. She barely managed to parry the onslaught of blood tendrils with her own lightning bolts. Occasionally, the Blood Widow would launch a vertical slash using hardened blood, but Ria was able to dodge in time, thanks to her always having a maximum charge of lightning.

'Its power is already rivalling that of the peak of three star hunts I've seen before, and Alice wants this her second Sigil? Impossible.'

As much as she wanted to end the fight there and then, doing so would make Alice's life much harder, as she'd forever be stuck trying to kill something harder. The best thing Ria could do at the moment was stall for time. As long as she didn't directly impact the success of the hunt too much and just stalled for time, she could interfere for quite a while.

'She told me to limit it to one assist, but here I am now fighting head-to-head.' Ria berated herself while dodging more slashes.

Jumping back, she spotted something take form above the Maiden's head; a strange crown of obsidian appeared out of thin air.

Waving her hand down, a cage of spikes crashed down around Ria as she gathered all of her strength and activated her third Sigil, unleashing all charges of lightning and breaking the cage in one go.

If it wasn't for the fact that Ria knew she could reach full charge once more rather easily using her new technique, she would not have used such a method to escape.

Taking a deep breath, Ria gathered one of her nodes and reached maximum charge once more before slamming her hand down, causing the ground to rumble while lightning struck in the area around her, destroying several blood spikes that the Maiden planned to use.

But that didn't slow the Blood Widow down as she simply waved her hand and the destroyed spears reformed themselves.

"!!!"

Activating her charge once more, Ria created a dome of electricity around her, blocking the attack while taking the chance to reposition herself.

It was at that moment Ria felt a pair of hands grab her ankles. She looked down and saw the Maiden slowly rise from a pool of blood that had gathered beneath her.

"Damn it!"

Gathering as much lightning as possible, she struck down on her own location.

RUMBLE!!! BANG!!!

Countless lightning bolts struck down at her location, forcing the Maiden to let go before retreating slightly.

Panting heavily from repeated uses of her maximum charged state, Ria could feel her body screaming at her to stop. The pain through her muscles and joints made it hard to even move, but she held on. She had to stall long enough for Alice to recover. Then, they could think of a plan of retreat.

'This hunt is undoubtedly a failure...' She sighed.

Jumping back, Ria started to search for Alice when she noticed a shadow behind the Maiden. Just looking at the clothes told her it was Alice, but her appearance seemed completely different.

She could no longer see Alice's facial features; there was a veil of darkness covering her face while red liquid swirled in it. It reminded Ria of watching oil flow down a river. A strange, mesmerizing pattern could be observed while the same could be seen on Alice's hands.

She had taken off her left glove that didn't have her weapons attached. Like her face, her hand was covered in darkness while red swirls flowed through its surface.

The strangest part of all was her lack of presence. If Ria had not been looking at the Blood Widow intently, she wouldn't have even noticed Alice. It seemed to be the same with the Maiden. It was unable to react to Alice opening her mouth and... taking a large bite out of her shoulder!

"!!!" Snapping her head back in surprise, the Maiden attempted to attack Alice, but she was already gone from her location.

"Thank you. Now, let me finish up this hunt," Alice's voice whispered into Ria's ears as she felt a tingle down her back.

Right now, Alice was like a ghost, unable to be detected yet present at the scene.

Understanding that Alice must've consumed the beast's blood, Ria jumped back and returned to her hiding spot, allowing the girl to finish what she started.

It was only once Ria returned to her spot did she spot where Alice was.

Standing on one of the branches, she was looking down at the confused Maiden who was trying to find out where she was.

The darkness surrounding her face had been removed and reformed itself into an extension of Alice's outfit with her jacket now extending to ankle length and the rest of her outfit looking as though it was alive with the edges squirming with the same black material and red swirls.

While her right eye remained the same, her human eye had been changed. It was now completely red with a silver iris.

Looking up at the blood moon that manifested itself due to the Maiden's powers, Alice curled the corners of her lips up into a smile and jumped down towards the Maiden.

Perhaps it was a high from consuming the beast's blood but right now, Alice knew she could kill her target.