

Abyssal A 95

Chapter 95 Allura's Inquiry

Feeling a strange kind of numbness spread through her body, Alice groaned softly and sat up. She was now in her own room at the inn and realised that Allura along with the others must've carried her back.

'How long was I out for... They must have questions. Apparently, I was about to die because there were three sources of power in my body. Allura must've seen it, too. And yet, here I am.' She sighed.

Raising her hand, she caressed her left eye, where the second Sigil had been engraved upon her body.

"First the right, now the left. Urg..." She complained before jumping out of her bed.

As she moved her body around, the numbness eventually faded away. Despite her small movements, Alice could already feel a new surge of strength within her. After all, the Maiden she had killed was a pseudo-four star beast.

Hearing a set of footsteps coming up the door, Alice recognised it to be Allura's as she opened the door and greeted her with a small wave.

"You're up. How are you feeling? You weren't looking too hot when the beast died." Allura asked as she gave Alice a brief glance while closing the door behind her.

Pulling a chair from the table, she sat down and gestured for Alice to do the same.

"I'm feeling fine. Better than fine, actually, since the Hunt is complete."

"That's good, then. We got a few things to talk about, mainly questions on my end. First and foremost, though, can you show me the Sigil you got?" Allura asked.

Pausing for a moment, Alice was surprised by the sudden turn of seriousness. But with everything that happened, it was bound to occur.

Nodding, she activated her second Sigil just enough so that it appeared on her body.

"Hmm... That's not a Sigil I recognise. It has some aspects of what would be obtained from killing a Maiden of the Blood Moon, but the design is too strange. It seems almost corrupted..." Allura muttered with a slight frown.

"Erm... The Maiden... was a little strange. Before the fight occurred, she was... talking to me a lot, and even asked me to leave at one point. Are beasts supposed to be like that?" Alice asked as the sight of the woman crying and asking her to leave was still fresh in her mind.

"No. At least not this early, and not in this fashion. She wasn't a beast, but half of one. It seems like she was converted into a beast against her will. *Sigh*... It's not a process I'm familiar with. It was something entirely new... and unholy.

I already had some people find out who the woman was while you were unconscious." Allura shook her head.

Hearing that, Alice was surprised, but still listened intently.

"Verona Gresk, a woman who used to be a rather famous young hunter in the mainland, but went missing on her wedding day. 30 people went missing that day, and it seems like they had been captured to partake in a ritual. One which forced Verona to become a Blood Widow and eventually into a Maiden of the Blood Moon.

"Going off on what you told me, you would have borrowed the powers of her Sigil. But since she was turned to a beast, you gained a portion of her power from drinking Abyss Blood. And the main issue of you being dragged into the ritual. Somehow, it stopped. I know you have your secrets, as I have mine. I don't want to dig into your past if you don't want me to.

However, I don't know what the consequences are of having so many different sources of power conflicting within your body. It is also why I'm considering the option of trying to find Kaden and ask him where he found you." Allura sighed.

She hated doing this. To her, freedom of choice and the belief of each to their own formed few of her core values. She respected and allowed others to act on them. But in order to understand what was going on with Alice and how to best prepare her for the future as the holder of the Eye, Allura had to get a good grasp of what was going on.

Biting her lip, Alice looked down at her feet.

Images of her nightmare returned. The image of Allura holding her by the neck was potent, and so was the shadow of her father looming over her. Even now, his influence chained her down from being able to be her own person.

Opening her mouth, Alice hesitated before closing it once more. She wanted to ask. Ask if Allura was trustworthy. But what's to keep her from trusting Allura's words?

Then, she remembered Lilia. A girl who'd lost so much, yet decided to take that step to befriend Alice and refused to betray her even when her life was threatened. And in the end, Lilia died so that she could live.

Clenching her fists, Alice gritted her teeth and took a deep breath.

"Zenias." She muttered.

"Hm?"

"Alice Zenias. That's my name. Youngest daughter of the Zenias family, locked away for 10 years to undergo experiments so they can produce Abyss Blood for everyone else." Alice confessed as she spoke as fast as possible, relying on the surge of courage that she found within herself.

This was her leap of faith, an act of trust towards Allura who was looking after her.

"Abyss Blood will never have a permanent effect on me. When I drink the blood, the effects fade after a while. Due to this body of mine, the Zenias family locked me away and produced all the blood for the Church of the Moon and the people on the surface.

They made a collar that can inject healing blood or any damn Abyss Blood whenever they wanted!" Alice stood up as she could feel blood rushing to her head.

All the emotions Alice had buried deep within burst out as she remembered all the pain she had to go through. The insanity she developed as she sat in that white room while looking up at the moon, only being able to imagine the freedom that others tasted every day.

"They locked me up when I was a child! Cut me to pieces, put me back together, mutilated my body, injected me with needles, filled me with tubes, pulled out my innards, carved out my bones and stripped away my flesh to see why my blood was unaffected by the Abyss's powers!

Just so they can make more blood for others... My own father, my own brothers, my own family, they watched me die a thousand times over just to bring me back time and time again!

"Scholars said that my pain was necessary for the masses, how I should sing and cheer as they cut me to pieces! They made me watch while people poked and prodded my organs, seeing every reaction I would have and how it affected me. I had to feel the side effects of countless banned Abyss Blood vials because the side effects were not suitable for normal use!

The safety of the masses was built on 10 years of my suffering! Why should I do that for them? I don't even know them!?" Alice shouted as she could feel her anger and sadness reach a new peak.

All that talk for the good of the masses. The sacrifice of one for the many.

Screw all that!

She didn't care. All she wanted was a normal life. Why should she burn so others can laugh and enjoy freedom without even knowing who she was?

Screw all that!

They can be the ones to enjoy what it feels like to have stone shards shred your organs to pieces, your body mutating into a monstrous beast as your bones break with each movement! All these side effects, they can discover for themselves! Why should she suffer for them?!

Before she could continue, she could feel Allura's arms wrap around her tightly.

"You don't have to do anything for anyone. It's not fair. Especially to you. You don't owe anything to me, to Kaden, or the world. It's the world that owes you for all that you've done," She replied softly.

It made sense now. She had heard of the Zenia family, how they rose to prominence as they continuously produced safe Abyss Blood for everyone to use. Even she was confused as to how they were able to produce so much.

But now, it made sense. Everything was because of the girl in her embrace. A frail girl that was on the verge of breaking. Someone who feared to trust the world.

Even for someone as old as her, she couldn't imagine what 10 years of that environment would be like, especially for Alice who was locked away since she was young.

Looking at Alice, Allura could feel her heart ache for the girl. Her anger grew after hearing everything the Zenias did.

Hearing Allura's reply, Alice could feel her tears burst forth. She hugged Allura back and cried into her jacket. 10 years of sadness came crashing down.

She could finally feel safe in someone's embrace.

###

Alice didn't know how long she was crying for, but by the time it was over, she could feel the edge of her eyes hurt. Seeing the mess she made on Allura's jacket, Alice couldn't help but feel bad.

However, Allura simply patted her on the head with a smile on her face.

"Are you feeling better now?" She asked as Alice nodded in embarrassment.

"That's good. From now on, I want you to remember what I'm about to say and burn those words into your mind." Allura knelt down and looked at Alice face to face.

"You are free. You don't have to inherit the role of being the Eye's holder that Kaden forced you into. I will ensure that you live the life that you want. You are Alice. The Zenias have no hold over you. No matter what happens, no matter who threatens you, even if the Gods the churches worship were to descend, I will protect you to the end." Allura promised in seriousness.

Alice could feel a warmth wash over her.

"You got one thing wrong..." Alice smiled, causing Allura to tilt her head slightly.

"My name is Alice Agnelia." Alice grinned in a manner similar to Allura.

"You cheeky brat. But yes, you are Alice Agnelia. My student and my family." Allura laughed as she gave Alice another hug.