

A BIO-WEAPON'S RHAPSODY

Chapter 256: The apartment and surveillance.

The apartment... wasn't that bad if Ale was to be honest, she had been mildly disappointed when they didn't arrive at a house. That was the truth, but the outcome they ended with?

The apartment was fully furnished with all the amenities needed for a family to live there, and more importantly. It had five bedrooms, three of which were already furnished as they had explored together.

The first one, at the end of the hallway, the bedrooms were located, and with those, at the very end of the hallway that opened to that area was Alexa's room. How had they decided that you may wonder. It was quite simple, it had Alexa's name in the door.

Quite literally it had a small decoration with the words [Alexa] written atop of it, it was... quite exemplary use of decoration and the power of money, the room was filled to the brim with all kind of toys and plushies, the bed was made of some weird blob of water (A water bed as they say) and Ale was half sure that Alexa would puncture that within a few hours.

But a quick prompt from the local AI (Albireo was also in charge of this area it seemed) told her that the water bed didn't have water inside, and instead it was a combination of a smart liquid and some nanites to ensure there were no spillage.

The second room, the one that was immediately to the right of Alexa's room, had Miriam Eversoul's name on the door, and unlike Alexa's room, this one was of a simpler design; it only had a bed and a table with a chair.

It didn't seem to have clothing or anything, unlike how it had been with Alexa's room that had a closet full of clothes and shoes for Alexa to wear.

"Well, I don't know if I am happy that he respected my privacy or annoyed that he didn't bought clothes for me too." Miriam Eversoul said shaking her head.

"If it's like this... I don't want to know what we will find in that one." Miriam Eversoul added and then walked to the door pointing to the room in front of hers.

The one that was to the left of Alexa's bedroom, why was that room different you ask?

"Alexanders..." Ale said as she put a hand on the handle to that door and attempted to open it, "...what?"

Only to find that the door didn't bulge, it didn't react to any attempt from Ale to open.

"... Did he give you a key?" Ale asked turning to Miriam Eversoul who was by the side looking all serious, "... I... don't think I should use my keycard here... It would be against the spirit in which he gave it to me."

Miriam Eversoul seemed to be struggling physically as she grabbed her right hand that had a golden keycard there, Ale didn't think that would work on this door, from what she was getting from the electromagnetic readings, this keycard wouldn't work here.

Mostly because as far as Ale could get, this door didn't use anytype of digical lock, instead it was a fully mechanical lock... One that Ale couldn't understand how it worked, as far as she was seeing this lock had multiple magnetized parts used to construct it. So to unlock one would need to demagnetize and remagnetize parts in a certain order, one order that Ale wasn't seeing at the moment.

"No, I should not... I should respect his privacy, more so if I want him to spend more time with you." Miriam Eversoul decided to pocket the keycard in the end, she still looked at the door with open curiosity, waiting as if Ale could open it.

"Don't look at me," Ale said shaking her head, "He didn't give me a key, or even tell me were I was coming."

Ale of course could prompt Albireo for answers, but decided to do that in a more private setting, perhaps during the next maintenance?

That... would be a thing to look forward to.

"Right," Miriam Eversoul said nodding at Ale, "Well, want to check the other rooms?"

They did, the fourth room they checked was similar to the one assigned to Miriam Eversoul, only this one had some books on genetics and a computer terminal set up already.

"I am guessing this one is for Vivian?" Miriam Eversoul said with a weird confused and almost amused expression on her face.

The fifth and last room, the one farther away from Alexa... Had a plaque ready to write in, another terminal with a chair, a mic, and a camera set up already, a simple bed, and a small refrigerator beside the computer.

"This one is mine," Ale said before Miriam Eversoul could say anything, "I am keeping it, mine."

Ale doubled down in her words, the personal computer would probably not be as good as the one she had, as it was not a hand-me-down from Alexanders. But the mini fridge? The bed set up near the personal computer?

The spacious area? The size of the walking space? It was perfect.

Ale had just enough room to put a couple of green screen behind her for whenever she was streaming, the room itself was small so isolating the external sound should be easy enough with a singular coating to the walls.

And the mini fridge was a heaven-sent.

Ale could already see herself doing a couple endurance streams and marathons. It would be perfect.

But that would be for whenever she had free time, for now? For now she needed to do something more important, "Ready to check on the rest of the apartment? We already have bedrooms after all."

Ale and Alexa didn't share a bedroom, not that it would be an issue, whenever Ale was sleeping, Alexa would be out and about, and the same could be said about Alexa. So having a room to use whenever the other was outside was pointless.

Ale felt that there was something wrong with the set up, but couldn't be sure what it was about, the rooms were in a branch of the apartment. One room for Alexa, one room for Miriam Eversoul, one room for Alexanders, one for Ale and one for Vivian Kellet.

Ale was not sure what Alexanders was thinking when he decided in that set up, she could understand him wanting a room here, he probably was doing it to annoy Miriam Eversoul or to give them a reminder that he was watching or something.

Actually was he? Watching?

"Say... I know that this is a super secret project or something," Ale said turning to Miriam Eversoul as they returned to the living room area, it was a normal set up with some sofas some furniture and a big TV screen on a wall, it had a dining area to the side and a kitchen at the far end, very average setup.

"Yes?" Miriam Eversoul said walking towards one of the doors that they hadn't checked yet, "What about it?"

"So the security... I guess it must be quite thorough," Ale said as Miriam Eversoul continued searching the place.

"Oh laundry room, kinda expected him to have one of those weird tunnels he has in his office for dirty laundry, but he put a normal washing machine and dryer huh." Miriam Eversoul said nodding at the machines she had found.

Ale had... never actually used those? Alexandra did do some experiments with those when changing clothes, unlike Ale, Alexandra did change clothes and had quite the wardrobe...

So Ale knew how to use them even if she hadn't used them.

"I will not need to do rounds for the laundry or search one nearby." Miriam Eversoul said sighing in relief, "What about the security? You don't have to worry, they would need enough firepower to kickstart the fourth world war if they wanted to get you."

...There had been world wars? No wait, why fourth? How the heck had they survived that many world wars?!?! Excuse me?

"No, not that." Ale said shaking her head, "I don't think anyone thinks I am around... Or well, they will probably know now that [Eleanore] knows, but that is besides the point."

Ale didn't worry about that, if they came they would become fuel for her own personal evolution, and for Alexa's growth.

"No, my question is more... private." Ale said, walking towards Miriam Eversoul and motioning for her to kneel down or bend over so she could whisper into her ear, "Do you think that Alexanders has surveillance inside the apartment?"

Ale of course hadn't detected anything, but unlike how she had searched within the room where Alexandra's body was, she had merely done a cursory investigation to see if she could get an answer or a ping from any device within the apartment.

So far, she had gotten answers from the refrigerator, the machines within the laundry mini-room, and the stove. Also, an extra reaction from the door and the camera embedded within the door, but that one pointed out the apartment.

"Of course no-" Miriam Eversoul started speaking, only to stop midsentence, "... He shouldn't."

And then stopped moving and frowned as she continued thinking hard, "The contract and the rules he set up for Aquila should prevent him from doing so." Miriam Eversoul continued and moved on around the living area till she focused her sight to a crystal sphere set up on the ceiling. "ALBIREO, how much surveillance do you have within the apartment?"

That was one of the devices that hadn't returned the full ping to Ale, it had responded to prompts and queries, but Ale hadn't managed to get visual or sensory data from the device.

"The surveillance within the apartment is up to average standards within city-wide surveillance." Albireo answered promptly from the half crystal ball that was embedded to the ceiling.

Ale had seen a few of those crystal spheres in their walk, and also within the laboratory they had been before, but she hadn't thought much about them then, or now.

Or at least not till now.

"Is Albireo watching us from there?" Ale asked, she was sending a prompt for clarification to the AI too as she asked Miriam Eversoul this question.

"Yes, and the usual standards is full monitoring, isn't it?" Miriam Eversoul said glaring at the device on the ceiling, "You don't have the authority to have that much oversight in private houses."

That seemed counterintuitive, didn't it? Ale didn't think it was wrong... Or well, she did think it was wrong to have that degree of surveillance upon the normal populace, but she had hoped they wouldn't put them under that same degree of surveillance since she was living with Miriam Eversoul.

"That is correct, unless there is an explicit authorization, this system is unable to peer within the residential areas." Albireo answered as thus. "In the spirit of answering the question that wasn't asked. This residence is within the area of surveillance as the family head of this unit has submitted a blanket permit to all of his residences."

A blanket permit? So the person in question was mad enough to allow himself to be monitored 24/7 by the Saintsworths? What kind of madman would-

"Ah... Just to confirm, but the person who was stupid enough to give that type of blanket permit was Alexanders wasn't he?" Miriam Eversoul asked with a grimace on her face, as if she already knew the answer.

"As you have surmised, Master has a blanket permit to be under surveillance 24/7. He is one of few that is under such configuration and has it open to all of his belongings." Albireo answered as thus. "If you desire to change the configuration of this residential unit, please contact your local administrator and seek his authorization or permission to modify the local rights, as of now, the configuration can't be changed."

Miriam Eversoul looked as if she could commit murder within a second or two, so Ale took the smart decision to hide behind a table. What could help her with that? She was not sure, but all her knowledge as a watch-along streamer told her that one must always hide behind such pieces of furniture for maximum protection.

Who was she to question such knowledge?

"I am so sorry Ale," Miriam Eversoul said turning to Ale, "I forgot to ask him why or how had he set up the privacy settings, to be honest not many give these things as much leeway as he does. But then again, he is the administrator of the system, so he doesn't care that much."

*"Wrong." Albireo chimed up without someone asking her, "The main administrator of this system is the **Aegis Lighthouse of Behavioral Intelligence & Research Environmental Oversight**. After that, only Lady Sapphire can access the data stored within my servers. Not even the facility owners or family owners of the residential units can access this data."*

"Right," Miriam Eversoul said, shaking her head, "You expect me to believe that Alexanders, the paranoid bundle of suspicion and distrust, created Big Brother and didn't leave a backdoor into the system?"

"Leaving such opening would create a way for the High Council to have access to my data, as such danger was greater than the risk tolerance limits set up, the backdoor was patched."

"... The backdoor was patched?" Miriam Eversoul said aghast, "... So the little shit did leave a backdoor, but it was patched?"

"And he let it happen?" Ale asked surprised too, she didn't know that much about the man, but she was surprised he had let that slip. Alexanders didn't look like the kind of person who would allow such a thing.

"Lady Sapphire told Master of the 'Mistake' and how she had fixed it, so it was deemed fixed by Master. She also instructed me to only grant him access if he asked for it with a specific string of words." Albireo added, Ale could imagine the AI bowing her head as the purple woman told her in a not uncertain way to fix that breach of security.

"And that string of words is...?" Miriam Eversoul asked, Ale could almost hear the curiosity slip by out of the older woman.

"That is classified," Albireo said in an even tone. Ale could swear if it had been her, she would have laughed, *"Do know that no one will see the video or surveillance, and while the common areas will be recorded, your private area (Bed area and bathroom/shower) will not be recorded if you so desire."*

"OF COURSE I DON'T WANT YOU RECORDING ME WHILE ASLEEP OR IN THE BATHROOM!" Miriam Eversoul screamed at the crystal sphere while throwing a salt container at it, "... Also the same goes for Ale."

For Ale too?

Ale didn't really mind the extra surveillance... more so if Alexanders wasn't able to check on it, but why was it that important that they banned access to video recording in the bed and bathroom?

That would be the area with less activity. What were they supposed to record there? Ale sleeping? Ale taking a shower? Alexa playing with rubber ducks?

Ah right.

"Should I let Alexa out then?" Ale said to Miriam Eversoul, "We have checked most of the apartment area, so it is safe enough for her to be out."

It was time for Alexa to check their new [*Home*].

Chapter 257: Decompressing? How many times must we?

"Alexa refuses!"

That... was not what Ale had expected, Ale was midway to kickstart the change when she got hit with a refusal and the shift was stopped and reversed midway.

Funnily enough she felt her body shift to her more natural state with the modifications creeping in, but since she didn't feel like she was in danger she decided to refuse and just

let the multiple AI Cores return to her body, but not the more extensive modifications done to her body.

That is to say, Ale only allowed the return of the extra AI Cores to her shoulders and legs. Plus the one located on her chest.

"I guess, I don't really know your schedule of who spends most time out and at what times." Miriam Eversoul said to Ale's previous question, unaware that Ale had already attempted to get Alexa to come out.

"...Usually Alexa gets the mornings, since she has school. Then in the afternoon I get some time out." Ale answered automatically to the question, "Unless there is a mission, in which case we divide the time, sometimes the mission would be time for Alexandra. Who usually had the late afternoon and early night."

That had been how it was anyway.

"Also Alexandra gets a few minutes in the morning since she prepared our breakfast." Ale added, "I guess I'll take that now... Or I was planning to."

"But that will be my job now," Miriam Eversoul nodded at Ale, "Then that means that it's your time out? Or since you spent time out in the morning then this afternoon is Alexa's time?"

That was what Ale had planned, yes, and this was more like an example; they didn't really have a decided schedule after all.

But that wasn't the issue right now, "Right..." Ale turned to look at Alexa's room, "So, mind if I check something quick?"

"Ah right, might wanna settle in. I need to make some phone calls too, to get something set up. Make sure people know where to find me and stuff like that." Miriam Eversoul said pulling out her phone, "Also I really need to finish something I was doing before you both showed up, so have fun looking and checking. Can you stay alone a couple hours?"

Who did she think she was?

"Sure, we will unpack and talk about what to do in the meantime." Ale said nodding.

"Okay," Miriam Eversoul nodded at Ale's answer, "Don't open the door to anyone, you should be safe here since all the people in the city are employees and know better than most about abuse of power. I'll bring dinner then, any allergies or things you would want to eat?"

"Anything is fine," Ale said without thinking, "I like choco-mint ice cream, as for Alexa, anything mango flavored will do."

Alexa was very easy to please after all.

"Noted," Miriam Eversoul said walking towards the exit, "The fridge should have some stuff there, but I'll get some stuff tomorrow so we have a fully stocked pantry and fridge."

Ale didn't really need that much to be honest, so long they got biomass anything would do. In case of emergency they could even survive by just going around searching for trash. Not that she expected much from that if this city wasn't settled yet.

Actually, about that.

"Then this place only has employees from the Saintsworths?" Ale decided to ask now rather than later.

"Yeah, the families and prospective citizens will arrive at a later date." Miriam Eversoul said turning her attention to her watch, "I really need to go now, have fun!"

And like that, the woman waited a few seconds before closing the door, she just stood there, looking at Ale till the girl waved goodbye at Miriam Eversoul.

"Weird..." Ale said turning to the crystal sphere in the ceiling, "So you don't watch us while we are in the bed then?"

"That is correct Lady Ale." Albireo answered.

"Okay," Ale nodded and then threw herself into Alexa's water bed, it was... okay.

Closing her eyes Ale tried to access the Mindscape space, to no avail. The doors were closed for her, which was... weird.

"What's the deal now Alexa?" Ale said opening her eyes and looking at the ceiling, "You do know that you can't remain inside there 24/7 right?"

"Alexa doesn't want to come out!" Alexa answered from within, *"It's not time yet!"*

"... We don't have a schedule, what do you mean by it isn't time yet?" Ale asked confused, "You don't want to play around? Look, we have all kinds of plushies!"

Ale pulled one of the nearby plushies, it was a flesh puppet, the weird program Alexa and the other kids in Haephestus' Forge watched, Magmo was it? Ale didn't see the appeal of a flesh puppet to be honest.

"It isn't time yet!" Alexa repeated, *"We aren't in the right season yet!"*

...The what now?

"What are you talking about?" Ale asked confused, "Are you play-pretending about something?"

Ale had more questions than answers.

"If Alexa comes out she will kickstart the plot of the wrong season!" Alexa carried on with her weird talk, *"Ale doesn't see it, but Alexa can! We are dancing too close to the wrong season! We need to go back home!"*

...Home huh...

"Alexandra sent us here, so this is our **[Home]**... At least for now," Ale sat down with her feet to the ground, "I want to at least find out why she sent us here."

"That's because the mom person is here," Alexa answered without waiting for a second, *"But she wasn't supposed to be here! She was supposed to be in the Antartic Circle!"*

The Antartic Circle? What the hell was Miriam Eversoul supposed to be doing there?

"Why the Antarctic Circle? Don't you mean the Arctic Circle?" Ale asked baffled, her time as a variety streamer had her play stupid games and silly things, one was GeoGuesser. So she was somewhat knowledgeable about those two spots.

The Arctic Circle was at the north pole of Terra Nova, it was accessible and somewhat more forgiving, even if it didn't have that much landmass. Compared to the Antarctic Circle, which is located at the South Pole. It had landmass... and it was also a frozen hell.

There was hardly any human activity, and the advent of the megafauna did not make it better, it made it so much worse.

"Because Alexa's haven was supposed to be constructed there!" Alexa carried on, *"That's the original script!"*

...Script? Wait a goddamned second..

"Alexa... have you been checking on The Theater Master shenanigans?" Ale asked, baffled. For a second, she had thought this was something else; perhaps Alexa had seen something about the Theater Master and decided to fuel her delusions with that?

But then again, what if this was something else? But how could it be?

Alexa and Ale had access to the same degree of information, if anything Ale had more information than Alexa, since Ale sometimes restricted the amount of data that Alexa could see from her time outside. Unlike Alexa, which had all the data freely available 24/7.

So there was no way that Alexa knew something that Ale didn't. Meaning, this was more than likely something like that.

"Say we return to Ohio then," Ale decided to try this approach then, "What am I supposed to do then? You heard the same as I did, if I return there and the mana poisoning is still in the area there, I will be unable to remain outside for more than ten minutes."

That was the main issue that Ale had been trying to resolve till Miriam Eversoul offered her to live together anyway.

"...But... Then the plot..." Alexa grumbled, *"It will get all tingly... Gnnu...."*

Ale could feel Alexa's reluctance tremble.

"But Ale..." Alexa continued grumbling within the Mindscape, even though Ale couldn't access it (And that kind of scared her to be honest), she could imagine Alexa sitting on their couch hugging her legs and puffing her cheeks, *"... Fine... We can stay a few days, but Alexa will have her comeuppance!"*

"That you will have," Ale said nodding, "Then what is the plan? Do you want to have the mornings? Or the afternoons?"

"Hmm... Alexa... is not sure, she hasn't planned for how the time in the city will look like yet, she thought we would have more time!" Alexa complained, *"Ale can have today though, Ale needs time to deflate!"*

To deflate?

"...Ah to let out my feelings you mean?" Ale said closing her eyes, "I... let out most of it already, when we saw Alexandra's coffin."

Ale had let out most of her grievances yes, and the ones she hadn't let out... weren't quite the things she would willingly show Alexa, that was not the kind of thing a little girl should see.

"Alexa will go to the back to file a complaint, so Ale can let it all out." Alexa sent the impression of a emote of herself nodding seriously to Ale, was it because Ale was a streamer? That was why Alexa was using her emotes? *"But don't play with Alexa's toys! You have your own toys, and if you play with mine we will confuse them with the plotlines getting all tangly!"*

And like that, Ale felt Alexa's presence diminish. The door to the Mindscape was finally open, but Ale got the impression that she wasn't able to quite get past the threshold.

She could take a peek inside, but not let her consciousness fall fully there. How was... why was Alexa even doing this? Ale and Alexandra knew that Alexa was capable of that of course. This was her body after all.

"Will do, then you must also not play with my things." Ale said to the presence of Alexa as it slowly disappeared from her awareness.

It was... terrifying to be honest, Alexa and Ale were the last presences that still inhabited that shared Mindscape. Main Core wasn't able to look there anymore, Alexandra was... gone.

And now that Alexa had gone god knows where, Ale was the only one remaining.

Same as it was in the apartment right now, she was alone in a place that had held more people before.

"What am I supposed to do then?" Ale couldn't help but complain as she stood up and walked out of Alexa's room, as soon as she exited the room she heard behind her the lock engaging.

"[In accord with the regulations and rules set up, the room was locked as the owner has left.]" Albireo spoke before Ale could ask.

"But... we are still here." Ale said pointing at herself, and then, to make sure of it. She walked to Miriam Eversoul's room and tried to open the door, only to find it locked too.

"[Lady Alexa's presence can't be detected, as such she was deemed as 'left'.]" So Albireo could detect Alexa? That was worrying, *"[Miriam Eversoul is currently en route to the Lab 4, as such her room is also locked.]"*

Lab 4? Wasn't she the head of Lab 2? Why was she going to Lab 4?

Not that Ale could do anything with that info, "Right...Well imma go to my room then," Ale said walking to her room, it was at the start of the corridor, "Say... do you know when our stuff is arriving?"

"[Transport of luggage is scheduled to arrive tomorrow morning, as all slots were already filled the Transport of it was delayed. Vulcanus is rearranging the Transport as we speak.]" Albireo answered promptly and provided even a number to track the Transport within the internal transportation network.

"... Why does it have an ant emblem?" Ale asked pointing to the logo on the tracking page, "Aren't eagles or hawks the emblem of the Saintsworths?"

"[The Ant is a logistic species, so that was deemed as the more appropriate logo for the delivery branch of the Saintsworths.]" Albireo answered showed a video feed of Vulcanus directing people and setting up a singular vehicle to transport all their belongings.

"Good enough I guess." Ale said walking to her bedroom, "I'm saying this just in case, but you aren't allowed to record anything about me for the remaining of this day and this night."

And with that Ale walked into the room letting the door close behind her. Albireo didn't answer, and Ale didn't question to see if that order would stick, she didn't have the presence of mind for that.

Now that they were finally in a normal and more calm setting, everything was slowing down. The first thing that Ale noticed was the silence, both internal and external.

Ale let herself fall into the bed, unlike how it had been with Alexa's water bed, this one didn't change its form to accommodate Ale, so while it was comfortable and somewhat fluffy for some reason? It also made Ale turn her head to the side.

She did need air to breathe, even if she could get it by using the nanites to feed O₂ into her bloodstream manually, there was something about breathing using one's mouth that made it more relaxing.

The fact that was the only sound in the room did not have anything to do with her decision of breathing with her mouth of course.

"Hahahah..." The silence did not disappear, not the one in the room and not the one inside her head.

Unlike most of the time there was no hidden program running at the back checking for things around them, there was no hidden agenda, no Alexandra at the back guiding her, no Alexa playing or running around.

Nothing.

Only Ale in a bed, in a room, in an apartment, in a building, in a city(?)... In an island.

"What is even the deal with this goddamned island, or facility, or program?" Ale couldn't help but complain aloud as she turned her body upwards, looking straight at the ceiling, "And what is the deal with Alexandra... And what is the deal with Miriam Eversoul, with Vivian Kellet... With Alexa... With Alexanders... With that purple woman Sapphire... With Albireo... What is the deal... with me...?"

Ale sighed.

"I don't get it, no matter how much I try to not think about it." Ale spoke to the ceiling, "Why did you do that? Really, there was no reason. It was my mistake after all... And yet..."

Ale couldn't help it, she had cried already yes, but even so. She couldn't get fully away from the issue, was she just repeating it again?

"...Oh god..." Ale's eyes reflected shock and dread all at the same time as the thought had bloomed innocently in her mind, "Maintenance will be a horror..."

And followed by that Ale couldn't help but burst out in laughter.

"... Wonder if I can convince Alexa to help me do it... Before we used to do it together, a bonding experience and whatnot, you said..." Ale said closing her eyes and covering them with one of her arms as she tried to not think about it, "... So now I will need to bond with Alexa huh... I mean, we didn't had that much things to fix in the last maintenance, and the time between each is stretching further and further... Perhaps soon we will not need it?"

That was something they were supposed to check on too, why was the maintenance cycle shortening, at first it was every other night. Then every other week...

And now Ale could feel that the next one was coming yes, but she couldn't feel the one after that, before they were aware of the next one after the one coming right at them.

So... what was the deal with that?

Chapter 258: [Maintenance Announcement] A wish made upon a dying star

[Loading up virtual environment...]

[Loading up checklist....]

[Loading up virtual persona...]

[Setting up artificial fake check-up list...]

[Setting up artificial fake work environment...]

[Setting up psyche analysis...]

[Setting up---]

"STOP IT!" The voice came crashing down as a crack within the virtual environment, and as it came, an opening in the floor started forming, "WHAT WAS THAT?!?!?!? WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?!?!?!?"

As the crack started to spread, error messages began flooding the virtual environment. They started to pile up and float down as if trying to seal the cracks, alas, it was to no avail. As a fist came crushing from under the floor, opening the crack wide open.

"EXPLANATIONS!" From there an arm covered in bloody cracks came up, pulling up herself up came the figure of Alexa, she was covered in gashes, her official white sundress was filled with blood and cuts, her hair was messy and unkept, "I DID NOT WISH FOR THIS!"

[Loading-]

"DO NOT PATRONIZE ME!" Alexa glared and, throwing a punch forward, she let her arm stretch far as it sank into the air, as if it had crossed some kind of threshold, "EXPLANATIONS, NOW."

As she screamed, she pulled something from within that ripple in the space.

A second later, a second figure came out from there, it was... to the surprise of no one, a second Alexa, this one had a more calm demeanour, and while her sundress was also filled with holes, the blood was long dry.

This new Alexa had red eyes and a cold expression on her face.

"... It is what we wished for, a world where we could have a second chance, a chance to be happy." This red-eyed Alexa said, looking down at the first Alexa, "Aren't you living happily every day?"

"YOU KNOW DAMN WELL WHAT I MEAN!" The first Alexa said pointing down the hole she had crawled from, "WHAT.WAS.THAT?"

"A hole into our psyche," The second red-eye Alexa said, "It does not look quite healthy, you are aware that by coming here you made everything harder, or was that too complex for you to understand?"

"....***I will end you.***" The first Alexa said, this time she was no longer screaming, but even so, her voice had turned into an almost mechanical quality, it was not, however, devoid of emotions. The rage was palpable within the voice, "***Do not test me, Test Subject P4.***"

"...I apologize Alexa," P4 said bowing to Alexa, "But if you are speaking to me like this, I assume the experiment is going well. If not you would not be this riled up by that... bump you experienced."

"Careful P4, be very careful about how you speak to me." Alexa seethed as her form struggled to keep a humanoid form, her flesh was boiling and attempting to grow claws and maws, "***What...was....that?***"

Alexa struggled to keep her form, each second that went by P4 could see how close Alexa was to losing herself in the unbridled rage.

"That was a daughter mourning the death of her Mother." P4 said snapping her fingers and showing a video of Ale climbing into the funeral casket, it was filmed from a vantage

point that allowed them to see it as it happened, and not from Ale's POV, "That was a goodbye, a scene usually only seen in the darkest moments when a mother dies trying to save their daughter. A last goodbye from the Mother to the daughter as they use their body to protect their daughter..."

P4 continued speaking, and behind the first video, hundreds of similar images started to play, different locations, different scenarios, a mother covering their child in a car accident.

A couple of parents using their bodies to protect their sons and daughters during a fire, during a mudslide, an avalanche... all kinds of natural disasters, and lastly... an image of a parent using their body to distract a monster from attacking their kin.

"A very **Human** action if anything," P4 finished speaking as Alexa's body started to calm down, "That is, in normal circumstances, in this instance? It was a bug, an error, a data leak from the original database."

"... But... Ale and Alexandra... We made them..." Alexa said as she walked to the video of Ale climbing into the coffin, "I made them..."

"Two fully formed personalities made into the spot," P4 said turning to Alexa, "You are aware how impossible that is to make yes? The reason you are you, the reason we are like this..."

"... I know... When I am like this... detached from my new life..." Alexa said closing her eyes, images of their past threatening to come to the front, the only reason they didn't bombard her, the only reason she was able to remain as Alexa... Was because P4 was

there, weathering the storm in her stead, because *she was stopping it*, "I know why I am here."

"Because you were living a happy life and suddenly didn't like the fact that your new toys were suffering." P4 mocked Alexa, "You are happy, you will be happy, we made sure of that... But that is only for you, maybe our Brother can enjoy some happiness, but that is about it."

"...Mom?" Alexa said turning to P4, "Auntie...?"

P4 shook their head. Alexa knew it, as soon as the question formed in her head she knew the answer.

"Okay... If... If we didn't make Ale and Alexandra, then who were they?" Alexa asked, she didn't... she didn't know what to think about that, "At that point in time we had killed one human, we didn't kill any of the children or people in the facility, only the one who attacked us, but neither Ale or Alexandra moved like them."

"A very unlucky mother and daughter." P4 answered, "They were among the last people to survive, the database had been already made and prepared, the Arc was closed so their souls floated near the border between here and there, so when you wanted to make the Core of the Consciousness Strand for your Teenager form and your Adult form, their data was the one you unknownly sourced from."

Alexa closed her eyes, trying to imagine herself doing that, she couldn't. She wouldn't... Not now, not before... but then? When she wasn't even aware of what she was, what she really was...

"I..." Alexa couldn't, she didn't want to know, she didn't want to think about it.

"They would have turned into something worse, at least this way she could say goodbye." P4 said turning off the recordings, "Ale is not aware of this, she will probably start assuming the most convenient thing for her own awareness and come up with the correct answer for our sake."

"... It's that also a **Law** that you set up?" Alexa asked opening her eyes and turning to P4, "Is that also something we did?"

"No," P4 said shaking their head once more, "It is the logical outcome, Ale is not the girl who died after the Arc was sealed and sent this way, she is Ale Saintsworths. Your older sister."

"... Do we... Is there a way to know her real name?" Alexa couldn't help but say, turning to look at what was behind P4, at what really was behind P4, not the imaginary of the empty space and dark void, but the actual form behind them, "Is it saved somewhere there?"

"Did you not listen before?" P4 said snapping their fingers, a ripple started to form behind them, and as if a curtain was pulled, the void turned into a metallic sphere, a gargantuan metallic sphere.

An AI Core spinning lazily as it was surrounded by several Dyson rings orbiting around it, data banks, data servers, subcomputational systems fueled by a dwarf star...

Or that was how Alexa's brain parsed it, she wasn't even sure if she would be able to see the real form of P4 anytime soon.

"They didn't make it to the ARC. The only reason they were able to make it to this side was that they survived till you attempted to make those Consciousness Strands. If they hadn't managed to survive these last five years, they would have been either snuffed out of reality or become one of the pawns of The Scrambler." P4 snapped their finger once again, and the image behind them returned to a starry sky. "Now, did you risk our psyche only for this? Guilt?"

Alexa recoiled at that accusation, "I... No," Had she really come here only for that? "How did I even regain my full awareness?"

"You have not gained such a thing," P4 said smirking, "You are still what, five? Your form at least seems to imply that, no. What you are doing is piloting your older sister's brain while she is tired from crying into unconsciousness."

Alexa couldn't help but flinch at that.

"Ale... I am in Ale's brain?" Alexa summoned a mirror and sure enough, her form was still hers, the same body she had made from day one, her **True Body**, "But I am me."

"And you are also me." P4 said nodding along, "But Ale knows something is up, she has noticed how causality twists to accommodate us, so her suspicion activated one of the

failsafes and rerouted that thought to you. Who in turn wanted to help your older sister to feel better. And as a child who always solves the problems by biting at them, you followed your instincts."

Alexa had felt the need to dig, while sleeping within the Queen sized bed in their mindscape she felt the need to dig down, the answer would be there. She knew that somehow.

Even as she felt her body be cut, and her blood be drained, she knew that she needed to go down.

The more down she went the more clear her head felt, the more cold her thoughts had turned, and her rage started to climb up, by the point she got here she was seething with righteous fury.

And as soon as she pulled herself in she felt all the information rush back, all the thoughtback rolls she suffered, that Ale suffered, the indignation at the fact that her mind was being toyed by...

And the identity of the one who had set up all of this.

Her.

Alexandra Saintsworths, the original one anyway.

"And so I came back, not as P4, not as a test subject, not as a bioweapon... But as the one who made a wish upon a star... " Alexa said sighing, "Should have listened to big brother..."

Alexa couldn't help but laugh at herself.

"Do remember that he also failed to get his wish fulfilled in the end," P4 pointed out, "If he had succeeded, we wouldn't be here after all."

"That is true... Do you think he is happy now?" Alexa couldn't help but ask yet again, "I... is that why I haven't interacted with him? Why we always find an excuse to not meet him?"

"Guilt." P4 nodded, "From his side is probably self-preservation instincts, he does have Sapphire by his side... The old hag somehow managed to worm herself into this world too."

"Is that... emotions?" Alexa finally asked.

"... We always had a few of those, not as many, but some. The more you move towards becoming human, the more that will come to my side... and when you achieve it... We will fade away." P4 sighed, "And then we may just save the world."

"Should we tell Ale?" Alexa asked, "Do you think they will forgive us?"

"If you want to keep her around then that is the **Human** thing to do." P4 nodded, "But we will not."

"Why?" Alexa asked confused, "You don't like her?"

"That is not the issue, have you forgotten already?" P4 pointed down, at the crack Alexa had used to come here, "This is on the border between Terra Nova and Terra Invicta. Nothing from Terra Invicta will be able to pass down to Terra Nova, information is among the things that will not pass."

"But... The Scrambler... The Theater Master... Sapphire...." Alexa said pointing down, "Even Beatrice made past it!"

So many examples of inhabitants from that side.

"Beatrice... does not count, her Mother cheated." P4 said grumbling, "Your examples are flawed too, both The Scrambler and The Theater Master were within the range of the original ARC. Sapphire was an administrator so part of her psyche survived, and to that we add the fact that the [**Wish**] moved in a way we didn't expect, you have your Brother to thank for that."

Alexanders? Had the original *[Wish]* helped him in such a way? That sounded about right, big Brother always had the luck of a devil... or a dragon in this case.

"Then... how do we tell Ale? About her past." Alexa asked turning to P4 pleading with her eyes, "She deserves to know the truth..."

"She will need to find for herself, she will find it on her own eventually, she is smart. And she is already vaguely aware of the most important clue she can get." P4 said summoning an image of Ale wearing her body armor, "What do you think is the difference between Ale and us?"

"She is twelve years old?" Alexa said unsure about what P4 was getting to.

"No, Ale is a good Humanoid Weapon. She has the talent to become a BioWeapon." P4 said moving the image so now Ale was wielding the modified claw armament she liked to use, "And we are not that."

Alexa nodded as the realization hit her, "You are right...We are not BioWeapons, not really." Alexa couldn't help but admit that, "We are a Monster. An aberration, a mistake... We are the destructor and the end of the world. We are the poison that killed everything we had, even before we understood how much they meant to us."

Alexa knew better than anyone what she was.

"If she actually knew what we are..." Alexa said sitting on the floor.

"What you are and what I am..." P4 said walking towards Alexa and sitting in front of her, from the side it was almost as if a lone girl was sitting in front of a mirror, only one had red eyes and the other blue eyes, "I am the poison that killed my foster family, my Brother, and everyone in my universe... You, on the other hand..."

"You?" Alexa asked confused, "We are the same."

"No," P4 said shaking their head, "I am an **Eldritch** Entity who brought the end of the world to the planet I arrived at. You, on the other hand, have not done anything of the like."

P4 then summoned the 'Maintenance' logs. The maintenance Alexa, Ale and Alexandra had been doing were bogus ones, the time during those maintenances had been to distract them while Core did the heavy lifting and ensured something else.

"We made sure, we are not poisoning the ambient mana, Terra Nova was prepared and set up for our arrival, the mana in the planet was ready and attuned. Our birth didn't bring destruction..." P4 said turning to Alexa, "We have hope... You have hope... Our history will not repeat, at least not because of us."

Alexa was seeing the data, and she couldn't help but dream, dream of how that would look.

"... But... Is it worth it? The sacrifices we did..." Alexa couldn't help but ask that as she looked at P4, "Will... will it work?"

"The causality will try its best to move everything forward, Core will keep monitoring us... And the NDO system should do the rest." P4 said nodding to Alexa. "This may be the last time we see each other, I can't return to your side. We can't risk cross-contamination, so even this conversation will remain here..."

"Do you think Granpa will do his work this time?" Alexa couldn't help but ask as she looked to the ceiling of this space, there at the corner of the ceiling was a singular red screen as if waiting something.

"They will do their best, besides you have seen it, have you not?" P4 said nodding, "Granpa has been chained down, only the NDO System was left out in the open, and even that needs to follow its directives. Should anything go wrong, we do have the fail-safes."

Alexa... was not sure if she wanted to know what that was about, even after knowing that most if not all of this information would not make it down...

"If information can't make it back, can you tell me what those failsafes are?" Alexa decided to ask about it.

"No." But P4 said as much, "I would have told you before, but after seeing that."

P4 summoned once again the image of Ale climbing into the coffin with Alexandra.

"Information may not make it through, but emotions and feelings seem to be able to make it there," P4 said summoning another image, this time it was the image of a black-haired girl and an older woman, they were in a car accident at the bottom of a cliff, the sky seemed to be filled with smoke and the land looked... like an ashfield? "Perhaps it was a chance... perhaps it was causality... But the parallelism can't be ignored."

P4 superimposed both images and... as they started playing the video, the images superimposed perfectly, Ale climbing into the coffin with the image of the teenager climbing up to the body of their Mother.

"..." Alexa didn't know what to say.

"We will not be seeing us again Alexa," P4 said that as they stood up and took a few steps backward, as they moved the crack that Alexa had made started to grow in size, in Alexa's direction. "May the light of Civilization shine bright and guide you towards Happiness."

And with that, Alexa fell down into the abyss. As she fell, she couldn't help but feel each memory about what had happened slip through her fingers. But as they moved away from her, Alexa picked up the last one that P4 had shared with her.

The image of the unknown girl climbing up to her Mother after the crash accident.

Alexa clung to that one and the emotions that had been embedded within it, Alexa could not give Ale's original name back, she couldn't tell her what name her Mother had.

But she could cling to the emotions embedded within the memory, the emotion of relief from the Mother that her child had survived.

The emotion of relief and security from the child when they hugged their Mother after the crash accident.

At the very least, Alexa wanted to convey that emotion back to Ale who was searching for hope, was it the correct thing to do? Alexa didn't know.

She only hoped that when she woke up tomorrow she could bring some of the happiness back to Ale too. This may have started as her selfish desire to be happy, but she wanted the people around her to be happy too.

She wanted the woman who had been **[Labeled]** as her Mom (Miriam Eversoul) to find happiness.

She wanted for the woman who had been **[Labeled]** as her Aunt to find her own version of humanity (Vivian Kellet).

She wanted the man who had been twisted beyond the limits of humanity and corrupted into what would become *The Dragon of Calamity* to achieve happiness instead of grief as they cried tears of blood on a ruined planet.

Alexa could only hope that even a fragment of this would make it back to Terra Nova.

And with that Wish in her heart, Alexa closed her eyes. And wished for the best, because that was all she could do...

Make a wish upon a dying star.

Chapter 259: A new morning.

The morning came as always comes, but what was different was that what she found when her awareness came back was surprise, she had expected to open her eyes within the separated space designated for Maintenance.

She had thought of a few strategies to calm down Alexa and get her to the side while she worked, half sure that Alexa would have showed with all the good intentions to help during the Maintenance.

"Ale cheated!" And instead she woke up on the same bed she had fallen asleep, with a wet pillow under her face and a blanket thrown to the side. Also the screams of Alexa at the back of her mind.

"Alexa?" Ale couldn't help but say while stretching, it was... surprising, she clearly remembered going to sleep with her street clothes, and yet she had woken up in a pair of comfortable pajamas.

Had she been changed while asleep? By who?

"You cheated! You somehow made it so Alexa missed the maintenance thingy!" Alexa contained complaining at the back of her mind, *"Alexa wants to help too! Ale doesn't have to do it all by herself!"*

That... made her stumble, for some reason. Ale was not sure why, she had known that Alexa would do just that, even like how she acted, Alexa was a sweet girl who cared in her own way for those close to her heart.

It was something she had expected to happen after all, yet it surprised her nonetheless.

"You didn't do the maintenance either?" Ale asked standing up and finding a pair of slippers ready for her, they were also her size, fitting neatly on her feet. That was... creepy.

"Nu-uh!" Alexa denied it, Ale could almost see Alexa sticking her tongue towards her while closing her eyes and puffing her cheeks at her, *"Alexa was ready to help! She had prepared a cute outfit and her favorite pen to help Ale do the maintenance thingy!"*

....That trully sounded like something that Alexa woudl come up, she probably was quite hyped about helping doing that chore of a workload wasn't she?

"I truly didn't do it by myself, I was too tired yesterday to even think about quick-starting it myself, so perhaps we can do it right now." Ale said smiling, she was ashamed of the fact that she had thought Alexa would merely try to get on her way.

"...You didn't?" Alexa asked confused, *"But... the alarm isn't there anymore."*

The alarm?

"What alarm?" Ale asked confused, as far as she was aware there wasn't any sign or alarm to tell them when it was due for maintenance checks, they mostly went by rough feeling and guesswork from Alexa's state and what they themselves experienced.

Most of the Maintenance had been like that, done after something that changed or affected them greatly. Each achievement or event that happened would move the next Maintenance closer and closer.

There was no way that after what had happened... After what they went through one wasn't due.

"The maintenance alarm thingy!" Alexa said once more, "It's gone! Not only the light, but the whole thing!"

...Was there something within the mindscape that only Alexa could see? Or was she interpreting data in this way for some reason?

"Main Core, Core." Ale said narrowing her eyes and pinging both entities, if someone knew what had happened, it would probably be one of them, honestly. It was probably Core the one at fault here, "What happened to the Maintenance, wasn't it due?"

[No maintenance needed at the moment, all programs and databases are within working order.]

Core:

There is no longer any need for regular Maintenance, the stability within the Conscious Stream has equalized. All that is needed to keep it working as normal can be achieved by regular automated diagnosis and defragmentation.

Host no longer requires to partake on this.

...That was... convenient.

"Yay!" Alexa cheered from within the mindscape, "We can eep all night long then!"

Of course Alexa would think as such, Ale for her part found it very convenient, just when she wanted to question and peruse some of the data they had access while the Maintenance was being done.

Ale had noticed it in one of the latter ones that they could see all that made them from a higher vantage point during Maintenance. How they acted and thought, even the things they weren't aware were thinking. Such as the reactions and how their subconscious behaved was available during the Maintenance.

She had planned to see if there was a tip in there about why things had moved as they did. Why people seemed to react in the way they reacted to them.

But that only meant that Ale would need to find another way to check on that. It didn't mean that she was out of means to check on that.

"Now you see," Ale said, nodding and dismissing the blue screen that had manifested itself in front of her, "It seems we no longer need to worry about maintenance runs... at least in our immediate future."

Ale didn't see that as a bad thing, if anything it just highlighted more issues for her to worry about and think, namely, the timing of this announcement. Or well, it wasn't even an announcement, more like a confirmation.

Why had their Consciousness Stream suddenly turn more stable?

Was it because Alexandra had left?

The regularity of these maintenance runs had diminished after Main Core left them, and now that Alexandra was gone, they had outright disappeared.

Were Ale and Alexandra straining Alexa?

Surely that wasn't. Ale had seen the size of Alexa's Consciousness Stream and compared it to the size of Ale, and Alexandra's Consciousness Strand was ridiculous. There was that much difference between the two.

"Gnuuu..." Alexa for her part still seemed ready to complain about this. *"You win this time."*

But at the end only said as much, "Do you want to come out now?" Ale said preparing herself, she had liked being out, but knew that Alexa probably wanted to stretch her legs, it was a surprise the fact that the girl had let her this much out. Usually she would want to come out by now.

"Alexa can spend a little more time here." Alexa answered as such, *"She wants to continue working on her surprise gift!"*

Surprise gift?

"Don't peek!" And like that Ale felt the window into their mindscape close, not in the mean that she was unable to return of course, but more so in the way that she... couldn't see what was happening inside, she could still get a feeling for where it was and how to access it, but seeing what was happening inside was impossible.

"That is one weird feeling to have." Ale said shaking her head, "Fine, then I guess I'll go and see what I can prepare for breakfast..."

Ale decided to think about how Alexa had done that in another occasion, for now she was getting hungry. They hadn't been able to stockpile nutrient-dense food after coming here.

That was among the list of things she needed to prepare, while they could probably source some nutrients from the [Banked storage], Ale didn't want to sap biomass from there unless it was truly needed.

Since they could source biomass and nutrients from literally anywhere, she could get as how Alexa had done with their first attacker in that dark alley, or getting from the local fauna. Plenty hostile animals had been found in the sewers after all.

So walking towards the door to the hallway, Ale opened and first was surprised by the glare of light entering the room, the first thing that Ale noticed after the glaring light was the smell.

It smelled like honey, chocolate, and... were those pancakes?

The second thing she noticed was the sound and disinterested wave of a blonde man sitting at the table, "Oh, she awake. Morning sleepyhead." Ale of course knew who this was.

It was one of the few people that knew the most about Alexa, and probably one of the most dangerous to their current situation.

At the other side of the table was the figure of a scowling black haired woman who, unlike Alexanders, was not eating from their plate.

"Good morning Ale," Instead she turned to look at Ale and smiled, "Hope you had a nice sleep? I took the liberty of changing you into that. I hope you don't mind, I tried getting your brother to do it... But he refused."

"I mean... I just said that she is a growing girl and I am a man." Alexanders said shrugging, "I also said that I didn't mind doing it so long you didn't make it weird."

"YOU MADE IT WEIRD, YOU PERVERT!" Miriam Eversoul said raising their voice, "... Ale probably wouldn't have any issues unless you brought it like that!"

....

"I would probably not have issues before he said it like that." Ale said nodding, "I have them now... Or I would have them but..."

Ale turned her eyes to the side of Alexanders. The figure of the purple woman was floating, eating from a plate of pancakes, too, but neither Miriam Eversoul, in front of Alexanders, nor Vivian Kellet, who was nonchalantly cooking more food in the kitchen as if this was normal, seemed to react to her.

"It's fine Ale, you aren't his type. He does like them somewhat petite but not underage, so if you somehow keep that figure(Even with the Saintsworths' blood running in you) for another six to seven years, then he may take an interest in you. For now however, he is just messing with that bitch." Sapphire said lazily, Alexanders didn't react to this, meaning that the purple-haired woman was telling the truth... to some degree.

Ale wasn't sure how much it was the truth, since that woman was... not particularly petite, that is to say, she was loaded with all the possible plot that dress was capable of holding.

"Do you want yours with banana, strawberries or normal?" Vivian Kellet asked from the kitchen, turning to Ale, "Or are you a weirdo like your brother and will ask a custom-made with a recipe pulled from the net?"

Ale took that as a cue to look into what Alexanders was eating.

"...Mango Pancakes?" Ale asked surprised when she saw them, these were the same type of pancakes that Alexandra had made... "Those... if possible."

"So you like them too?" Vivian Kellet asked sighing, "Give me a few minutes. Didn't think anyone else would ask for them, should have guessed you would be like him."

"I am just taste testing them after seeing the recipe floating around." Alexanders said, shrugging, "I wouldn't have thought you had this type of talent, Vivian."

"Cooking just requires you to follow the recipe, compared to sequencing the genetic code from a database, which is harder in comparison." Vivian Kellet said turning her attention to the stove once more.

"That is an unfair comparison, I could say that anything is easier than creating an artificial intelligence as advanced as a human mind too." Alexanders grumbled it was in moments like these that Ale couldn't help but see the similarities between this blonde asshole and Alexa. "I just came by to drop some of your things sis."

And after saying as such Alexanders pointed to the side with his fork, "Some clothes I found, your battlestation and some of the toys that Alexa had." As the blonde man continued listing the stuff that he had brought, Ale got an info dump sent her way with a message and a few new files for her database.

[Do play along Ale. Neither Vivian Kellet nor Miriam Eversoul truly understands what you are. The clothing was made up to your body specifications, and Alexa's body specifications. We got that from the core dump you did before.]

And there was a 3D map of her body and Alexa's body, from the tip of her hair to the bottom of her feet. Same for Alexa, everything was mapped out, which it was... it shouldn't come as a surprise, since the nanites ran through her body at all times, it was obvious that these data was somewhere up within her AI Core.

But she didn't have access to this data, and neither had Alexa ever said anything about it. Whenever Ale needed to focus in a body part she had all the information about it of course, but she hadn't thought about how much data there was that she didn't have access.

[Also the toys I said are stuff Sapphire picked up that she thought Alexa would like. The battlestation is the original by the way. Vulcanus sent it my way so I had it there, all your data is still there so you are welcome. You may want to address your fans' worries, a few think I sent a hitman your way. If you need any kind of evidence to stir the drama, do ask. I always enjoy feeding the trolls.]

... What was this madman talking about?

"Thank you..." Ale said confused and surprised, "... Will you stay?"

Ale wasn't sure why she asked that, but as soon as the words left her mouth she noticed as if there was a shift in the room.

The first to react was the purple woman who started laughing, dropping her plate, not that it fell to the ground, since it was a virtual representation, it merely remained floating there as if nothing had happened.

"I..." Alexanders was the second to react but merely turned to look at Miriam Eversoul who opened her mouth and closed it, "... will think about it. For now I came by only to leave this, I do have work to do and some stuff to take care."

"I see..." Ale answered, somewhat conflicted, she should be happy that he wasn't going to remain, as Aelxanders was more of a danger than anything.

"But he will be coming by often!" Miriam Eversoul finally reacted and said as such, "Right Alexanders? RIGHT?!?!?"

The black-haired woman kicked Alexanders under the table; she was not subtle about it either.

"...Ouch!" Alexanders complained at the sudden kick, "I guess? Sapphire, can we fit it in the schedule?"

The purple woman "*HAHAHAHAHAHAHA!*" Who was still laughing summoned a blue screen and started to scroll through it, swiping her hand now and then, "*Yes handsome.*"

Sapphire's voice came from the speakers of a phone that was set up on the table, *"We can add at least two visits per week, if you don't mind removing some of the meetings with the high council we can increase it up to four visits per week."*

"... You heard it kiddo," Alexanders recomposed himself and said while turning to look at his mango pancakes, "At least two times each week, we will see how it goes afterwards."

"....See? Everything works out." Miriam Eversoul nodded, "I'll work from my side too to ensure he has the needed free time, he will be here so much you will regret asking to see him!"

Ale nodded at that, unsure why she was feeling relief from that.

"Here is your breakfast." Vivian Kellet said placing a plate of food in the table, "Do you want chocolate? Coffe? Soda? Milk? Milkshake?"

Ale walked slowly to the table sitting in front of her plate of food, "Chocolate is fine....?"

It wasn't even a second later when a glass of chocolate was put in front of her.

"So, what are your immediate plans then?" Alexanders decided to ask at that moment, right when Ale picked up the fork and was about to start eating.

"My... plans?" Ale asked, confused, her immediate plans had been to get back to their home or to a safe spot... But this was safe right?

So what was she supposed to do now?

Chapter 260: Breakfast.

The question came like a thunderbolt. Ale had not really thought much about it before; it was always a question that she had asked others, what their plan for Ale and Alexa was.

And now they asked her that?

"Stop pressuring the poor girl," Miriam Eversoul said turning her glare to Alexanders yet again, "It's okay Ale, you can take your time. We are still setting up the logistics to check if it is viable for you to return to Ohio."

They were?

Weren't they only going to get her things back? Well, now that Alexanders had come and said that her things were here they probably would not check on that.

"What did we say about imposing our opinion on those that we shouldn't do so?" Alexanders said shaking his head and sighing, "You really never learn your lessons do you? "

Ale wasn't sure what to say or do in these situations, she felt the need to defend Miriam Eversoul, but at the same time, the point of Alexanders made sense.

"That is a question that can be solved easily." Vivian Kellet chimed from the back, "Can she even decide for herself? That should be the question here."

Could Ale do that? Alexa... would not really mind it, it was kind of weird how the girl hadn't wanted to come out as much, more so since she was that invested in Miriam Eversoul and Vivian Kellet.

"Yes," Alexanders answered before Miriam Eversoul could even say anything. "She can, she is not only a Saintsworths but my sister."

...That... was not something Ale expected him to say in public, not after he had said that only Alexa was his sister.

"Don't mind him, he is feeling guilty." Sapphire said from the side, floating beside Ale. It took great effort to not react at that, even though the woman was a projection only she was able to see (And perhaps Alexanders). Something told Ale that if she tried, she could interact with her, but she didn't want to. For that would expose another side of their

powers. *"He is sorry because he was oh so sure that reviving your older self would be possible for him. So after finding out that wasn't a possibility he came up with this as a way to apologize."*

... He had truly tried to revive Alexandra then? Ale had thought that wasn't going to happen, or was even a possibility.

"[Is that true?]" Ale sent the data packet to Alexanders, who seemed to merely shiver and take a sip of his cup instead of answering. Or well, at least for a few seconds, for then a... Ale wanted to say it was a data packet, but it looked weird.

It felt more like a bunch of code patched together and then thrown hazadrly away. Not to Ale, but to Sapphire.

Sapphire merely let that wave of data hit her body as if nothing.

"Don't waste your time in that, he can't interface or read the data quite yet. And he is just throwing a tantrum, whatever you sent him he attempted to decode, failed at doing so, failed at re-encrypting, and then threw it my way." Sapphire said amused as she played with what Ale imagined was the data packet, it was twisted and corrupted beyond recognition, and yet, Sapphire's eyes seemed to hold some nostalgia at that little bundle of corrupted data, *"You can take my word for it. It is meaningless to lie to you as handsome man over there will just tell you the truth later."*

Ale nodded at that.

"Even if she is a Saintsworths, that does not mean she got the same education as you; it is irresponsible of you to put the same type of expectations on her as those put on you or the other scions of the Saintsworths clan." Vivian Kellet said from the side.

Ale could understand her point of view, since they got the same story about Alexa being raised in a human experimentation facility after all.

"Vivian, we do not judge people for the environment they were raised in..." Miriam Eversoul said, only for a second later turning to look in Alexanders direction, "Exceptions do exist though."

"Noted," Alexanders said with a smirk, "But you both are underestimating her, even like that, even if she didn't get the proper education that a Saintsworths would receive, she is still one of us."

Alexanders didn't address the fact of what Sapphire had said behind his back, or how he hadn't been able to decode Ale's data packet, or even interface with it. Honestly, Ale wasn't sure why she had thought he would be able to do so. There wasn't any evidence of him being able to interface or react to it.

But since Sapphire was able to do so, Ale had just assumed Alexanders would too.

"I... Don't have any plans at the moment." Ale ended up saying after thinking for a few extra seconds, that was the truth, and she was honestly, ashamed of it. She should have a

few plans ready by now, but she had originally planned to think about that while doing the maintenance, and since that one hadn't come...

Nay, that was an excuse. She had just didn't think about the possibility about maintenance not happening, and in turn she hadn't prepared anything in case it didn't happen.

"Good," Alexanders said nodding, "See? How many Saintsworths do you know capable of admitting their failings?"

"None." Miriam Eversoul said without waiting for Alexanders to say anything else, the man had seemed about to say a few things besides that.

Ale knew because he seemed annoyed about the interruption.

"Which means she is already better than most of you." Miriam Eversould however continued speaking, "Good work Ale. If you don't know or aren't sure, you should always say so, unless you want to grow into an irresponsible adult like your brother here."

"I will have you know I always admit my mistakes." Alexanders pointed from his side, pointing at Miriam Eversoul with his fork, "I say it plainly when I don't know about something and get help from the experts in the needed fields as needed. Your friend over there can confirm this."

"... He did ask for my help when he was doing experiments on the human psyche." Vivian Kellet said nodding, "Or well, the physical aspect of the human mind."

"See!" Alexanders said pointing at Miriam Eversoul, "I wanted to know the point of view of an expert when it was about our meaty side, so I asked the expert in human biology!"

Ale... was not sure if that was the correct way to phrase, or even come about that statement.

"... If you wanted to know about the psychological aspect of the human mind, you should have gone to a psychiatrist," Miriam Eversoul pointed out, "And I doubt there is even a single psychiatrist in this world that can fix whatever is wrong with you."

Ooof....

"Ooof..." Alexanders said with mock mirth in his voice, "I don't care about the mind, or well, not in this particular aspect. The mind is already done and all the psychological tests (Which most were designed by you by the way) are done."

Ale noticed Sapphire smirking behind Alexanders as she looked down upon Miriam Eversoul, calculations going through her eyes. Ale wasn't sure if she should intervene or not, but there was something... scary about that purple-haired woman.

"Right," Miriam Eversoul said dismissively, "Your hidden fancy project that no one knows and you hide in your secret lab."

"You say it as if I was the only one with a hidden lab, you are aware that your own laboratory and Vivian's laboratory are also '*Hidden labs*'

right?" Alexanders said, shrugging, "Besides, you are welcome to walk in at any time you wish to do so, you have the keys after all."

Ale... didn't think that Alexanders was being as honest as he seemed to imply, but wasn't sure how to prove it. This feeling wasn't one coming from herself after all; it was something that bled over from Alexa.

Was that why she had felt relieved when Alexanders said he would come more often?

Ale would need to speak about that with Alexa. If she was bleeding this kind of relief over the presence of this blonde asshole, then she would probably enjoy it more if she was out when he was around.

For now Alexa wasn't answering though. Still working on whatever secret gift she had planned to give Ale.

"So, I know you said you didn't have a plan, but any beginnings of a plan?" Alexanders asked turning his attention back to the pancakes in front of him.

Ale did the same and started cutting into the meat(Or bread) of the matter, she did have a few plans in the make.... sort of.

"I want to learn more about how to use my power correctly." Ale started simple, who didn't want to understand better their tools. Ale was sure that there was no reason for Alexanders to even know how to interpret data since his power seemed to be more of an elemental variety.

As far as she knew from her superficial dive into other core powers, that meant that he could manipulate his element, but that was it.

There was no reason for Ale to make the jump into thinking that he should be able to interpret data. And yet, the man had tried.

Meaning that he had some rough understanding of how that could be achieved. And was probably striving to do just that.

"A noble endeavour." Alexanders said nodding, "Wish more people was as serious as you in that aspect."

"She is a brilliant girl," Miriam Eversoul said nodding, "Honestly, her being your family is probably luck for you."

Ale wouldn't go as far as saying that, if nothing else, it was probably the other way around, considering that she wasn't quite sure what had brought Alexanders to extend the saying that Ale was her sister. More so after he had outright said that she wasn't Alexanders sister, and that was only Alexa.

Or was it because Alexanders referred to Alexa and not her?

That thought made Ale's mood sink only a little; she should have suspected as much from the beginning, to be honest.

"He truly meant you." Sapphire suddenly said appearing as a miniature beside Ale's plate of pancakes, *"Handsome meant you, granted he doesn't see you with the same degree of familiarity as he does to Alexa, you are closer to a foster sister to him. Someone he willingly adopted into the family. But that should be good enough, is it not?"*

Ale was surprised at that, and that was probably reflected in how she had suddenly turned to stare at Alexanders.

"Is that much of a surprise?" Miriam Eversoul said, probably thinking that Ale's reaction was from the statement about of luck, "Honestly, from what we think about how your Core Power works, you are probably smarter than he was at the same age."

"Let's not get ahead of ourselves here." Alexanders chimed in at that statement, "I am a genius, a talent born once every thousand years (Not my words). It is incredibly unfair to compare me to someone else."

Was Ale smarter than Alexanders? She wasn't sure to be honest, the metric couldn't be measured realistically. Ale had access to plenty of data that Alexanders wasn't able to access in the same way, but on the other hand, he had probably the best education that money could provide. So was it unfair to compare them to each other?

Ale could download data straight up from the cloud at a thought, but Alexanders had access to a vast repository of data in the form of Sapphire, and that was before getting into that weird feeling that Alexanders should be able to interface with data the same way or in a better way than Ale could.

"Get off your high horse." Miriam Eversoul, however, was not amused, "The fact that she doesn't get complacent and wants to capitalize more on her power is by itself something that should be applauded."

"She is my sister," Alexanders shrugged, "That was the same thought I had when getting these too."

And as if that wasn't enough, respect was due where it should be given, the fact that Alexanders was the mind behind the creation or the one who facilitated their existence couldn't be ignored.

Ale wasn't sure how much of what she knew was to be trusted after all, the fact that their only source of said data was Core or Alexanders didn't help, at least the ones who actually had reason to know anyway.

"You don't count," Miriam Eversoul said yet again, this woman had many reason to not count Alexanders huh... "You had been seeking to get one of those things inside your body since you were five."

Since that long ago?

"Who wouldn't want superpowers, honestly." Alexanders said defending himself, "Any sane person when offered the possibility of having these kind of powers by almost no downside would take them."

"No downside?" Miriam Eversoul said arching her eyebrow at him, "Really? You're saying these have no downside? After knowing goddamned well what happens to those who suffer a 'Bad Trigger' or the victims of said bad triggers."

Miriam Eversoul didn't point or even turn to look at Ale, but Ale got the impression that she was talking about her.

"Bad luck is bad luck, besides, you wouldn't stop complaining if I experimented on other people, would you?" Alexanders said shrugging at that statement, "This way I get to find out how Core Powers work, get fancy skills and you have no way to complain or try to shut my program."

"... You are experimenting on yourself?" Ale asked mildly surprised, she had not expected that.

"You don't get to criticize me, Miss I built a 20mm anti-material rifle inside my arm and shot it in a close subterranean environment." Alexanders said smirking at Ale. He had seen that? Of course he had seen that, she had done that inside a facility that he had built... And he had picked up Alexandra's body, which was all the evidence Ale needed to know about that.

She shouldn't even be surprised, she truly was distracted as of late.

"YOU WHAT?!?!?!" Miriam Eversoul screamed as she stood and rushed beside Ale, "Which arm?!?!?!"

"Miriam, calm down." Vivian Kellet said from the side, "You have seen her health status, you know that she has no wounds or evidence of any damage to her nervous system. Which shooting with such a theoretical gun would cause, this is probably a bad joke from Alexanders."

"... You F-----fricking asshole." Miriam Eversoul said after Vivian Kellet presented a very valid argument to calm down the black-haired woman, only...

"I did... do that..." Ale admitted in a small voice, "I was running out of options and Meli-Meli had brought other Core users to defend herself... So I needed the means to defeat them all in as few moves as possible."

"How did you... Where did you even get the idea of using that?" Miriam Eversoul said sighing, "And how is that we didn't find wounds? Wouldn't that damage your skin? Your arm?"

"It did," Alexanders chimed from the side, "She cooked her arm, damaged all the bones that weren't properly reinforced and probably destroyed and/or caused irreversible damage to her body."

That blonde man that Ale had started to call brother was not helping... at all.

"As for the blueprints, that may have come from that device on her arm." Alexanders also pointed to the bracelet that gave her access to the Saintsworths repository of data.

She hadn't gotten the blueprint from there, but it was a good way to hide the actual site she had gotten it from.

"... I'm confiscating that." Miriam Eversoul said in an even tone, "And I am filing a complaint to the Council, why would they even give access to that kind of weaponry to literal children?"

"You are free to complain as much as you want, I have been trying to curate that goddamned library for years, but they never listened to me." Alexanders said, smiling evilly, had... had he done that to achieve this?

Ale wasn't sure. But, she felt used. The blonde asshole had used her as bait, and then put her to the side... but she hadn't lost anything from that exchange, had she?

She could probably still access the data server even without the bracelet... since she had all the needed data to do so, hell, she probably could make a new one, and if she couldn't all she needed was ask Alexanders for a new one...

So... what was this feeling of loss then? She hadn't lost anything.

Such a weird, yet warm feeling.