

Chapter 459 Request

The testing with Iana and Christopher wasn't quite as successful as on the previous day. Something definitely worked but other than chunks and pieces of Ilea, nothing else was teleported.

Ilea's lessons in the afternoon went well on the other hand, nearly all students participating in the torturous endeavor. She wondered why Lorelai watched her with such an intense glare. Ilea decided it had to be just a difficult day. Or she overcame her fear and pain by channeling her anger at Ilea.

Her bow training didn't amount to a level but she did receive one for her Sage of Torment skill, bringing it to level three.

Ilea went to meet with Claire afterwards, finding the woman watching Cless draw.

It was Kyrian again, flying in mid air with a large number of blades floating around him, all aimed at a creature shrouded in a mist of colors.

"You're back, how was your day?" Claire stated, not taking her eyes from the canvas.

The girl was utterly consumed, not reacting in the slightest to the newcomer.

"Classes went well. Training too. Did she draw me earlier? I got a level in Divination Resistance."

"She did. Several times. I am not sure if what you're doing is the best idea, Ilea. I've seen it before but the still painting of dozens of spells flying at your unprotected body made me worry a little," Claire said.

"Is Kyrian fighting a mist monster or what is that?" she asked.

"It means Cless can't see it, whatever it may be. It happened with you too from time to time. Some creatures have a higher resistance to divination magic," the woman explained.

"I see. Let me know if you find out anything about his location. As to your question, it's perfectly safe. I doubt anybody in this city can kill me at this point," Ilea said.

"I didn't say it was unsafe. I said it might not be a good idea. Everyone who uses their magic against you will feel inadequate. I can't have half the city's adventurers quit because you broke their self confidence," Claire explained and finally looked at her.

Ilea followed her to the table, enchantments activating that separated Cless from their conversation. Not that the girl would listen right now anyway.

"With all due respect," Ilea started and formed an ashen chair as she sat down. It warmed up immediately. "If anything, I'm providing them with easy skill levels. If someone quits because they can't injure a powerful Shadow, they are not adventurers in the first place. Plus, there are a few Shadows present now too. It might help to see that their spells are just as ineffective."

Claire sighed and summoned a document. "I hope you're right. I know you don't care much but every adventurer is needed, for a variety of jobs. The economy and growth of this city would be impacted if a lot of them quit suddenly."

"Most come back for more. I believe you are overthinking this," Ilea said and nodded to the piece of paper.

“Maybe. I didn’t mean to have you stop by the way. I just thought to tell you,” she said and turned the document around. “I received this a few hours ago. From the team manning the communication unit provided by Iana and Christopher. A request for assistance,” Claire said.

“Riverwatch?” Ilea asked. It was the only place outfitted with such a device outside of Ravenhall.

Claire nodded. “Yes. I assume we will get further information in the coming days from a courier. Anybody that could make the trip in less time would be too valuable to send.”

“Want me to go check it out?” Ilea asked.

“I thought about asking, yes. A job for the Shadows would take a little more information and who knows who would take it. Our alliance is new and you already know Alistair. However, I know you are busy. Both with your classes and personal training,” she said.

“Hmm. You are right with both. People know me now though. I can take a few days off if necessary, they will be back. The students might welcome a bit more time to breathe too. You will receive the information from Riverwatch anyway. If it’s too big for me or if it takes too long, I’ll leave it to a Shadow team,” Ilea said.

Claire closed her eyes and visibly relaxed. “Thank you. I really really appreciate this, Ilea. And I apologize that I’m bothering you with this.”

“Don’t worry. There are a few people in Riverwatch I’d like to survive. And I know the situation isn’t exactly stable with the war and everything. Plus, there are some things I wanted to get done in the area. Guess I’ll just move that a little forward in my schedule,” she said. “Should I just go talk to Alistair?”

“I told you everything I know. The device isn’t very specific. Yet,” Claire said.

“I will go immediately then. No dancing lesson today, I suppose,” Ilea said and got up.

“I suppose not. I will be here for your next one. Trian and the arena will be informed that you won’t be participating tomorrow. Don’t get yourself killed out there. And please, don’t start any wars,” the administrator said.

“I’ll try not to,” Ilea replied and vanished out of the room.

With my charged flight speed, it shouldn’t take more than a few hours to get there, she thought and made a stop at the Sentinel headquarters.

Iana and Christopher were still working. *Might be good for them too. Another perspective.*

“Good evening you two,” she greeted them with a wave, having been let in to their sanctuary.

“Hey Ilea. Didn’t expect you back until tomorrow? Didn’t you plan to explore dungeons?” Iana asked. She scratched her head, still holding a pen in her hand.

Christopher didn’t even get up from his desk.

“I did. A request from Claire and through extension Riverwatch has come up however. I will fly there right now and thought you two should come with me,” Ilea said.

“What... Riverwatch?” Iana said and looked around. “It takes months to get there... I don’t have my things ready and we can’t stop our research for so long!”

“It does seem like a long trip. Even though you fly quite quickly,” Christopher said as he got involved as well. “Why do you want us there anyway?”

Ilea crossed her arms. "Calm down you two. It shouldn't take more than a few hours. My wings aren't the same anymore. Hmm, I do hope you survive that speed. How does your Vitality look?"

Iana was murmuring something to herself before she spoke up. "Ilea, focus. Why this trip? Why now?"

"Because back in the Azarinth temple, where I got my class, there was a device that teleported me down into the basement. That and a fountain that made the water inside it have healing powers. I want you two to have a look. Plus, if Weavy is around, you can talk to him about demonic runes. Both might be helpful," she said.

I wonder if Maro is already back too. He probably fucked out of the north as fast as possible.

"The demon you mentioned. That would be quite helpful. Iana, I think we should go," Christopher said.

"Yes but a few hours? How fast exactly are you?" Iana asked.

"Quite," Ilea said. "You have food, clothes and whatever else you need in your storage ring?"

"I do, but-" Iana said.

Ilea nodded and clapped. "Then we are ready to go. Come on, grab what you need for your research as well as a bunch of weapons and armor."

"Will we have to fight?" Christopher said, frantically glancing at the two of them.

"I don't plan on it but who the fuck knows what's waiting out there. Might as well be prepared," Ilea said. "If you need anything, we can quickly check some of the shops."

"No, no. We are quite prepared. My father made sure of that," Iana said as a set of dark blue steel armor appeared on her body, the enchantress' look changing to that of a fearsome warrior. Various enchantments glowed on the gear. A rapier was fastened to her belt.

The armor was obviously fitted and made just for her, reminding of Ilea's own bone armor.

"You look good in that," Ilea said and nodded to the weapon. "Are you trained?"

The girl winked, only her eyes visible. "I can hold my own. Not against a Shadow but enchanters have their own tricks."

"I don't have tricks," Christopher said with a sigh.

"What do you mean? What about the trap enchantments you made and the explosives? You finished the implosion device too! Just activate and throw them," Iana said.

"Ah yes... I suppose I could do that. I will get them, give me a few minutes," he said and walked to one of the many storage units built into the walls.

"Check C18, I made something for you. Just in case," Iana said with a giggle.

Have you been getting a little closer than just work acquaintances? Hmm? Ilea thought and glared at the girl with a smile on her face.

She didn't look her way, instead focused on the ceiling.

He may be a little old for her but if anyone is looking for someone more mature than their age, it's Iana.

"Oh wow... this is... quite useful!" the man exclaimed and looked through the pieces.

“I will get dressed immediately!” he said and started changing where he stood.

“Not very modest, are we?” Ilea asked, not loud enough for him to hear.

Iana’s face turned a little red, her eyes still focused on the ceiling.

He was done a few minutes later, joining them again with a smile.

Ilea had to admit that his face was easy on the eyes. Perhaps not the most striking appearance but it might not be fair to compare him to level two hundred mages and warriors, enough money, time and power on their hands to get all they could out of their appearance.

Compared to when she had found him, in Arthur Redleaf’s *employ*, the man now positively glowed. He looked a few decades younger too.

His gear consisted of belts and pockets, strapped onto an intricate light weight armor with bits of steel and leather. Masterful work but what else was to be expected from Balduur and Iana. The most striking part was that all the pockets, straps and belts were part of the clothes. They didn’t have to be fastened individually. Otherwise they might have very well left on the next morning.

“I think with this I can distract a few monsters. Or set up some barriers at least,” he said, gingerly opening and closing some of the compartments.

“Good. Ready then?” Ilea asked. She wasn’t in a hurry because of the request itself but perhaps there was a chance that she could be back for her morning session after all.

The two looked at each other.

“I guess so,” Iana said. “You will carry us?”

“Yes, I will,” Ilea said as her ashen armor formed, limbs moving out to grab the two. “I don’t want you to die so I’ll have to hold on pretty tightly. My healing should offset any damage you would take but I will have an eye on the both of you.”

“Going off your estimation, we would pass out and die after less than a minute of flight,” Christopher said as he looked at the ashen limbs, nodding to one of them as if it was a living creature.

“We will test,” Ilea said. “If you can’t take it, I’ll go alone.”

Ilea’s normal flight speed without charged wings was already quite taxing on the two. She was sure they would pass out after a few minutes without her healing and the ashen cocoons she had formed around them.

The test with charged wings was successful too, both of her passengers passing out after a while, their vitals however stable thanks to her continued healing. *Delivering two enchanters to Riverwatch, now where was that large fucking mountain?*

Just under three hours later, the dark winged healer reached the intended destination.

The suns hadn’t gone down quite yet and visibility was good.

Ilea spotted the town from a high distance, just a speck to her enhanced eyes but it was unmistakable, sitting next to the mountain Karth and the river flowing past.

The town was neither on fire nor besieged as far as she could tell. Enough for her to swerve away and towards the Azarinth temple.

Ilea slowed down considerably, going low and into the forest to avoid any interested eyes. Her sphere, blink and third tier wings made the dangerous journey quite simple. Not that trees would stand against her flying form.

It would be moot however, if she avoided tracks on the ground but left behind dozens of felled trees.

She did spot a few of them on the way, some likely not downed more than a few months ago but that didn't change her opinion. The temple was close enough and they soon reached it without interruption.

"Here we are," she said and checked the area. There were tracks and she saw magic residue. Nothing that would suggest humans or other bipedal creatures.

Ilea laid both of her travel companions onto the grass and pushed a little more healing into them than before.

Both shot up immediately, eyes wide open as they reoriented themselves.

"What! What happened? Where are we!?" Iana said out loud.

"How long have we been out?" Christopher asked as he cupped his face with both hands.

"A little over three hours, I think," Ilea said. "We are near Riverwatch. Far enough away not to attract any attention. And this," she gestured behind them. "Is an Azarinth temple. Past its glory."

"This is where you got your class," Iana said, already over the experience. Likely due to the constant healing.

"Three hours?" Christopher said as he scrambled to find a booklet in one of his pockets. "That is... incredible... truly. If people can move at that speed, a teleportation device becomes obsolete in the first place... storage devices would solve the wind resistance issue and the logistics of transferring large amounts of goods," he murmured to himself as he took some notes.

"The world is bigger than the human plains, Christopher. And I doubt many will be able to fly this fast, nor do I want to become a delivery girl," Ilea said.

"Of course. I am simply looking at the possibilities. Well, the enchantments you wanted to show us, they are here?" he asked.

"Yes. Follow me," Ilea said.

"Marvelous... it's healing isn't it?" Christopher asked and looked to Iana.

She nodded, moving her hand over the inscriptions, barely visible without any perception skills. "It invades whoever gets too close, thus activating the enchantment without a previous charge. Ilea, do you happen to have a skill to steal mana from someone?"

"Part of one skill does that, yeah," she said.

"But nobody mentioned gaining a drain resistance I assume? It's a healing skill," Iana correctly assumed.

Ilea just nodded.

“Can you recreate it?” Ilea asked.

“I’m not sure yet. The chance is low however, because neither of us can channel the type of mana necessary. The principles however, might be useful.”

“Perfect. The second thing is in the room this teleportation thing leads you to. A fountain that produces healing water,” she said.

“We will look at it as soon as we’re done here,” Iana said, focused on the runes.

“How long do you think you will need?” Ilea asked.

The enchantress looked up. “As long as we can.”

Ilea nodded. “I don’t think there should be anything too dangerous around. For your level at least. If something does show up, just teleport below using the enchantment.”

“You won’t stay?” Christopher asked, glancing around the dark temple.

“I have other plans. I would leave a mark but I’m out currently. I’m sure you’ll be safe. I will sweep the area to check if anything is around but I survived here for weeks on end, below level one hundred,” she said.

“It’s alright. We aren’t defenseless, Ilea,” the enchantress said, giving her a thumbs up with an armored hand.

You don’t look defenseless. But if a Specter or Praetorian showed up, you wouldn’t stand a chance.

“Good. I will check in on you again. You have food and water as well as provisions?” she asked.

Iana nodded.

“Okay. If I’m not back in three days, assume I’m dead. Go back to Ravenhall and continue your work,” she said.

“What exactly are you planning?” Iana asked.

“I hope you aren’t getting in too much danger,” Christopher said.

“Your funding will be guaranteed anyway, don’t worry,” Ilea said. “I plan to meet an old acquaintance and help out an independent city with an unspecified problem. Just don’t want you two to be stranded in case something finally manages to put me down... though it is more and more unlikely.”

“We will figure it out, don’t worry about us. I welcome the opportunity to be in the wild, studying ancient runes without my overprotective father looking over me,” Iana said.

Christopher gulped. “I had hoped it was finally over.”

“Don’t worry, we don’t plan to face Taleen. And if it becomes too dangerous, we will leave,” Iana said, patting his back.

“Well, knock yourselves out. Ah, if any Bluemoon Grass has grown in the meantime, harvest but don’t eat it. It hurts and there’s a high chance it can kill you. Well, maybe not you at this level but I would still be careful. Stay safe and I’ll see you later,” Ilea said and waved.

“You too. Have fun on your adventure,” Iana said, beaming with joy in her eyes. The dangerous looking armor gave the farewell an odd feel.

“Have... fun,” Christopher said, shaking his head.

Ilea chuckled at the sight and vanished, appearing on top of her temple. A single ashen limb moved out and marked a few new discoveries on her small map next to the compass rose.

It felt a little weird, to stand here now, where she had started in this weird and fantastical world. *If the wolves or drakes had gotten me, it would have ended somewhere here, in the woods. But it didn't.*

Her wings spread as an armor made of ash covered her. The fear and uncertainty that vividly came to her mind as memories of her first months came back to her were no more. All was replaced by confidence in her magic and abilities. The only feeling she shared with her past self that had struggled to survive in this temple, was excitement.

If only she had known that in a year or two, she would be flying through the skies.