

Chapter 890 Light and Smoke

Ilea stood up and cracked her neck.

She looked at the massive dragon corpse, knowing that all the materials she could harvest from it were probably beyond divine. Armor made of dragon scales, a hammer made of dragon bone. If any of it could even be made into something that small.

She would've liked to hang the head above her bath in the soul forge, but the thing was near as large as the entire structure itself.

But as enticing as the corpse looked to her, Ilea found that she wanted to do one thing only.

She breathed in and grinned, feeling the heat, ash, and smoke deep within, she felt the Cosmic energies running through her veins, and the power of the Primordial Flame coursing through her very soul.

The dragon, she decided, could wait.

Ilea focused on her anchor left within the current den of Icy. She used her new addition to the second tier of Fabric Alteration to glimpse through the mesh, gaining a hazy image of the surroundings. Ice and stone, a part of the elemental, its form slightly blurred. All of it seemed as if viewed through water.

She left a gate location in the valley, then activated her third tier of Teleportation, gritting her teeth as she felt the cosmic energies coalesce within and around her. Mere seconds and she was gone, and still, she felt the power of the spell. Ilea appeared and breathed in, cosmic energies dissipating into the dense mana that surrounded her.

Icy opened her eyes wide, power glowing within as she stood up, the temperatures in the cavern dropping as dense ice magic formed around the elemental.

Ilea grinned. *"It's just me."*

She locked eyes with the massive wolf.

Icy regarded her for near ten seconds, huffed, and sat back down. Though she kept her ice magic up, and her eyes focused on Ilea.

"Something wrong?" Ilea asked, in the most innocent voice she could manage through her telepathy.

The Elemental growled, both annoyed and amused.

I think I'm getting better at the ice elemental tongue, Ilea thought and nodded to herself. *"I'll be out for a while."*

She didn't wait for the being to respond and teleported past the stone rubble, then straight to the mountain in the valley beyond. Looking up, she saw a distant mountain peak and once again used Teleportation.

Ilea appeared above and landed on the stone, hearing her heavy weight impacting the ground.

She regarded the storms all around, could see the flashes of lightning, could feel the power in the very air, and she felt the magical forces moving through the astral storms. A realm of strife, haunted by insatiable planetary spirits.

But more than that, she felt the magic in herself. She felt the auras raising her abilities. She felt her muscles, more dense than steel, her bones, heavier than lead. She felt the infinite potential of her magic, the storm that she could will into existence, the fires she could summon. She activated True Reconstruction and grinned at the sudden flow of power. Health and mana, brought into existence by the cosmic energies permeating her very form.

Ilea looked down at her arms and saw the pale blue and white runes from her aura mix with thin orange-red root like lines from her Draconic Core. With slow deliberation, she summoned her Ash Scale Armor, the elements flowing out into existence, dense and heavy, ash and black glass merged and settled on her skin, a part of her now, just like her blood and bones.

Her Fourth Tier of True Reconstruction came to life, starting to burn away at her ridiculous pool of health, slower even, than before. The runes now glowed above her armor, brighter than ever. And she felt her very cells pushed to the limit of what they could take. A limit different to what it had been before, but she found it difficult to grasp, the sensation itself similar, and yet she knew on some level that it was entirely different, like an ocean to a pond.

She turned her head to see the large and armored wings spreading out as they were brought into existence. An extension of herself, just as indestructible as her armor and her skin. She moved them once, and brought herself into the air. Then she used Teleportation, three times near instantly, then another three times a second later. Into the storm and away from the mountains. Ilea charged her wings then, and shot away into the distance. She could feel the sand and air pushing at her ashen form, but she didn't slow, a glowing trail left cutting through the storm of dust and astral might.

Ilea slowed and halted, looking around herself. She charged her Fabric Alteration, and pushed outwards, in all directions. A thrumming noise resounded, as all the sand, air, and debris was pushed aside near instantly. She received a few notifications for having killed a dozen or so lower leveled spirits. Her eyes focused on the pale blue creature with three wings, turning towards her as a dozen eyes opened to regard her form.

Astral energies coalesced into a single point, before she saw a beam shooting out towards her.

Ilea summoned a single golden shield, pale blue light flowing through, a shock wave spreading out when the beam struck true. She saw the webbing cracks forming quickly, and focused out her Reconstruction, stopping the spread and repairing her magical creation, the barrier still glowing bright when the beam was gone. She dismissed it and smiled to herself.

My turn.

She focused on her core, and started generating heat.

Instantly, she felt as if her chest had turned into the molten core of a planet. Draconic Core and Volcanic Source working in tandem with her Class, creating what felt like searing heat inside of her. And despite what she felt, it simply didn't affect her. If anything, she felt more comfortable. Another second passed, another beam of astral might shooting out towards her.

This time, she pushed back with Fabric Alteration, the two forces striking each other with sizzling light. Ilea saw herself in her domain, her chest glowing with heat and magical power. She pushed more and even went so far as to increase her weight, more interested in testing her limits than in killing the weak Daughter of Sephilon.

Her weight increased dramatically, but her wings kept her floating in the air without issue. Ilea gave it another few seconds before she summoned her Wyrms Cannon, her form now glowing so bright in her perception that she could barely see, the air around her catching fire. She aimed, and released the heat through her cannon.

The energies rushed out, an explosion ripping into her when the wyrm eye used as a focus burst into a thousand pieces. She looked at the cannon and started laughing, most of it half melted, and the eye gone entirely. She knew it would recover, the cannon that is, maybe not the eye. Beyond, she saw a searing line splitting the very storm moving back in, and two halves of the three winged spirit roaring down towards the ground with twirling motions.

'ding' 'You have defeated [Ranuvil – Daughter of Sephilon – lvl 1893]'

Like a fly, cut in half.

Ilea followed, using Fabric Alteration from time to time, to push back the surrounding storm. Finally, she landed next to the piece she saw regenerating, charging heat as the undying spirit reformed.

Looking down at her hand, she focused. *Gotta get used to it, as fast as possible.*

The yellow flame came into existence, floating just above her palm.

She stood mesmerized by the creation and closed her hand, the flame gone once again.

Ilea closed her eyes and breathed, hearing the creature move again.

Opening her eyes, she decided to test something else. Her palm aimed towards the regenerating spirit, she sent out a wave of Cosmic Deconstruction.

The blue white sizzling energies flowed into and past the astral spirit, taking with it a part of its form, skin and muscle dissolved into nothingness. The next use, she charged. Five seconds for 25'000 mana. She didn't send the spell intruding into the creature, but as a broad wave straight in its direction.

This one looked more substantial. The pale light moving almost like a mesh of electricity, the connections forming strange patterns that almost seemed serene. Without a sound, the wave passed through the frozen desert, taking with it sand, ice, and a Daughter of Sephilon. All of it gone, as if it never had existed.

'ding' 'You have killed [Ranuvil – Daughter of Sephilon – lvl 1893]'

Ilea raised her brows at that.

Interesting.

But now my test subject is gone.

Looking around, she charged Monster Hunter and roared into the storms, once more pushing everything aside with her Fabric Alteration.

She charged her heat while waiting, the frozen desert thawing and soon melting into glass, merely being in the presence of her form.

When the next Daughter arrived, she didn't use her cannon. She looked at the moving tentacles of the flying squid like creature and lowered her arms, seeing the thousand eyes and just as many birds of astral light flickering into the fabric.

Just what I needed.

Ilea watched as the birds flew down towards her, waving her hands in disinterested gestures. Cosmic waves of energies rushed out, dispersing everything they passed. She saw the few birds that evaded her own magic, focused on their frameworks and stopped them, with space magic alone. Within her domain by now, she absorbed their power until nothing remained.

And then she felt the gravity push down into the desert, her wings moving to prevent her from sinking down into the cracking glass her heat had left behind. And still, she felt the glowing core within her grow. She had reached a point that she didn't quite comprehend, and simply raised her hand, all of her healing, her weight, and her resilience turning the powerful gravity magic all around into a mere nuisance.

Ilea didn't so much as aim, but more just held her palm out towards the massive floating spirit a few hundred meters broad, and just as far away, glowing eyes of astral light and writhing tentacles clasp at the fabric. An eldritch horror from beyond. An astral spirit brought down from Sephilon.

Ilea released the heat stored within her.

She saw the world turn white with fire, a chaotic maelstrom of heat and energy that burned away the very air, sands around bubbling up and melting. Three seconds, her spell lasted before fresh air rushed in to fill the void. Beyond, she saw the outer edges of unmoving tentacles, a few dozen eyes remaining near the edges of a burnt and glowing crater left at the center of the being, more than half its form burnt into nothingness. She watched it fall, the gravity no more.

'ding' 'You have defeated [Leviah – Daughter of Sephilon – lvl 2528]

Looking up at where the creature fell, Ilea used Teleportation, appearing a few hundred meters away and flying above the spirit about to impact hard onto the frozen desert.

Once again, she summoned a single yellow flame above her palm. This time, she looked at it longer. It was so bright. Too bright, she found, but kept her eyes on her creation. With every passing second, she felt as if her soul should tremble, but at the same time, it felt right, comforting. As if her soul and mind knew that this was hers to wield, hers to command, the Primordial Flame, in the hands of a human. But what remained of her that was human, screamed in abject terror, at the incomprehensible creation moving right above her palm. She focused on her breathing, one breath at a time, and soon she grinned, and moved the flame. Just a little, up and towards the sky. Then she fueled it with more health, making it a little larger. Just a tiny bit, and still, she felt as if her stomach lurched, every hair on her body standing up.

Ilea waved her other hand in an annoyed gesture, dispersing the astral birds homing in on her. "I'm testing," she said out loud and closed her palm, the bright yellow and just slightly orange flame gone in an instant.

Instead, she looked at the spirit, mostly regenerated already, and floating up towards her.

This time, Ilea tapped into the waiting storm within her, and unlocked her harmony. She breathed in, and willed her smoke and ash into existence. A broad and boundless avalanche descending down towards the spirit, searing heat and glass, ash, and smoke to suffocate and burn. Like a wave, the spirit was impacted by her creation, covered and pushed down as gravity pulled at the ash and smoke, white birds of astral energy exploding deep within the immense storm.

Ilea saw the creature deep within her smoke and ash, her eyes piercing through with Vision of Ash, the wording not including smoke and glass, but still, she saw.

First, Ilea generated heat within her, and sent it out with her Volcanic Source, as waves throughout her growing storm creation. She saw the creature's spells suffocated as soon as they were summoned, the astral explosions only bringing short reprieve from the heat and ash, the gravity not near enough to oppose her unlocked harmony.

And then she stopped.

Ilea hovered in the air, as she watched the astral explosions disperse her ash and smoke as best they could. It would take a while.

She took in a deep breath, biting her lip.

"What was that saying again..." she murmured to herself as she felt goosebumps on her arms and neck.

A light flickered to life.

As bright as the very sun.

Sometimes, you have to run, before you can walk.

Her vision turned white as the storm of ash ignited with the fusion of a star. Heat and light radiated outwards as Ilea heard her scream turn into laughter. Her health was burned away and recovered at the same time, her eyes staring at the floating storm of burning light and ash.

She felt as if an eternity has passed, when a noise resounded in her mind.

'ding' 'You have killed [Leviah – Daughter of Sephilon – lvl 2528]

She stopped her flames, as easily as she had summoned them, the world growing dim and dark before her eyes adjusted. She knew she would have been blind without her enhancements and resistances.

The spirit was dead. And nothing remained. Everything consumed by her flames.

And still, she had her Fourth Tiers up, two out of four. Her health was higher than before the fight, ten percent of the spirit returned to her by the Primordial Flame.

This time, her mind didn't reel back when she summoned a small flame before her, carefully spreading the fires across her body and ash as she tried to acclimate herself to the feeling.

Let's try it out then.

Her former Primordial Shift, the Sunbound Creation, came to life, enhanced by her fourth tier, she gasped as the light grew brighter still, her fabric bordering reality, and yet compared to before, she felt as if the mesh was there, right next to her. Her domain pierced past her veil of fire and space. She still found it difficult to move, but compared to the slow attempt at swimming through a lake of sand, it now felt more like walking through waist high mud.

She looked at the fabric before her, and she saw all. She could feel her control of space and pushed aside the astral storms, hundreds of meters of wind, ash, ice, and lightning swept aside as if she cleaned away a bit of dust that had culminated on a shelf. But she had expected nothing less, after her small bout with the Meadow.

Instead, she focused on her Pyroclastic Flow, and brought into life, a speck of ash. Not within her own reality, but within the realm of Erendar.

Harmony unlocked, empowered by True Reconstruction, and infused with the Primordial Flame. She added in her Fourth Tier Meditation. Just because she could.

Hovering there, above the frozen lands of Erendar, burning with the light of a sun, one with the fabric, and imbued with cosmic energies, Ilea felt calm. She felt good, and perhaps a little tired. It had been a long day. And she had killed a dragon.

Her spells waned as she remained flying in the air, her ash and smoke descending down towards the encroaching storm.

There were a few more things that she wanted to test, but right now, she felt like reading, or perhaps a meal. Somewhere busy. Somewhere that wasn't a wasteland wracked by storms.

But first, some dragonscales, she thought and glimpsed through her anchor to her house.