

Ilea appeared in relative darkness. She looked down and saw the glow of white fire drifting deeper into the depths. She couldn't breathe, her own fires illuminating the vicinity. She looked up but couldn't find another source of light, bubbles of air floated up when she breathed out slightly. *So that's how you think you can escape?*

She considered for a brief moment before she squinted her eyes and followed the descending monstrosity, dark shades of limbs moving alongside the burning creature. Her wings picked up the speed.

The creature sped up too, swimming in the depths of the ocean with its tentacles slithering behind its form.

A beam of heat and fire lit up the darkness in a flash, Ilea aiming her cannon at the creature, a line of white flame set alight on what she perceived as its back. Steam rose from the line of heat, a whirl following as the waters broke.

The monster stopped and floated, its many limbs spreading out in a wild motion as it focused its eyes on her. Two dozen spots lit up with arcane light, the flashes pushing through the dark waters with perfect precision, only slowed marginally by the heavy pressure of the depths.

Ilea used her wings to swim closer, teleporting through the whirls and dodging past the fast moving beams of magic. Void magic surged up around her, the waters vanishing as her form was wracked by the spell. She watched the surrounding liquid close in on her but decided to vanish instead, another beam cutting through the whirl right after. A drill formed before her, her wings charging before she sped through the waters. Once more she dodged the limbs but the forces were too much here, the waters crashing into her with explosive pressure. Swirls all around, she was flung aside, struck several times by the creature as comfortable in the depths as it was in the air.

The burning spears she shot out were lost in the vortex, exploding in heated flames to illuminate the darkness. Strange eyes stared back, more arcane beams flashing out to strike her twirling form.

Ilea stabilized herself and teleported, three times until she was far enough away from the creature's limbs. The impacts had wrecked her innards, healing spreading through her as organs, flesh, and muscle was reformed. She watched the creature move its limbs, the strange form now reminding her more of a squid or jellyfish, perhaps some mixture.

She sent out another beam, more of the flames now extinguished or removed than when they had arrived in the ocean. *And it's healing. Damn*, she grit her teeth, feeling the pressure of the water all around her. It wasn't quite as strong as what Hector could produce with his magic but it slowed her down nonetheless. And wind pressure was far easier for her to deal with than water. She sped up again, getting closer to the creature before she teleported, this time using Fabric Tear and Transfer to close the distance instead of trying for a drill attack.

Her burning ash spread out but much of it was simply washed away by the wild flailing of the beast, herself included. She spun in the darkness until she could once again stabilize herself, watching the distant creature float with hardly any flames remaining on its form. She could tell the wounds were closing too, though not quite at a pace comparable to hers. Then again the thing was much larger, it likely recovered more mass per second than she could.

This isn't getting anywhere.

A vibration came from below, a beam of white light flaring to life several kilometers away. The cone moved with rapid motions before going up, taking in the large form of the strange creature Ilea had fought until now.

She watched as the source of the light approached, the other being immediately swimming up and away at a rapid pace, its form twirling before it vanished once more.

Ilea formed a gate behind herself as the cone turned to look at her, strange whispers in the light. She still saw, but all was white. Pushing back, she came out on the surface of Kohr with a stream of water, the gate closing behind herself.

'ding' 'You were seen. One Core skill point awarded'

She sat up and rubbed her eyes, everything still white. Her dominion still worked. The whispers were growing louder. *Hell no.* Ashen limbs bored into her eyes, destroying the organs before new ones formed, her sight returning with them. The whispers were gone.

Ilea slapped back on the ground, taking in the pale light of the moon. She shivered, drying herself with her heat generation as a curious demon approached. This time she just moved the creature with her space magic, into the crater where it wouldn't be able to climb out to get her. At least not anytime soon.

What the shit was that?

'ding' 'Transfer [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 26'

'ding' 'Eternal Brawling [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 30'

'ding' 'Eternal Sight [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 9'

'ding' 'Titan Core [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 27'

'ding' 'Origin of Ash and Embers [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 8'

'ding' 'Embered Heart [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 29'

'ding' 'Authority of Ash and Ember [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 23'

'ding' 'Ashen Wings [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 26'

'ding' 'Vision of Ash [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 6'

'ding' 'Embered Form [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 28'

'ding' 'Primordial Shift [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 4'

'ding' 'Primordial Shift [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 5'

'ding' 'Fabric Tear [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 22'

'ding' 'Reality Warp [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 3'

'ding' 'Primordial Flesh [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 16'

'ding' 'Space Manipulation [Enhanced] reaches 3rd lvl 22'

'ding' 'Azarinth Barrier [Mythic] reaches lvl 19'

'ding' 'Azarinth Barrier [Mythic] reaches lvl 20'

'ding' 'Azarinth Barrier [Mythic] reaches 2nd lvl 1'

Azarinth Barrier [Mythic] – 2nd lvl 1

Channel your mana through the Azarinth Star to form healing infused golden barriers of arcane magic around you.

2nd stage: Form a powerful barrier in the shape of either a dome or sphere with you at the center. Movement is considerably slowed while this spell is active.

'ding' 'Bulwark of ash reaches 2nd lvl 9'

'ding' 'Monster Hunter reaches 3rd lvl 20'

'ding' 'Telepathy reaches lvl 13'

'ding' 'Arcane Magic Resistance reaches 3rd lvl 28'

'ding' 'Void Magic Resistance reaches 3rd lvl 19'

'ding' 'Divination Magic Resistance reaches lvl 18'

'ding' 'Divination Magic Resistance reaches lvl 19'

'ding' 'Divination Magic Resistance reaches lvl 20'

'ding' 'Divination Magic Resistance reaches 2nd lvl 1'

Divination Magic Resistance – 2nd lvl 1

Be it seers, oracles, or madmen. Undeniably there are those gifted with the ability to pierce the veils of space and time itself. You must be important enough to warrant special attention, leading to a resistance to such magic. If anything, this new ability will increase said attention but at the very least, your most private moments might not be so easily perceived.

2nd stage: You have been the target of powerful divination magic. Know that much can be learned of someone when the right spell is used. You are far more difficult to grasp and gauge with divination magic and you gain a certain sense to feel when the unseen eye is upon you.

'ding' 'Divination Magic Resistance reaches 2nd lvl 2'

...

'ding' 'Divination Magic Resistance reaches 2nd lvl 7'

Okay this isn't getting better. What the fuck is this?

"Hey, saw a strange creature underwater in Kohr. Lots of Divination resistance levels. Any idea?" she sent to the Meadow, not wanting to jump through a gate right away. Just in case.

"Open a gate to my domain if you can and are safe. But do not step through," came the answer.

Ilea did as the being asked.

Through the gate floated Violence, the little fae tilting its head to the side. It floated closer and tapped Ilea's brow with its hand.

Safe

Now

“What do you mean safe now? Was I not safe before?” she asked.

Seen

“Please. You’re being cryptic. I got the message too, I was seen. But by what and what does it mean?” she asked.

Old

Being

Primordial

Maybe

Effects

Unknown

Safe

Now

Removed

Mark

Ilea sighed, grabbing the little creature and hugging it close. “Thanks,” she murmured, not entirely sure what to make of the experience. “It didn’t attack me. Not instantly... but then the other being fled immediately.”

Effects

Unknown

“Sure. I guess it’s better to be safe than sorry,” she said, reforming the gate to send the Fae back through. It however teleported to her shoulder.

“Violence, this place is really, really dangerous,” she said.

It just looked at her with big white eyes, tilting its head to the side a little.

“Fine... wait no... I just fought a creature close to level two thousand. With arcane beams and insanely fast tentacles,” she said.

Violence.

Came the obvious answer.

“Alright. Fair enough. Violence. Maybe you can help me prevent them from teleporting,” Ilea said. “Or you can find out if they’re intelligent in some way, but my attempt at telepathy was... unpleasant.”

Small

Mind

“Yes, yes. I know you’ve been hanging out with the Meadow a lot,” she said. “Where was the mark set anyway? My soul?”

Soul

Protected

“Where then? I have super high resistances,” Ilea said.

Face

“So if I had removed my head and grew a new one I’d have removed the thing?” she asked.

Yes

Skinning

Good

“No it’s not,” she said. “But good to know. If there’s a next time.”

She spread her wings and flew up again, ready to find more of the large creatures. Next time she planned to use her anti teleportation aura to prevent them from teleporting. An underwater battle didn’t seem feasible anyway, though she still considered the skill levels more than worth it.

It took her a mere twenty minutes to find another one of the flying creatures, her enhanced flight and high wind resistance skill allowing her to cross a ridiculous distance through the wasteland. She watched as the large appendages grabbed groups of demons from the ground before bringing them up into the dark clouds.

“Any clue what it is?” she asked the Fae on her shoulder as they approached.

Stupid

Fat

Fish

“That’s your elaborate summary of that ancient creature?” she asked with raised brows.

The Fae nodded.

“You seem a little grumpy. Everything alright?” she asked.

The creature glanced up at her before it crossed its arms and looked forward.

Expected

Primordial

Only

Fish

He pointed forward as if to illustrate his point.

“Right. You want to go back then?” she asked the sulking Fae.

It didn’t reply.

“Sure you don’t want to see some major violence?” she added, poking its cheek of absolute darkness.

The Fae ignored her.

“I’m sure to get splattered. Should’ve seen me before. Gore all over,” she said.

A short giggle escaped the creature before it raised a hand to where its mouth would be were it human, a strange sound very distantly resembling a cough exited in way of telepathy.

“Sure. You stay here then and observe,” she said. “And call for me if you need help or want to go back early.”

She left the creature behind, checking all around to make sure no Ascended was sneaking up on them. The Fae had her mark however, she could get to it.

It turned out the monstrosity was indeed quite similar to the first one she had fought. It used the same beams of arcane and the same fast attacks with its appendages. Things changed over an hour later when she watched its burning form start to twirl. Instead of letting it happen, she closed the distance with her own teleportation and activated her aura. To her surprise and joy, the massive spell dissipated, entirely interrupted by her small aura.

Her space awareness allowed her to perceive the thing too. *Like throwing a wrench into an industrial power plant and watching it fail instantly.* She grinned before she was splattered against the ground, unable to teleport due to her aura.

The fight continued largely without any more surprises, Ilea whittling down the massive being with her fires, drill, explosions, and space manipulation. There were no massive mistakes to be made, her speed unable to match the many appendages and the overwhelming power of the creature. Her defenses were breached time and time again, her body smashed and splattered so often she lost count. And yet it didn’t matter. She always stood back up.

Baron’s interpretation of the thing being a bit of a stupid fish turned out to be somewhat correct, its tactics in the battle not changing in the slightest. It simply lashed out with its ridiculous power.

Like some lobotomized flying Meadow. She compared the thing to Demon Spawn, though the prospect of someone controlling them was vastly more terrifying than the small humanoid ground bound critters. Not that demons weren’t a threat in the first place, and she knew there were plenty of other types around in Kohr. She had even spotted a few three marks running around, some as large as a village. All flesh, bone, teeth, and claws. That they had in common.

Ilea watched the creature burn as she recovered some mana, its tentacles flailing around in an effort to reach her. She stayed at a distance, flying and teleporting to make sure she could react if it tried to flee again. It did not.

Instead it spread out all its limbs, a pulse of void magic flowing through the vicinity.

Ilea could feel the spell build, preparing walls of burning ash. Primordial Shift activated a moment later, the azarinth star glowing with power as a sphere of golden light formed around her flying ashen form. She could no longer move, barely seeing the black sphere flickering to life about thirty meters away from her. Time slowed.

An instant came and went, the ground shaking below.

Ilea came out of Primordial shift, her eyes reforming for her to see the debris falling from the sky, a spherical crater in the ground spanning more than a kilometer in width visible below. Boulders as

large as houses fell from the sky, a whirlwind of wind flowing in where the previous air had been a mere instant prior. Most of her fires were gone from her body, Ilea just now realizing that half her bones were sticking out of her torso and legs, some of them broken for the first time in a long while. Many of her organs were gone, some just now sliding out of her. New ones reformed below, soon covered by muscle and skin.

'ding' 'You have survived the Sphere of Nothing spell – One Core skill point awarded'

'ding' 'Void Magic Resistance reaches 3rd lvl 20'

'ding' 'Void Magic Resistance reaches 3rd lvl 21'

Fourth tier spell then, I guess, Ilea mused. She wasn't particularly impressed with the effects it had on her but she couldn't deny that the massive crater below gave her pause. The first chunks of rock now started to impact the ground, loud crashing sounds as entire hills fell onto the surface of Kohr.

"Guess I am pretty durable at this point," she murmured to herself as her bones fused back together. Unsure what's more impressive. The spell or me surviving it. Fuck, it's healing. She returned to the fight, watching as the creature continued to remove burning tissue from its massive form. The battle was far from over.

Three hours later and seven more fourth tier spells plus several teleportation attempts later, she did it. Ilea watched the large form of the creature slowly descend towards the fractured landscape it itself had created. What remained of its massive form was wreathed in flames, its limbs slow now, many of them not moving at all. It came crashing down into one of the craters, another heated beam cutting into it, followed by a swarm of burning spears, the ash spreading out as soon as it reached the creature. Now that it stopped using its magic and limbs, she could simply cover it in burning ash from a distance, slowly working her way through the endless mass of flesh.

A ding finally resounded in her mind, marking the end of the long battle.

'ding' 'You have defeated [жүзүн] - lvl 1738'

'ding' 'The Arcane Eternal has reached lvl 596 – Five stat points awarded'

'ding' 'The Arcane Eternal has reached lvl 597 – Five stat points awarded'

...

'ding' 'The Arcane Eternal has reached lvl 607 – Five stat points awarded'

'ding' 'The Ashen Titan has reached lvl 594 – Five stat points awarded'

'ding' 'The Ashen Titan has reached lvl 595 – Five stat points awarded'

...

'ding' 'The Ashen Titan has reached lvl 604 – Five stat points awarded'

'ding' 'The Primordial Arbiter has reached lvl 582 – One stat point awarded'

'ding' 'The Primordial Arbiter has reached lvl 583 – One stat point awarded'

...

'ding' 'The Primordial Arbiter has reached lvl 596 – One stat point awarded'

Ilea floated in the air. *No evolutions hmm. Oh well. Not that I expected one after what happened at four hundred.*

Violence appeared in front of her and bowed in an extravagant manner, Ilea leaving the skill notifications for later.

Congratulations

“Thanks,” she said with a smile. “It’s the highest level being I managed to kill alone.”

Fat

Fish

Hunter

Ilea shrugged. “It’s more a jellyfish really.”

The baron raised both its arms.

Fish

Is

Fish

“I suppose so,” Ilea said and looked to the pale horizon of Kohr. “Don’t think anyone will mind me cleaning up a little in this realm. What do you think?”

Violence nodded before he appeared on her shoulder, one arm on her cheek and the other pointing forward.

Violence!

“Eloquently put,” she said, flying to a nearby outcrop of salt stone. “But food first.”