

Epics of Isavoire

Chapter 2: Wynverian Pride

The arena of Rynnade was packed with crowds of visitors, coming from various nations, organizations, and backgrounds in order to witness the great event.

The Titan's Trial tournament was an event, hosted in a different nation every two years. This year was Ahsira's turn to host, and Cassera was acting as representative of Wynveria.

While Queen Zelina herself was interested in the tournament, her royal duties had relegated her to being a mere observer to these events. Besides that, the Queen was still new to the throne, and tiring herself for sport might make her too weak if a challenge to her leadership was to occur.

Cassera was ready, though. Readying a pair of fingerless leather gloves, the black haired Wynverian went forth.

She noticed the roaring of the crowd, the multitude of eyes upon her as she stood in the sands of the arena area. She could also see Queen Zelina, seated with the Empress of Ahsira, and the Sovereign of the Guardians. The two royals were alone, as Lurion's king was occupied with other business and that the Flor lacked a leader aside from their idol, Gaea.

Cassera took her mind back to the tournament. She saw that her opponent was also a woman, her hair having two tones. The outer color was black, though there was a shock of gray as well. Her eyes were a deep red color, and she seemed very composed.

"The Titan's Trial tournament shall now commence!" shouted the tournament's announcer, the crowd hushing to hear him. "Our first match shall be Cassera the Wynverian, facing off against Ife the Shadow! If both fighters are ready, we shall commence!"

Walking to the center of the arena with her opponent, Cassera looked her in the eye and saw no fear, nor any nervousness. Most trembled in the face of Wynverians, and their innate power, but this was simply not so for Ife. Nonetheless, Cassera would be relentless.

The opponents watched each other, neither making the first move for a time. They were fully engaged, however, sizing one another up and looking for an opening. Neither was hasty enough to rush into combat, nor were they unaware enough to leave themselves exposed.

Eventually, Cassera opened, kicking at Ife's head.

The dark haired combatant grabbed Cassera's boot mid-attack and countered by kicking back at Cassera's other leg.

The Wynverian felt pain as Ife's heel collided with the back of her knee, sending her down to the ground with a crash. She managed to free her other leg before rolling up before Ife could continue her onslaught.

Cassera then opened her mouth and spewed forth a trail of flame, the intense heat a danger to any who stood in its path.

Swiftly, Ife avoided it, but Cassera would not let her go. She focused on her target again before ceasing her stream of fire and attacking with a punch to Ife's stomach.

The heavy impact of Cassera's fist into Ife's abdomen made the scarlet-eyed fighter pause from pain, but she had no time to dwell on it. She put it out of her mind before she grabbed Cassera's arm and tossed her, using her own weight against her.

To Cassera's shock, she was sent tumbling through the air, landing solidly on her back while the audience cheered and gasped.

Cassera began to grow more agitated by the moment. Her opponent was faster than she was, and obviously was able to think on her feet, however Cassera was sure that she had more endurance, she merely had to wear Ife down. Attacking again, she delivered a strong punch to Ife's arm. The attack had earned a cry of pain from Ife, and a moment for Cassera to attack again. Bringing her hands together and swinging, Cassera sent Ife sprawling, before she ended up skidding on the sandy tile below her.

Ife rose, however, showing no signs of giving up.

"I'm impressed you can ignore your pain so easily," Cassera huffed as she approached. "Most I know would be stuck on the ground after that."

"I am not most." Ife's eyes were locked onto Cassera's. "Nor will I lose this tournament."

"I suggest we agree to disagree on that one." Cassera was growing more confident by the moment. "We dragons aren't known for being pushovers."

"No, but you are known for having weaknesses, as all beings do. Even if you should transform, I shall prevail."

Cassera considered it for a moment, thinking of the woman's confidence. There was no way an unarmed human could beat a dragon, not that she knew of. Still, she decided to humor Ife.

“Very well, then. I’ll test your boast!” Cassera began to focus, releasing her inner power and transforming her body into its dragonic state. She stood tall, feeling her silver colored scales begin to cover her skin. Her nails sharpened, becoming more razor-like, as her teeth became fangs and her senses started to become more powerful, much like herself.

The transformation was a sight to behold, as most gathered had never seen a Wynverian transform. While Cassera continued, she could feel herself getting bigger as her bones started to shift, her large, powerful wings manifesting and her tail starting to grow, as her legs, arms, and torso gained considerable muscle mass.

Ife watched for a few moments, knowing her opponent would be difficult, but she also knew that this transformation left her open.

Acting quickly, Ife rushed in, closing the distance between them in seconds and startling Ife, who had not expected such a sudden attack.

Ife’s hand struck with precision, hitting Cassera in the throat and halting her breathing, before Ife attacked again with a forceful palm thrust to Cassera’s stomach, putting all the power she could manage into the strike.

The attack hit so hard and so fast that Cassera felt her legs give, and her transformation into her dragon state immediately ceased. She was helpless, even as Ife delivered a stunning kick that knocked her unconscious.

Cassera’s breathing slowed, and she could hear noise just before she regained consciousness. She looked around and saw that the audience was cheering for Ife and she had lost.

Cassera cursed under her breath. She had been goaded, and her pride had been exploited. She sat up and began to rise, just as she noticed Ife was near.

Ife’s face did not show an expression of triumph or boastfulness. Rather, she seemed mildly concerned.

“Are you alright?” she asked.

“Nothing I won’t recover from,” Cassera replied, almost bitterly. “I should be more wary of trickery.”

“You should. However, I respect your skills, and thank you for the match.”

“Likewise, I suppose.” Cassera said. “However, I am not the only Wynverian who entered. I doubt they’ll fall to the same pool after what occurred with me.”

“I am aware. As I said, all beings have weakness, and I shall not lose. I do hope to challenge you again someday, so I may overcome your dragonic state and show you personally.”

“If you insist.” Cassera smiled. Ife was strange, but she was confident, at least.

Saddened by her loss, the Wynverian fighter consoled herself by remembering the experience, and letting it be her teacher for the next time she fought.