

There were two states regarding a person that wielded a Corrupted Persona.

A Stable and an Unstable state. Frost did not have this problem when it came to manifesting her Corrupted Personas, likely due to her being the Amalgam. The sample size was miniscule, however. Ber and Frost were the only known individuals capable of manifesting the powers of the Corrupted.

Nav however, understood that Ber rode between a fine line of sanity and insanity. Even prior to her entering the First State. So long as she possessed a Corrupted Persona, Ber needed to avoid generating an excessive amount of negative Nex.

Because of how new it was, Nav was uncertain until now. And they were still largely uncertain of its underlying mechanics. However, if there was one thing that was for certain –

< Ber >

< “Come dance with me underneath this moonlight. You’ll love my voice.” >

– It was that this phenomenon would become a greater deal moving forward.

Ignis became no more than an observer in a world of chaos. The violent spectacle left no time for her to shed tears for their fallen friends. She watched the last of her friends spiral into self-destruction, baring fangs, claws and levying everything they had onto one another.

The infested world of black barbed cloth animated like a belt sander, slicing buildings into giant chunks as Ber’s field of electricity was not caused by [Supercharged Field]. Rather, it was solely generated by her ability, Galvanic Blood. All else, including her Skills of the sane Ber were stripped, leaving only the ugliness of her Corrupted’s hideous form.

< The lower Ber’s mana becomes, the more her sanity returns >

< MANA REQUIRED UNTIL SANITY IS RESTORED: 250,000 MP >

< UNSTABLE >

Ber

< The Black Swan >

AFFINITY : Desire

LEVEL : 200 HP : 1,920,000 ORIGIN : Trauma ATT : 45,000 MAG ATT : 39,000
ATT DEF : 30,000 MAG DEF : 30,000 MP : 360,000 AGI : 250 RESIST : 4,200

After revealing the significantly buffed Ber, Nav then brought up the Conditions required to defeat the Blood of the Covenant.

< **CONDITION:** Blood of the Covenant seeks the Bonded. The bonds of all will be severed. Blood of the Covenant takes significantly less damage from those that are not Bonded. Only the Bonded may Suppress it >

< **SUPPRESSION REQUIREMENT:** When Blood of the Covenant's HP reaches 0... >

< **SUBJUGATION REQUIREMENT:** Nil... >

"Nav! Are you saying that this isn't even the end!?" Ignis cried, interpreting the Suppression Requirement as such.

She hoped in her heart that she was wrong as Ber took flight, her wingbeats generating monsoons as she charged straight for Frost. Her wings were spread like that of an arrowhead, with her bladed hand pointed high above, and her claws reeled backwards, primed to eviscerate the bounded Frost.

< I am uncertain. But the Archivist is desperately trying to arrange something in the Nexus. I have forwarded all relevant information. So long as you are still within the Isolation Sphere, then help is bound to arrive in due time! >

< ... and good luck. A machine like myself does not understand the concept of prayers. They are meaningless. But I will clasp my hands regardless and offer one for you >

Comparatively, Ber was *stronger* than a Woe of the Fallen Star given her buffs. So much so that the head on collision of both unstoppable entities caused their surroundings to ripple. Ber, like an aggressive cat, latched onto the bounded Frost and concealed her within her wings, singing loudly as she held up her claws.

< **Frost** >

< “People will turn their backs against friends. When the ‘mission’ or ‘ideal’ is greater than the bonds we make, then can we truly trust the people around us?” >

< Ber >

< “Ahaha! Watch my dance! How it spins! You can’t get away from my moonlit embrace!” >

Frost spoke and was followed by Ber’s distorted voice. Their conversation as broken as the world. A nonsensical exchange of words by two minds that had lost control over oneself. Ignis herself was useless. At least in her twisting perspective.

Her ATT and MAG ATT were not enough to make a tangible difference outside of defending herself from the sweeping ribbons. However, her DEF stats made her largely immune to all forms of damage, both from Frost and Ber.

She was in a way just as monstrous.

Ignis

< The Symbiote >

**LEVEL : 200 ORIGIN : Original HP : 2,280,000 ATT : 16,200 MAG ATT : 14,400
ATT DEF : 45,000 MAG DEF : 39,000 MP : 210,000 AGI : 200 (Limit) RESIST : 3,300**

< [Corrosive Binding] >

< [Bond Splitter] >

Corrosive Binding what created the black ribbons, endlessly regenerating them from external balls called Watered Bonds. Unlike the previous iteration of this fight, the cloth themselves had no name and were easily broken down. In exchange, they proliferated endlessly, like parasitic worms bursting from the abdomen of an insect.

These things were what kept Frost chained. The bonds of water gagged and blinded her as Ignis made it her mission to take them down.

Watered Bonds

HP : 1,200,000 ATT DEF : 3,000 MAG DEF : 3,000

In the meantime, as she wielded boney blades in both hands to sever the sapient cloth, Ber's clawed hand began to spin like a drill. Black lightning struck her spiky shell where they both resided before it plunged down straight into Frost's chest.

<><><> [UNSTABLE: FUTILE GALVANISM] <><><>

< "Dance, dance, dance dance dance dance DANCE under my moonlight!" >

Blood of the Covenant | HP: 29,400,000

Ber had dealt 600,000 damage to Frost in that short time span. By now roughly an hour had elapsed since the battle had started. With the way time worked within, an hour equated to 10 hours beyond.

It also went without saying that this battle would last significantly longer than all the previous combined.

< [Impassioned Rally] >

< Frost >

< "The last thing I'd ever want is to break the bonds of the people I've come to love. Rather, I wish I could just keep them close like this, bounded as one." >

Pure hatred wriggled into Ignis' heart, like a worm into the core of an apple.

She bounced from building to building, scaling their great heights as they were uprooted from their very foundations. She zipped across the world, running around the city in search for the Watered Bonds. The backdrop of the two warring giants captivated her as much as it caused her to despair.

I hate the Corrupted. I hate that it's turned you both into that. Out of everyone, it's you two who shouldn't be fighting against each other. Frost. You're gentler than that and I know it. No one else tried to help me, Ber or anyone. And Ber... you're the one who feels the strongest about our bonds. We're part of your 'flock' right?

Approaching a black sphere, Ignis extended her bony blades, using them like stilts as she impaled them from above, watching a thick mixture of water and blood burst from its seams. In the meantime, she avoided the whips of cloth, and danced around the ever-expanding web.