

The monsters responsible for the Painter's torment were equipped with these whip-like weapons above their carapace helmets, and they stroked the air in their direction when they sensed their presence. Their size was double that of the Suppressors, and they had a total of 6 muscular arms capable of crushing stone barehandedly.

Depravers

AFFINITY : Civilization

LEVEL : 125 **ORIGIN** : Trauma **HP** : 20,000 **ATT** : 3,500 **MAG ATT** : 1,200
ATT DEF : 0 **MAG DEF** : 2,600 **MP** : 0 **RESIST** : 170 **AGI** : 35

They were strong. Their MAG DEF was enough to significantly mitigate the magical damage output of a Moon.

"B-BE CAREFUL! THEY'LL EAT -!"

However, they were still *nothing* compared to them. Frost possessed the Etched Coin infused with Beating Desires. This slightly buffed her group's stats. It was miniscule, granting around 10 extra points, but she believed that it had the potential to continue snowballing to greater sizes.

Not that it mattered in this instance. Out of the eight present Frost took 4 out using her Touch of Golds, which pierced them repeatedly like a burrowing eel. Their bodies seemingly gave way to her bite; and only now did she suddenly notice that the DEF-nullifying attribute of her maw extended to the rest of her body so long as she used Punch.

Weapons? Sharpened edges? Legendary blades crafted by the finest of blacksmiths?

What for when her fists could literally *eat* those weapons as well.

Bhodie Quaint

< Exhibitory Painter >

LEVEL : 80 **ORIGIN** : Impuritas **HP** : 10,000 **ATT** : 0 **MAG ATT** : 100
ATT DEF : 300 **MAG DEF** : 300 **MP** : 3,500 **RESIST** : 25 **AGI** : 30

Jury disappeared like a specter, annihilating one as she quickly moved to free the woman from the wall. Ignis and Ber took out the remaining three as Frost converted one third into an Etched Coin, and another into hefty bundles of golden coins.

The remnants were reserved for Ignis to enjoy.

< Stats from the Depraver Gained >

< **Unique Ability Gained** >

< **ABILITY:** Heart of Depravity >

< **EFFECT:** Know what will kindle the wrong flames in their heart >

< *Right and wrong is a clash between two different hearts of ours* >

“E-Eat... My word. *You* ate them. W-Wait a second! A prison break!? What’s happening outside right now!? I know I should be thanking you first but – Don’t tell me they’re gone mad and begun slaughtering us!” The woman, who was relatively normal looking aside from her canvas-like skin and her multicolored hair which appeared like painted brushstrokes.

“RELAX. Calm down. You’re safe right now! Tch. Look what they did to you... Listen to me. You’re a Painter. Do you know Ayel!?” Frost rapidly asked as Jury helped the woman onto her legs, allowing Frost to easily heal her as Ponea watched on, nibbling her thumb in pure envy.

Unfortunately, Frost did not have the time to comfort this woman.

“Angel...? Words upon my own words! Ayel you said – Yes! YES! I know the fellow!”

“He said that you Painters can help us. Dunno how with those skills.” Cer began scratching her body impatiently. “Start talking or start running!”

“Listen. Please, don’t try to fight against us. Just answer anything we ask. Tell us everything you know. I don’t know about you, but Ayel doesn’t want these people to die. Neither do we, and I’m go hoping that extends to you and your Painter friends.” Frost scooped her up with her Touch of Gold, wrapping her various exposed flesh.

Although, this was not needed. Somehow, the woman *painted* clothing over herself. At first it appeared like body paint, but it was actual cloth much to her surprise. It seemed like the Painters had an ability to manifest their Paintings into reality; or at least partially.

The cloth around her waist degraded due to the friction of her grip as they swiftly evacuated from the deceased stronghold. She had yet another satellite in her orbit, and she hoped this woman had the insight they desperately needed to pick apart the Heart of Ours.

If not, then at least the 'plan' or intentions of the Impuritas.

"We're the same! Look at them... How they torment their hearts for the sake of their appreciation. Music should inspire! But they do nothing but quell the heart! When it does inspire, it makes it rattle so painfully you would not even imagine it..."

Bhodie uttered, her hair remaining static despite the blasting winds that threw the hair and apparel of the others behind.

"And to think they wish to do the same to the world above our caverns! You three – I thought I recognized you! You must be the fated triple identical Moons –!"

"Wait wait wait wait – WAIT! YOU MEAN BRING IT UP TO THE SURFACE!?" Res' reaction was exactly how the others felt. It was like someone had brought a knife into their chest as another Beaten Desire swept through the city.

Bhodie rapidly nodded, gripping tightly onto the Touch of Gold.

"Why else would have they brought you down here in the first place!" She dropped a major bombshell, causing them to briefly turn to look at her as if she was insane. The woman looked at them with her rainbow eyes, wondering why they looked so concerned over what was supposed to be common knowledge.

Ayel likely did not know this since he was imprisoned elsewhere.

"You three are the only Moons present in that sprawling city of impurities. Their words, not mine! But my word – How come there are so little Moons up there!?"

Impuritas wished to repeat the devastating history that unfolded a decade ago within the City of Hearts; H5. But their target was unclear. From what they knew they were probably still within the territory of the City of Diamonds.

"No Moons within the Nex Megalopolis. Nearly all forms of long-range communications are gone. The trains are malfunctioning, and the Golden Index faces a problem with betrayers... Frost!" Jury exclaimed in contagious panic.

"I know! Just... Just how many people are they planning to wipe out *this* time!? And for what!? FOR WHAT!?" Frost roared till her voice went hoarse.

She was on the brink of reaching the Third State.

"To unify our hearts into one. To reach for that glorious one true wish!"

A disturbing voice sung from the greatest heights of the city. This was Leitmotif, no doubt.

"The sacrifice of many will be terrible, but it will be worth it in the end. We are the same, Amalgam. Look at your devastation. You unmelodic murders! It is a simple means to an

end, although I do lament the death of many who could have united with our glorious music!”

Frost’s gums drew blood. There mere voice of that *thing* was as scathing as the Bloody Herrings.

“Means to an end? Do you think I’m – We’re doing this willingly!? FROM YOUR FUCKED LOGIC OF DESIRES AND MUSIC!? HOW YOU TREAT THESE PEOPLE IS YOUR MEANS TO AN END!? I AM NOTHING LIKE YOU!”

Emotions surged through her body as her heart could no longer beat. It exploded with resounding thumps. She could not believe the arrogance... and the blindness of these Impuritas. The perversion of desires, logic, and world views in this twisted world of cruelty caused her heart to brim with nothing but pure violence towards these unreasonable beings.

“Amalgam of the Nexus. And I, the esteemed star of this staging ground. Both you and I are rulers. The hearts of the people beneath belong to us; as stars! There must only be one aspiration, less we all drown. Music! Vocals! Sinew strings and harmonious cries are the acknowledgement of our superposition!”

All suddenly fell silent. Frost nearly stopped moving entirely. Something deep within her soul ate at her as the voices of the others fell onto deaf ears. Civilization... and the perversion of it.

Frost, who came from a world where it was managed, understood that even it was not truly perfect.

But here... Here in Elysia, the methods of how these creatures ruled their people... how they hurt them... how they persecuted the innocents...

And how they believed *her* of all people to be the downfall of Civilization itself because of one falsely interpreted book.

She reared her head back, her eyes sent straight to the height of the city. They began to glow like beacons.

“Rulers... *Rulers*. That King of Puritas. His bastard son. The Beholders that can’t get things right. And *you*. All of you – ALL OF YOU! IS THAT WHAT A RULER IS IN YOUR CIVILIZATIONS!?”

< The Second State Has Manifested as Civilization >

Suddenly, the silhouette of a monumental diamond grew all the way back at the Triple Paw Complex. The structure was easily over a hundred meters in size, and its beautiful luster refracted the light of the star like a disco ball, shining countless 'stars' over the complex.

Not only that, but another miracle struck!

"Doubled... What the – Everything's doubled!?" Res exclaimed in disbelief. "Our stats are all doubled!?"

"DOUBLED!?" Ber shouted

"HAHAHA! THAT'S MORE LIKE IT FROST!" Cer celebrated, reveling in her sudden might.

"Dou... Double..." Ignis whispered.

"Quadrupled..." Jury uttered in total disbelief.

The Diamond Counter's effects *stacked* with her newfound abilities that arrived in the wake of her resounding connection with the affinity of Civilization. Her Touch of Golds lengthened to upwards of 50 meters, propelling her size to colossal scales.

< **UNIQUE | PASSIVE:** *Empowered* >

< *He mentioned it only once. That there are people who, from the depths of their heart, carry the pride to resist the temptations of the world* >

< Grant the Empowered Condition onto allies within 50 meters of you, the Hired Arm, and the False Diamond >

< **UNIQUE | PASSIVE:** *False Diamond* >

< *The memento was made from glass. They told me it was worthless. But I loved it because it was a gift from my most precious friend!* >

< Those within 50 meters of the False Diamond and Hired Arm become Hired Mercenaries and may substitute your coins for mana. Additionally, the Hired Arm's stats will match yours. All coin costs are cut in half >

< This answers whether they can fight. Your Hired Arm has given them a hand! >