

82. The Girl Who Stood Up

The chapter opens with a sense of cautious hope, as a character reflects on the possibility that a recent effort might finally bring an end to the ongoing war promised by the Heralds. This introduces a tone of longing for peace amid chaos. The narrative quickly shifts to a scene where the protagonist, She huddles and loses track of her surroundings, overwhelmed by memories and the faces of those she couldn't save. Her mind is haunted by visions of death and failure, emphasizing her deep internal struggle with guilt and helplessness as she confronts the devastating consequences of her actions and the harsh realities of her environment.

The story delves into She's internal conflict, revealing her feelings of inadequacy and the toll of her efforts to help others. She is haunted by vivid memories of loved ones and victims of violence, which serve as a stark reminder of her perceived failures. Her persona as Veil, a guise she adopts to cope, is shown to be a false front—she feels unprepared and inexperienced, realizing that her attempts to aid the city's suffering have only made things worse. Her despair deepens as she questions whether her presence is truly making a difference, and whether her efforts are worth the lives lost, including a young boy, which leaves her feeling defeated and overwhelmed.

A moment of solace arrives when Wit enters her space, offering silent companionship and gentle reassurance. Their interaction emphasizes the importance of silence and understanding, as Wit encourages her to accept failure as an intrinsic part of life. He gently challenges her self-criticism, reminding her that living involves making mistakes, and that her attempts to help, even if imperfect, are valuable. She confesses her desire to become Veil permanently to escape her painful memories but admits her lack of real-life experience, which hampers her ability to act decisively. Wit's words serve to comfort her, framing her struggles within a broader perspective of resilience and growth.

The chapter concludes with Wit sharing a story about a girl who looked up at a wall and contemplated the storms beyond it, symbolizing curiosity and hope in darkness. Using illusion, She attempts to recreate the story visually, but Wit guides her to see the deeper meaning—that even in darkness, life persists, and people find ways to endure without light. This reflection underscores themes of perseverance, the importance of perspective, and the human capacity to find hope amid despair, reinforcing the chapter’s message of resilience and inner strength.

