1988. Ruin Has Come to Our Family

To the west of the crumbling castle, a vast swath of the lake seemed to boil with foam as a seething mass of dark tentacles rose from below.

The gargantuan tentacles reached for the moonlit sky like a primordial forest, each aiming to catch, crush, smother, and tear the swift enemy apart.

Or bring the enemy down to the depths, into the dark chasm of the creature's harrowing maw.

The size of the enormous kraken was so immense that it easily dwarfed the great dragon, making him seem small and insignificant in comparison.

However, the Night Singer was undeterred.

Folding his wings, the dragon dove down, piercing through the palisade of towering tentacles with dire speed. His voice resounded above the lake, making their movements grow slow and sluggish; in the next moment, a haunting song resounded above the lake, and a devastating sonic wave crashed into the foaming water, producing a deafening explosion.

Countless tons of water were displaced and thrown into the air, obscuring the view.

...It was really a daunting thing, to witness the dreadful battle between the ruler of the depths and the monarch of the skies. Reality itself seemed to contort and groan from the dire forces unleashed by their tyrannical clash, as if moments away from cracking and crumbling down.

Sadly, Morgan did not have time to pay close attention to the battle between Nightingale and the Kraken.

Nor did she have time to observe the clash between Athena and the monstrous creature, Typhaon.

The giant fin had risen even higher above the water, and then, the behemoth's fearsome body was finally revealed. He slowly emerged from the deeper part of the lake, straightening as giant waterfalls flowed from his impenetrable scales.

Typhaon was vaguely humanoid in shape. He had a powerful body that towered even above the War Colossus, Saint Athena. However, where she was lean and graceful, the monster of the depths was broad and mighty. His figure bulged with muscles that resembled tectonic plates, and his skin was covered by a natural carapace of unbreakable scales.

He had sharp, ridge-like fins protruding from his back, his forearms, and his thighs - those were like colossal blades, capable of slicing armored ships in half.

Instead of two legs, Typhaon had four flexible, pillar-like limbs that resembled long tentacles. His head was bestial and appalling, crowned by enormous horns, and there were two monstrous serpents growing from behind his shoulders, each with long twisting necks and terrifying needle-like fangs crowding their maws.

He looked like a dark deity whom the abominable Drowned would have worshiped. Morgan had never been to the Great River, so she could not draw the parallel...

However, Effie — who knew the Drowned all too well — could.

She grimaced with resentment and braces herself, preparing to endure the assault of the titanic fiend of the depths.

When the two goliaths collided, the entire world shuddered and shook.

All throughout the ruin, shards of stone fell from the crumbling walls and scattered on the piles of rubble.

Morgan winced.

Below the wall, the cloud of swirling mist was flowing up the shore, already nearing the wall. The chilling wails and muffled thunderclaps were still resounding from within it, proving that Soul Reaper was engaged in a deadly dance with the swarm of abominations.

Her insidious Aspect was capable of destroying souls directly, and Morgan suspected that that was the only reason why there were no rivers of blood flowing back into the lake from within the icy fog.

Finally, the first tendrils of mist washed over the stone wall, and she looked at the Saints of Night.

“We are retreating to the second ring.”

Naeve hesitated for a moment.

“Wouldn't that give that man more room to surround us?”

She smiled darkly.

"His forces are spread thin, too."

There was always the risk that her brother would choose to attack either Nightingale or Raised by Wolves from the back instead of going to her and her remaining Saints... however, the possibility was not high.

After all, he was being weakened by the prolonged siege, just like them. In fact, time was his most fearsome foe. And while Morgan lacked the ability to end the battle swiftly by decapitating the enemy, Mordret could all he had to do was kill her.

That tempting possibility would dictate his actions, even if he knew that it made him more predictable.

Morgan turned around.

The four of them abandoned the outer walls and swiftly reached the second defensive ring deeper in the ruins. It was situated higher than the outer wall, too, so they could see the battle more clearly from there.

So, they saw the moment when the walls of Bastion fell in perfect detail.

Even though Morgan had anticipated the inevitable destruction of the outer rampart, watching the ancient wall crumble still rattled her.

No one knew who or what had shattered the moon and brought the proud citadel of the Demon of Imagination to ruin in the distant past. However, what remained of it had withstood thousands of years of neglect and desolation, never surrendering to the wrath of the Nightmare Creatures.

Until humans... she and her brother... came.

A wide section of the wall collapsed, raising a billowing cloud of dust. Mist poured through the breach, followed by the enormous shapes of advancing abominations.

They spilled from the breach like a tide there were fewer of them than before, and many seemed to be in agony, their movements slow and listless.

Still, Nightmare Creatures had invaded Bastion for the first time since her grandfather had conquered this great Citadel.

Morgan sighed lightly and cast her gaze further, at the shore of the surging lake.

There, more creatures were emerging from the water.

These ones were no less terrifying, and yet, they were no Nightmare Creatures. Instead, they were Transcendent vessels of her brother.

As she watched, several of them retained their monstrous forms, while others turned into humans.

One figure in particular caught her eyes.

...He was looking at her, too.

Morgan gritted her teeth.

'So, he came personally this time.’

Far away, her brother smiled and gave her a mocking bow.

Snarling, Morgan looked away and turned to the Saints of Night.

“The main guest has arrived. Let's give him and his entourage a warm welcome…”