2104 Killing Tools  
  
Sunny landed on the obsidian dust in front of the gargantuan Serpent's skull, which towered above him like an ivory mountain. The lower jaw of the immense creature was buried in the dust, but its upper jaw loomed above him like a dark portal, its arch adorned by a palisade of great, terrifying fangs.  
  
Sunny let his wings crumble and dissolve, then allowed himself a few moments of contemplation as he studied the ancient remains.  
  
He had a good idea of whom these bones belonged to…  
  
They were the bones of a Soul Serpent. Not the Soul Serpent, but one of its kin.  
  
It made sense that Sunny was not unique in having received the companionship of a Shadow Guide. In fact, Soul Serpent was too perfectly matched to someone who had received the blessing of the God of Shadows — so, Sunny suspected that all those marked by Shadow God were bestowed a Soul Serpent of their own.  
  
Just like those marked by the Lord of Shadows received a small shadow snake.  
  
However…  
  
If these remains indeed belonged to one of Soul Serpent's predecessors, then it had been a far more terrifying creature than Sunny's own loyal Shadow.  
  
His Soul Serpent had grown to truly immense size, coiling around the entire great hall of the Nameless Temple when it slept. Its maw was large enough to swallow armored APCs whole, and its scales were like precious onyx, each the size of a tower shield.  
  
However, Serpent was easily dwarfed by the ancient skeleton, seeming like a tiny worm at best in comparison. The remains in front of Sunny were truly gargantuan, twisting as they stretched for no less than a dozen kilometers…  
  
Sunny was a Transcendent Terror, and since Serpent's power depended on his own… he cowered to imagine to whom this enormous creature had been a companion to, thousands of years ago.  
  
Was it the progenitor of all Soul Serpents, or simply an especially distinguished member of their kind?  
  
More importantly, had it been able to exist in the Shadow Realm without being consumed by it, or had it come here to die after its master perished? Depending on the answer, Sunny could try to find a way to summon his own Soul Serpent here without sacrificing it to certain annihilation.  
  
In any case, that was not the issue at the moment.  
  
The issue at the moment was that the shadow of Condemnation was still marching despite having become a battlefield for the nebulous slayer and the harrowing dark drifters, and all of them would reach the skeleton of the ancient serpent soon.  
  
Sunny did not have a lot of time.  
  
'Let's do this.'  
  
What he needed right now were deadly tools to slay his enemies, not esoteric knowledge about the secrets of the past.  
  
Taking a deep breath, he called upon the surrounding darkness and commanded it to embrace him as a Shell. The process was both familiar and strange — it had been a long time since Sunny ventured to construct a Shadow Shell in such a crude way, remaining in its depths as a corporeal being instead of turning into an intangible shadow and becoming its natural part.  
  
He was a little rusty.  
  
Nevertheless, the Shell swiftly built itself, embracing his body and assuming the shape of the Shadow Colossus. Sunny had to shift his way of controlling it, though, adjusting for the fact that the manifested shadows continued to crumble. They longed to dissolve and return into the essence of the Shadow Realm, and so, he had to pull and manifest new shadows to replace them constantly.  
  
From the side, that process looked quite spectacular — it was as if the Shadow Colossus was wreathed in a billowing mantle of ghostly dark smoke that trailed behind him and obfuscated his figure.   
  
For a moment, Sunny felt dire strength permeate his being.  
  
Then, he smiled darkly deep within the Shell and moved, delivering a devastating blow to one of the ivory fangs that barred the entrance into the ancient serpent's maw.  
  
His strength was terrible enough that the great fang was dislodged, falling to the ground and raising a cloud of black dust into the air.   
  
The arm of the Shadow Colossus crumbled from the dreadful blow, and he pulled his hand back, reforming it in the process.  
  
A few moments later, Sunny delivered another terrible blow, and then a third one, dislodging one more fang.  
  
Using his newfound strength to raise them from the ground and put them on his shoulders, he looked up, lingered for a heartbeat, and then leapt into the air.  
  
Landing on top of the ancient skull, Sunny pushed his towering Shell forward and jumped again, landing on the gargantuan serpent's spine.  
  
From there, he could already see the shadow of Condemnation lumbering in the distance. The beautiful trail of essence was drifting behind it like a radiant river, and a furious battle was raging on its immense body.  
  
He could not see the figure of the mysterious archer anymore, but could guess their location based on the movements of the dark drifters. There were only three of them left in the fight, while the fourth one — the Wolf — was rushing across the desolate expanse of obsidian dust to catch up with its siblings.  
  
One of the dark drifters was sticking to the abdomen of Condemnation, tearing into it with countless appalling maws. Sunny decided to call it the Leech. One more was drifting in the air like a great veil. Suddenly, the veil shrunk and twisted on itself, enormous wings sprouting from its depths — using them, the creature dodged back and avoided the grasp of the Cursed Tyrant.  
  
Sunny decided to call that one the Vulture.  
  
Another one was like a mass of seething darkness, climbing the torso with countless tendrils that shot out of its body, pulled it up, and then were absorbed back — that one was obviously going after the archer, which was evident by the arrows falling upon it from Condemnation's left shoulder.  
  
Sunny had no idea what to call that abominable thing, so he simply designated it as the Thing.  
  
Spending a moment to study the dire situation, Sunny put the fangs of the ancient serpent down and concentrated, manifesting more shadows.   
  
The mysterious archer seemed to be doing fine against the dark drifters with the bow and arrow. But the appalling creatures still continued to devour pieces of Condemnation, undeterred by the ruthless enemy.   
  
'Let me show you how it's done, then...'  
  
Manifesting a great span of tangible shadows into a semblance of a chain, Sunny altered its composition to impart a measure of elasticity to it, and then controlled the ends of the chain to wrap themselves around the bases of the ancient serpent's rib.   
  
Then, nocking one of the fangs on the chain, he gathered all his titanic strength and slowly, arduously took a few dozen steps back, straining the elasticity of his improvised string.   
  
That way, he had turned the gargantuan remains into his slingshot, and the fang of the ancient serpent into a dreadful projectile.   
  
'...Taste that!'  
  
Grinding his teeth from the strain, Sunny finally released the chain and allowed it to snap back with terrible momentum, sending the great fang barreling through the air like a missile shot by an enormous, dreadful siege engine.   
  
There was a roaring thunderclap, and in the next moment…  
  
The ivory comet tore through the black sky of the Shadow Realm, striking the Vulture from the back, breaking its wings, and impaling the appalling creature on the body of Condemnation.