2109 Vicious Shadows  
  
The titanic fist of Condemnation snapped shut, crushing the Formless Shell and killing the two Creatures of Darkness.   
  
…Of course, by the time it did, Sunny was already someplace else.  
  
After all, nothing prevented him from abandoning his Shell while maintaining its existence.  
  
If it had been a more complicated construct, he would have lost the ability to control it with any measure of finesse after leaving — but that was beside the point in this instance, considering that the sphere of shadows had only needed to be durable enough to endure the violent onslaught of the Leech and the Vulture, and therefore, did not need to be controlled at all.  
  
So, mere moments before it slammed into the palm of the shadow of Condemnation, Sunny opened a narrow breach in the wall of the sphere and held tightly to the chain of shadows that still connected it to one of the ivory fangs embedded in the body of the Cursed Tyrant.  
  
The chain drew taut.  
  
As a result, he was catapulted outside while the crumbling sphere of shadows — and the two appalling horrors that were tearing it apart — continued flying forward with great speed.  
  
To their doom.  
  
By the time the Vulture and the Leech perished in the crushing grasp of the shadow of Condemnation, torrents of elemental darkness flowing between the gargantuan fingers, Sunny was already halfway back to the nebulous body of the Cursed Tyrant.  
  
Wind howled in his ears as he smiled wickedly.  
  
'There. Go die, bastards. Leech, vulture… fools! You should have thought twice before making an enemy out of a cockroach...'  
  
Then again, he would have killed them anyway, so it did not really matter whether the abominations had antagonized him or not.  
  
…Reaching the abdomen of the shadow of Condemnation, Sunny slammed into the cold obsidian and momentarily let go of the chain to grab onto the cracks in the black stone. Folding his wings, he pressed his body against it and carefully looked up.  
  
Just then, something flashed blindingly high above and dimmed the silver radiance of the swirling essence for a moment. Following the flash, something dark obscured the view.   
  
Sunny held tightly to the cold obsidian as a river of elemental darkness flowed slowly from above, trickling onto his armor and temporarily blinding him. If he was to hazard a guess… that was what remained of the Thing, who must have been killed by the nebulous slayer on the shoulder of the shadow of Condemnation.  
  
Soon enough, the darkness receded, having already flowed past him on its way to the dunes of obsidian dust far below.  
  
All that remained was silence.  
  
The world swayed slowly as the shadow of Condemnation walked across the desolate expanse of the Shadow Realm, illuminating it with the pale light of swirling particles of soul essence.  
  
Sunny waited tensely, hiding in the shadows cast by the protruding ridge of glossy obsidian. He knew that his position was quite a bad one... after all, being far below a deadly archer on a vertical slope was not an ideal situation to find oneself in.  
  
When no arrow came crashing down a few seconds later, he gritted his teeth and started to climb up, sticking to the darkest and deepest shadows. The body of the shadow of Condemnation seemed more solid here, but he still encountered wide gaps between the vast plates of obsidian — instead of spreading his wings, Sunny simply used the chain to pull himself up and reach the next piece of black stone.   
  
He swiftly reached the ivory fang and climbed onto it, wondering what had happened to the archer.  
  
Was that damned maniac dead, as well?  
  
Or maybe had already moved on to trying to slay the shadow of Condemnation?  
  
It did not seem like Sunny was in immediate danger…  
  
His face suddenly fell.  
  
'I just had to think that aloud, did I?'  
  
In the next moment, a black arrow fell from above, almost piercing his eye. This time, however, Sunny managed to dodge it just in time — the arrow moved with truly astonishing speed, arriving almost instantaneously, but it disturbed the swirling torrent of essence particles.   
  
That disturbance caused the shadows populating the great expanse of Condemnation to shift, so Sunny had sensed the arrow a split second before it would have killed him.   
  
He reeled back, and the obsidian arrowhead scraped against the visor of his helmet, slicing it apart, then struck the ivory fang.   
  
The violent impact was so devastating that the ancient fang exploded, sending bone fragments flying away like a cloud of shrapnel, and Sunny was tossed into the air.   
  
'Damn it!'  
  
A moment later, a hurricane was raised by his wings, and he shot up through the silver radiance.  
  
Sticking close to the body of Condemnation, Sunny veered left and right, trying to make him a more difficult target. He dove into the deep gorges on the polished obsidian and used jagged outcroppings as cover, dodging another arrow a heartbeat or two later.  
  
But that was not all.  
  
While Sunny was flying up, six Shadowspawn Shells burst from his figure and followed while leaping from one plate of obsidian to another — or rather, six dummy Shells that he had created to confuse the archer.  
  
These ones only had the appearance of Shells, with none of the intricately complicated inner machinery. There was no rigid frame of bones, no tensile muscles, no elastic tendons... all of them created by manifesting shadow in unique ways, of course.  
  
Instead, these constructs were no different from the most primitive shadow tentacles, with only their outward shape altered to look like a creature. Luckily, that seemed to have been enough to split the   
archer's attention — the decoys were obliterated one after another, but Sunny managed to keep himself intact until he reached the shoulder of the shadow colossus.  
  
The opposite shoulder from where he had initially landed, and where the Thing had been destroyed by the archer.  
  
Dismissing his wings, Sunny landed on the glossy surface of black obsidian and rolled.  
  
Rising to his feet a moment later, he lowered his chin a little and looked at the figure standing a few dozen meters away from him.   
  
The nebulous archer was surrounded by wisps of black smoke, as if wearing a tattered cloak of shadows. Their figure was obscured, and so was their face. However, Sunny could feel that his enemy was looking at him, as well.   
  
Finally, the mysterious shadow calmly placed their bow on the ground, straightened, and unsheathed two long knives — one cut from black obsidian, the other from white bone.  
  
Smiling darkly, Sunny revealed his hand, which held a long, sharp splinter of the destroyed fang of the ancient Soul Serpent.   
  
Then, he revealed five more hands, each holding a bone blade of their own.  
  
The archer tilted their head slightly.   
  
Sunny grinned.   
  
"That's right, bastard. Come and get me."