2117 Supreme Strength  
  
At this point, Sunny was in rough shape. He was not going to bleed out, for obvious reasons, but pain was not the only consequence of being repeatedly cut and stabbed by the eerily sharp knives of his merciless enemy.  
  
His skin had a powerful property that allowed it to heal itself, but the same could not be said about the muscles and tendons beneath. Most of the wounds were shallow, but the accumulated damage was subtly diminishing his mobility.  
  
And that was without even mentioning the terrible state of his shredded soul, as well as the spiritual exhaustion of having to push against the will of a dead deity.  
  
Sunny felt like crap.  
  
That last blow had been especially debilitating, for some reason — having crashed into the surface of the enormous obsidian sphere, Sunny had the wind knocked out of him entirely. He remained motionless for a split second too long, laying on the cold stone, then staggered to his feet and looked around briefly.  
  
Somehow, the alien expanse of Condemnation, with its vast darkness, frozen glimmers of silver light, nebulous clouds of black dust, and jagged slabs of obsidian drifting in the cold emptiness… felt smaller than it had before, like a galaxy that was slowly collapsing under the pull of a supermassive black hole at its center.  
  
But he had no time to ponder the cosmic beauty of dead deities.  
  
Lowering his gaze, Sunny glared at the mysterious archer.  
  
His enemy had already risen from the ground. The murderous shadow did not seem to be faring well, either — it was hard to spot any wounds on their body behind the veil of ghostly black smoke, which veiled it like a tattered cloak, but the silent slayer's overall form was now much more vague and less substantial than before.  
  
As if struggling to maintain its shape at all.  
  
Sunny knew for a fact that the archer was hurting. There was the deep penetrating wound in their side and a dozen minor cuts here and there… one of their elbow joints was utterly destroyed, as well.The extent of damage was evident by the fact that the shadow moved their right hand awkwardly and sheathed the bone knife, leaving only the obsidian blade pointing at Sunny.  
  
He smiled as he massaged his bruised neck.  
  
"Why don't you use that knife to slit your own throat?"  
  
These words seemed like mere provocation, but in fact, they were not. They were an order empowered by his authority as the Lord of Shadows, and as such, carried his will.  
  
The archer's hand trembled, but refused to move in the end. Instead, the cold, frightening presence emanating from the ragged shadow grew even more intense, making Sunny shiver.  
  
His smile widened.  
  
"...Maybe not."  
  
With that, Sunny raised his ivory blade and took a step forward.  
  
The archer advanced with swift, murderous grace. Sunny could see the enemy, and he could sense the enemy as well — after all, he was facing a shadow. He had already gained a deep understanding of how the slayer of the Shadow Realm fought, so he could predict where the next attack would come from.  
  
The obsidian blade was going to fly at his neck.  
  
So, Sunny lowered his blade and protected his abdomen, instead, saving himself from being gutted when the obsidian knife suddenly struck low.  
  
He had already established that the damned maniac knew how to deceive his shadow sense, after all. Either his enemy had rich experience of battling those who followed Shadow God, and therefore possessed abilities similar to Sunny's, or they knew how to weave deception into their movements simply by virtue of being an old and devious shadow themselves.  
  
So, at any given moment, the opposite of what Sunny thought was going to happen could happen.  
  
The problem was that the archer also knew that Sunny had seen through the deception, so they would sometimes just go through with the telegraphed attacks instead.  
  
It was nothing short of vexing, as well as the reason why Sunny had so many holes in him by now.  
  
'You vile thing...'  
  
Binding the obsidian knife with the splinter of the ivory fang, Sunny twisted the archer's wrist — or at least tried to — and punched with his free hand, intending to split the enemy's skull open. However, the elusive shadow was too swift and nimble, leaning a little and taking a flowing side step to avoid his fist.  
  
Sunny tried to grapple them, but the archer slid from his grasp like a dark wind. A moment later, there was already a ceaseless onslaught of lethal attacks flying his way, and Sunny had no choice but to defend himself.  
  
He had hoped that with his enemy losing the ability to use one hand, the cadence of the battle would change. But even left with only the obsidian knife, the vicious shadow never slowed down the suffocating, oppressive assault — it was just that, now, the archer was using their legs more, subjecting Sunny to a devastating barrage of sudden kicks.  
  
Their combat technique remained swift, meticulous, supremely aggressive, and absolutely murderous. And while Sunny would not be cut by a kick, the devastating concussive force of each one was wreaking havoc with his inner organs.  
  
If this continued in the same manner, he wasn't going to win. He was going to either die, or — much more likely — be driven into such a weakened state that he would not be able to resist the will of Condemnation anymore, which was a fate worse than death.  
  
Sunny remained calm… but he was also at his wits' end.  
  
Ever since deciding to return to the embrace of civilization, he had often found himself in situations where his powers were severely restricted.  
  
However, he had never once considered these instances as an impairment — if anything, they were empowering, proving how versatile his Aspect was. It was to the point that no matter what dire limitations were placed on him, Sunny was never left without a multitude of choices on how to deal with the situation.  
  
Adaptability was king, and therefore, it was the supreme form of strength. So,what some would see as being weakened, Sunny saw as the most indisputable proof of strength.  
  
But!  
  
But… wasn't this situation a little bit too much?! Here within the Shadow of Condemnation, Sunny was not just stripped of some of his powers, he was basically stripped of all his powers. Even Shadow Dance, which had never betrayed him before, was proving to be useless against the damned archer.  
  
He was reduced to using only his fists and a sharp piece of bone, like some kind of caveman… worse even than a Sleeper, barely qualified to be compared to an Aspirant. What next? Would he be forced to use his teeth like a beast?!  
  
Sunny was seriously angry.  
  
'To hell with this…'  
  
Glaring at the archer, he smiled viciously and decided to be as desperate and beastly as he could be.