2204 Unnamed  
  
Across the wide expanse of pristine white bone, Rain was watching numbly as the soldiers around her were slowly leaving the camp to assemble into a battle formation.  
  
The Seventh Royal Legion, despite having suffered severe casualties, was at the very center of the Song Army once again. They were going to face the Knights of Valor once again, and endure the fiercest of the fighting once again. If there was something different, though, it was that Princess Seishan was leading them personally this time.  
  
Her grace and exquisite beauty were enough to take one's breath away... today, however, it paled in front of a delicate woman standing by her side. It was Saint Cassia, Song of the Fallen — the Transcendent hostage of the Queen.  
  
One of them was like the moon, while the other was like the sun. The eyes of the soldiers were drawn to the two Saints against their will, and Rain could see a hint of a strange, dreamlike emotion ignite in the numb gazes of the terrified soldiers.  
  
It was a bit like the way Ray looked at Fleur, and Fleur looked at Ray.  
  
Come to think of it... it was also like the way her brother looked at soul shards.  
  
Which was a bit strange, considering that she had not seen him absorb a soul shard even once.  
  
'To each their own, I guess.'  
  
Rain did not know how Cassie ended up being captured by Clan Song, and was in no position to worry about the beautiful Saint.  
  
Inhaling slowly, she looked at her shadow.  
  
Then, she whispered quietly:  
  
"Is there... really going to be a battle?"  
  
There had been many battles in this war, but none as frightening as this one. This one... would be the last, after all. The Song Army had nowhere to retreat, either.  
  
Her shadow answered in a whisper.  
  
"I don't κnow."  
  
It remained silent for a few moments, and then added somberly:  
  
"Whatever happens, though, do your best to survive. I might be... indisposed, later."  
  
Rain exhaled.  
  
There was a strange emotion in her heart. Something she had never felt before, and could not quite name... the word was at the tip of her tongue, demanding to be spoken, but it was not coming to her.  
  
It felt too powerful to be a simple feeling, and oddly elusive.  
  
She checked her bow, and then said awkwardly:  
  
"...You too. Do your best to survive, I mean."  
  
Her shadow chuckled.  
  
"That's the plan."  
  
He did not get the opportunity to say anything else, however, because Tamar approached her at that moment.  
  
The Legacy girl looked like she always did... well, actually, not quite.  
  
Rain had not noticed it before, but Tamar had changed a lot from the young girl she met on the Moonriver Plain. Before, her stern demeanor did not quite fit her youthful appearance, as if Tamar was only playing the adult without quite having the maturity to be one.  
  
She was still just as young, but there was a firm coldness and a dark confidence to her eyes that had not been there before — a kind of harshness that did not fit the eyes of someone so young... not in any kind of world worth living in, at least.  
  
Rain suspected that she had the same haunted look in her own eyes. All of them, soldiers of the Song Army, had it now... the soldiers of the Sword Army were probably no different.  
  
War had a way of quickly turning youths into adults, and adults into a broken mess.  
  
She sighed.  
  
Tamar looked at Rain silently for a few moments.  
  
"Are you ready?"  
  
Rain forced out a smile.  
  
"Not at all."  
  
Her friend nodded curtly, then said in the same neutral tone:  
  
"Well... tough."  
  
Hearing that, Rain couldn't help but laugh.  
  
A tentative smile found its way on Tamar's lips, as well.  
  
"Gods... I was hired to build roads, you know? How did I end up in this mess?"  
  
Tamar shrugged.  
  
"You don't know?"  
  
She hesitated for a moment, then sighed.  
  
"Listen, Rani... I wasn't going to mention anything, but since you're asking, I'll just say it. It's because you're nоt very bright. No, really — every decision you make is unwise. Actually, unwise is not quite enough to describe it. Ill-advised... monumentally stupid? Yeah, that's better. It is a bit shocking, honestly, the consistency with which you manage to make the worst possible choice in each and every damn situation..."  
  
Rain grinned. Considering how much the usually taciturn Tamar was talking, she seemed nervous, too.  
  
Her logic was quite sound, though.  
  
Rain sighed and shook her head, then asked in a slightly amused tone:  
  
"You do know that Rani is not my real name, right?"  
  
It was just something that entered her mind out of the blue. It was a bit funny, that none of her friends even knew what her name was... they could even die without ever finding out.  
  
That would be a bit sad.  
  
Tamar stopped talking and blinked, staring at her in confusion. A few moments later, she asked slowly:  
  
"...It isn't?"  
  
Rain shook her head.  
  
"Nope."  
  
Her friend seemed genuinely startled. She remained silent for a while, then raised an eyebrow.  
  
"What is your real name, then?"  
  
Rain coughed, suddenly feeling embarrassed.   
  
"That, uh... well, you know. It's Rain, actually."  
  
Tamar stared at her for a while, then sighed and palmed her face.  
  
"So you just moved two letters around? Ah... what can I even say? Case in point."  
  
Rain gave her a look of indignation.  
  
"Hey! It's... it's not easy to come up with a fake name on the spot, you know! You try it!"  
  
The young Legacy shook her head.  
  
"I don't see why I ever would."  
  
They looked at each other, smiling.  
  
...Their smiles were pale and fragile, though.  
  
All around them, the Song Army was slowly moving, assembling into a battle formation.  
  
Across the wide divide of the pristine white plain, the Sword Army was doing the same.  
  
However, before two armies met under the radiant sky of Godgrave...  
  
Three different battles were coming to an end somewhere else — far away, but promising to change the outcome of the war desρite the distance.