2215 Il Principe  
  
A tide of enchantments washed over Ki Song, pressing her into the shattered surface of the broken bone. Her wings broke with a revolting crunch, the black feathers becoming soaked with blood. Her red dress rustled, the rich fabric tearing under the immense weight.  
  
The frayed threads moved as if possessing a life of their own, however, repairing the tears a moment later.  
  
The wings were mended, as well — only to be broken once again, and mend themselves once more.  
  
Using that brief lull in the onslaught of attacks, Anvil rushed forward with impossible speed. His twin swords fell like the blades of a guillotine, one aimed at her neck, the other at her abdomen. This time, there was something different about the way the sharp steel hissed as it cut the air… as if the swords were not simply cutting space, but slicing the fabric of reality itself apart.  
  
Ki Song looked up fiercely just before the two blades fell on her kneeling figure. Instead of seeking to avoid them, she shot forward. A cloud of bone shards exploded backward from under her foot, and as a blinding flash drowned the battlefield for a moment, she collided with Anvil at a dreadful speed.  
  
The force of the impact made the world tremble. Anvil retracted his swords at the last possible moment, leaving two deep cuts on Ki Song's arms before blocking her palm with the crossed blades. A hurricane rose, cleaving the storm of rustling swords apart, and the devastating shockwave sent thousands of puppets flying.  
  
This time, however, no puppet received the wound for the puppet master. The cuts remained on the Queen's porcelain skin, swelling with crimson blood.  
  
As Anvil slid dozens of meters back, and she rushed forward to pursue, a vicious smile twisted her lips.  
  
"A will sharp enough to cut the world!"  
  
A moment later, her delicate hands descended upon the King like a crushing tide. A litany of deafening thunderclaps consumed the battlefield,fusing into a continuous roar — Ki Song's graceful figure seemed to blink in and out of existence as she moved around Anvil, delivering a hundred devastating blows from all directions in less than a second.  
  
The bone plain quaked.  
  
"A soul vast enough to encompass the heavens!"  
  
With a snarl, she delivered one last blow — the most dreadful of them yet. Five of Anvil's swords were batted away, and he blocked her soft palm with the last two blades. The impact was so terrible that a furious explosion blossomed from the point where her skin touched the cold steel, washing the world in light and flame.  
  
Anvil withstood the attack calmly, but a deep crack spread through the ancient bone from beneath his feet, cutting it like an ugly scar.  
  
Ki Song laughed as she danced away from his retaliation, her red dress flowing behind her like a stream of blood.  
  
"A heart cold enough to extinguish the flames of hell!"  
  
As he lost his balance and fell, she lunged forward with a wicked smile.  
  
"Aren't you a marvel to behold, Vale?"  
  
Scattering the five swords with a powerful wave of her mighty black wings, she mounted Anvil like a beast, raised her hands, and clenched them into fists.  
  
"A monarch among monarchs…"  
  
The first of the obliterating blows fell down upon him, causing more thunder, more light, more heat…  
  
The blades of the swords Anvil used to protect himself were already glowing red.  
  
Somewhere else on the battlefield, the dead Titans were standing like tall mountains in the storm of flying swords. The lesser puppets were shredded and cut down, but these colossal abominations were too vast, too dreadful, and too powerful to be destroyed easily.  
  
They walked across the bone plain, converging slowly on the spot where the two Sovereigns were locked in a deadly brawl, and the world itself shook under their footsteps.  
  
The storm of swords raged, aiming to bar their path and destroy them. Each of the gargantuan abominations was surrounded by a great maelstrom of rustling steel,countless sharp blades shredding their flesh in a vain attempt to bring the giants down.  
  
However, the body of a Titan, even a dead one, was as resilient as it was colossal — some were covered by unbreakable armor, some by thick layers of impossibly tough hide. Some were like crawling mountains of misshapen flesh, all damage dealt to it healing in a matter of moments.  
  
Despite the harrowing force the flying swords unleashed, the Titans did not fell… and neither did they stop.  
  
Up to a point.  
  
The hurricane of swords suddenly twisted, the myriad of blades forming countless runes around the marching giants. Then, the runes ignited with an ominous scarlet glow, and streams of ethereal red light connected them like rivers.  
  
The scarlet rivers formed nets that surrounded the Titans… or cages, perhaps. The bars of the sorcerous cages were intangible, and yet, the gargantuan abomination crashed into them as if they were made from solid metal.  
  
The bone plain shuddered as the dead giants collided against the rays of scarlet light, staggered, and came to a halt.  
  
Some distance away, Anvil was still unharmed under the barrage of Ki Song's fierce attacks. Even though the surface of the ancient bone around them was riddled with cracks, his dark armor remained intact, and his body remained unbroken.  
  
Laying on the ground, he sneered coldly.  
  
"...I am."  
  
A moment later, five of the seven dreadful swords pierced Ki Song's body from behind, while the sixth pierced her heart. Anvil released its hilt, wrapped his fingers around her neck, and shot into the sky, dragging her with him.  
  
"A marvel to behold, a monarch among monarchs — and so much more."  
  
As they soared high enough to almost touch the Cloudveil, he turned the visor of his helmet to Ki Song and said with a hint of indifference in his cold, ruthlеss voice:  
  
"What are you?"  
  
With that, he strained his muscles and tossed Ki Song down.  
  
She plummeted through the hurricane of swords like a crimson comet, being pierced and cut.A moment later, the strike of the seventh sword — the cursed sword — caught up with her, tearing the hurricane apart.  
  
Ki Song impacted the ground with a force so terrible that the shockwave produced by her fall not only tossed the surrounding puppets down, but actually ripped them to pieces. Those closest to her were pulverized into clouds of crimson haze, while those further away were merely torn into tiny pieces of flesh.  
  
A vast net of cracks snaked through the surface of the ancient bone, surrounding her like a dark spiderweb.  
  
At the heart of that web, Ki Song struggled to stand up.  
  
The six swords, however, were still lodged in her body, impaling her and keeping her bent to the ground.  
  
Anvil landed a few steps away and walked toward her, raising the seventh sword.  
  
His voice echoed from behind the black steel of his helmet:  
  
"...You are nothing."  
  
Ki Song let out a raspy chuckle.  
  
"Aren't you the kind of man to fear nothing, though?"  
  
Before the cursed sword could fall, the enchanting figure of theQueen seemed to blur as she assumed her Transcendent form.  
  
A moment later, a great flood of crimson blood rushed forward, escaping the cage of six terrifying swords and threatening to consume Anvil.