2233 Wrath of Heaven

Out there on the battlefield, the consequences of the three Great Citadels falling could already be felt.

Anvil seemed strangely unaffected, fighting in the same cold and calculated, ruthlessly callous manner — but he had to have felt his power diminishing greatly when Effie took control of Bastion.

Strangely enough, though, this significant loss could only help him at the moment… and he was in dire need of help, being pressed and battered by the fierce onslaught of the Queen.

That was because the King only lost one Great Citade, while the Queen lost two. So, while the sudden betrayal of the government Saints did weaken both Sovereigns, it actually served to narrow the gap between them, greatly improving Anvil's position.

One could see the results already.

The towering flesh golem containing the blood essence of the Ki Song staggered, allowing one of the King's swords to deal it a grievous wound. A strange wave spread through the sea of puppets, slowing them down for a few precious moments. Many fell victim to the storm of flying swords as a result.

Most importantly of all, the great fissure of the Dream Gate rippled, and then collapsed on itself, disappearing without a trace soon after. The torn fabric of reality slowly repaired itself — with the loss of Night Garden, the Queen had lost the Component that allowed her to connect two areas of the Dream Realm, as well.

Therefore, not only did the power of her Domain weakened greatly, but its presence in Godgrave was also severely diminished.

Anvil did not waste any time, pressing his temporary advantage and bombarding Ki Song with a maelstrom of devastating attacks… almost as if he had been ready for the sudden reversal.

Her titanic flesh golem, which had seemed indestructible, was slowly coming undone under the barrage of merciless attacks. It was being destroyed faster than she could repair it.

And yet, their battle did not turn any tamer. If anything, it only grew more calamitous.

If before the Sovereigns seemed to be holding back some of their power to defend themselves, then they focused on pure aggression now. The puppets and the flying swords discarded all caution to destroy the enemy, too.

The fractured bone plain quaked and groaned, more pieces of it collapsing into the snowstorm raging in the Hollows. The entire battlefield seemed to be swaying on the verge of collapse.

It could not continue for much longer…

And it didn't.

Because, at that moment, the battered Ivory Island revealed itself from the storm of swords directly above where Anvil and Ki Song were fighting.

And then, in the rattle of chains…

Came the Crushing.

An invisible force descended upon the shattered battlefield, flattening the rising tendrils of the abominable jungle and pгessing the Queen's puppets into the ground. Countless swords plummeted from the sky, scraping against the bone before rising up again, their blades trembling from the strain.

For a few moments, the cаlamitous battle seemed to have frozen.

And, under everyone's gazes, Changing Star of the Immortal Flame descended from the sky, landing softly on the ground between the two Sovereigns.

With her silver hair dancing in the air, she folded her white wings and lowered her incandescent sword. Her clear voice rang above the ravaged battlefield:

"Stop this madness!"

\*\*\*

"Stop this madness!"

Nephis spoke these words, knowing that they were meaningless.

The Sovereigns would not listen, and she did not want them to listen. All she wanted was to kill them.

How could she not, after waiting for a chance to slay her abusers for all these years?

For all her life…

And it had not been an easy one, that life of hers.

From the broken dreams of her childhood to the blood-soaked battlefield of her adulthood, Nephis had always been driven by a singular, uncompromising desire.

To conquer the Nightmare Spell and destroy it… to obliterate, decimate, and bring it to ruin.

Not because she was a noble hero,but simply because she loathed it. Nephis was consumed by hatred, shaped by it…

She was no hero.

And yet, she had to pretend to be one. Because no one could survive the ruthless world of the Nightmare Spell alone. She needed the support and faith of those who believed in her to destroy it, just as much as they needed her… and she needed to obliterate those who stood in her way.

That was why the Sovereigns had tо die. Not because they had ruined her family and haunted her childhood nightmares like monsters, but simply because they were... inept. They might have been great and brilliant once, but they had lost their way.

One did not exclude the other, though.

Today, she was going to remove an obstacle on the path to fulfilling her ardent desire.

And she was also going to have her revenge.

Looking at them — the proud King in his vermilion cloak, the Queen hiding inside her grotesque golem — Nephis could feel it.

A roaring flame igniting in her soul, drowning her mind, and engulfing her heart.

The flame of wrath, the flame of hatred.

Scorching, overwhelming... impossible to deny.

And so, telling them to stop felt like torture, because Nephis wanted nothing more than to carve their souls and bodies with her sword.

These ghouls… she had endured tolerating their existence for too long.

Today, they were going to die. Her will was absolute.

Looking at her, Anvil suddenly let out a low chuckle.

"And what if we don't stop, Nephis?"

She looked at him, lingered for a moment, and then pointed her sword at him.

"Then, I will stop you."

There was more she had to say… an entire speech, in fact, that Cassie and Sunny had prepared far in advance. A clever argument that listed all the crimes the Sovereigns had committed, advocated for the safety of the Awakened soldiers, hammered down the senselessness of a civil war, and painted a rosy picture of the future.

For everyone interested to hear.

But Nephis could not wait anymore. She had waited for too long, already.

Words were cheap, anyway. Her actions would speak louder.

Anvil looked at her silently, then asked in a cold voice:

"Is it really wise, to point a sword that I myself forged at me?"

With that, her sword — the Kinslayer — suddenly moved on its own. Flying from her hand, it rushed to Anvil and turned to point at her own chest, hovering above his shoulder.

Just as expected.

Nephis smiled as she dismissed it.

"If you insist… I'll kill you with a better sword, forged by a better smith…"

She summoned the Blessing.