2241 Fleeting Star  
  
After listening to Anvil reveal the depths of his madness, something inside Sunny switched… or maybe snapped. He was not sure.  
  
There was a line that could not be crossed, and hearing the King of Swords boast about brutalizing an innocent child… Nephis… as if it was some kind of crowning achievement had crossed the line for Sunny.  
  
A storm of emotions raging in his heart settled, and a swarm of thoughts weighing on his mind was quelled. All that remained was a cool, silent darkness of uncompromising killing intent.  
  
Before, Sunny had been worried about how to kill Anvil and survive.  
  
Now, he only cared about killing him…  
  
No, caring was not the right word. It suggested the possibility of a different outcome, but Sunny knew without a shadow of doubt that his enemy would die… it was an axiom, a self-evident truth. All he had to do now was shape the world to fit that truth.  
  
That was something he could handle.  
  
Sunny was the most honest man in two worlds, after all.  
  
His body was wounded and pulsing with pain, and his enemy was superior to him… his enemy was Supreme. But it did not matter.  
  
'Life is just the prelude to death…'  
  
As two of Anvil's dreadful swords forced Saint and Nightmare back and the Sovereign himself descended upon Sunny, he allowed the cursed blade to pierce his armor and sink into his flesh. The pain was exquisite.  
  
Grabbing Anvil's wrist, Sunny smiled behind Weaver's Mask.  
  
'...and war is just the key to open its gates. Got you, bastard.'  
  
When he spoke, his voice sounded sinister and full of malice:  
  
"Do you feel at home on this battlefield, heir of War? Well, allow me to invite you into my world then."  
  
With that, he strengthened his grasp…  
  
And pulled Anvil into the shadows.  
  
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Some distance away, Nephis was locked in a dire battle against the Queen. The titanic flesh golem pursued her with eerie grace and bestial fury, and all she could do was flee,retreating further as further while lashing out against the monstrous creature with searing rays of pure white flame.  
  
The Blessing was complimenting her Aspect flawlessly.  
  
Now that she had assumed the form of the radiant spirit, her bound sword seemed to be forged from pure light as well. Just like Nephis herself was augmented by the titanic power of her soul flame, its incandescent blade was augmented by the white flames too… in fact, it benefited from their ferocious power even more due to the [Flame Conduit] trait.  
  
The very same trait allowed Nephis to channel her fire through the blessed blade, condensing it into incinerating rays that span hundreds of meters in length. That was how she was able to contend against the towering flesh golem despite being much smaller, and that was how she had managed to deal it grievous wounds.  
  
Sadly, those wounds simply healed a few moments after being dealt. The scorched flesh was discarded, and the cut tissue was repaired. The Queen never slowed down, never faltered, and never let up her fearsome assault.  
  
Nephis raised her sword once more.  
  
Her world was stark and pure, devoid of all distractions. There was only her and her enemy… everything else was washed away by pain.  
  
The harrowing agony of her Flaw was familiar, but the pain of having her body and soul ravaged by the talons of the flesh golem was new.  
  
Nephis was able to move incredibly swiftly in the radiant spirit form, soaring through the carnage of swords as she circled the Queen and evaded her obliterating attacks — but she had not managed to evade all of them. Usually, she would have been able to heal any wound dealt to her, and this partial Transcendent form оf hers was more or less immune to physical attacks, anyway…  
  
However, every time the Queen managed to strike Nephis, there were gruesome marks left on her body and on her soul… on her very spirit, perhaps. As if she was being cut not simply by the Queen's talons, but also by her Will.  
  
'It hurts…'  
  
But pain was just pain.  
  
More importantly, Nephis was overcome by suffocating wrath because of how powerless she was in the face of Ki Song. Nothing she did dealt any lasting damage to the eerie flesh golem, while the marks left on her by Ki Song were refusing to heal.  
  
She was losing.  
  
Some distance awаy, Sunny seemed to be slowly succumbing under the steel storm unleashed by Anvil, too. Further still, the two great armies were slowly melting in the flood of abominations — the snow still swirled in the fissures of the ancient bone, but the Shadow that had summoned it was already gone, having turned into a serpentine sword. The jungle was yet to recover, but it would shake off the frigid frost soon.  
  
The Great Nightmare Creatures that had escaped from the Nameless Temple were dying.  
  
Time was running out for Neph's defiant rebellion — and for the great armies as well, perhaps.  
  
She could feel it, even through the pain…  
  
The flames of their hope, which burned brighter and brighter still the deeper countless soldiers fell into the dark, dreadful abyss of despair.  
  
'There is no point in holding back anymore.'  
  
Nephis poured her flames into the Blessing once again and swung her incandescent sword, unleashing a blinding jet of condensed flame from its blade. The white ray stretched high into the dark sky and then fell, leaving a deep wound on the Queen's titanic body.  
  
Using the momentary lull in the barrage of attacks, Nephis dashed away, flying high above the fractured battlefield.  
  
She had almost reached the edge of the massive chasm that had been caused by the Ivory Island's fall when the Queen caught her. Nephis twisted and summoned a devastating explosion, using the shockwave to slow down the flesh golem's attack — however, its enormous hand still reached her, the sharp talons tearing her flaming body apart.  
  
A flower of white flame in the dark sky as fire leaked from her gruesome wounds like blood.  
  
Suppressing a scream,Nephis forcefully contаined the fire and coalesced her torn form back into its previous shape, then used her momentum to circle around the Queen. Before the flesh golem could turn, she delivered another cut — this one aimed at the ankle of the titanic creature.  
  
'Fall!'  
  
The ray of light sliced cleanly through the Queen's leg. The wound would heal itself moments later, no doubt, but for the moment, the flesh golem had lost its balance.  
  
And as Nephis dashed forward, using herself as the epicenter of a violent explosion, another shockwave slammed into the titanic creature…  
  
Sending it stumbling over the edge of the chasm, into the billowing white veil of swirling snow.  
  
As the Queen plummeted into the depths of the Hollows, Nephis hovered above the chasm, shining like a radiant star in the boundless darkness of the vast starless sky.  
  
Then, she aimed the blade of the Blessing down…  
  
And ignited her soul.