2244 Seventh Strike  
Deep in the embrace of shadows, Sunny was being cut apart as he was tearing Anvil apart. The two of them were destroying each other, both indifferent to the harrowing pain of their souls coming undone.  
However, the indifference of one was different from the other.  
Anvil did not care about anything, while Sunny cared about killing him too much to be bothered by the pain.  
'Die, die…'  
He would have laughed if he had a mouth capable of laughing, but while his formless shape possessed a hundred maws, all of them were mute.  
There was no sound in the world of shadows, only silence.  
'Die!'  
He shredded Anvil's armor and mangled his soul, drowning in agony and dark glee… but as much as Sunny abandoned himself to the fervor of battle, his mind remained cold and calm like a still lake.  
Even as the King's sword cut him, he was calmly calculating how to kill the King of Swords.  
Sunny had a hint of suspicion that Anvil had rambled about forging Nephis into a flawless blade for a reason. It was most likely a true glimpse into his twisted thoughts, but at the same time, Sunny would not put it past the insidious Sovereign to have said it aloud in order to undermine his composure.  
If so, it had backfired spectacularly…  
But even then, the more Sunny cаlculated the odds, the colder he felt.  
Because he saw no possibility of winning.  
Anvil… was simply too tyrannical, his Will too sharp of a weapon.  
Even as his soul was being torn, Anvil was growing more accustomed to fighting in the world of shadows. And as they plummeted deeper and deeper into the lightless expanse of the Shadow Realm Fragment, angry red runes ignited on his black armor, causing the shadows to ripple and part.  
Anvil opened his mouth, and against all laws, the silence of the lightless abyss was broken by a sound.  
"Enough."  
Grasping Sunny's shapeless form with one hand, he raised his sword and brought it down…  
Cutting the very shadows with its blade.  
In the next moment,Sunny was violently thrown back into the material world.  
He rolled on the splintered bone, groaning as his battered body hit the ground. By the time he rose to his feet, Anvil was already stepping out of the severed shadows.  
His armor was whole, and his vermilion cloak moved languidly in the wind.  
Even though Sunny knеw that his enemy's soul received grievous wounds, outwardly, Anvil looked utterly unscathed.  
'Ah… that rotten bastard…'  
The battlefield had changed while they were struggling in the shadows. The fractured battlefield was crumbling, smoke and an angry white glow rising from the jagged cracks on its surface. The Hollows below were a sea of embers and fire. Far away…  
'What… the hell is that?'  
A colossal figure towered above the bone plain, its vaguely feminine shape both harrowing and eerily beautiful.  
A flash of white radiance illuminated the towering creature, and that was all Sunny had time to see, since Anvil's sword whistled past his neck.  
He would have been beheaded if he had reacted a split second later.  
Sunny reeled back and deflected the next blow with his odachi, grimacing under Weaver's Mask as his tattered soul pulsed with pain.  
Anvil smiled coldly.  
"Your world, huh? What a dreary place…"  
He was suddenly just a step away, batting Sunny's sword to the side. In the next moment, Anvil kicked him with devastating force, sending Sunny flying dozens of meters back.  
He crashed onto the surface of the bone, bounced like a pebble, and slid dozens of meters more.  
Sunny jumped to his feet almost instantly, but by the time he regained his balance, Anvil was already upon him.  
The dreadful sword cut the air.  
"I should commend you, though… such spirit! I am actually in pain."  
Sunny dodged and tried to deliver a blow of his own, but Anvil dodged it with an easy step and spoke evenly, a chilling threat hiding in his cold voice:  
"...What shall we do about that?"  
'Why are you talking so much?'  
Sunny laughed.  
"I heard dying is a good cure for pain,King of Swords. Let's do that."  
Anvil smiled darkly.  
"Still insolent, I see…"  
With that, his sword lashed out, suddenly encompassing the whole world.  
This time, Sunny could not escape.  
The cursed sword seemed to pierce his very essence, cutting his courage apart.  
Suddenly, Sunny felt terror grasping his heart.  
The next strike cut his determination, and Sunny staggered, suddenly unsure of why he was still resisting the inevitable.  
The third strike cut his hope, and in that moment, Sunny knew that he stood no chance. What was he thinking about? A mere Saint could not defeat a Sovereign. It was impossible.  
Serpent suddenly felt heavy and unwieldy in his hands, and his pain — both physical and mental — became overwhelming.  
He gгoaned.  
The fourth strike cut his killing intent…  
Or rather, tried to.  
Instead, the cursed blade came to a screeching halt and bounced back, failing to destroy its target.  
Full of terror, hesitation, and hopelessness, Sunny took an unsteady step and looked up at the towering figure of the King. His hands trembled.  
…And yet, he forced himself to smile despite the dread, doubt, and despair that had conquered his heart.  
'I'll kill him... I must kill him… I must...'  
His shaking voice escaped from behind the fearsome mask:  
"Are you ready to die?"  
Was he ready?  
Anvil shook his head.  
"How stubborn."  
The fifth strike cut space itself.  
'What…'  
The space was suddenly warped. It seemed like even Anvil could not destroy the Shadow Realm Fragment, but being the inventive craftsman that he was, he found a way to displace a part of it.  
There was darkness behind them, and there was darkness in front of them… but in the space where Sunny and Anvil stood, the harsh radiance of the overcast sky poured from above, and the familiar heat enveloped them like a suffocating veil.  
Sunny was blinded by the light.  
He was also robbed of the power that had been bestowed upon him by the Shadow Realm Fragment,and lost connection to the source element that nourished him.  
The sixth strike was quite mundane, piercing his abdomen and throwing Sunny to his knees.  
Pulling his sword back, Anvil looked down at him with a cold expression and said in an indifferent tone...  
"Rest in peace, Lord of Shadows."  
The cursed blade fell down.