2246 Children of War  
Far below, on the ground, Sunny was slowly losing the struggle against Anvil. The tip of the bloodied sword was already pressed against his neck, piercing the skin.  
The blood was slowly flowing up the blade, trying to return to its source… however, his trembling hand was too mangled to contain it. His grip was still crushing, though, preventing the cursed sword from moving any further.  
In that moment, tormented by desperation and pain, Sunny suddenly saw it clearly… the Will, and the way the King of Swords wielded it.  
The vague shape of the path to Supremacy.  
Disjointed pieces of knowledge and the things he had observed all came together, falling into place.  
And suddenly, it all made sense.  
His eyes narrowed.  
It all made sense, but Sunny still did not know what he had to do. What he gained was not a map, but rather all the necessary tools he needed to draw the map — and then chart a course to his destinations across it.  
If only he had time…  
But there was no time.  
He was going to be killed in mere seconds.  
Sunny gritted his teeth, desperate and refusing to give up.  
'No, no, no…'  
And just then, a miracle happened.  
Far above, the clouds of Godgrave parted, and rays of annihilating light poured down from the white abyss of the incandescent sky. The Fragment of the Shadow Realm endured them with cold indifference, remaining as dark and lightless as it had always been.  
But Sunny and Anvil were currently devoid of its protection.  
Sensing the clouds breaking above them, the King of Swords looked down at Sunny with cold contempt and pushed her sword forward with tyrannical force. He must have hoped to finish the job before the light reached them, but Sunny refused to be killed. The sword did not move.  
However…  
The annihilating light did not reach them, either.  
High in the sky, the storm of rustling swords shifted, and both of them were suddenly drowned in shadows. Shifting his gaze up, Sunny saw the flying swords forming a vast,impenetrable shield above them — the enchanted blades were pressed tightly against each other, so that no gap was left between them, and therefore, no light reached the ground below.  
Of course, the sky of Godgrave was not forgiving enough to be stopped by a barrier of mere steel, enchanted or not.  
Already, there were isles of angry red glow spreading across the surface of the celestial shield. Glowing drops fell down, and soon, molten metal rained from the sky.  
The swords were being annihilated, but there were so many of them that, for now, the barrier held.  
It was not going to last long, though.  
Sunny lowered his gaze and looked at Anvil, feeling the cursed blade scrape against the bones of his hand and sink deeper into his neck.  
He was drawing the map feverishly.  
…And then, he saw it.  
He finally understood how to attain Supremacy.  
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Far above, Nephis was drifting in the harrowing white abyss оf the godless sky.  
There was no wind here, no hope, and no salvation. Only silence and blinding radiance that went beyond fire, beyond light, beyond heat. That radiance was destruction incarnate… it was destruction itself, a force from before time existed that was capable of erasing entire worlds from existence. Of erasing existence itself.  
Nephis was burning.  
Her body was made of flame, but even that flame was being destroyed.  
Her soul was turning to ash, and the ashes of her soul were turning into nothingness.  
There, in that merciless white abyss…  
Nephis lost her body, her mind, her soul. Her very self was stripped bare and cleansed of everything, until nothing but her naked spirit remained.  
Her spirit began to crumblе, as well.  
But she still had the will. Her will had been born from pain, from flame, from conviction…  
From longing.  
And so, she willed herself into existence.  
She willed herself to be reborn from the fire, to be blessed by the fire.  
She spoke the True Name of destruction, warding herself from being destroyed.  
Even as Nephis burned,she healed herself, and burned again…  
Maintaining a tenuous state of equilibrium, neither dead nor alive, she continued to exist — for now. She knew that she would not be able to prevent herself from dissolving into white radiance with her sheer will for long. Her will was not inexhaustible, after all.  
It was not absolute.  
But in that moment between life and death, Nephis finally saw the path to Supremacy.  
She knew what she had to do, and what her will had to become.  
'I have to survive!'  
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'I have to die.'  
That was his answer.  
It was so simple, but Sunny had remained blind to it for so long.  
Anvil's blade sank deeper into his neck. Molten metal rained from the sky, and far above, the barrier of swords was falling apart. Rays of light were already falling on the surface of the ancient bone.  
Sunny had to die, but he could not allow himself to be killed. There was a trick to it all — at least there was for him.  
He was going to cheat his way to Supremacy. That was his act of defiance.  
Still, death was cruel and terrifying, even for someone who had died as many times as Sunny had. He had cheated death on plenty of occasions, always finding a way to stay alive…  
But this time was different. It had to be.  
This time, he had to die in earnest, with no deception or trickery involved... only truth.  
It was so absurd that he wanted to laugh… he would have, if not for the few centimeters of cold steel currentlу piercing his neck.  
Still, Sunny smiled crookedly behind Weaver's Mask.  
He opened his mouth and asked in a hoarse voice, straining to make himself heard:  
"Hey, King of Swords… do you wish to kill me?"  
Anvil looked at him coldly.  
"I do. I will."  
Sunny couldn't help it, after all, and let out a stifled, sinister laugh.  
The cursed blade cut him, and he grimaced.  
A dark, murderous fury rose like a pyre in his heart.  
Sunny spat:  
"Listen, you wretch… you can't kill me. You are not worthy enough to kill me."  
He mustered what little remained of his strength,arduously pushing Anvil's sword a few centimeters back for a moment.  
"A man worthy of killing me has not been born in this world, yet."  
Kneeling, bleeding, utterly broken, Sunny looked up at Anvil and laughed agаin.  
"And never will be. I am the heir of Death, you fool. Did you really think that you could kill Death?"  
The only thing that could kill Death was Death itself.  
As brilliant light illuminated them, forcing Anvil to freeze, Sunny raised Serpent with his free hand.  
The black odachi rippled, turning into a ghostly stiletto.  
And just as his arm started to crumble into ash…  
Sunny grinned, turned the blade of the stiletto against himself, and plunged it into his own heart.