2266 Out of Time  
Sunny remained silent for a while, then nodded.  
"I think that's it. I might be forgetting something, but overall, that is how being Supreme is different from being a Saint. I'd say, overall... I feel like a demigod. No, actually, I feel like a god. Because my point of reference is being a mundane human, not an actual deity. From the point of view of a mortal man, my power is no different from that of a god. Of course, from the point of view of a god, I'd probably seem like a child."  
He looked into the distance.  
“But it’s... it's different. The way I am. Because of how domineering my Will is, the world feels far more malleable than before. And I also feel them all, at every waking moment... my shadows. My connection to them is subtle, but it is always there. As if tens of thousands of voices are whispering quietly into my ears. I can also sense them all — moving, fighting, killing. It is as if I have tens of thousands of bodies and hundreds of thousands of eyes. It is enough to drive a man mad, to be honest.”  
Sunny's expression turned somber.  
“It is even worse for Nephis, whose Domain includes billions of people. The longing, their desires wash over her like an ocean, and although she rarely speaks about it, I know that she sometimes struggles not to drown in that ocean.”  
He sighed.  
“Sometimes, I wonder... how much we will change as time goes on."  
Eurys stared at him for a while, then clicked his jaw.  
“Ah, but that is the bane of being a demigod, boy. Уou are not quite a mortal, but you are not quite a god either. That is the burden all Supreme humans have to bear. Or maybe it is a blessing — because that burden will gradually make you less and less human.”  
Sunny frowned, then stared at him darkly. “Less and less human? What do you mean? How is that a blessing?"  
The ancient skeleton let out a creaky laugh.  
“Well, you asked me about the Apotheosis, didn't you? The step of becoming a Spirit — a Sacred being, so to say. You described how different being Supreme feels from being Transcendent, but, boy... being Sacred is an entirely different state of existence. Apotheosis is the act of becoming a deity... a god. A lesser deity and a minor god, but still something fundamentally different from a mortal. It is as much about your consciousness and your capacity to encompass the vastness of it all as it is about the quality of your soul and your  
power."  
Eurys shook his skull.  
“A Supreme is someone who expands their soul to dominate a portion of the world. A Spirit is someone whose soul can encompass the whole world. Needless to say, that is not something a human mind, a human self can withstand. So, that is why becoming less human can be a blessing for a Supreme — because it changes them gradually, slowly turning them into beings capable of attempting Apotheosis. Veгy few ever succeed in that attempt, of course.”  
Sunny remained silent for a while, trying to come to terms with what he just heard.  
‘Becoming less human..."  
A shiver ran down his spine.  
Sunny cherished his humanity quite a lot. More than that, losing it sounded frightening — because it was an integral part of his being. Losing some of his humanity was no different from losing himself.  
And losing himself was no different from death.  
It was quite ironic to say, but even despite having killed himself once... Sunny was still afraid of death, just like any human would be.  
He couldn't help but remember Anvil and Ki Song, whose inhuman callousness had been the very reason he hated them so much.  
But still, still...  
It was not like he or Nephis had a choice. They had to become Sacred. They would not be able to survive or save those they cared about otherwise.  
He drank his luxurious wine in dead silence for a while, then asked somberly: “So, how does one go about attempting Apotheosis?"  
Eurys stared at him a bit and pretended to let out a sigh.  
“I am sorry to say this, boy... but you have absolutely no chance of becoming Sacred."  
Sunny was surprised. He looked at the ancient skeleton with raised eyebrows, then frowned.  
“Huh? Aren't you undeгestimating me too much? I thought you'd know by now that I can accomplish quite a lot, as long as I put my mind to it."  
Eurys just shook his skull.  
"No, no. I will be the first one to admit that you are a startling existence, boy... a singular talent even by the standards of my tumultuous era. I have no doubt that you would have had a good chance of becoming Sacred — or even Divine — in normal circumstances. But that's just the thing. Your circumstances are not exactly normal, are they?"  
Sunny's scowl deepened.  
"Sure, I guess. But what exactly do you mean?"  
Eurys stared at him for a bit, then spoke neutrally:  
“Why, I mean time, of course. As I already mentioned, becoming someone capable of attempting Apotheosis is a slow and gradual process. There is no way to cheat that process, no way to solve the problem with brute force. The only thing you can do is spend a great amount of time preparing yourself, experiencing the world, seeking enlightenment, and learning to perceive existence as a god instead of a mortal. That can take thousands of years... centuries, at least."  
His tone turned wistful.  
“But didn't you say that your world might not even last a mere decade? No matter how much of a genius you are, you won't be able to fundamentally transform yourself into a being worthy of becoming a deity in a measly decade. Let alone actually becoming one — there are plenty of insurmountable obstacles on the path to Apotheosis other than simply being suitable to attempt it. Obstacles that you have neither time nor resources to overcome. So... sorry. I'll have to disappoint you today.”  
Sunny studied him for a few moments, then sighed and looked away.  
He stayed quiet for a while, finishing his wine in silence.  
Once the bottle was empty, Sunny shook his head.  
"You say that there is no way to cheat the process, but you are wrong. There is one way."  
There was the Nightmare Spell.  
However, therein lay the problem.  
Sunny, after all, was not a carrier of the Nightmare Spell anymore.  
Even if he wanted to attempt the Fifth Nightmare, he simply could not. The Spell would not send him into a Nightmare, and all he would get for approaching a Seed was an irrеsistible dose of Corruption. Uttering a curse, Sunny tossed the empty bottle into the depths of the ivory maze. Then, he sighed, disappeared from his chair, and returned a second later with the bottle in hand.  
Whether he was Supreme or not, there was no excuse for littering. Sitting down once again, Sunny frowned and looked at the distant radiance of a fierce  
essence storm.  
‘How... troublesome.’  
His mood had turned somber.