2267 Unwelcome Choice  
  
Sunny remained silent for a long time, looking into the distance with a somber expression on his pale, eerily beautiful face.   
   
His eyes were drowning in darkness.   
   
"So that is how it is..."   
   
A heavy sigh escaped from his lips.   
   
Against all odds, he had become a demigod — a being of such great and dreadful power that almost no one else could ever hope to endure its crushing weight. A walking calamity of apocalyptic proportions... a creаture who was much closer to a mythical force than to a mortal man.   
   
He had gone from being a nameless slave to being a king...   
   
A nameless king, but a king nevertheless. And yet, in the Age of the Nightmare Spell, even that great power was not enough. Simply being Supreme was not enough to achieve his purpose.   
   
Which meant that he had to grow stronger... but to do that, he had to become a carrier of the Nightmare Spell again. He hаd to possess a True Name again. He had to become entwined into the vast tapestry of fate... again.   
   
That was easier said than done.   
   
In truth, there was only оne way that Sunny knew of — and even then, he could not be sure that it would work.   
   
That way, of course, was to hunt down the Vile Thieving Bird and get his fate back from its talons.   
   
That odious thing was a Cursed Terror, though... and he had a sinking suspicion that even among the dark deities of the Dream Realm, the loathsome Thieving Bird was a singular existence. Otherwise, it would not have survived being hated both by the gods and by those who dwelled in the Void.   
   
It would not have been able to steal Weaver's eye, and it would not have been able to resurrect itself by crawling its way back to reality from the depths of a Nightmare — which was what had happened, most likely.   
   
Sunny had not even defeated a Cursed Beast, yet. But even if he could brave the Nightmare Desert, enter the real Tomb of Ariel — which he most likely would, considering the future version of himself he had encountered in the Estuary — and somehow slay the Thieving   
Bird...   
   
Sunny was not sure that he wanted to. After all, getting his fate and True Name back would give him something he wished for desperately... but it would also give him something that he had strived to escape desperately.   
   
One had to be careful what they wished for.   
   
After reclaiming his fate, Sunny would be remembered by those he cared about... but he would also become chained by the Shadow Bond again.   
   
"Ah, how poetic!"   
   
He smiled bitterly and shook his head. Sunny did not know if he wanted to have his fate back. He felt ambivalent about the whole ordeal... that was why he had taken steps to prepare for his eventual return to the Tomb of Ariel, but also why he did not press the issue, allowing himself to go with the flow of events and remain indecisive. Natural Apotheosis was not completely out of the question yet, еither, precisely because of the nature of the Tomb of Ariel. Eurys had said that one needed time to become a Spirit — that was what humans of the Sacred Rank were called, apparently — and there was a Great River of Time conveniently hidden in the depths of the Black Pyramid.   
   
In any case, whether Sunny would try to face the Thieving Bird to become a carrier of the Nightmare Spell once again or achieve Apotheosis without its help, he would have to prepare thoroughly.   
   
There were quite a few things he had to accomplish first before leaving on this uncertain journey.   
   
So...   
   
He could make the fateful decision later. Letting out a sigh, Sunny glanced at Eurys and smiled.   
   
"Why are minor deities called Spirits, anyway? I expected that title to be more... I don't know, awesome. Something like Angels, for example..."   
   
Eurys suddenly shivered, his teeth clattering.   
   
"Angles? Goodness, boy. Why would you mention those dreadful beings?"   
   
Sunny raised an eyebrow.   
   
"Well... no reason, really. Why, what is so terrible about them? Aren't angels supposed to be divine heralds or something like that?"   
   
The ancient skeleton slowly shook his skull.   
   
"What? No, of course not... who told you that? Angels are not heralds of the gods. Angels are of the Void — they are an especially harrowing kind of Void Beings. Needless to say, people like you and I have no business knowing of them, let alone beholding them. So, keep that word out of your mouth, boy. Better yet, keep it out of your mind entirely."   
   
Sunny stared at him with a confused expression.   
   
"Well, okay. Wait, no... then what about the Nephilim? Aren't they children of... those beings you mentioned? Of those beings and the gods?"   
   
Eurys chuckled.   
   
"For someone who is best friends with a nephilim, you sure are ignorant about the abomi... adorable kind, huh? Why, yes. They are indeed children of an unholy union between thе divine and the profane — something that should not have existed, but did. It does make some sense, I guess, considering that the gods themselves were an especially harrowing kind of Void Beings. The most harrowing kind, maybe."  
  
He laughed.   
   
"You know... it feels quite liberating to spout heresy about the gods, knowing that the gods are long dead. Ha! In any case, no one really knows for certain how the Nephilim came about, how their existence was even possible, or which god had sired them. But it must have been Sun God — who else but the god of passion, after all?"  
  
His laughter died out slowly, and after falling silent for a short while, Eurys added in a tone of melancholy:   
   
"Nephilim were not welcome anywhere, so they usually kept to themselves. Still... they joined the army of the Demons when Nether rebelled against the gods, and fought side by side with us against the Divine Host. And they died with us, one after another..."   
   
The darkness nestling in the eye sockets of the ancient skull suddenly seemed deeper than before.