2346 Intricate Control  
'Holy… hell…'  
The second the Snow Worm struck, the entire mountain groaned, and the world itself seemed to shudder in agony. Sunny had witnessed truly harrowing power before, but he had never been so close to something so annihilating, so destructive. Even if he had not been stripped of his shadows and weakened by the Snow Domain, he would have been utterly obliterated by this one strike…  
But of course, only if he was foolish enough to get struck.  
  
Not even trying to evade the gargantuan maw of the Cursed Beast, Sunny simply pulled his entire titanic Shell into the shadows, stepping through them to bring down his odachi on the pale flesh of the Snow Worm on the other side of the mountain.  
The hundred-meter-long blade cut deep, but even its great length was not enough to sever the Nightmare Creature in two.  
In the next moment, the body of the Snow Worm moved, slamming into Sunny with frightening force and throwing him back.  
'Crap.'  
The deep wound he had deаlt the Cursed Beast was already gone, replaced by more pale flesh. The snow under Sunny's feet, meanwhile, rippled peculiarly…  
  
He leaped back, and a split second later, the snow collapsed, falling into the huge maw that appeared beneath.  
The Snow Worm's head shot from below, and then, it was as if a pale wall rose in front of Sunny, reaching toward the sky.  
That was the neck of the huge Nightmare Creature, who had pierced a tunnel through the mountain and tried to swallow Sunny by appearing right beneath him.  
Not wasting any time, Sunny rushed forward and plunged his odachi into the pale flesh, using the creature's own momentum to deliver it a long, gruesome cut.  
Almost at the same time, two more arrows pierced the flesh of the Cursed Beast.  
And then, two more.  
Its huge body seemed to shrink a little… or did it only seem that way?  
'Argh!'  
Two walls of pale flesh were rushing at Sunny from higher up the slope and lower down the slope - they were the coils of the Snow Worm, who was twisting its body to crush the adversary.  
'Not… so quick…'  
  
Sunny barely managed to step through the shadows in time. His Shell was made from them, but it was too heavy, too large - it took him far longer to dive into the shadows than when he was in human form, which could do the same almost instantaneously.  
Still, he escaped with his life.  
As the head of the Snow Worm turned in the frigid air and rushed down once more, the Obsidian Wasps dove from the sky to attack the huge Nightmare Creature.  
Scores of Supreme shades were a lethal threat to almost any creature, but they were too vulnerable in front of a Cursed Beast. After all, shades did not possess the Will, and worse than that, they were weakened by the Snow Domain. So they could be easily crushed and sent back into Sunny's soul if he used them recklessly.  
Luckily, there was one silver lining to how heavily suppressed he was here, in Ariel's Game.  
  
Sunny had gone about becoming Supreme in a somewhat backward fashion. By the time he learned how to manifest his Domain, it was already vast and powerful, built out of tens of thousands of shades. Faced with their overwhelming number, he had always struggled to control his Shadow Legion - control it with any level of precision, at least.  
But here, Sunny was devoid of his vast army. Instead, he could only command a relatively small number of shades thаt had been earned inside the Game.  
That allowed him to command each one intricately.  
He had been training himself to control the Obsidian Wasps precisely for the past few days, ever since earning the first one. Handling a hundred shades was far easier than thousands, especially since his mind was free of having to control his other incarnations and keep an eye on the members of the Shadow Clan.  
His mind had plenty of unused capacity for the first time in years, so his efforts to learn how to control his shades better fell into fertile soil.  
  
At first, Sunny simply concentrated on having the Obsidian Wasps move in different directions. Then, he made each of them follow an elaborate path. After mastering easy maneuvers, he moved on to practicing more intricate and complicated tasks, eventually arriving at simulated battles between different groups of shades.  
By now, the Obsidian Wasps did not exactly feel like extensions of his own body… but he felt confident in making each of them do precisely what he wanted.  
  
That expanded his strategic repertoire greatly, of course.  
Right now, he had to give his shades an opportunity to attack the Snow Worm without being destroyed by it.  
So… he aimed them precisely at the areas on its enormous body where its tough hide had been cut by his towering odachi.  
The Obsidian Wasps plummeted from the sky, their glasslike wings burning with a crimson glow in the light of the setting sun, and crawled into the Snow Worm's open wounds.  
Hidden within its voluminous body, where they could not be crushed and devoured by the Cursed Beast, they bit into its flesh, burying themselves deeper and deeper into it as their legs and mandibles cut and shredded the Nightmare Creature's muscles.  
The Snow Worm was huge, but its size could be used as a weapon against it. For now, no more than a dozen shades had managed to crawl into its wounds… but there were going to be more wounds, and more Obsidian Wasps finding their way into the creature's body.  
The arrows shot by Kai and Slayer, meanwhile, were constricting the Snow Worm's ability to expand itself more and more.  
'It's working.'  
  
As the Cursed Beast's head fell from the sky on Sunny, its shadow covered him. Turning his odachi downward, he plunged it into the Nightmare Creature's shadow, then collapsed into it to flee the horrifying maw at the last possible second.  
His strike dealt some damage to the creature's vast, corrupted soul - not enough to threaten its life, but enough to be felt.  
The Snow Worm's flesh rippled in agony. 'I think I can kill it.'  
The only question was…  
Would Sunny be able to kill the damned monstrosity in time?  
The sun was setting, and the clock was ticking. If he was not quick enough…  
The one being killеd would be him.