2394 Confluence of Contradictions  
  
Kai smiled at first, as if assuming that Sunny was joking, then looked at him with surprise after realizing that he was telling the truth.  
  
"You are worried about yourself more than you are about me?"  
  
Sunny simply nodded.  
  
"Yes. I am… especially vulnerable to what that thing has in store for us."  
  
Kai remained silent for a few seconds, then shook his head.  
  
"I find it hard to believe. You are a Supreme, after all. Didn't you tell me yourself that a Sovereign is someone who dares to bend the world to their will? How can someone be that obstinate and doubt themselves at the same time?"  
  
Sunny glanced at him with a dark expression and shrugged.  
  
"Well, what can I say? People are comρlicated creatures. They can be two different things at the same time. So, I can be sure of myself so much as to force the world to agree with how I feel, but also doubt every single thing I do."  
He was indeed someone who possessed a Will sharp enough to cut the world.  
But, at the same time, Sunny's existence was… deeply ambivalent.  
  
He loved Nephis and enjoyed her affection, as well. But, at the same time, he always doubted her feelings for him and questioned his place in her life. The person she knew was only a husk of the real Sunny, after all.  
  
So, he wanted to reclaim his fate and make her - and everyone else - remember him. But, at the same time, he wasn't really sure that he wanted it desperately enough to pay the price of becoming bound again.  
  
He was determined to resist the horrors of the Nightmare Spell and protect humanity, but at the same time, he was hiding his existence from everyone, forced into the shadows by the cursed lineage of the Forgotten God.  
  
Sunny was a confluence of irreconcilable contradictions on a good day, and a bad day… he was one push away from losing control and falling into a murderous frenzy.  
  
All these conflicting emotions had been simmering quietly in the background as he lived his life. Usually, they were not a problem.  
  
But tomorrow, each of the unresolved doubts he harbored would become ammunition the Puppeteer could use to destroy him. Each of them was a crack in his armour through which the enemy blade could slide.  
  
So…  
  
Tomorrow's battle was not going to be fun for Sunny.  
  
He groaned.  
  
'Ah. I really hate Nightmare Creatures who mess with my mind the most…'  
  
Shaking his head, Sunny resumed weaving the enchantment of the Evening Star and grumbled:  
  
"Well… you don't have to worry about me, really. I'll handle it. If everything else fails, pure spite has never let me down."  
  
His expression turned concerned.  
  
"That said, I expect the battle against the Puppeteers to be horrible enough to push me to the limit. Far beyond my limit, really. I might be forced to resort to doing something really desperate… if I do, your role will be the most important. You will have to help me come back."  
  
Kai frowned.  
  
"Come back? What do you mean?"  
  
Sunny smiled faintly.  
  
"It's easy, really. You'll have to make me remember myself. By reminding me who I am."  
  
Kai stared at him for a while, then cleared his throat.  
  
"But, Sunny… I am sorry to say this, but despite our wonderful rapport in these last couple of weeks… I don't really know who you are. We are barely acquainted."  
  
Sunny let out a laugh.  
  
"Fair enough."  
  
Then, he scowled.  
  
"No, wait. What do you mean, barely acquainted? You and I are best friends! We fought side by side and killed literal gods together. We rolled in the same mud and ate the same rats. Are there even a closer pair in the world than us?"  
  
Kai coughed.  
  
"I didn't eat the rats, though."  
  
'Oh, right. He refused to partake in the rat barbeque, the fool.'  
  
Sunny sighed.  
  
Naturally, Kai was right.  
  
How could Kai make Sunny remember himself if he himself could not even remember the real Sunny?  
  
It sounded like a problem, but actually, the answer was quite obvious. In fact, Sunny had experienced a very similar situation once, only his role now was the opposite of what it had been back then.  
  
A long time ago, Nephis had taught him how to make her escape the mind hex of the Soul Devourer, at least to a degree. All he had to do was recite three names to her - the names of the people she hated, and would therefore remind her of the most important thing in her life. Her ardent desire to destroy the Spell.  
  
Aster, Song, Vale.  
  
Sunny had to come up with an "Aster, Song, Vale" of his own.  
  
He hesitated for a while, then said:  
  
"Just recite a few names to me, Nephis, Cassie, Effie, Kai, Rain, Jet. If that doesn't help, throw in Noctis and Ananke. Aiko, Julius, Beth… Kim, Luster, Quentin, Dorn, Belle, Samara, Obel. Hmm. That should do it, I think."  
  
These were the strongest connections to his sense of self he possessed in the absence of a True Name. The tethers that bound Sunny to the world, and therefore shaped him.  
  
If anything could remind him of who he was, and what was most important to him, it was these names. In a odd way… these few words were the most meaningful summation of his life.  
  
Kai gave him a odd look, then nodded slowly.  
  
"Alright. I'll remember."  
  
He lingered for a while before adding:  
  
"I must admit that I feel a bit weird about my name being there, though."  
  
Sunny grinned.  
  
"What can I say? You make an impression."  
  
With that, he beckoned Kai to come closer.  
  
"Oh, by the way… I am going to punch you really hard now."  
  
Kai blinked a couple of times.  
  
"Huh? What? Why?"  
  
Sunny shrugged nonchalantly.  
  
"You see the horizon? The sun is going to rise soon. I doubt that the Puppeteer will leave the Snow Castle, but it can surely subject us to some kind of terrifying mind attack without moving. You don't want to endure a mental attack of a Cursed Tyrant more times than necessary, do you?"  
  
Kai moved back a little, a wary expression on his face.  
  
"I don't, but what does it have to do with me getting punched?!"  
  
Sunny scoffed.  
  
"I mean, the best way to avoid a mental attack is to be unconscious. That's just common sense. So, come closer… it will only hurt a little…"  
  
Kai, however, did not come closer.  
  
A few moments later, a cloud of ash rose above the slope of the towering volcano.