2450 Kingdom of Imagination  
A little fall was not going to hurt a Saint, and it was especially not going to hurt Effie, whose Awakened Ability made her body as tough as steel. Granted, this particular fall was quite a lengthy one... but in the end, both of them reached the Mirror Maze unscathed, if a little worse for wear and covered in dust.  
  
“Crap... I can't see anything. What a hassle," Effie complained, but she did not summon a luminous Memory. That was because Sunny had drowned the Mirror Maze in shadows on purpose — this was his tried and trusted method of erasing the infinite reflections from its walls, thus avoiding encountering the Others.  
  
"I suspect that the intended — and therefore the safest — way to explore the heart of this maze is to traverse it across reflections. But since neither of us knows how to deal with the Others, we will just walk like normal people." He turned to Effie.  
  
“Grab my hand."  
  
He offered her his hand, but she did not take it. Sunny frowned.  
  
“What seems to be the problem? What, are you shy all of a sudden?"  
  
Effie rolled her eyes.  
  
"No, you numskull. I can't see where your hand is!"  
  
Letting out an awkward cough, Sunny grabbed her by the forearm and pulled her into the darkness.  
  
The Mirror Maze seemed no different from how it had been before, not damaged by the dreadful devastation above at all. Granted, there was more dust on the floor — but other than that, it was in pristine condition. As they walked through the darkness, Effie seemed to be listening to the sounds of their footsteps intently. Eventually, she asked:  
  
“So, Clan Valor had no idea this place was here?"  
  
Sunny shook his head.  
  
"No. It used to be hidden deep underground and protected from usual forms of detection. I barely found it myself... so, neither Warden nor his son knew about the existence of the Mirror Maze, despite spending decades right above it."  
  
Effie remained silent for a bit, then said suddenly:  
  
“But Mordret must have known."  
  
Sunny gave her a guarded look.  
  
Yes... that was the conclusion he had drawn, as well. Mordret could gaze through the mirrors around him and even travel through them — those were his Dormant and Awakened Abilities. So, when young Mordret first returned into the cold embrace of Clan Valor, he would have definitely felt the presence of a vast mass of mirrors beneath True Bastion.  
  
He must have known that the Mirror Maze was here... maybe he had even been the first human to explore it. Was he hiding somewhere in the complicated web of twisting tunnels right now?  
  
Sunny did not think so... he did not think that Mordret was in any of the tunnels, that was.  
  
“If he's here, he is probably in the Hall of Imagination. That is where we are heading, as well."  
  
Effie tensed a little.  
  
“Remind me why we are going there, again?"  
  
Sunny collected his thoughts before speaking.  
  
“Well... you are the master of Bastion, so you know better than anyone what the Great Mirror is. It is situated deep below the castle — its illusory version, that is — in a great underground hall hidden in the heart of the mountain. It is also the nexus of the Component of your Citadel, the one that allows the true and false versions of Bastion to swap places. One stays in reality, while the other one is safely contained within the Great Mirror."  
  
Effie pursed her lips.  
  
"And it also allows the Others to crawl into reality from True Bastion if someone forgets to cover it."  
  
Sunny nodded.  
  
“But actually, I think that we have not even discovered the true Component of Bastion yet."  
  
Effie tilted her head a little.  
  
“Huh?"  
  
Sunny considered his words for a moment. “Think about it. There is an underground chamber with the Great Mirror below the illusory castle, connected to it by secret passages. But what about True Bastion? There are no passages. Instead, there is the Mirгor Maze... and the underground chamber at its heart. The Hall of Imagination, which makes things you imagine real — or at least creates illusions of those things that are seemingly nо different from real.’  
  
He paused for a moment, then added in a somber tone:  
  
“I did not dare to explore the Hall of Imagination before, so I don't know what is hidden in its center. But if theory is correct... then there is another Great Mirror there — the true Great Mirror, not an illusion of it that stands below the False Bastion.”  
  
Effie frowned in the darkness, just as stunned as the first time he had shared this theory with her.  
  
This time, however, she had a question.  
  
“The Great Mirror... the supposedly illusory Great Mirror leads to True Bastion. Then, where does the true Great Mirror lead?"  
  
Sunny smiled faintly.  
  
“That is what we are going to find out.’  
  
At that moment, he stopped and looked down, a troubled expression appearing on his face.  
  
Effie almost slammed into him, stopping in time only because she had been listening to the sounds of his steps the whole time.  
  
“What is it?"  
  
Sunny knelt and studied the floor.  
  
“There are footprints in the dust."  
  
He expected to find some sign that Mordret had passed through these tunnels. However, what Sunny had not expected... was that there would be two sets of footprints, one slightly more faded than the other.  
  
And a bit smaller, too.  
  
He remained silent for a while, then said in a surprised tone:  
  
“I think... that both Mordret and Morgan were here before us."  
  
The former princess of Valor had vanished without a trace a few months after the war. Some were convinced that her brother had killed her, after all, while some simply assumed that she had left to start a new life somewhere, in complete anonymity — after all, being the last heir of a fallen, infamous Great Clan was not the easiest fate.  
  
Some, meanwhile, believed that Morgan had challenged the Fourth Nightmare.  
  
As it turned out, though, she was here, in the Mirror Maze, instead.  
  
Sunny did not know quite what to make of it, let alone how to feel about it.  
  
“How curious."  
  
He was glad that Morgan was still alive, though.  
  
Sunny remained motionless for a few moments, then rose to his feet and continued moving forward while guiding Effie through the darkness.  
  
“Come. We must hurry to the Hall of Imagination."  
  
After a while, she said:  
  
“Wait a minute..."  
  
Effie grabbed his forearm as well, slowly increasing pressure.  
  
“Was that why you did not let me eat the whole day? So that I could not think about anything except food by the time we reach that damn hall?!"  
  
Sunny smiled sheepishly in the darkness.  
  
“Oh, that... well, yes. I think it's going to work out great!"  
  
As for Sunny himself, he had a far simpler way of getting to the heart of the Hall of Imagination without summoning the illusion of some Unholy Titan into existence.  
  
He was going to release control of his incarnation and let his shadow enter in his stead, then retake control at the last moment.  
  
His shadows did, indeed, have minds of their own — but he was pretty sure that the Hall of Imagination had not been designed to make the fantasies of shadows come true. Even if it did, whatever they could imagine was not going to be nearly as harrowing as what Sunny could.  
  
Especially this shadow... the naughty shadow. Its fantasies were pretty transparent, most of the time...  
  
There was only one way to find out for sure, though.  
  
Effie was earnestly trying to crush his forearm in a vice grip, but Sunny simply ignored her — now that he had both the Bone Weave and the Flesh Weave, not to mention the Jade Shell, enduring such pressure was not a big problem.  
  
It still hurt like hell, though!  
  
Effie growled in the darkness:  
  
“Hey, Shadow Boy! If you don't feed me right this moment, I'll eat you... instead?"  
  
Her voice grew quieter and then fell silent, because at that moment, they reached the boundary of the Hall of Imagination.  
  
The walls of the tunnels spread out, opening into a vast open space. It was full of darkness, and neither Sunny's sight nor his shadow sense could penetrate it.  
  
They froze for a while, preparing themselves for the trial of the Hall of Imagination warily.  
  
In the end, he sighed and pulled Effie forward.  
  
"Let's go. The sooner we do... the sooner we can get into some kind of insane trouble, barely survive it, and return victorious with scary stories to tell."  
  
Effie blinked a couple of times.  
  
“What? Was that supposed to calm me?"  
  
Sunny sighed.  
  
“Yes. You might not know it, but I have a proven track record of doing just that. I'm still alive, aren't I?"  
  
Effie's mouth hung open.  
  
"No, you're not! You are literally dead! Two entire armies saw you kill yourself, and then get killed by Nephis immediately after that!"  
  
Sunny grinned.  
  
“What, was I supposed to die from just that?"  
  
With that, he took a step forward.  
  
They had already discussed the plan earlier, so there was not much left to say. Sunny positioned himself in the middle of the entrance to the Hall of Imagination, then concentrated and summoned Saint — having at least one Shadow covering for them was probably a wise move, and she was the best choice for this particular trial. The taciturn knight emerged from the darkness and glanced at him with her usual indifference.  
  
This time, howeveг, Saint's gaze lingered on him for a while longer, as if sensing remnant traces of the Jade Titan persona he had assumed in the Death Game.  
  
Eventually, Saint took her place to his left, while Effie stood to his right.  
  
“Ah. I don't like it..."  
  
She raised a hand to grab his shoulder, Sunny got ready to temporarily release control of his incarnation, knowing that Effie and Saint would get him to where he needed to be.  
  
“Just think about your favorite food. Actually, I've tried something very delicious recently! Have you ever tried... a barbequed Cursed rat? If not, I cannot recommend roasting one over lava enough..."  
  
Effie sighed deeply, then mumbled a quiet curse and pushed him.  
  
Together, the three of them entered the Hall of Imagination.  
  
Sunny did not remember quite what happened next.  
  
Next thing he knew, he was someplace else... He was someone else.