1348 Sorcerer Supreme

Now that a Supreme soul shard replaced the original nexus of the spellweave, the powerful energy contained within it flowed into the radiant tapestry. The ethereal threads shone much brighter, reinforced by their own enchantment. Most of them held... but some of the more delicate patterns started to glow too intensely, as if a moment away from catching on fire and dissipating into blinding light.

He had to reinforce these sections of the weave, and do it in a way that did not contradict the intricate patterns.

Threading a string of shadow essence into Weaver's Needle, he held himself back from hurrying too much, and started to weave new patterns — these ones black and lightless — on top and through the radiant ones.

The needle worked in the most pressing areas of the weave, while his other hands tackled less critical points. No matter how nimble his fingers were, he still couldn't weave as fast without a proper tool — the reverse effect of his unique ability to touch the ethereal strings was that they were sharper than any sword could ever be, and were thus capable of cutting his flesh without any effort.

Losing a finger was as easy as applying the slightly wrong amount of pressure or missing the mark by a hair's breadth.

That said... while his own fingers were indispensable, those of the shadow hands could be easily sacrificed. They weren't just as responsive as the real ones, but the fact that one or two could be lost with no consequence made up for the fact.

'Ouch.'

No matter how careful Sunny was, the dire need to move fast was bound to cause him some pain. A thin cut appeared on his right thumb, swelling with blood. Luckily, no drop of it fell into the weave to disturb its delicate equilibrium — his blood was tenacious, after all, and knew how to stay inside his body. Most of the time.

The shadow hands were faring worse. By the time Sunny put out the most dangerous fires, they were utterly shredded. He was barely keeping the wounded shadows from dissipating back into intangible forms, and had even been forced to dismiss one of the arms and create an entirely new one on the fly.

Nevertheless... it felt like he was past the most dangerous part.

A shaky breath escaped from Sunny's lips, and a drop of sweat fell from his forehead onto the wooden deck.

Without allowing himself to relax, he froze for a split second, gazing at the entirety of the weave.

'The nexus is holding. There and there... the shadow strings are lessening the burden on the original ones just as planned... that area is a bit frayed, I need to reinforce it more... no, not more, better... those areas, though, looked fine at the start, but are starting to worry me now...'

Calming his wildly beating heart, he resumed his work. Now, Sunny moved at a less breakneck pace, but was more methodical in his approach.

'Good, good... it's all coming together.'

It was a wonderful feeling. The collapsing weave had struggled against his attempts to save it at first, to the point that he felt like three critical problems appeared for each one he fixed. The more he repaired and reinforced it, though, the more it felt like the weave was assisting him.

The ethereal tapestry was starting to look elegant once again. The radiant threads and the lightless ones intertwined in a beautiful harmony. Both were being strengthened by the enchantment of the Dawn Shard and strengthening each other at the same time.

A feeling of wondrous harmony permeated the intricate spellweave. Its nexus was replaced, and its pattern was invaded by countless new threads, all of them dark and ghostly. But, nevertheless, it was resembling... a different, but natural version of itself, more and more.

...Continuing his meticulous work, Sunny threw a brief glance at the Sin of Solace.

"Hey, you."

The sword wraith raised an eyebrow.

"Hey yourself, fool."

Sunny was already looking back at the weave, concetrating on finishing the alteration, but the corner of his mouth rose in a small, vindictive smile.

"Go drown yourself in the river, you insufferable wretch. Weren't you endlessly going on about how I would inevitably fail? Well, did I? Who's the fool now, huh?!"

At that moment, he grinned and abruptly lowered all six of his hands, then froze, staring intently at the bond of bright metal laying on the deck in front of him.

His work was done. The alteration had been finished. Sunny took a deep breath...

And as he did, the Spell whispered into his ear:

[Your Memory has been destroyed.]

His eyes widened.

His hands twitched.

'Ho...'

Before the shock could even register in his mind, the Spell spoke once more:

[You have received a Supreme Memory, Crown of Dawn.]

'...w?!'

Sunny remained frozen for a few moments, then slumped against the side of the ketch. An infuriating growl escaped from his lips:

"What?! What the hell was that?! Are you trying to give me a heart attack, you damned Spell?! Think before you speak, damn it!"

...The Spell did not answer. Perhaps for the better.

After calming down a little, Sunny dismissed the shadow arms and picked up the Crown of Dawn from the deck. His hands were trembling slightly.

The eastern horizon was already painted lilac by the rising suns.

Looking at the Memory he had altered with burning eyes, he lingered for a while, and then said tiredly:

"So, your name actually changed to the Crown of Dawn. Ah... how fitting."

Before, that had simply been what they called the Dawn Shard, the Shard Memory of the first Lord of the Bright Castle. But it seemed that the Spell decided that the alteration he had performed was significant enough to warrant a new name for the newly elevated Memory.

Was he mistaken, or had the single gemstone adorning the austere band of metal become brighter?

Enjoying the view of the bright gem, Sunny inhaled deeply and summoned the runes.

...The runes read:

Memory: Crown of Dawn.

Memory Rank: Supreme.