1424 Do It Yourself

Eventually, they arrived at the bone orchard. The skeletal remains of the dead horrors towered above them, and the subtle sweet smell emanated by the Hollow Butterfly permeated the flowing fog.

The members of the cohort looked around tensely, unnerved by the eerie scene. Sunny, however, had been to this sprawling graveyard many times. He walked nonchalantly between the bones, his steps hurried.

"Follow me. It's right ahead."

Soon, the Great Monster revealed itself from the mist. Even though Sunny had explained that it was not dangerous, his companions still couldn't help but grip their weapons tighter.

"What... the hell... is that?"

Jet's voice sounded hoarse.

Looking back, Sunny gave her a pale smile.

"Nephis and I call these creatures Dark Butterflies. We've seen another one in action, much further upstream... needless to say, it's a blessing that the one in front of us is Hollow."

The four of them stared up at the gargantuan form of the Great Monster in apprehension. After a few moments of silence, Nephis finally asked:

"So, why are we here, exactly?" Sunny lingered for a few moments.

"Since it's Hollow, we won't earn anything by killing it — no soul shards, no Memories. But its body is perfectly healthy. And it's a body of Supreme quality, so... we are here to butcher it."

White sparks ignited in Neph's eyes.

"You want to craft weapons out of its chitin?" He nodded with a tired smile.

"Yes. A few pikes, I hope. If we succeed... the pikes won't have any enchantments, but they'll still be akin to Supreme weapons. That should be of some help on this damned island."

Sunny stared at the motionless butterfly silently, then sighed. "Let's get to work, shall we?"

The idea to repurpose the body parts of the helpless Great Monster was not that deranged, provided that one was capable of rending its impregnable carapace. Sunny was by no means an master artisan, but knew more about blacksmithing and crafting than an average Awakened did — mostly due to the Brilliant Emporium.

He was almost certain that they would be able to achieve success, even though it was going to take some time. But wasting some time here was also part of his plan — Neph had yet to replenish enough essence to use her Dormant Ability, which meant that Jet's wounds were still unhealed.

Sunny did not want to enter the caverns before both of those things had happened.

So, they camped in the middle of the bone orchard for a while. Luckily, this place was one of the safest on Wind Flower — perhaps because the Hollow Butterfly's scent scared the other Nightmare Creatures away.

Nephis and Jet simply rested and observed, while Sunny, Cassie, Saint, and Fiend were hard at work.

Their target were the six legs of the Great Monster. Severing them was no easy task, but with the help of the five shadows and the augmentation of the Crown of Dawn, as well as a scattering of useful utility Memories, the work progressed at a steady pace. Saint and Fiend, with their

Transcendent strength, were of great help as well.

By the time Nephis had finally regained enough essence to heal Jet, the lower parts of the Hollow Butterfly's legs were laid out on the ground in front of them. They were still too large to be used as pikes — each at least ten meters in length — so Sunny had to splinter and shave them down some more.

Now that Neph could use her augmenting Ability, everything went much faster.

Eventually, there were six makeshift pikes in front of them, each crafted from chitin of Supreme quality. There was also a bundle of crude javelins, and a pile of long splinters to its side.

Looking at the collections of weapons, Sunny couldn't help but remember the Siege Souvenir — a javelin he had crafted from the remains of a Corrupted abomination, then enchanted and used to kill a Fallen Titan. Sadly, there was no time for him to enchant the ones in a similar manner.

One day was too short to create any kind of meaningful spellweave.

Remembering the Siege Souvenir also reminded him of his battle with the Ravenous Fiend. The vengeful creature had used a crude sword fashioned from the tusk of an unknown Nightmare Creature back then...

After thinking for a few moments, Sunny picked up a slightly curved splinter of the Hollow Butterfly's chitin. Its edge was sharp enough to serve as a sword, so he tossed it to Fiend.

He also handed another piece of black chitin, this one flat and roughly circular, to Saint. Sunny had personally made it into a shield before.

"I think we are ready."

As ready as they would be... at least in this revolution.

Each member of the cohort, as well as Saint and Fined, picked up one of the pikes. The javelins were divided between Sunny, Nephis, and Jet.

Armed to the teeth, they threw one last glance at the motionless butterfly — which was now laying messily on the ground, serene despite being mutilated and deeply disturbing for that reason — and backed away.

Sunny led the group through the labyrinth of bones, stopping from time to time to ascertain their location. Eventually, they had to climb over the spine of an especially large horror, and found a small space hidden behind it.

There, the ground had been broken by a titanic blow, and a black pit waited for them, full of darkness.

"That's our way down."

It was one of the entrances to the system of underground caverns that Sunny had found.

Using Neph's golden rope, the Evertwine — which had once been earned by Cassie in her First Nightmare — they cautiously descended into the pit. Soon, the members of the cohort found themselves standing on the rough rock floor of a natural cave, surrounded by darkness.

Almost no light reached this deep down, swallowed by the mist above.

However, none of them felt too concerned about it. In fact, they even felt relieved for finally having escaped the everpresent fog — there was none of it underground.

Sunny had not mapped all the caves yet, but he knew the general location of where they had to go.

Carrying the long pike, he took a step into the darkness and sighed.

'I hope we won't die here today... again. No, I know we won't.'