1431 Tea and Dessert

In the end, Sunny was not killed. However, he did receive a few bruises... considering that his skin was not easy to bruise due to the Marble Shell, it went to show just how much his little stunt had angered the three women.

Luckily, they calmed down pretty fast.

Even luckier, Sunny had wisely finished his breakfast before drawing their ire... in the aftermath of his punishment, the mess deck was in complete disarray, and there was nothing edible left on the overturned table. The wrath of three infuriated Masters was a frightening thing.

'Ah... I don't get it... it was just a little joke...'

Rubbing his sides resentfully, Sunny stared at Nephis, Cassie, and Jet. Of course, he was smart enough to keep these thoughts to himself. Otherwise, a few bruises would be the least of his problems.

His companions, in turn, were staring at the surrounding mess. "We... should probably tidy up."

Cassie's voice sounded uncertain. Jet gave her a glance and shrugged:

"Won't it tidy itself up at the end of the day? Everything will go back to how it was."

The blind girl hesitated.

"Still. Let's clean what we can now."

Sunny was not really keen on cleaning on his day off, but he could always make Fiend do it for him. Before he did, however, Cassie suddenly said that he and Nephis should leave it to her and Jet.

Neph was still suffering from the symptoms of essence exhaustion, while Sunny was supposed to be resting. So, the blind girl told them to go enjoy the dessert on the upper deck.

Nephis seemed unconvinced, but Sunny was shaken. He remained silent for a while, then asked solemnly:

"There's... dessert?"

After that, the two of them were sent out of the devastated mess deck. Soon, Sunny found himself sitting in the shade of the sacred tree, having

an improvised picnic with Neph. There was indeed dessert on a cloth in front of him, as well as another pot of freshly brewed tea. Drinking hot tea while surrounded by the chilly mist was a special kind of pleasure.

They spent some time in comfortable silence. Sunny was tired of having the same conversations over and over again, and Nephis seemed to be keeping her questions back.

He let out a satisfied sigh. "This is great... what is it?"

He pointed to one of the bowls, causing Nephis to glance at him. She lingered for a moment.

"Just a simple fruit salad. Sorry... I didn't have time to make anything fancy. Plus, the supplies we received in Fallen Grace are not very varied."

Sunny tilted his head a little.

"Are desserts also included in the Legacy nutrition course? How strange!"

She coughed, then looked away and remained silent for a while. Then, Nephis suddenly stood up and said:

"I'll... I'll go brew more tea."

With that, she disappeared, leaving him alone.

Sunny stared into the mist, then lowered his gaze and looked at his hand. Soon, a black flame appeared above it. A few seconds after it did, his skin started to blister.

And a few moments after that, Sunny winced and dismissed the flame.

His slightly burned skin shone with dark radiance and slowly healed itself. Then, he summoned the flame again. His hand was burned once more.

Sunny repeated the process several times. Each time, he couldn't keep going for more than a dozen seconds before dismissing the fire. Even if he consciously willed himself to endure, his instincts took over.

'I wonder if I can get used to this.' His expression turned somber. "I'm back."

Nephis sat down, carrying a new pot of tea. Noticing the black flame on his palm, she froze for a second.

"What is that?"

Sunny made the fire disappear and smiled faintly.

"I used the Mirror of Truth to copy your Dormant Ability. That is how I healed Jet on the way back."

She contemplated for a few moments, then nodded. "Good decision."

Looking at her with a complicated expression, Sunny sighed.

"But I don't have your lineage Attribute, so the fire burns me. It hurts like hell. I don't know how you do it."

Sunny was almost constantly using his Aspect. Even when there was no active threat, his shadows were always out and about, either serving as his eyes or augmenting his body. Many routine tasks were solved with Shadow Step and Shadow Manifestation.

Nephis, on the contrary, used her Aspect as rarely as possible. She did not even summon its powers in most battles, relying solely on her training and skill. It was only when the enemy was overwhelmingly dangerous that she resorted to using the soulflame.

But even then, it seemed like too much. The pain of her Flaw was unbearable.

She shook her head.

"Says the man who has been killed terribly many times already, but has no intention of slowing down. Dying over and over again, reliving the same day... I don't know what I would have done in your situation."

Sunny smiled.

"You say that... but come on. We both know that you would have seen it as a wonderful opportunity to fit more sword practice in your schedule."

The corner of Neph's mouth curled upward. "Maybe I would."

She remained silent for a while, looking into the fog, then said with a hint of wonder in her voice:

"But then again. It would be strange and tempting, to know that no matter what I do, there would be no consequences tomorrow. Maybe I would have done some things that I never dared to do before."

Sunny stared at her in confusion, then frowned.

"Hey! If you are going to insinuate that I'm a pervert again, let me tell you that I'm absolutely innocent. I've not done anything inappropriate in any of these revolutions, nor am I planning to."

He gave her an indignant glance, then suddenly grinned and added in a more subtle tone:

"...Unless you want me to."

Nephis chuckled and looked away. After a while, she said:

"I wasn't insinuating anything. But it is interesting where your mind immediately went... revealing, even..."

Sunny laughed.

His day off... was going better than he had expected. He was enjoying it quite a bit.