1454 An Oath and a Promise

Wind Flower remained silent for a while, seated comfortably on her opulent bed.

Eventually, she sighed.

"We made a deal, he and I. I never thought that I would make a deal with a Defiled abomination one day, but then again... I never thought that I'd be imprisoned in a whirlpool of time, forever, either."

Sunny grew tense, staring at the beautiful Saint with a grim expression. The news of her making deals with one of the Six Plagues did not bode well for the cohort...

Noticing his reaction, she chuckled.

"Don't look so worried, Sunless. I did not sell my soul, corrupted as it may be. The Mad Prince... he only wanted to know about Aletheia's Island, and especially about how my father had managed to kill that Great Tyrant in the tower. The creature remains dead no matter how many times the loop resets, which seemed to be of great interest to him. I, on the other hand... wanted to know what had happened to Twilight and the other human cities on the Great River. And how it was that he appeared wearing my father's crown."

Her gaze once again brushed across the Crown of Twilight. She smiled softly.

"Now, I know."

Sunny lingered for a few moments. There were a lot of things he wanted to ask about, but it did not seem wise to press Wind Flower for answers.... too much.

The Mirror of Truth was safely hidden in his sleeve, ready to grant him Neph's [Longing] Ability at any moment.

Eventually, he asked:

"How did Daeron make that Tyrant stay dead?" Wind Flower tilted her head a little.

"...You want to know, as well? It was with the help of a very special Memory. A Legacy Relic left behind by a dear friend. It's gone now, of course. Just like everything else is gone."

'Why was the Mad Prince so interested in the dead Tyrant, though? Unlike me, he did not have to destroy the loop to escape the island. What did he want?'

Sunny tried to understand the motives of his future Defiled version, but failed. It wasn't a good idea to try understanding madmen, anyway.

"How did you know that one of my companions has the Guiding Light, then?"

The beautiful Saint chuckled.

"How else? The madman told me that you would."

Sunny froze.

His eyes narrowed.

'Wait...'

Leaning forward, he pierced Wind Flower with an intense gaze and asked:

"Are you saying... that the Mad Prince knew that we would arrive here one day?"

She simply nodded.

"He seemed quite certain. But why are you surprised... you are the same person, after all."

Sunny let out a shaky breath.

Indeed... if the Mad Prince was the future version of him, then the bastard would have already experienced coming to Aletheia's Island before.

Still, something about it didn't make sense.

If the Defiled lunatic already possessed the memories of meeting Wind Flower and learning about the island from her, like Sunny was currently learning, then why would he need to come and ask again?

And if she had already met Sunny by the time the Mad Prince arrived, wouldn't she have already had the answers to her own questions?

It didn't make any sense at all!

...Just like Undying Slaughter and Jet existing at the same time did not make sense. The same went for Devouring Beast and Effie. Or everything else about this damned pyramid.

If anything, though, the new revelation made it seem as though the Six Plagues were somehow alien to this timeline... more alien than Sunny and his companions were, at least.

'Focus on the task at hand. How to escape this cursed island...'

Sunny gritted his teeth, remained silent for a few moments, and then said:

"...So how do I destroy the loop?"

He suddenly hesitated.

Before Wind Flower could answer, Sunny raised a hand and added, his voice low:

"Wait. If I do destroy the loop... you will die, won't you?" The Saint simply looked at him with a smile on her lips.

'She will. That is why she is here on Aletheia's Island, after all... this is the only place where she can exist.'

So, by destroying the loop, Sunny would be... he would be killing Wind Flower.

She watched him for a bit, then shook her head.

"You are both right and wrong. I... Wind Flower of the Twilight Sea... will indeed cease to exist if the cycle of time is broken. However, I won't die. No, what waits for me is much worse than death — it's Corruption."

Her smile slowly disappeared, leaving behind only coldness. The beautiful Saint looked at him somberly, then said:

"That is why we are going to make another deal, you and I."

Sunny met her heavy gaze and shifted slightly.

"What deal might that be?"

Wind Flower stared at him for a few moments, then smiled darkly.

"It's simple, really. I will teach you how to break the cycle of time. In return, Sunless... you will kill me."

His expression cracked for a moment.

"What?"

The beautiful Saint nodded.

"You will make an oath that after the loop is destroyed and before Corruption swallows my soul, you will kill me. That is the only way I'll show you how to escape Aletheia's Island with all your companions."

Sunny looked at her solemnly.

He... couldn't say that he didn't understand. Indeed, if he was in Wind Flower's place, he would have preferred death to turning into a Nightmare Creature. At least, he hoped that he would.

But still...

Wasn't it just too sad?

Sunny sighed.

"You want to die?"

Hearing his question, Wind Flower chuckled.

"You make it sound so serious."

Her enchanting azure eyes ignited with humorous sparks.

"Remember, Sunless... I am not even a real person. I've been conjured by the Spell to play a role in this Nightmare, and so, there is no purpose for my existence outside the Nightmare. So... wouldn't it be a fitting end for a creature like me, to be killed by a real person like you? By a person who will conquer the Nightmare?"

She fell silent, looking into the window with a distant expression on her beautiful, charming face.

After a few moments of silence, she added in a softer tone:

"I won't ask you for another oath, Sunless. But... make me a promise, if you will. That you'll conquer this Nightmare, indeed."

Sunny remained silent for a while, looking at her with a heavy expression.

...Eventually, he sighed and opened his mouth to speak.

Not long after that, he was back on the deck of the Chain Breaker.