1477 Undying Slaughter

Sunny knew how terrifying Undying Slaughter was better than most... perhaps even better than anyone. And yet, even he was astonished by the sight of the dreadful mist wraith slaughtering the former prisoners of the stone bridge.

Each of them was an opponent Sunny would not want to face in battle. Some, he had a good chance of defeating, but others were absolutely lethal existences to a Master — even an Ascended Terror like him.

Nevertheless, all of them had been ruthlessly and methodically brought down by the Defiled Saint. It was as if no amount of physical might, impregnable armor, and unholy powers could deter her. The ghostly blade danced in the mist, and following its elusive movements, the souls of the harrowing Nightmare Creatures were snuffed out one after another.

...Or rather, they would have been, if not for Effie and Cassie.

Each time Undying Slaughter was about to kill one of her enemies, a bone javelin would inevitably fall from the sky, stealing the creature's life moments before the mist wraith delivered the last strike. Guided by the blind seer, Effie had not missed once.

Which meant that all the essence the Defiled Saint was spending to fight against the group of powerful abominations could not be replenished by absorbing their broken souls. With each moment, she was growing weaker.

Their plan was working.

The last to fall was a Great Beast that resembled a black hound with seven serpentine tails. Its lean, muscular body towered above Undying Slaughter like a dark hill, and its power was dreadful enough to make the ground crack and collapse into the chasm of the empty moat.

The abominable hound was like a living nightmare, its frenzied eyes burning with eerie green flames.

Despite it all, neither its terrifying jaws nor its seven tails managed to strike the elusive mist wraith. Moving with the graceless elegance of an emotionless butcher, Undying Slaughter delivered the Great Beast two swift, cruel blows. The hound staggered after the first one, then grew slow and lethargic after the second.

The green flames burning in its eyes dimmed... and before the third blow landed, a bone javelin pierced one of them. The monstrous black hound was thrown down by the force of the impact, making the island shake, and grew still. Viscous red liquid flowed from its maw.

On the slope of the cliff, Effie let out a shaky breath and swayed lightly. Her legs gave out, and if Cassie had not caught her in time, the huntress would have fallen down. The blind girl helped her sit down on the stone steps.

These past few minutes had taken a lot out of Effie. Even though she was far from the terrible battlefield, she had to put all of her immense strength into each throw... especially that last one. Sweat was rolling down her pale face.

"Did I... did I just kill a Great Nightmare Creature?"

Her tired voice was faint and full of disbelief. Cassie smiled gently.

"You certainly did."

Effie took a deep breath and put her trembling hand on her belly, as if trying to protect it.

"D—damn... I've been spending too much time with doofus, huh?"

Of course, the Great Beast had already been brought to the verge of death by Undying Slaughter. And of course, all members of the cohort had done their part in order to make the outcome possible... and yet, a Great Beast had fallen by Effie's hand. It was a startling achievement, to say the least.

A feat worthy of Raised by Wolves, the legendary huntress of the Dark City.

Effie smiled weakly, lingered for a few moments, and said in a solemn tone:

"Well, f..."

The island quaked, and the sound of breaking stones swallowed her words.

Far below, more stone debris slid into the widening chasm. Even the bridge shuddered slightly, a net of cracks appearing on its surface.

On the far side of the bridge, Undying Slaughter stared at the dead Great Beast for a few moments, then turned and looked across the chasm, at the members of the cohort.

Sunny shivered, feeling an eerie chill.

"Let's go."

They stepped on the bridge at the same moment as the mist wraith did. There was nothing left for them to do but fight.

'Come, aid me.'

His shadows rose from the ground, flowing onto his body. One, two, three, four, five... the sixth one, however, wrapped itself around Nephis instead. At the same time, a generous measure of her pure flame filled him with radiant warmth. The sum of their powers was greater than the parts.

Sunny felt as strong as a Titan.

He dashed forward, followed by Nephis and Saint. The three of them were going to confront the mist wraith first, and hopefully force her to assume a less ghostly form. Jet, Fiend, and Nightmare would attack second.

"Remember, our weapon is time!"

The blade of the Cruel Sight ignited with divine flame.

They clashed with the dreadful wraith in the middle of the cracking bridge. Undying Slaughter was still stronger, faster, and far more malevolent than Nephis and Sunny... however, with Saint fighting by their side, the two of them were able to keep up.

Far more important was the fact that both Sunny and Nephis were combat prodigies. He could follow Undying Slaughter's movements, and even predict them, because of his mastery of Shadow Dance. She was capable of doing the same because controlling the flow of combat and manipulating the actions of her enemies had always been the basis of her skill.

Now that Neph's combat mastery entered a period of rapid growth, that ability of hers had become even more frightening.

Therefore, both of them could counterbalance Undying Slaughter's undeniable superiority... to a degree.

Still, Sunny felt stifled in this battle.

That was because he was not just fighting against the terrifying mist

wraith. He was also fighting against the memories of dying terribly by her hand. The pain of having his soul shattered... the dread of seeing his shadow killed... the sorrow of being helpless to save his companions... all those scars were like chains that weighed his limbs down.

If Sunny wanted to have a chance of surviving this fight, he had to break these chains.

'I'm alive, am I not?!'

He received the ghostly blade on the shaft of the Cruel Sight and was thrown back, his hands growing numb. Before Undying Slaughter could advance and deliver a follow-up attack, though, Nephis appeared in her way, her sword shining with incandescent radiance, the single gem of the Crown of Dawn burning like a third eye.

Sunny regained his balance and threw himself back into the fight.

'I survived...'

Neph staggered back, but Saint took her place. The graceful knight was wielding her dark sword in both hands, facing the mist wraith with cold indifference. They clashed fiercely, and the stone bridge shuddered.

He was already lunging forward to share the pressure with his Shadow.

'And now, it's time to deliver some payback!'

After all, Sunny was nothing if not vindictive.

He had destroyed the Black Knight of the ruined cathedral for gutting him. He killed the immortal Transcendent, Solvane, for throwing him into the Red Colosseum. He had shattered the Fallen Titan Goliath for bringing him to the very doorstep of death.

Now... what was he going to do to Undying Slaughter for killing him multiple times?