1501 Two Choices

Sunny should have expected what question Nephis would ask. The Dread Lord was in Twilight... Soul Stealer was there, as well. The city itself was frozen in time. Finally, the truth of how it had been lost was revealed.

But what mattered most was that there was also an army of human warriors there — all the people from the Twilight Sea, except for those who had perished during the siege of Verge and the subsequent retaliation of the Defiled horde.

Could they really be saved by deactivating the defensive array?

Sunny had just the Memory to do it.

However... the things Mordret had shared with them changed the entire game.

Sure, the question Nephis had asked was reasonable. The primary goal of coming to Twilight was to rescue Kai, but they had harbored a tentative hope of finding more allies here, as well. Now, even if there was a caveat, it seemed that their hope could come true. But... why was it that they needed allies, to begin with? It was to have enough forces in order to attack Verge, which was supposed to be guarded by the legion of Defiled abominations and the Six Plagues.

Now, three of the Plagues were gone. Of the remaining three, two were trapped here in Twilight. Numerous Defiled had either perished or become frozen in time here, as well. Then, didn‘t it mean... that Verge was far more vulnerable than they had ever expected? Vulnerable enough so that the cohort had a chance of destroying the First Seeker without the aid of powerful allies, perhaps.

It was as though the only ally they needed was the Mad Prince.

A subtle frown appeared on Sonny's face.

'Aren't I putting too much trust into a Nightmare Creature?l

Sure, the vile madman's motives seemed to align with his. But to what degree? And could an ending envisioned by a demented abomination truly fit what Sunny wanted to achieve? It could not. For example, Sunny would have never massacred Weave and treated Ananke so cruelly — but for the Mad Prince, it was a perfectly acceptable course of action. Who was to say that the bastard had not planned for something similar to happen again? What else would he have been willing to sacrifice in order to achieve his goal?

Doubt, doubt... Sunny was full of doubt.

Mordret, meanwhile, raised an eyebrow with an amused smile. He studied Nephis for a few moments, then answered in a pleasant tone:

"Why... although I can't be entirely sure, it appears so. Yes, there seems to be an army of Awakened warriors in Twilight, all waiting to resume the battle against the Defilement." He paused briefly.

"Do remember that there is also an army of the Nightmare Creatures there, complete with two dreadful Defiled champions. But what of it? The point is moot... unless you have discovered a method to control the defensive array of Twilight during your travels, of course."

Mordret looked at each of them in turn, and then asked with a hint of curiosity:

"Have you? "

Jet raised her eyebrow slightly.

"You seem to be strangely certain that we have."

The Prince of Nothing chuckled.

"Ah, I'll admit it. Yes, I am quite confident that you do, indeed, possess the means of lifting the curse enveloping Twilight. The Spell is always fair, after all... in its own perverse way. Granted, I find its treatment very distasteful this time around. I have been left with no choice but to rely on others to help me escape this predicament, more or less."

He smiled.

"But that is exactly why I believe that you, the others in question, must have a way of helping me free myself. Otherwise, the Spell would have been entirely unreasonable, which it never is."

Sunny scoffed.

"Help you? Do we have a reason to help you? All of us are in this mess because of you. If it wasn‘t for you and your schemes, the Battle of the Black Skull would have never happened, and we wouldn't have ended up in this damned Nightmare."

Mordret studied him with a friendly smile, then shrugged nonchalantly.

"Such a small trifle. Are you still mad about it? You should really learn how to let go of past grievances and forgive people, Sunless. Holding onto spite is a terrible way to live a life. just look at me! You spoke so convincingly about not wanting to serve the Great Clans, then went and joined the army of Valor anyway. But am I mad? No... I graciously forgave you a long time ago."

He looked at them with reproach, waited for a few moments, and shrugged.

"Well, if that does not convince you, there is still your friend Nightingale. You might not feel very motivated to help me, but what about him? You aren‘t going to leave him to rot in Twilight, are you?"

Sunny glared at the Prince of Nothing for a bit, then grimaced and shook his head.

"No... most likely. And yes, we do have a way to control the defensive array. However, it is not a given that we should."

He looked at Nephis and said, his voice somber:

"As I see it, we have two choices. One is to enter Twilight, deactivate the array, then try to kill the Dread Lord and Soul Stealer with the help of Daeron's army. If we survive, the seven of us will lead that army to besiege Verge and finish off Torment and the First Seeker."

His expression darkened.

"The other choice is to leave Twilight without facing the Dread Lord and go directly to Verge, just the five of us. There can't be that many Defiled left there, serving Torment... it will be dangerous, of course, but perhaps less dangerous than fighting the Dread Lord and Soul Stealer."

Mordret coughed.

"Aren't you forgetting something? Abandoning your friend to avoid danger... ah, how heartless. Really, Sunless, I thought better of you."

Sunny gave him a dirty look.

"Who is abandoning who? If we manage to destroy the First Seeker, the Nightmare will be over. Both of you will return to the waking world as Saints without having done anything."

Mordret shook his head.

"What if you fail? At the risk of sounding presumptuous... you know what I am capable of. Don't you think that having me with you will increase our chances of escaping the Nightmare? Seven is much better than five, anyway. There is no reason to settle for less when you can have more."

Sunny remained silent for a while, then sighed and looked at Nephis. Honestly... he found himself agreeing with Mordret. Not only because having the Prince of Nothing fighting by their side would be a boon during the assault on Verge. but simply because leaving Kai behind did not sit right with him.

Sunny was not a superstitious man, but he knew more about fate than most. Sure, in theory, a person could conquer a Nightmare without contributing anything to its completion. But in practice, the Spell was never that kind. One way or the other, trying to hide and bide your time almost always invited disaster.

So, even if there was no logical reason to worry about Kai, Sunny had a feeling that simply leaving their friend frozen in time would not end well — both for him and for them. After hesitating for a few moments, he shook his head.

"I don't know. Neph... it's your decision."

She glanced at him, then shrugged.

Her answer was just as he had expected:

"What is there to decide? Let's kill the Dread Lord. We'll go conquer the Nightmare after he is dead.”