1516 Consuming Wrath

Using the fact that the loathsome dragon had been distracted by the fly, Sunny considered his enemy for a moment. His mind was aflame with insatiable anger, so it was hard to think... hard to stay still and contemplate the way to kill his enemy better, even though that was his one and only goal.

Somewhere deep down, Sunny knew that he had surrendered his most lethal weapon — his cunning — to the scorching temptation of wrath. But that thought, too, was obliterated by the ocean of boundless rage.

'That worm is strong.'

Sunny had called upon his most primal, most destructive power — the Shadow Shell. He had ravaged the Dread Lord as a ferocious sea serpent, a dreadful butterfly, a decaying leopard, and many more revolting shapes. His attacks had dealt some damage to the enemy, but none of them had made the dragon reel.

The only thing that had was the Sin of Solace.

Sunny glanced at the beautiful jade jian.

'He knows that sword.'

The Mad Prince had wielded the Sin of Solace, and so, the Dread Lord would be familiar with the sinister power of the cursed blade. Even if it had never been used against him, he would know and fear it.

That was because while Sunny could mutilate the dragon's flesh, the Sin of Solace could shatter his mind. It had been created from the whisper of Ariel, the Demon of Dread, after all.

And there was no one more familiar with the terror of Ariel's secrets than the Dread Lord, who was similarly burdened by the knowledge of truth due to his Flaw.

There was a problem, though...

Sunny could only wield the Sin of Solace in a human hand, but his human body could be destroyed by one bellow from the dreadful dragon.

Or maybe not.

Grinning madly, Sunny dismissed the jade jian. At the same time, he called upon the shadows once again. They surged from the open gate of the Shadow Lantern, enveloping him like a dark tide.

And then, a towering figure rose from that tide.

This time, Sunny did not create the shell of a serpent, a butterfly, or a fearsome leopard. Instead, he borrowed a page from the Devouring Beast's book... and created the shell that was a perfect replica of himself, only on a much larger scale.

Of course, he couldn't compete with the feral Plague, who had stood a hundred meters tall. But even at a third of her height, his head still rose above the battlements of the fortress.

A furious dark giant made of shadows appeared in the middle of the courtyard, sharing Sunny's appearance. His towering body was covered by a cracked onyx armor... and a whirlwind of sparks surrounded his outstretched hand.

Memories were mystical tools. They were created from the soul essence of their wielder, and adjusted to suit the wielder's body. That was why Awakened did not need to fit and tailor their armor, or mold the hilts of their weapons to their grip.

However, things changed once an Awakened reached Transcendence. The body of a Saint could transform, taking an entirely different shape. It was only then that the limit to how much a Memory could be adjusted to fit its wielder revealed itself.

Different Memories had different limits. Some could still be used by the transformed Saints, some could not. Generally, the more powerful a Memory was, the more flexible potential it possessed.

And Sunny was willing to bet that the Sin of Solace, a Transcendent Memory of the Fifth Tier, possessed more than enough of it to be useful in the hands of a giant — especially because the form he had taken was only different from his own body in size, and therefore did not require the jade jian to stray away from its nature as a sword.

All he had to do was pour more essence into manifesting it. Ten times more, a hundred times more, a thousand times more... it did not matter. Sunny's essence was inexhaustible right now.

As the shape of a graceful sword, its blade dozens of meters long, started to manifest itself from light, Sunny grinned and dashed forward. It was going to take the Sin of Solace some time to weave itself into existence, and he would have to occupy the loathsome dragon until then.

Struggling to control his massive body, Sunny leaned forward and rammed his shoulder into the wall of the courtyard. The entire fortress quaked and tilted, water pouring in through the broken gates. The wall itself cracked and collapsed, forcing the Dread Lord, who had been using it as purchase, to lose balance.

Before the dragon could open his massive wings, Sunny grabbed onto him and pulled him down. His face was very close to the Dread Lord's bloodied chest... if not for the visor of the onyx helmet, Sunny would have tried to bite into his throat.

'What's this...'

Something glistened amidst the silver blood. There, between the midnight scales, was a scale that seemed different from all the others. It was dull grey, as if forged from iron, and had a peculiar shape.

Sunny tried to get a better look at it, but at that moment...

He heard the annoying fly shout:

"S— sunny! I... I can't..."

'What...'

And then, a radiant arrow hit him in the back, slid into the crack of the Mantle, and detonated inside.

'No!'

The left side of the shadow giant's torso exploded from within. His onyx armor, which had already been severely damaged, crumbled into pieces. His left arm, which had almost grasped the hilt of the Sin of Solace, fell to the ground.

At the same time, the dragon's maw closed on his neck, shredding it. The Dread Lord growled, tearing the giant's head off with a terrible pull.

Blinded by terrible pain and disoriented, Sunny crashed on the cold stones.

His shell fell apart, and he was banished from the embrace of shadows.

His body rolled and came to halt in the rubble of the shattered fortress wall. He felt cold water licking his torn skin.

'Ah...'

The fly... he should have killed it sooner. The loathsome dragon must have whispered a command into the vermin's ear...

Letting out a pained groan, Sunny forced his battered body to rise — only to see the Dread Lord's tail swiping at him with terrible speed. Remembering how the hollow vessels of Soul Stealer exploded into bloody mist after being struck by it, he let out a hateful scream and stepped into the shadows.

A moment later, he appeared on top of the crumbling wall.

From there, Sunny could see the courtyard, and the figure of the bleeding dragon below him. He could also see Twilight in the distance, barely visible through the haze of dawn.

'What to do, what to do...'

Belatedly, he thought about his Shadows. Saint, Fiend, Nightmare... they could help him a lot in this battle. Especially Saint, who was immune to all mind attacks and could resist the authority of the Dread Lord.

But thinking about them filled him with endless fury.

No one was allowed to steal his vengeance from him... no one! Summoning the Shadows would only give them a chance to kill the odious dragon before he could.

He would never allow that to happen.

'This... this is madness!'

A feeble thought was drowned by the torrent of bloodlust and demented anger. Sunny was not going to allow anyone to steal his victims. No... if he summoned the Shadows, it would only be to kill them. Kill them all! In fact, it was exactly what he should have done.

Each of them was a Shadow Creature, and a powerful one at that, suitable to become fuel for his soul. He had painstakingly nurtured them himself, after all. So, wasn't it only right, for him to reap what he had sown? Just imagining the flood of shadow fragments he would receive from slaughtering his servants made Sunny smile viciously.

Was that how the Mad Prince had become a Titan? It had to be. Where else would the vile madman find enough fragments to form the seventh core, here in the Tomb of Ariel? Sunny would be wise to follow his example.

But first, he had to kill the dragon.

And the traitorous fly...

Turning his head to look at his enemies, Sunny lingered for a split second.

Out there, far away... wasn't something strange happening in Twilight?

Suddenly frozen, he looked into the distance.