1527 Leaving Twilight

The Chain Breaker left the drowning remains of Twilight behind and turned away from the rising suns. Drifting above the currents, it traversed the dreadful battlefield and escaped into clear waters.

The Great River flowed below them. By now, the sight of the world in constant motion was both familiar and calming. Sunny had a feeling that returning to reality, where the ground was solid and unmoving, would be a strange experience.

There were no Nightmare Creatures in the vicinity of Twilight, so they could relax for a few days. The members of the cohort rested and recuperated, not doing anything in particular. They slept, consumed delicious meals, and spent their time in idleness.

Even Mordret's presence did not dampen the peaceful mood. He was nothing if not accommodating, even pleasant to be around. Of course, he was... true monsters knew better than anyone how to appear sympathetic and friendly, after all. And the Prince of Nothing was a singular existence even among the insidious monsters.

But that was fine. Sunny did not mind sharing a ship with him, as long as Mordret was an ally. Gods knew that the cohort needed all the help it could get in this dreadful, utterly unreasonable Nightmare.

Sunny himself did not do much in the first few days of their journey across the Great River. He slept some more, spent some time staring at the sky, and chatted with Kai, describing the past events of the Nightmare in more detail.

The month he had spent with Nephis on the carcass of the Black Turtle, the battle with the Azure Serpent. Their meeting with Ananke and the visit to forlorn Weave. The journey to Fallen Grace and their reunion with Cassie. The battle against the Defiled sybil... the dreadful months they had spent on Aletheia's Island, and their eventual escape.

In the process, Sunny also spoke about the many mysteries they had solved and the startling revelations they had received in the Tomb of Ariel. Looking back... he had truly learned a lot here, both about the past and the present.

And about himself.

Kai was the perfect audience for his outrageous tales. Sharing his experiences with a friend soothed Sunny's conflicted heart, a little. He was not quite alright — after suffering so much in Antarctica and on the Great River, how could he be? But he was at least back to being his usual spirited self.

Almost.

There was still the issue of what had happened at the end of Twilight to deal with. If there was a way to deal with that, even. Sunny felt that he at least owed it to himself to have a talk with Nephis, pointless or not.

But with Nephis being in that strange dispassionate state, talking with her about deeply emotional issues did not seem like a good idea. She was slowly recovering, at least. So, Sunny decided to wait until she was back to her usual self before broaching the topic.

With that, there was nothing for him to do.

Eventually, the Chain Breaker traveled far away from Twilight. They were still bathed in the beautiful blaze of the endless dawn, but the waters the graceful ship was braving had imperceptibly changed. They were surrounded by danger once more.

From here onward, there would be untold horrors hiding beneath the waves once more. The radiant sky would harbor terrifying abominations once more. And so, the members of the cohort would have to maintain vigilance at all times once more, ready to fight for their lives.

The mood aboard the Chain Breaker subtly changed.

That said... strangely, Sunny was not too concerned.

Perhaps it was arrogance, but looking at the seven people gathered on the graceful ship, he felt confident in their chances of at least reaching Verge unharmed.

Had there ever been a more deadly cohort of Masters? Surely not.

Kai and Effie were veterans of both the Forgotten Shore and the Antarctic campaign, with plenty of incredible feats under their belts. Soul Reaper Jet was one of the most feared individuals in the world, with even Saints being wary of her sinister blade. Cassie was someone whose lethality could not even be evaluated by mundane means.

And then there were Sunny, Nephis, and Mordret. The three wielders of Divine Aspects, unheard of in history. Their individual power was already outside the scope of what Masters were supposed to be capable of, and when put together...

If anything, Sunny should have felt concerned for their enemies.

Speaking of Mordret...

Sunny had wished to avoid him entirely, but having access to the well of knowledge the Prince of Nothing possessed was simply too tempting. Granted, the bastard lied as easily as he breathed, so anything he said had to be taken with a grain of salt.

In fact, as a rule of thumb, nothing Mordret said could be trusted. But Sunny still wanted to ask him a few questions, especially those that almost no one else could answer.

Mordret could usually be seen at the bow of the Chain Breaker, where Saint stood guard with Morgan's Warbow in her hands. He seemed to be very interested in the graceful stone knight, or maybe the bow she held. In any case, he could be found there most of the time.

Sunny left his usual spot under the branches of the sacred tree, walked past Ananke's ketch, and approached the Prince of Nothing. Sensing his gaze, Mordret looked up.

"Ah, Sunless. What a pleasant surprise. Did you want something?"

Sunny glared at him for a few moments, then sighed and summoned the Shadow Chair. Noticing it, Mordret raised an eyebrow, as if remembering something unpleasant.

"Uh-oh."

Sitting down, Sunny remained silent for a bit, then said evenly:

"Yeah, I did want something. Just... to chat for a bit."

He glanced at Mordret and asked, trying to keep his tone devoid of hostility:

"So, how is Ravenheart treating you?"

The Prince of Nothing gave him a curious look.

"Ah, you know. The weather is not great, but the people are really... charming. Well, you've met Seishan and Beastmaster, so you must have an idea. It's like I'm living in a flower garden."

Sunny smiled, nodded, and asked cordially:

"I see, I see... so, what are the Sovereigns up to? Are they really going to abandon the waking world?"