1545 Purest Sound

The delivery did not go smoothly. Sunny, Kai… and Mordret, of all people… remained on the stern of the ship for more or less the entire time, waiting for the results. Sunny at least had a task to keep him occupied — guiding the Chain Breaker across the black void was not very difficult, but it still required attention.

Mordret did not seem to care that much, but Kai was extremely concerned. He paced nervously, sometimes glancing down, but then hurriedly turning his gaze away.

It was a bit strange. All three of them could learn exactly what was going on — Sunny thanks to his shadows, Mordret through the reflections, and Kai due to his Awakened Ability. However, none of them made use of that opportunity, preferring to remain in the dark about what was happening below deck.

It was not like they did not receive any signs, though.

The Chain Breaker seemed to tremble from time to time, and Effie's voice eventually reached their ears, penetrating the impregnable wood the enchanted ship was built from.

Hearing the barrage of curses pouring out of her mouth, Sunny was a bit reassured. Things could not be going too terrible, considering that she had enough energy for such eloquence.

…At the same time, he felt his ears slowly turning numb. Some of those words, he did not even know. Others seemed familiar, but used in an entirely new context. Even after growing up in the outskirts, he was on the verge of blushing a little..

'Really… is there a need to be so descriptive? She has been chewed on by all kinds of Nightmare Creatures. How bad can the pain be?'

Nevertheless, the process continued for many hours. After a while, Effie's voice grew tired, and his expression grew dim.

It was taking too long.

Even without being able to precisely measure time, Sunny knew that Effie had been in labor for longer than usual. It has already been a full day, at least, and there seemed to be no end to it.

Nephis, Cassie, and Jet were with her, handling the process. They would have called upon him and Kai if they needed help, but none of them had appeared from below the deck. Sunny was growing more and more uneasy, and Kai was entirely beyond himself, by then.

"Should we… do something?"

Sunny looked at him somberly.

"Do what? There's nothing to do. Calm down. Neph is there, so everything will work out."

Kai hesitated for a while, then nodded.

It was hard not to feel useless.

It was even harder not to feel burdened by the uncertainty of the future. They were going into battle very soon… the timing of it all was extremely unfortunate. Disastrous, maybe.

This whole Nightmare had been one disaster after another, starting with the dire necessity that had forced them to enter the Seed, to begin with.'

And the man responsible for landing them into this situation was right here with them, yawning as he looked into the darkness.

Sunny suppressed the desire to toss Mordret overboard. Not because doing so would lessen their chances of prevailing in Verge, even, but simply because he knew that getting rid of the bastard would not be that easy.

Letting out a heavy sigh, he moved the steering oars slightly and looked ahead.

Time slowly passed. The intensity of Effie's labor only grew, while at the same time, her voice became more and more fatigued.

And then, after something that felt like several days passed…

They finally heard a new sound.

The shrill, loud sound of a baby crying.

Kai let out a long sigh and simply sat down where he stood, looking completely exhausted. It was as if it was him who had given birth to a child, not Effie.

But Sunny knew how he felt.

It was indescribably strange, to hear a child's cry in the black emptiness of the Tomb of Ariel. A pure sound like that did not belong in this dreadful place… it seemed wrong and alien.

And at the same time, strangely uplifting.

Feeling a profound sense of relief, Sunny poured his essence into the runic circle and slowly brought the Chain Breaker to a halt.

The flying ship hovered in the dark abyss, unmoving, the leaves of the sacred tree emanating a beautiful glow.

Sunny remained motionless himself, for a while, then took a deep breath and left the runic circle.

Glancing at Kai, who seemed too mentally exhausted to think straight, he shook his head and said:

"I'll go check."

He walked across the deck of the Chain Breaker and descended below deck, eventually finding his way to one of the cabins. In front of it, the air was heavy with the scent of blood. A radiant memory illuminated the gloomy interior of the corridor, and Cassie was standing in front of the door, her face tired.

Hearing his steps, she turned her head slightly.

Sunny stopped, feeling his heart beating rapidly.

"How… how is she doing?"

A faint smile slowly found its way onto the blind girl's face, illuminating it beautifully.

"It wasn't easy… but she's fine. They're both fine. Nephis helped."

He hesitated.

"...What about the timing? Wasn't it too early?"

Cassie remained silent for a moment, then shrugged with uncertainty.

"Everything seems fine."

Then, she suddenly remembered something and raised a hand.

"Oh. Can you… lend me the Endless Spring? I was supposed to bring more water, but the nearest barrel is all the way in the cargo hold. We'll wash them off. And then you'll be able to see them."

Sunny summoned the Memory and placed it in Cassie's hand, feeling a storm of emotions raging in his wildly beating heart.

'What the hell. What is this damned Nightmare, even?'

"Right. Sure. Of course. I'll… I'll go tell Kai."

He turned to walk away, then froze.

"Oh! I forgot to ask. Who is it? A boy, or a girl?"

Cassie smiled wider and then opened the door of the cabin, slipping inside.

"It's a healthy boy!"