1635 Message to Myself

A few days before, far away from the harsh splendor of Ravenheart, Sunny was looking at Cassle while hiding his emotions behind a polite smile.

"Oh, and by the way..."

Her tone was neutral.

"...Happy Birthday."

For a split second, his mask cracked.

Sunny's face did not move, but his gaze changed. For a short moment, his eyes were much deeper and darker than before - the lightless depth contained within them was much too vast, much too cold, and much too unfathomable to fit the image of a harmless shopkeeper.

He froze, a storm of emotions raging in his heart. For a second, Sunny was stunned, not knowing what to say.

The shadows stirred.

But then, he quickly composed himself.

"Why, thank you. But how did you know?"

An irrational, but desperate hope had ignited in his chest, trying to burn away his judgment. A hope that someone anyone remembered him... that Cassie did. The thought of it was both blindingly sweet and ruthlessly painful.

Because it was impossible, The [Fateless] Attribute, as he had called it, was thorough. So, Sunny discarded that futile hope and hid his rattled state.

How had she known that today was his birthday, though?

'Maybe... just maybe...'

Cassie was facing him, remaining silent. Her smile slowly dimmed, replaced by a strange and solemn expression. Sunny felt uncomfortable because her eyes were hidden by the blue fabric, but he did not show it.

Come to think of it...

He had not noticed it immediately, but Cassie looked a little strange.

How could he describe it? She seemed a little... haggard.

Of course, a stranger would not have noticed, blinded by the stunning beauty of the blind seer. But to Sunny, she looked out of sorts. Her clothes, which had always been neat and tidy, were a little messy. Her hair was like a waterfall of pale gold, but it did not seem properly combed. There were signs of fatigue on her delicate face.

Much more importantly, there was a hint of restless intensity to her which had never been there before. As if Cassie was... not quite stable, having lost her innate state of composed balance.

Sunny had seen all the other members of the cohort after returning, even if from afar, but it was his first time seeing Cassie, The blind seer seemed to have changed a lot.

She finally turned away and walked a few steps, as If studying the dining hall of the Brilliant Emporium.

"It's strange. I've been delivered a note asking me to find a person named Sunless and wish him a happy birthday. On a winter solstice, of all days. It happened a while ago. But, the strangest past? The sender of the note... was me. And I don't remember ever writing it."

Sunny remained silent, wanting her to say more. Sometimes, silence was the best way to make people talk.

The faint hope in his heart had been extinguished. Cassie did not remember... however, she seemed to have known that she would not remember. And therefore, she had made arrangements for them to meet, before the Third Nightmare.

He suddenly felt stifled.

Cassie traced her fingers across one of the tables and turned her head slightly.

"Sunless is a rather peculiar name, so I didn't think that finding him would be difficult. But, to my surprise... that person didn't seem to exist. Not in the government databases, Academy records, or the archives of the Great Clans. You might not know it, Master Sunless, but I am a rather knowledgeable person. One might even say that there's no one better at collecting information than me”

Sunny tilted his head a little.

Oh, he knew.

"That is indeed strange."

His voice was pleasant and even.

She smiled.

"A person named Sunless had not existed in either of the two worlds... until this year, when you found your way to Bastion. Naturally, I was curious. So, 1 studied you a little. I hope you don't mind."

Sunny hesitated. Even if he did mind, no one in their right mind would rebuke Song of the Fallen, a prominent Saint and one of the most valued seneschals of the Great Clan Valor.

Cassie turned her head left and right, as if looking around.

"I must admit, you are a fascinating man. Not only do you seem to have appeared out of nowhere, but your establishment is even built inside of an Ascended Devil. How inventive."

He tensed.

Well... it wasn't a surprise. Cassie's Dormant Ability allowed her a measure of insight into all living things, Marvelous Mimic was not an exception, so she would have realized its nature as soon as she approached the Brilliant Emporium.

And yet she had stepped into the maw of an Ascended Devil without much worry, Was it confidence or indifference? Sunny was not sure.

He coughed.

"Ah. Well, why not? My house might not be able to fly like your Citadel, but it can walk. it's convenient."

The more Important question was... what did she see when looking at him? Weaver's Mask was all the way in Godgrave, and while the Nebulous Mantle could hide his presence, it was nowhere nearly as potent at deflecting divination.

Nevertheless, Sunny was not worried. He was mostly certain that Cassie's powers were based on a subconscious ability to perceive the strings of fate, and sense when they were trembling. Since there were no strings of fate connected to him anymore, she should be powerless against him.

As if to confirm his words, Cassie spoke calmly:

"Do you know what I sense when I look at you, though? Nothing. You are like a black void, completely empty."

Sunny raised an eyebrow.

"That is not something a man wants to hear on his birthday, Saint Cassia."

She did not seem to have heard his words, continuing in the same tone:

"But this is perfect. This is exactly what I've been looking for, Oh, Master Sunless... you seem to be strangely well-informed about my abilities, considering that you are not at all surprised to hear these things. Well, just in case, let me tell you... I used to be able to see the future.”

He hesitated for a while, a little startled by that statement.

“...Used to?"

Cassle nodded.

"Yes. This ability of mine has been in complete disarray after my Third Nightmare. Not just mine, actually... all Awakened with high affinity to fate are suffering a reduction in their ability to discern the future. Not that there are a lot of us. It is almost as if fate itself has been thrown into chaos."

Sunny forced out a smile.

"How terrible."

She remained silent for a while, seemingly distracted. Then, she said with a subtle hint of relief:

"Yes. It has been rather terrible. And I've been... I've been trying to find the cause for the past four years, without any success. So, the message that I seem to have sent myself made me think that you might be of help. And won't just think that I am crazy”

Cassle paused, then faced him and said tensely:

"Master Sunless... how would you react if I told you that there is a man-shaped hole in the world?”