1637 Negative Space

Sunny tried to evade the question a few more times, but it was too important to Cassie. She stubbornly returned to it no matter what he said, forgetting his answers a few moments later. Watching her lost expression was eerie and a little heartbreaking, like talking to someone suffering from dementia.

"So, tell me... are you?"

Sunny reminded himself to be patient. There were many suitable ways to prevent her from voicing the question. He just needed to find the correct one.

"Yes, I am. But..."

Cassie was stunned, then confused, then tense once more.

'Maybe I should distract her with a revelation or two about what is going on in Ravenheart?'

However, in the end, he did not have to.

Somehow, Cassie did not repeat herself again. Instead, she shifted slightly, reached for her tea cup, and traced its shape with her finger. Her face froze, and she fell quiet.

After a few moments of silence, Cassie said evenly:

"...My tea is cold"

Sunny tilted his head a little. Then, his eyes gleamed in the darkness.

It seemed that there was no need to guide her away from the question, after all.

'So soon?’

Cassle was smart. She could not remember that which was forgotten, but she noticed the change in the temperature of her tea. Therefore, instead of remembering, she simply deduced that something had been erased from her memory.

The gears of her formidable mind were spinning now, connecting the negative space in her memory with the details of the conversation they were having. Observing the void and inferring its meaning.

Knowing Cassie, there were countless conjectures being formed in her head. Dozens of theories were being built, scrutinized, and discarded. Only those that could not be effectively disproven remained, leading to several parallel branches of assumptions. Those assumptions were then pitted against each other, turning into conclusions.

The conclusions were used to extrapolate what, exactly, she had forgotten.

‘...Too smart, maybe.’

It was a little scary.

Sunny did not say anything, carefully exploring his own emotions. If he was right, then Cassie not only knew that a person was missing from the world, but also deduced that he was that person, or at least connected to them.

She would not be sure, but suspect it strongly.

And he... he had come closer to being known to someone than he had ever been since leaving the Nightmare. Of course, there was a vast difference between a suspicion and a memory - but it was precisely because Cassle's Inference was based solely on deduction and not remembrance that she could retain It.

The taste of his tea was suddenly incredibly fragrant. Sunny drank it silently.

None of them spoke for a long time.

Cassie's delicate face was full of somber intensity, but she did not rush to ask him any questions. She couldn't. Because asking him about all the things she wanted to know would only result in her forgetting the answers.

It was an odd situation.

Eventually, she sighed and turned away. A few moments later, Cassie asked, her voice a little strange:

"Would you... like to look into my eyes?"

He was startled by the question.

'Where did that come from?'

Sunny hesitated, not knowing how to answer.

"I'm honestly not sure. Why are you asking?"

She touched her blindfold briefly, sighed, and said with a hint of reluctance:

"My Transformation Ability has to do with my eyes. Few people know about it, and you are now one of them. If you look into my eyes... I'll be able to read your memories."

Sunny blinked.

His first reaction was to reject her vehemently, Who would want their private memories to be exposed to a stranger? Not to mention the fact that Cassie's power was not limited to that. She had already admitted that she could also erase, replace, and manipulate the memories of other people.

That sounded utterly terrifying. Sunny had suspected that there were limits to her power, and now, she had exposed one of these limits to him- only those who looked Cassie in the eyes could be enthralled by her Ability. So why would he expose himself to that power?

She would forget everything she saw just like she had forgotten his answers, as well.

'Not everything.’

The memories of his past were forbidden, but the memories of everything that had happened to him after the Third Nightmare were less so.

The question was, what benefit would there be if Cassie saw it all?

She would probably be able to fill the empty void left by him with a few more pieces of logical reasoning, at least,

But then what?

Sunny put his cup down and smiled politely,

"You want to peek at my memories, Saint Cassia?”

She simply nodded, not hiding her desire.

"I do... Saint Sunless."

His smile did not falter

She has already connected me to the Exploration Report on the Tomb of Arlel and guessed that i was in the Nightmare with them. Damn it... 1 shouldn't have published it'

But he did not really regret his actions. That report was both for Teacher Julius and Ananke, so it was worth the trouble.

Sunny chuckled, then asked with a hint of amusement in his voice:

"What's in it for me?"

Cassie leaned back and remained silent for a few moments. She might have guessed that he was the person she had been looking for, but she had no idea who he was. What were his motives, desires, and convictions? What was his past, and what was his vision of the future?

What could she offer him to gain his cooperation?

She couldn't even be sure if he was a friend or a foe.

"Well, what is it that you want?"

Sunny contemplated for as long as his Flaw allowed him to.

"Actually, there is something that you can help me with, I must warn you, though... the faver I'll ask might land you in hot water with your venerable superiors from Clan Valor.”

He shrugged.

"Additionally, you will only access a memory of my choosing. You'll have to wait a bit, too. It can only be done on a full moon."

Cassie suddenly tensed.

"A full moon? Surely, you don't mean..."

Sunny chuckled.

"That's right. I want to sneak into Bastion."

He finished his tea and added nonchalantly:

"The real Bastion, of course. Not this mirage we all live in.”