1645 Found Nothing

Cassle gulded Sunny deeper into the ruins. She showed more caution after descending from the outer wall, to his relief - the young woman remained calm and composed, but he noticed that she chose roundabout paths, keeping to the less populated areas of the ancient castle.

From time to time, ghostly runes ignited on the weathered stones as they passed. The pebble Sunny held in his hands grew a little warmer in those moments.

After a while, Cassie spoke again:

"We are staying in the desolate parts of true Bastion to avoid running into someone powerful. I can handle the Knights without too much problem, but if we meet a Saint, especially one from the direct bloodline... a complication might arise."

Sunny nodded, strangely relieved. It was nice to have confirmation that Cassie's power was not limitless, even if she was on his side.

The blind seer lingered for a few moments, then asked:

"You only told me that you needed to get inside the castle, Where, exactly, do you want me to lead you?"

He shrugged,

"As close to the main keep as possible, I'll know where I need to go once I get there.”

In fact, Sunny did not know the precise location of what he was looking for. He just knew that there was something hidden here, in Bastion, and that the members of Clan Valor must not have found it yet. Well... maybe they had. But he was willing to bet that they hadn't.

That was because the timeline did not make sense. The Citadel that the founder of Valor had conquered was the illusory Bastion, not the real one. Otherwise, it would not have been conquered at all-no member of the First Generation had been powerful enough to survive in a Death Zone, after all, let alone claim it.

It was only after Broken Sword, Anvil, Ki Song, and Asterion had become Transcendent that this hidden place was disturbed by humans. Even then, Sunny doubted that Valor had truly occupied the true Bastion before the Sovereigns emerged.

Which meant that they had not had a lot of time to explore the vast ruin, especially considering how dangerous it was, and how few people had access to it. The best warriors of Valor had also spent more than a decade conquering distant regions of the Dream Realm to expand the King's domain.

Perhaps Anvil and his knights had discovered a few of the more easily accessible secrets of the fallen castle, but Sunny doubted that they would have found them all. Or at least he hoped so.

His hope was based on the fact that there was only one person in the world who possessed a daemon's lineage, and that person was him.

So, Sunny cautiously extended his senses outward, communicating with the ancient shadows populating the ruin. He could feel the dark hollows hiding under the rubble. Some of them were simply the result of stone blocks falling on each other, some were halls and chambers that had been buried and forgotten in the devastation.

However, none of them were what he was looking for.

Cassie led him deeper into the ruin, choosing the most deserted paths. Neither of them needed a source light to walk, so their passage was quiet and unseen, illuminated only by the pale radiance of the shattered moon. They walked across crumbling parapets and half-buried pathways, the ancient stones hanging dangerously above their heads.

Anvil's hammer continued to ring, steady and powerful, like the beating of an emotionless steel heart.

Sunny glanced at Cassie and said in a neutral tone:

"It must be... a real chore to sleep here."

She seemed surprised.

"Who would be insane enough to sleep in a place like this?"

Then, the young woman hesitated for a few moments and added with a sigh:

"It is forbidden, actually, This land used to belong to the Demon of Imagination, Here, what you dream about might very well become reality... the last time a knight dozed off on the wall, we fost four Masters to his nightmare."

Sunny fell silent with an appalled expression on his face. That was a little bit too much.

‘A Death Zone is a Death Zone, I guess!’

If Nightmare wasn't busy performing an important task in Godgrave, he would have summoned him immediately.

As they drew closer to the inner area of the ruined castle, Sunny sent his shadow sense down, into the mass of the drowned mountain below. He was cautious, limiting its reach to a narrow... beam, of sorts. Something like that had not been possible before, but after becoming a Saint, he learned how to control his senses better.

The mass of stone beneath his feet seemed solid enough. Sunny followed Cassie while concentrating on the ancient ruins - he even closed his eyes to feel the surroundings better.

However... he felt nothing.

The longer they spent among the ruins, the less of anything he felt.

'I'm sure there is something!’

If it had been before, Sunny would have probably been drawn to a fateful location by his intuition, or simply stumbled upon it due to being Fated. But now, he was the opposite of that, and his intuition remained silent,

Cassie did not show it, but she must have grown uneasy about their aimless wandering by now. Indeed, he would seem like a complete lunatic if his search did not produce a result. Who Infiltrates the secret stronghold of a Sovereign... for nothing?

Nothing, nothing...

Sunny smiled.

'Found it.'

There was absolutely nothing below them. But that was exactly what gave away the hidden sanctum - even if the mountain was made from solid stone, there would be cracks and crevasses inside it. And those would be populated by ancient shadows.

With how potent Sunny's shadow sense was, he would have felt their presence.

But he felt nothing, which meant that something was blocking his senses.

Deep, deep below...

Sunny opened his eyes and took a deep breath. Noticing that he had stopped, Cassie halted and turned to face him.

Her eyes were blue and clear, devoid of any abnormality. He still chose to look away.

"What is the matter?"

Sunny smiled subtly and shrugged.

"I found what I was looking for."

She tilted her head a little.

"...What now, then?”

He hesitated for a bit, then sighed.

"Now... please excuse me for a moment, Saint Cassia."

Taking a step forward, he placed his hands on her delicate shoulders.

And then, he pulled her into the shadows, teleporting both of them into the depth of the mountain.