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A moment later, the two of them were far below ground, with countless tons of stone hanging above their heads. If Sunny was not mistaken, the hidden sanctum he had found was most of the way to the bottom of the lake, at the very heart of the mountains.

In the past, Sunny had not been able to carry living beings with him when stepping through the shadows with the sole exception of Nephis. It was different now that he was a Saint, though. He could pull much heavier inanimate objects with him, as well as actual people. The latter were very cumbersome, though, consuming a lot of his essence.

Especially those whose souls were vast and powerful. Teleporting Cassie with him, and to such a remote place, had drained a good portion of his reserves.

Sunny sighed inwardly and tried to take a deep breath.

There was nothing to inhale, though.

A strangely calm voice resounded in his head, startling him:

[There is no air here.]

It was Cassie's voice,

But why was she so calm?

Sunny glanced at the blind seer with a hint of confusion, then shrugged and summoned the Quintessence Pearl. A few seconds later, a beautiful white pearl appeared in his hand. This time, Sunny did not place it in his mouth, keeping It between himself and Cassie. Soon, the two of them were able to breathe again.

"Please stay close, Saint Cassia."

Saints could keep their breath for much longer than mundane people, so neither of them had felt any discomfort in these few moments. Still, he had expected that Cassie would be at least a little startled.

But then again... why would she be? Cassie did not receive visions of the future anymore, but her Awakened Ability was functioning perfectly fine. She must have known that Sunny would use Shadow Step a few seconds before he had, and saw him summoning the Quintessence Pearl before he ever did.

Cassie usually acted in a way that made people forget about this Ability of hers, but if one stopped to think about it, she had every conversation and witnessed every event twice. For as long as her Awakened Ability was active, it was all but impossible to surprise her. And she would have definitely kept it active while sneaking a suspicious Saint into a Sovereign's stronghold.

Her Ascended Ability, meanwhile, seemed to have undergone a change, Unless she was using a Memory to communicate with him telepathically, it was that Ability of hers that allowed her to talk to people she had marked.

Sunny was well-acquainted with this manner of conversation thanks to the Shroud of Dusk, so he wasn't worried about thinking an unwanted thought aloud.

‘Huh. Convenient.'

No wonder Nephis had seemed so well-informed about his Shadows when they met in the Nameless Temple.

Cassie, meanwhile, looked like she was having similar thoughts. Facing Sunny, she tilted her head a little and asked:

"A spatial movement Ability?"

He nodded.

"Well, yes. Something like that."

She contemplated for a few moments, then said casually:

"Huh. Convenient."

Sunny blinked.

With that out of the way, he could finally look around - his shadow sense was rendered useless, so he could only rely on his sight now.

The space where the two of them had found themselves was not very large, and submerged in total darkness. Luckily, it was a mundane kind of darkness, which did not pose an obstacle for him.

They were in a small chamber. It was clearly artificial, as opposed to naturally formed. The walls were smooth and polished, with no seams on their stone surface. The ceiling was high. There was nothing in the stone chamber - no furniture, no spiderwebs, no runic circles carved into the floor. There was only a tall door, which seemed to have been carved from a single piece of dark wood.

Nevertheless, Sunny felt the same kind of discomfort he had felt once in the Ebony Tower when looking at it. The door seemed quite mundane, but it was also ever so slightly wrong. The handle was placed a bit too high, its shape was a bit off, the hinges were spaced strangely. It was as though it had been made for a being that resembled a human, but was not quite human.

A daemon, perhaps.

Cassie remained motionless, but he knew that she was studying the stone chamber through his eyes.

A few moments later, she spoke:

"I know that it might be strange to only ask now. But, Sunny... what exactly are you trying to find here? And where is here, exactly?"

He smiled subtly.

"We are far below the castle, at the heart of the mountain. In a place that the Demon of Imagination must have left behind. As for what I am searching for, it's simple..."

He took a careful step toward the door.

"It's power!”

Cassie seemed surprised.

"Power?"

Sunny nodded.

"Haven't you heard, Saint Cassia? Knowledge is the origin of power. At least that was what the Demon of Fate thought, and I'm inclined to agree. Ah... but it is also the heaviest thing in the world. So not everyone is strong enough to hold it."

She turned her head sharply, but Sunny simply continued in a carefree tone:

"So, what I am trying to find here is lost knowledge... and, if I am lucky, something just as forbidden."

With that, Sunny grabbed the handle, turned it, and pushed the door open. Or, at least, he tried to.

The door didn't budge.

Scowling slightly, Sunny put more strength into it. He had a lot of strength as a Transcendent Terror and yet, the door didn't move.

'Is it locked? But there is no lock. Have the hinges rusted through? No, wait...'

"You should try pulling."

Sunny coughed awkwardly, then pulled instead of pushing.

The door opened easily, and the hinges produced no noise,

"...I was just going to, Yeah.”

Cassie did not say anything and walked over, stopping just behind him. Sunny tensed slightly.

‘Why is she standing so close? Oh, right... I told her to, because of the Quintessence Pearl…’

"So, what kind of knowledge do you hope to find?"

He walked out of the stone chamber and stopped, studying the long corridor beyond.

"Oh, you know... nothing too unexpected. Why did the Doom War start? How did it end? Who won? How did the gods die? How did the daemons die? Where are their corpses?"

Sunny took a deep breath and added nonchalantly:

“Why was the Nightmare Spell created? What is its purpose? What happened to its creator? Simple stuff like that..."

Of course, there was another goal Sunny was pursuing, and another thing he wanted to find.

The remaining parts of Weaver's forbidden lineage... he wanted them. He wasn't satisfied with only having an incomplete collection of fragments.

Not anymore, at least.