1733 Familiar Stranger

Sunny did not show any outward reaction - the Lord of Shadows was not someone who would be agitated by a mere mention of the Princess of War, after all.

Internally, though, he was troubled.

'Morgan...'

His relationship with Morgan of Valor was not very deep, but it was rather impactful. From their first meeting in the arena of the Dream Tournament, to his brief stint as her sparring partner, to the hellish journey across the Nightmare Desert... he couldn't say that he hated her a lot, but he also couldn't say that there was any sympathy between them.

First and foremost, Morgan represented the Great Clans in his mind. Not only their callousness, but also their dread and might. As such, he could never quite perceive her as an individual... which was, perhaps, a little unfair, but also understandable.

There had been a time when Morgan represented the pinnacle of power in his mind...

That time was long gone.

By now, Sunny was confident that he was superior to her in all but a few aspects.

Morgan did possess a diabolical talent for warfare and strategy... the cruel stratagem she had pulled off in Antarctica would have decimated the forces of Song, costing the Queen of Worms several of her most cherished daughters and the chance to claim the Tomb of Ariel - if not for the sudden arrival of the Nightmare Gates, of course,

And that was despite Mordret scheming to ruin Varor behind the scenes.

However, that was not what troubled Sunny. What troubled him was that he did not know the current Morgan at all.

The old Morgan was dangerous, but familiar, like a sharp sword. The new Morgan was a stranger. There were rumors that she had changed a lot after suffering a defeat at the hands of her brother, and the mystery surrounding her Third Nightmare did not help.

Someone cunning and unfamiliar was the exact kind of person he would have preferred to avoid.

However, there was no avoiding her now.

Sighing quietly, Sunny followed Nephis into a lavish building.

It seemed that the elders of Clan Valor were being considerate today. They had not invited him to the heavily guarded compound of the Great Clan, choosing neutral territory to conduct the meeting instead. It was just that...

The territory they had selected was an exclusive restaurant frequented by the elites of NQSC. Sunny, in his onyx armor, looked more than a little out of place when a dapper maître d' led them to a private booth on the lowest underground level of the luxurious establishment. He caught a few stairs...

But not as much as Nephis.

She ignored them casually, so he followed suit and acted as if it was the restaurant that was at fault for the mismatch, not the other way around.

'Is that the way of a Legacy?’

Soon, they entered a spacious underground chamber. The interior here was worthy of being called a work of art, with tasteful decor and softly murmuring water features creating a pleasant and tranquil atmosphere.

Or rather, it would have been tranquil if not for the dangerous presence of the woman who sat behind the table, enjoying a glass of red wine.

‘...Well, some things never change, I guess.'

Morgan was as striking as he had been before. She was dressed in a flawlessly tailored business suit, which was entirely black - just like the fashionable leather gloves she wore on her hands. Her raven-black hair only made her alabaster skin look paler, and there were only three flashes of vibrant color about her - her ruby cufflinks, her red lips, and her daunting vermilion eyes.

Her presence was much more powerful and cold than it had been in the past. The luxurious chamber was permeated by a sense of lethal sharpness, as if everything here was a hidden blade,

However, what drew Sunny's attention the most was something that he could not quite put into words. Morgan seemed... different, somehow. Whether it was her sharp gaze or elegant demeanor, everything about her seemed the same, but also fundamentally changed.

Perhaps she had just matured... perhaps it was something else.

In any case, Sunny found it much harder to only perceive Morgan as an extension of Clan Valor and its ruler, as opposed to a person.

‘...What is up with Morgan?’

While Sunny was staring at her silently, she put down the wine glass and smiled.

Her smile was perfectly pleasant, but looked cold and infinitely sharp despite having no reason to.

"You are here, sister. Finally."

Nephis simply nodded.

"Lord Shadow, this is my older sister, Princess Morgan of Valor. Sister, this is Saint Shadow."

Hiding behind the mask, Sunny studied them without saying anything.

The two did not look like sisters. In fact, with one dressed in white, and the other in black, they looked as if someone had consciously attempted to create two exquisite beauties who were the exact opposite of each other.

Morgan looked at him with curiosity.

"Ah, the hermit Saint of Godrave. I've heard a lot about you, Lord of Shadows. It is a pleasure to finally meet you face-to-face. Or... face-to-mask, 1 guess."

Her smile widened a little.

Sunny tilted his head, then walked over to the table and pulled out a chair for Nephis. Once she was seated, he sat down himself and stared at Morgan, who had been observing his actions curiously.

"The pleasure is mine, Lady Morgan. I've heard a lot about you, too."

She raised an eyebrow.

"Oh? Only good things, I hope."

Sunny kept quiet for a moment, considering what to say.

Eventually, he spoke in a cold and indifferent tone:

"That brother of yours paid me a visit. He seemed like a weakling."

The implication was clear... a person who knew Mordret's true background would undoubtedly know about the Battle of the Black Skull. Therefore, what Sunny had said meant the following:

"I fought your pathetic brother and defeated him easily, You had fought him and lost miserably. Doesn't that make you the true weakling?"

Of course, Mordret was not weak. He was the

opposite, The vessel that had visited Sunny in Godgrave was merely one of countless that the Prince of Nothing controlled, and an expendable one to boot. Which meant that it did not possess a lot of power... nevertheless, that weak body had somehow traversed the harrowing hell of the Death Zone and arrived at the Nameless Temple in one piece.

Even then, Sunny had only defeated it easily because Mordret had no knowledge of how dangerous his soul was, anymore. The legion of silent shadows dwelling in Sunny's soul took care of the rest.

Sadly, it was a trick that would only work once.

What would happen the next time Sunny and Mordret met? He wasn't sure.

No one truly knew how many bodies the Prince of Nothing controlled. His Transformation Ability was similar to that of the Soul Stealer - it allowed Mordret to split his soul and wear multiple bodies at once. It seemed to be weaker than that of the appalling Plague, though... or at least more limiting for someone who had not succumbed to Corruption and wanted to remain sane.

Otherwise, Mordret could have probably consumed all of humanity by now.

Sometimes, when Sunny walked around the crowded streets of Bastion, he looked at the faces in the crowd and felt momentarily overcome by fear, thinking that he had no way to know if... maybe... Mordreat already had.

If everyone had already been turned into his marionettes, with only Sunny and a few powerful people left alive, not knowing that they were surrounded from all sides.

...It was a disturbing feeling.

Chasing the paranoia away, Sunny glanced at Morgan and waited for her reaction.

She looked at him silently for a few moments. And then threw her head back, laughing melodiously.

"Oh, right. You met that despicable person. And roughed him up! That makes me like you, already. Please, tell me more…”