1736 Make it Four

The three of them left the opulent chamber and headed to the surface level of the restaurant, intending to leave. Morgan walked in the front, while Sunny and Nephis followed a step behind.

As they approached the elevators, they could see the staff of the restaurant leading the guests to a heavily armored shelter. This place was usually visited by the elites of NQSC, after all - all of them were prominent citizens. Their safety had to be guaranteed for an exclusive establishment to fair well.

Many of the elites recognized Morgan and Nephis. Sunny could tell that all of them were relieved at the sight - especially when they saw Neph. Her reputation was not only that of a brilliant warrior, but also that of a selfless champion. Morgan could have decided to ignore a descending Gate, but Changing Star would never.

"Lady Nephis! Lady Morgan! Are you heading for the Gate?

Morgan slowed down a little and bowed slightly.

"Indeed. Have no worry, ladies and gentlemen. We will contain it in no time, and you'll be able to finish your meals in peace. Please excuse us."

Nephis bowed silently and continued on her way, surrounded by excited whispers.

As they entered the lift, Morgan sighed and looked at her sternly:

"Really, sister. Couldn't you have said something? That old man manages the hydroponic complex that supplies half of the grain to Bastion. The young couple is the daughter and son-in-law of the Chief Administrator of the central district of NQSC. The rest hold important positions, as well. Leaving a good impression would not hurt anyone, would it?"

Nephis glanced at her emotionlessly.

"...Actions speak louder than words."

Morgan laughed.

"What does the action of ignoring them say, then?"

However, she didn't press the issue. She wasn't someone who cared for ingratiating herself to people, either - in fact, it was the people who were desperate to get in her good graces.

Not only was Morgan a Saint, she was also the princess of the Sword Domain. Her importance would trample all of these elites combined.

Soon, they emerged from the restaurant. The beautiful building had undergone a transformation, plates of heavy armor descending to cover the doors and the windows. Sunny would have expected the armor to be made from reinforced alloy, but to his surprise, it was actually made from Dream Realm materials.

"Truly an exclusive establishment.

A familiar Fire Keeper, Sid, hastily opened the door of the PTV and invited them inside. The drive was a short one, only taking a few minutes - most of the vehicles on the road were moving away from the impact zone, but they were driving to its very heart.

In the end, they arrived almost at the same time as the first squids of the government forces.

The Gate manifested in a park. It had not opened yet, of course, but there was already a sinister atmosphere in the air. There was a strange haze above the frozen pond, a precursor to the appalling fissure that would split reality apart soon.

Armored vehicles had torn apart the white blanket of snow, and soldiers were hastily raising fortifications. The government Awakened were silently preparing for battle, while a small group of Awakened volunteers were huddled together, discussing their Aspects.

The arrival of the luxurious PTV caused quite a stir. And when Morgan and Nephis emerged from it, everyone simply froze, staring at them with wide eyes.

"That's... that's... the Sword Sisters..."

"Goddess Morgan! G-goddess Nephis!"

"Quiet, you fool! They are Saints! They can hear you!"

"Who is that with them?"

"Is he an Echo?”

"I don't know... but that guy is super creepy..."

Sunny stared at the soldiers menacingly, unhappy with the way they ogled Nephis.

Morgan and Nephis, meanwhile, calmly walked to the person in charge.

It was a Master wearing a military coat on top of light Memory armor. He, too, was both elated and taken aback at the sight of them.

"Uh... Lady Morgan. Lady Nephis. It is an honor to meet you."

Morgan nodded, flicking a snowflake off the lapel of her stylish black suit jacket.

"We were nearby. So, we decided to help."

The Master seemed relieved.

"That... that is great. With two Saints, we can..." Standing behind them, Sunny shifted slightly and looked up.

A wide smile appeared on his face, hidden by the emotionless mask.

"Three Saints. But, actually... make it four.'

No sooner than he thought it, there was a rustle, and a dashing figure descended from the grey aky.

The soldiers, who had been stunned by the arrival of two sublime beauties, now seemed dumbatruck.

"N-Nightsinger..."

"He's so... so…”

"Oh. My gods!"

"I am not dreaming, am I?"

Sunny's smile trembled.

"That bastard doesn't change!"

Indeed, the man who had descended from the sky was none other than Nightingale, Saint Kai... the Dragonslayer.

Wearing beautiful armor made from ivory scales and burnished bronze, with luscious auburn hair and mesmerizing green eyes, he was just as tantalizing as ever. No, even worse... Kai had always been unreasonably attractive, but now that he was a Saint, his beauty was almost blinding.

It was to the point where Sunny felt a strange impulse to look away, but was also incapable of doing so.

There were only two Transcendents out there who could challenge Kai in the looks department - one of them was Cassie, the other was Beastmaster.

...Sunny could not compete.

Not that he needed to!

'I have my charms, as well...'

Really, he looked quite good. It was just that anyone would feel that comparing themselves to Kai was simply unfair.

It was a cruel injustice!

While Sunny was staring at him sullenly, Kal landed softly in front of Morgan and bowed. Then, he looked up with a refreshing smile.

"Lady Nephis. Lady Morgan. Are you here to help?" Morgan remained silent a split second longer than usual, then reciprocated his smile.

"Ah, yes. As I was saying, we were nearby."

Kai's smile widened a little.

"Please accept my deepest gratitude. I've just returned from the Western Quadrant and happened to be in NQSC by chance. Truly, what a fortunate turn of events! This Gate won't disturb the citizens with such distinguished warriors protecting them."

Nephis looked at him and asked with a faint smile:

"How is Effie doing?"

He chuckled.

"Everything is well. The battle was a tough one, this time, but we pulled through. Little Ling already has a new favorite bedtime story."

With that, he turned to Sunny, lingered for a moment, and asked politely:

"It is a pleasure to meet you, sir. I am Saint Kal, with the government forces. And you are?"

Sunny hesitated, considering how to answer. Eventually, he decided to do some mischief. Staring at Kal emotionlessly, he said in a calm tone:

"You can call me Shadow, I am your best friend.”

Kai blinked a couple of times. Slowly, a funny expression appeared on his face. His thought process was rather clear...

'My best friend? I clearly have never met this person before.’

'But he doesn't seem to be lying?’

‘No, but it can't be true! I would have remembered having a best friend.’

'So if he's not lying, but also not telling the truth...'

‘I see! This man is insane! He sincerely believes his lie.’

‘Wait. Oh, gods! He's not a sasaeng, is he?!'

Kai's magnetic smile dimmed a little.

At that moment, Nephis gave Sunny a strange look and intervened.

"This is Saint Shadow. He is... a bit eccentric. He is also here to help."

Kai hesitated for a bit, then nodded dubiously.

"I see. Thank you for volunteering, Lord Shadow."

With that, he turned to the Master in charge of the government forces,

"Scrap the battle plan and move the your people back. We will take care of the Gate - with some luck, you guys won't even have to put down the stragglers"

The Master nodded gratefully.

"Yes, Saint Kall"

By then, the wind was stirring, and a strange dimness was spreading over the park. The air above the frozen pond was trembling more Intensely.

The descent of the Nightmare Gate was not far.

Kai turned to Morgan and Nephis, asking politely:

"How do you want to handle this?"

Morgan lingered for a few moments, then gave Sunny a teasing look.

Her red lips twisted into a smile, and she said pleasantly:

"Lord Shadow, would you like to do the honors? My sister was so eloquent when describing your prowess. I must admit, I am a little jealous at not having had the pleasure to witness it myself."

Sunny stared at her coldly.

‘...Want to measure my strength, do you?'

He remained silent for a while, then shrugged.

"Sure, Stay here, then. I'll handle it."

'Well, then you'll have to be disappointed!’

As the reality split, torn apart by a dark fissure, a graceful figure of a stone knight rose from his shadow, two ruby eyes igniting with cold crimson flames.

Sunny looked up at Saint, pointed at the Gate, and said evenly:

"Go deal with it."

His taciturn knight tilted her head slightly, then turned around and looked at the Gate.

Although she did not say anything, somehow, it felt as if her aloof gaze was full of disdain.

Summoning her black blade and a round shield, she gave its rim two lukewarm blows and headed toward the frozen pond with graceful, unhurried steps.

Morgan, Nephis, and Kai were left staring at her in bewilderment.

Sunny crossed his arms and said in an even, indifferent tone:

"That should do it. Everyone... relax and enjoy the show.”