1744 Changing the World

The six of them... were going to destroy the Sovereigns.

Sunny was silent for a while, staring at the members of the cohort from behind his expressionless mask. Then, he chuckled.

"You want to topple both Domains and completely change the world... with just six people?"

Nephis remained composed and gave him a nonchalant shrug.

"Why not? Wasn't the world I want to change shaped by just three?"

He had no retort. The current shape of the world had indeed been dictated by three powerful individuals - Anvil of Valor, Ki Song, and Asterion. For the past two decades or so, they had been acting as the gods of humanity, deciding its fate from behind the curtains.

And now, Nephis and her cohort were preparing to rise in rebellion against the gods.

It was strangely poetic. It was also a little ominous, as if history was repeating itself.

Sunny sighed.

"So, you are welcoming me into your underground revolution club. Well... fine. That has been my intention all along, as well. But now that we have reached this point, I need to ask you the same question again, Lady Nephis. This time, in a less hypothetical context. How do you plan to defeat the Sovereigns?"

She met his dark gaze calmly.

"My answer stays the same. By attaining Supremacy myself."

His gaze suddenly turned much more intense.

"Oh? Have you... found a way to become a Supreme without challenging the Fourth Nightmare?"

Sunny would lie if he said that he wasn't interested in hearing the answer. He had been trying to discover the secrets of Supremacy himself, after all in Neph's case, she couldn't challenge the Fourth Nightmare because she wasn't allowed to. But in his case, he simply couldn't - without the Spell, coming into contact with Nightmare Seeds was meaningless.

Not only was Sunny unable to enter a Nightmare, but getting too close to a Seed put him at risk of becoming corrupted.

Nephis inhaled slowly, a hint of tension appearing in her eyes for a short moment.

"Did I find a way? This is... a complicated issue. In a sense, yes I did find a way to become Supreme. However, I am still searching for the means of actually walking that path."

Sunny frowned behind the mask.

"You will have to be more specific than that, I'm afraid”

She looked away and smiled faintly.

"Each Aspect is unique, and so, the paths to Supremacy are unique for each individual. At the root of it all lies the act of Imposing your will upon the world, thus attaining authority over it. But the actual imposition differs from Aspect to Aspect, as does the process. It all depends on one's source element."

For now, what Nephis was saying followed Sunny's own guesses.

What she said next, however, surprised him:

"My source element... is longing. Desire, yearning, passion, inspiration. The more people I inspire to feel a sense of longing, the more of them become a part of my source element. By building up my source element, I am building the foundation of my future Domain. In fact... it has already been built."

Sunny stared at her wordlessly.

'Huh.'

Suddenly, he saw many of the actions Nephis had taken in the last four years in a new light. The tireless wandering, the endless battles against the tide of Nightmare Creatures, the wordless compliance with being sent to handle the most deadly of calamities over and over again, the public appearances.,, even the theater plays secretly funded by Cassie.

Sunny tilted his head a little.

'So… has Cassie secretly built her own propaganda machine to prepare for Neph's ascent to Supremacy?’

It seemed very likely.

He turned his head and stared at Jet.

She smiled at him lazily.

"Yes. While Nephis and Cassie were working hard on their side, I've been subtly pulling the strings of the government to fan the flames. The initial decision to make Changing Star into a martyr was not my decision, but the reason why we haven't abandoned this narrative after she was adopted by Valor, and instead doubled down on it, is my doing."

Sunny remained silent for a few moments.

"I understand why Changing Star is doing what she is doing, and why Song of the Fallen is supporting her. But what about you, Soul Reaper? You as well, War Beast and Nightsinger. Why has the government decided to bet on her?"

Jet chuckled.

"The government... is less monolithic than it has been before. The older generation is too stuck on the idea of maintaining neutrality. It has served them well in the past, so they are naturally biased and assume that it will continue to work. But I am of the opinion that they are wrong. In this new world, neutrality is a myth. No one will be allowed to remain on the sidelines once the Sovereigns start fighting for dominance... let alone if one of them becomes a true hegemon.”

She shook her head.

"The government itself is different now, as well. Our power has grown greatly in the wake of the Chain of Nightmares... countless Awakened never left after becoming part of the Evacuation Army, and while we have few Saints, the ones we do have are among the most powerful ones in existence. For all intents and purposes, the government is like the fourth Great Clan now. Maybe even the third, considering the dwindling influence of the House of Night."

Jet paused for a moment, then sighed.

"And that an inevitable process. Soon enough, the Dream Realm will become humanity's new home. In that future, the role of the government will have to change - if we don't adapt, we will disappear. Which is not really a problem, since we would have served our purpose... but then, the question is, who will rule that new world?"

A dark smile appeared on her ivory face, never reaching her cold blue eyes.

"The King of Swords? The Queen of Worms? Or the third one? None of them are qualified."

Sunny looked at her with curiosity.

"Why do you say that?"

He had his own reasons to believe that the Sovereigns were not the best choice to guide humanity, But Jet had always been very practical what was her reason?

She chuckled.

"Ah. Sorry... It's nothing too philosophical. Actually, my reason is very simple. It's because Changing Star has gone from a mundane girl to a Saint in about five years, while the Sovereigns have been stuck at their Rank for decades. Once we are all living happily in the Dream Realm... what will the one who wins the war do when an Unholy Titan wanders out of a Death Zone? Will they be able to contend with the future? I don't think so, so I am betting on someone who would. Because I know that Nephis won't be satisfied with mere Supremacy."

When Jet finished speaking and gave him a relaxed smile, Effie added in a calm tone:

"Big Sister is mainly preoccupied with the end result, but as for me... I care about how we get there, as well. It's not enough to just preserve the world, it's also important what kind of world it will be. Right now, the stuck-up Legacies are looking down on everyone. Drives me nuts, really... can you imagine how much worse it will become once all of humanity is living under their roof? The kings, the queens - I don't trust any of them, but I do trust Nephis, She, at least, won't stop me from becoming a Supreme myself. If anything, she'll probably push me into a Nightmare Seed..."

Nephis did not comment on that, making Effie smile.

"...You would, wouldn't you? See, she's not even denying it!”

After that, Kai broke the silence, speaking simply:

"I just believe that it is the right thing to do. No more... but also no less."

Sunny stared at them for a while.

Eventually, he shook his head.

What could he say?

"You are all crazy."

Then, he smiled behind the mask.

"...Fortunately for you, I am as well. Fine. I like it. Let's conquer the world.”