1752 Reading About Nothing

The second passage he was keenly interested in was much less poetle, but tantalized Sunny much more. That was because it mentioned the other daemons... most of all, the nebulous Demon of Fate.

The runes read:

[Gods created all living creatures, but not all creatures they created carry a divine lineage. Only those born of the gods do, and those born of their descendants. Why have the gods forbidden us seven to sire offspring? Why are we destined for loneliness?

Is it because we are of the Forgotten One, who slumbers in the Void?

Where is the Void, and where is its Gate? How did Weaver enter it, and what did Weaver see?

Why did Weaver decide to break the will of the gods and create a lineage?

Blood, bone, flesh. Soul, spirit, mind. And shadow.

The gods shall discover the transgression, but they cannot.

That is because, having created a lineage, Weaver does not possess a lineage. It has been lost and will be lost, therefore having never been in Weaver's possession. One cannot be punished for something that has never been.

A plece is lost to fantasy, a plece is lost to fear. A plece is lost to respite, a plece is lost to darkness. A piece is lost to sorrow, a plece is lost to rot. And finally, a plece is stolen by a thief.

Weaver's defiance is elusive, just like Weaver is. But mine will be different.]

Sunny stared at the runes for a while, his eyes burning with wanderlust.

Nether seemed to have been considering the difference between him, the youngest sibling, and Weaver - the oldest. Both had decided to defy the gods, but in a different way.

'Gods created all living creatures, but only those born of them carry a divine lineage...

It seemed that Weaver had pursued the latter, while Nether had pursued the former.

But more importantly...

'Weaver's lineage.’

Finally, he knew the remaining parts of the Weave. He had already found Blood Weave, Bone Weave, and Soul Weave. Flesh, Mind, Spirit, and Shadow Weaves remained.

'Shadow Weave!'

Would absorbing it make up for Shadow God's lineage that Blood Weave had so unceremoniously devoured?

And if he managed to collect all seven, would the broken lineage of Weaver restore itself to an unblemished state, granting him its full power?

Sunny finally understood why the Weave had been shattered into many fragments, to begin with. it was because Weaver had hidden its existence from the gods by scattering it across the tapestry of fate.

Its fragments had always been fated to be lost, and so, it was as if Weaver had never possessed them at all. The fragment destined to be lost to sorrow was Soul Weave, which Sunny had found near Oblivion's grave. The fragment destined to be lost to rot was Bone Weave, which he had found here in the Ebony Tower.

The fragment destined to be stolen by a thief was Blood Weave, which the Nightmare Spell had granted him for slaying the Spawn of the Vile Thieving Bird.

At the time when Nether had been carving these runes, Oblivion was still alive, while Weaver had not lost an arm. Therefore, the Demon of Fate had foreseen these events in advance... or maybe even reached into the tapestry of fate to attach the fragments of the Weave to its strings.

One had to be inventive to avoid the gaze of the gods.

But where had the other four fragments ended up? Sunny looked back at the runes.

'A piece is lost to fantasy, a piece is lost to fear A piece is lost to respite, a piece is lost to darkness…’

He contemplated for a few minutes, then turned and gazed at the map where the strongholds of the daemons were depicted.

Fantasy, fear, rest, darkness. Imagination, Dread, Repose, Destiny?"

Were the remaining four fragments of the Weave located somewhere in Bastion, Ravenheart, Stormsea, and the Underworld?

He was suddenly overcome by the desire to travel to Bastion and check himself.

However... that desire quickly dimmed.

Going back to Bastion, Ravenheart, and the great citadel of the House of Night that drifted on the waves of Stormsea meant diving back into the boiling cauldron of humanity.

Sunny had just escaped it. Why would he go back?

The Underworld was a better choice... but also a suicidal one. Sunny was not ready to venture into the depths of the Hollow Mountains. His strength might have increased explosively after the Transcendence, but true darkness was the natural enemy of shadows. Out there, below the jagged peaks, was the realm of darkness...

Sunny would be nearly powerless there. Blind, weakened, and without an ally.

He could imagine himself braving a Death Zone, but not the Underworld.

'Forget it, then.’

Deeply disappointed, Sunny turned away from the passage and tried to never look at it again.

'Maybe someday In the future..’

The third passage that interested him, coincidentally, had to do with the Hollow Mountains.

But... it was a strange one.

The runes read:

[What can contain the Void? Nothing can.

Gods used nothing to envelop the void, and placed the cage of desire above it.

In the places where the cage is thin, nothing slips through its seams. The Underworld is one such place, shrouded in nothing.

It is like mist.

However...

Nobody can exist in the mist.

Nothing can contain the Void, and nobody exists within it.

I am wary of nobody, and fear nothing.]

Sunny was utterly bewildered by what he read, and thought that he had messed up the translation at first. But after going over it one more time, he confirmed that the translation was correct.

'Was Nether having a stroke?’

He reread the runes several more times, his bewilderment growing.

‘No, he was not someone who would write down nonsense.’

So, the passage must have had meaning. But what was the meaning of nothing?

Sunny pondered the question for a few days, until a tenuous idea surfaced in his mind.

What if nothing... was literally something?

Not the absence of everything, but the presence of nothing.

Just thinking about that made his head hurt.

But it seemed very much like something that the gods would be involved in. These beings operated with ideas and concepts, after all, having shaped the very universe into existence.

So, if nothing could contain the Void... the gods could have gone and literally used nothing to contain it. Enveloping the Void in a layer of nothingness, which the Void Beings could not cross, because nothing could stop them. And bringing down the cage of existence on top of that layer.

That would be a godlike thing to do, wouldn't it?

That nothingness seemed to seep into the universe, though...

Like mist.

Weren't the Hollow Mountains always shrouded in a strange mist?

Sunny opened his eyes wide, remembering how the cohort had escaped a flood of mist on the outskirts of the Hollow Mountains. Back then, they felt a terrible threat emanating from it, not knowing why.

If that mist was literally nothingness... would they have been erased from existence if it swallowed them?

Sunny also remembered the eerie creature that had come from the mist and demanded that he open his eyes on the Ashen Barrow.

'Nobody exists within it...'

Were there... actual beings born from and dwelling in nothingness?

He suddenly felt a chill running down his spine.

The Demon of Destiny... was wary of nothing, and feared nobody.

Wasn't Nether actually admitting that he felt wary of nothingness and feared the beings dwelling in the mist?

'Goddammit.'

As if the world wasn't scary enough already!

Sunny already had his hands full dealing with the Nightmare Creatures. There were also the Void Creatures, which were infinitely more harrowing than the familiar abominations... luckily, they were locked away by the gods.

And now, there were also Nothing Creatures? Nobodies?

No... he simply refused to deal with that.

‘Time to get some sleep.’

Sunny shook his head and left the fifth level of the Ebony Tower, returning to his living quarters.

The translation... was mostly complete.

He had already determined which passages he could understand, which he couldn't fathom, and which spoke too much about the Void, meaning that he had to avoid them at all costs.

Staying in the Sky Below was slowly becoming meaningless.

Perhaps it was time to start thinking about his next destination.

'I'll consider it tomorrow.’

Just before falling asleep, Sunny wondered where he would go, and a sudden thought crossed his mind.

'I don't exist in the memories of the world anymore, so am I a Nothing Creature, too? A nobody…’