1878 Interim Results

After Summer Knight left, Sunny remained on the platform, observing the battle that raged in the distance. The battle was entering an especially fearsome stage due to the fact that the expedition force was nearing one of the cracks in the surface of the First Rib — it was from there that the scarlet infestation was spreading, and therefore, the perils facing the soldiers were more dire in the vicinity of the dark chasm.

Being that close to the Hollows also meant that there would be more old abominations that had crawled to the surface from the dim twilight below — which put much more pressure on the Saints leading the war party, and its commander in particular.

Even from afar, Sunny could tell that Nephis had finally been forced to assume her Transcendent form. He sighed, knowing that it would take a toll on her.

'If I made more progress, she would not have had to.'

At the same time, if he had made less progress, then the burdensome task of besieging the fissure might have become Summer Knight's responsibility. In any case, there was no point in considering such issues and regretting the past.

Sunny hesitated for a while, then briefly summoned his runes.

Shadow Fragments: [1876/6000].

Another sigh escaped from his lips.

It was pitiful. He had barely gained two hundred fragments in the last four or five months… a far cry from the rapid progress he had enjoyed before Transcendence.

'At this rate, it will take me a decade to become a titan.'

The expedition force only advanced after Saint Tyris broke the Cloudveil to incinerate the thriving jungle, then closed it once again. That allowed the soldiers to only face the initial stages of the scarlet infestation and battle Nightmare Creatures that had not reached maturity yet, which made advancing forward easier.

It also meant that no matter how dangerous those immature abominations were, slaying them did not grant Sunny many shadow fragments. The situation would change once the war entered the next stage, spreading across the entire surface of Godgrave and delving into the Hollows — but for now, he couldn't help but feel a bitter sense of disappointment.

He wasn't saturating his cores that much… he wasn't receiving any Memories or Echoes, either. It was all so unrewarding.

Which was not to say that Sunny was not receiving any benefits from participating in the war.

His Transcendent battle art was progressing steadily.

He had already established its main principles a long time ago. No,he only needed to slowly temper himself in countless battles to perfect it and forge it into his very bones, which he had been doing since the Sword Army ascended to the collarbone of the dead deity.

That was the opportunity that the war had granted him.

Overall, the process was going well.

His essence technique was already all but flawless. His battle style had been rebuilt from the ground up to incorporate his unique advantages into its root principles — the ability to sense shadows and see what was happening behind his back, the tenacious nature of his blood and bones, the power to change the weight of his body and limbs at will, Shadow Step, various forms of Shadow Manifestation…

All of these powers, when incorporated into a combat technique comprehensively, changed it on a fundamental level. Sunny simply needed practice and experimentation to iron out the last kinks and truly master the art he had designed — the relentless battlefield of Godgrave was a perfect arena to achieve just that.

There was only one element of his Transcendent battle art that he could not practice freely yet. It was the seamless cooperation between multiple avatars that he had envisioned after becoming a Saint — after all, Sunny was hiding that ability of his from everyone except his closest allies.

Well… there was another element, as well. The last element, which had to do with spirit and will. He simply did not know how to approach it and elevate his Transcendent battle art to a Supreme one, so there was no progress on that front.

'I'm still growing stronger.'

Sunny was dissatisfied because of the lack of palpable rewards, but that did not mean that his growth entered a period of stagnation. If anything, his power was growing deeper, as he was shoring up his foundation in preparation for the final, vital leap.

Still, he did not feel like it was enough.

Glancing at the radiant grey sky, Sunny grimaced.

'I need to accelerate the weaving side of the plan.'

He was still working toward creating the soulbound sword for Nephis.

Once that was done, though… he would be able to create a few Memories for himself.

Sunny did not need a weapon or a suit of armor. If there was one thing he desperately lacked, thought, it was suitable charms. Both Sunny himself and Saint possessed the power to enhance the enchantments of a chosen charm, but sadly, these powers were remaining unused at the moment.

And while Sunny himself did not need an enchanted weapon,the same could not be said about Saint.

Forging a sword and a shield for his first Shadow was also something he planned on achieving before the war reached culmination.

He also had to create another [Handy Bracelet] for Rain. The Memory alone would be useless for her, since Sunny had no idea about what traits his sister possessed, but if he could get Cassie to read her runes, the missing information could be filled in…

There was a lot for Master Sunless to do while the Lord of Shadows was waging war against the scarlet jungle. Even Rain's teacher was busy with trying to keep her alive now that the seventh legion was braving the surface of the Collarbone Plain — without the help of someone like Saint Tyris, at that.

Shaking his head, Sunny rose to his feet and threw a last glance into the distance.

Even if he did perfect his battle art and succeeded in creating soulbound Memories… the main obstacle facing him and Nephis still seemed as impossible to overcome as it had been before.

They had not found any clues about how to attain Supremacy yet.

'Calm down. The war has only started.'

Consoling himself with that thought, Sunny took a step back and dissolved into the shadows.