2042 : Cold Flame

Sunny concentrated on creating the alloy. There was little common sense to what he was doing now, since the qualities of the materials transcended the mundane. The foundation of the alloy was a piece of the mystical ice that had once been the heart of the Transcendent Titan, Winter Beast. The metals were no less storied, sourced from the treasury of the royal clan at great expense.

The flame had come from the soul of Changing Star… another Transcendent Titan. Of course, Sunny was not simply melting the materials by exposing them to the immolating heat of her fire — he had to use a crucible, which seemed to defeat the purpose.

So, he had created a special crucible first, one that was both capable of withstanding the destructive power of soul flame and able to channel it instead of simply transferring heat. The first attempt at casting the crucible was a Memory, but in the end, Sunny had to employ Cassie's help to create a special runic enchantment.

That was because there was an inherent problem with using soul flame while weaving…

Sunny sighed and explained as metals slowly melted in the incandescent crucible:

"We are using your soul flame for forging because, as far as I can tell, personal affinity between the Memory and its master plays a great role in binding the two together. That was what I observed when dealing with a soulbound relic left behind by the Demon of Destiny, at least… there was an arduous condition that one had to meet in order to bind it, which I assumed to be a test at first. But later, I started to suspect that it was as much of a necessity as a challenge, meant to foster mutual affinity."

In hindsight, it made sense that Nether had been the one to create Soulbound Relics. These relics were able to grow and change with their owners, after all, almost like living beings. Considering how obsessed the prideful daemon had been with creating life, it was unlikely to be a coincidence.

The metals had already turned into incandescent liquid, but the mystical ice still remained, radiating an oppressive feeling of cold. Sunny continued:

"Therefore, a Memory forged in the fires of your soul would naturally have a high affinity to you. Sadly, there lies the problem… your flame is simply too tyrannical."

Nephis raised an eyebrow.

"How is that a problem?"

Sunny smiled.

Indeed. He had not expected to encounter this particular roadblock, either.

"Usually, I create the vessel first, and then enchant it. But this Memory is quite special, so forging and enchanting have to happen at the same time — that way, the weave will be integrated into the very essence of the sword. Your flames can burn anything, though, material or immaterial. They can even burn souls."

Nephis tilted her head a little.

"...And you create enchantments from strings of soul essence."

Sunny chuckled.

"Indeed. I need your flame to create the sword, but it will be destroying the essence strings as I weave them together. It's a bit of a conundrum."

Nephis remained silent for a moment.

"I bet you have come up with the solution already, though."

Sunny looked at her curiously, then nodded.

"True… took me a while, but I did. I tried all kinds of methods trying to isolate the essence strings and protect them from the flame, but actually, the answer was ridiculously simple."

She raised an eyebrow.

"What is it? I'll say… it's a bit disheartening to hear that there's a simple way to render my flames harmless."

Sunny laughed.

"Well, it's just the nature of the essence strings themselves, you see. Before today, I've been using my own essence to create them, naturally. But for this Memory, we will be using your essence instead. Since the flame and the strings will be of the same source, one won't destroy the other. Using your own essence to construct the spellweave will increase the affinity of the Memory further, as well."

Sunny used one of the Quintessence Pearls installed near the furnace to fan the flames. The heat grew almost unbearable, and beads of sweat glistened on his porcelain skin like pearls.

The mystical ice was starting to give in to the soul flame.

"We would have had to get inventive to extract your essence if you were an Awakened. But you are a Saint… your soul has already escaped the limitations of your body, and your essence flows free, permeating the world. So, that step should not be too troublesome as long as you cooperate."

Nephis studied him for a while and smiled.

"It's strange."

Sunny looked at her in confusion.

"What is?"

She simply smiled.

"Just how… nonchalant you are about this. Every step of the way seems to demand inventing something that has never been done before, and yet you keep coming up with these revolutionary and elaborate solutions, not even bothering to acknowledge them as something important."

He stared at her for a few moments.

"Well, that's just science, isn't it? People who built the Obel Scale were doing something that has nothing been done before, too. Or those who had developed the earliest concepts of spelltech. Today, there is a woman in Bastion who is trying to build a working electrical grid in the Dream Realm… I bet she's going to succeed, too. It seems daunting, but finding solutions is what we, humans, are best at. Especially when motivated by necessity."

Still… Sunny was secretly delighted by the compliment.

He watched the small piece of ice turn into a liquid. It was definitely not water, and Sunny had no idea what the liquid actually was… however, he knew that it always remained cold, never boiled, and never evaporated.

It was also not going to remain a liquid for long.

The incandescent metals mixed with the melted ice, and he swiftly poured the searing silver mass into a small mold. A few moments later, it had already solidified, turning into a bar of lustrous steel.

Well, it wasn't actual steel, of course. Rather, it was an alloy that had never been created before, and therefore had no name.

Sunny was pretty certain of its deadly qualities, though.

Picking up the silvery bar, he weighed it in his hand, then studied it carefully.

If not for his outstanding resilience to elemental damage, his hand would have probably already turned to ice and shattered. The alloy was cold… dreadfully cold.

Cold enough to make him shiver.

But more importantly, it possessed all the qualities that were needed to forge a sublime sword.

The last experiment was successful.

Sunny smiled.

"This… will cut."

A blade forged from this would be sharp enough to cut the world.