1658 Burning Wrath

Sunny's crumbling Shell and the eerie ice flower of the Winter Beast's vessel plummeted from the darkness into the vast lake of bubbling magma. The frozen hell of the calamitous snowstorm had been left behind, and although Mount Erebus was already swallowed in its ruinous embrace, the unholy cold did not reach this underground cauldron.

However, the Winter Beast had brought the cold, the snow, and the storm with it.

The azure flowers growing from the corpses of the Nightmare Creatures that the ice had encased were still blooming with plumes of snow, and the creature itself was like the heart of an endless, empty, cold abyss.

Several things happened before Sunny and his enemy plunged into the churning magma.

First, the vast cloud of snow surrounding the Winter Beast instantly evaporated. Second, the surface of the fiery lake instantly cooled, turning into black glass. Third, the sudden changes in pressure and temperature, as well as the sudden expansion of a vast mass of boiling gas, caused a titanic explosion, throwing Sunny and the dreadful abomination apart.

The explosion shattered the dome of the underground chamber and the crust of the recently frozen magma, which in turn started a chain reaction of devastating destruction.

Far above and outside, the erupting Erebus shuddered and quaked, gargantuan stones exploding into the frigid air like cannonballs. A terrifying crack split one of its slopes, and after another cataclysmic quake, the entire side of the fuming mountain crumbled.

Letting the wind, the ice, and the snow of the unholy storm pour deep into the Interior of the erupting volcano, where the blizzard came into contact with the endless mass of molten rock.

A secondary explosion tore apart the snowstorm and shook the very heavens, much more terrifying than the first. As indescribable destruction spread, a towering mushroom cloud rose above the frozen ruins of Erebus Field, dwarfing the first one.

All across the Antarctic Center, the ground shook. Avalanches rolled down from snowy peaks, and several mountains collapsed. The ice encasing the frozen ocean split open, and towering waves of black water rolled from below.

Deep underground, Sunny felt like he was caught in the middle of a collapsing star. Bombarded by devastating concussive waves from all sides, wreathed in incinerating flames and suffocating cold, he moved his damaged Shell to dodge the giant boulders that fell from above.

The boulders crashed into the crust of frozen magma, breaking it and causing immense geysers of molten rock to shoot upward. Those geysers were immediately frozen, turning into glass pillars, only to be shattered a moment later and collapse in a rain of obsidian shards.

It was a scene of absolute chaos, like a chilling glimpse of fiery hell.

Sunny wanted to laugh.

‘…Did I complain that the battle was not exciting enough?’

In this life, it seemed, all his wishes were destined to be granted.

The mangled colossus made of pure darkness lunged toward the grotesque shape of the Winter Beast.

The Shell was in poor shape.

The Onyx Mantle was cracked and fractured all over. It was repairing itself, but not fast enough to make a difference. His face was missing most of its skin, revealing his black teeth and slightly protruding canines... in that moment, it resembled Weaver's demonic mask much more than his face.

Both hands of the dark giant had turned to ice and chattered when he grabbed the Winter Beast, leaving him with no means of holding a weapon.

But that was fine. Sunny himself was a weapon.

Reaching the titan in several ferocious leaps, Sunny used all of his mass and all of his momentum to deliver a devastating kick to the eerie ice creature,

The blow was truly terrifying.

Even though the Winter Beast had used countless tendrils of ice to block it, most of them were shattered and exploded into a barrage of deadly ice shards. A net of cracks spread over the innermost surface of its hideous body, as well. Much more importantly, the creature was thrown down, crashing through the crust of magma and plunging into the flaming depths of the hellish

cauldron.

Of course, Sunny was not unscathed, either.

In fact, his entire left foot had turned to ice and broke off, taking with it the better part of the shin.

He briefly thought that the sight of him would be rather comical... if it wasn't so terrifying.

Because losing three out of his four limbs did not quench Sunny's murderous wrath one bit.

The crumbling colossus roared viciously as it fell.

The Winter Beast was not damaged by the incandescent magma at all, even if it directly opposed the power of unholy cold. Instead, the entire lake of magma cooled, its very heart turning into a vast expanse of black glass.

Thanks to that...

The titan was momentarily trapped in obsidian, fused into it like the corpses of the Nightmare Creatures were fused into the hideous ice of its body.

Sunny was full of furious glee at receiving that moment.

Using the [Feather of Truth] trait of the Onyx Mantle, he turned himself as heavy as he could, and toppled straight onto the immobilized abomination.

With no hands to deliver a blow, he brought his head down on the cracked ice. The force of the impact was so terrible that there was a flash of light, and the entire mountain shook.

The dark giant's skull cracked... but the cold carapace of the Winter Beast finally cracked, as well, a myriad of ice shards flying away.

It moved, easily breaking free of the obsidian lake. The gargantuan stalks of ice moved as well, wrapping around Sunny and pulling him closer to the ice. At the same time, ice spikes formed below him, shooting forward to impale his mutilated Shell.

The upper part of his broken head was already fused with the ice, turning still and brittle from the frost. Almost immobilized, Sunny was being swiftly assimilated into the Winter Beast's body.

All around him was pale ice, painted beautifully in shades of vivid azure.

He was caught.

...Caught exactly where he wanted to be.

Instead of trying to free himself from the icy tomb, Sunny used his broken limbs to push himself further down, into the fracture that he had created in the frigid carapace of the profane titan.

And there...

He snarled, and used his bared teeth to bite down ferociously on the vague shape at the heart of the eerie ice creature.