

A/N: Things are beginning to look dire for our intrepid heroes...

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Sophia watches in horror as Tyranos begins to dismantle Oren. The Otherworlder doesn't stop fighting, but the battle dramatically turns in the Ancient God's favor, so much so that even someone like Sophia can tell that things aren't going well.

For a second there, it had truly looked like he could do it. They had seemed so evenly matched and Sophia knew full well just what sort of endurance Oren had. In a battle of equals, she fully believed that Oren would have eventually won. He just needed time to wear Tyranos out.

... Except this wasn't a battle of equals. It never was. Her uncle had played one last trick on them, giving them a moment of hope while hiding his true hand. In actuality, Oren wasn't on Tyranos' level... and just because Oren was stronger than he'd been the last time they met didn't mean Tyranos hadn't become stronger as well.

"Come then, Otherworlder! Where is your strength now? Where is your bravado? Fight me, Otherworlder! Fight me, or die and know that my niece dies with you!"

The God of Tyranny and Conquest had taken the Ancient Gods of the Mortal Planes as well as his own followers from the Void and he'd turned them into fuel for his domains. Every conquest, every tyrannical act, every death... feeding him and making him stronger.

Where before neither of them could land a blow on the other, all of the sudden Oren is taking strikes across his armor repeatedly. He blocks what he can, but he can't block them all... not with how fast Tyranos is moving.

Sophia watches as the Ancient God pushes Oren back, slamming into him again and again.

Ferro's last creations are more than proving their worth, to be fair. The God Killer's blade that Tyranos wields does not find purchase in the armor Oren now wears. But it's not because Oren is stopping him. The armor itself is what stops Tyranos' blows, and Sophia doubts that will last forever.

At this point, her uncle is toying with them. He's playing games and from the way he's laughing as he presses his advantage and all but throws Oren around the throne room, he's having the time of his life.

"What's the matter Otherworlder?! Not so confident now? Starting to realize how in over your head you are? Heh, I think I felt a rib break from that last blow!"

Before, Sophia had refrained from using her domains because... well, this wasn't like the fight against Aureo, back when she'd still thought she was a Minor Goddess of Wisdom and Equity. Back then she'd been able to target Aureo with what she thought was bursts of Divine Equity because Oren couldn't get close enough to him anyways to close the distance.

Here in this battle however, it was hard to find an opening at the start since Oren and Tyranos were in melee with one another. They were constantly locking blades and pushing against one another with seemingly all their strength.

That's no longer quite as much of a problem now that Tyranos is dominating the fight. Every other blow sends Oren skidding or stumbling backwards. Sophia has plenty of openings to launch some Misfortune in her uncle's direction.

“Bahaha! Is this all you’ve got? Is this what ‘limitless potential’ amounts to these days? I’ve killed dozens of your kind, Otherworlder... you don’t even crack the top ten!”

The problem with doing so now is that he’s almost certain to notice and turn his attention towards her. Sophia doesn’t really care about her own life, but she does care how Oren would react if Tyranos tried to kill her. She remembers how he sacrificed himself back in the waterfall cave for her once before, after all. And this time, there’s no escape. This is all or nothing.

So that’s why Sophia is hesitating even now... and yet, if she does nothing, then they’re both going to die anyways. Oren can’t beat Tyranos alone... frankly, it was foolish of them both to think that he ever could. Even if it felt hopeless, even if they seemed to have no chance at all of winning... Sophia refused to give up or give in.

Of course, the moment that she begins gathering her divine power, Tyranos notices. He pushes Oren back with another titanic blow and then twists his head in her direction, the red eyes peering out through the slits in his helm glowing malevolently.

“Oh? Finally going to join the fray, Niece?”

He turns to face her and Sophia knows she’s mere moments from death. It would take Tyranos half a heartbeat to cross the distance between the two of them and lop off her head. Oren, seeing that Tyranos’ focus has changed, reacts as one might expect.

“NO!”

Rushing forward, he tries to get the Ancient God's attention back on him, swinging wildly from the side. But Tyranos' hand lashes out and curls around Oren's neck, stopping him dead in his tracks and lifting him up off the ground while still staring at Sophia.

"Go ahead, niece. Give it your best shot. Curse me, if you can."

Sophia grimaces, knowing full well that it will be the last thing she does. All the same, she can't back down. She won't. Except, just as she's gathering up her divine power and preparing to sign her own death sentence... she stops, feeling something... else. Something that stops her in her tracks.

Tyranos takes her sudden indecision as terror and laughs.

"That's what I thought."

Before he can do anything else however, Oren manages to bring his arm up and slam it into Tyranos', breaking the Ancient God's hold on him and creating some distance between them as the fight is rejoined. Tyranos turns his attention back to Oren and focuses on tearing him to pieces once more.

Sophia, meanwhile, finds herself lost in these strange sensations. There's a... foreign warmth that brushes up against her. It feels vast... but also broken and fractured. Incomplete. Her eyes twitch over to Tyranos, fearing that he might sense what she's currently sensing... but he doesn't. He's focused on Oren at the moment, distracted with slowly but surely killing her lover.

She begins to understand now. When Tyranos had said that 'what remained of Law' fought him even now, that hadn't been hyperbolic. A shuddering breath leaves Sophia's lips as she realizes what happened. It

all came back to blood in the end. Divine blood wasn't like mortal blood. It was more akin to essence, tied to the very existence of gods and goddesses.

When Ferro bled onto the armor and swords that Oren and Tyranos wore and wielded, the God of Forges gave of his essence to empower the weapons. Meanwhile... when Law bled on the floor of this sanctum, coating it in his lifeblood after Oren dealt him the fatal blow, the God of Righteousness and Justice gave his essence to this room... he imbued it with an aspect of himself and of his power.

Until Tyranos excised Law's ghost from this place, he would never be able to truly command the power of Law's Throne. But he hadn't quite managed to do so before Sophia and Oren arrived.

However... however, Sophia was not in the same boat as her tyrannical uncle. The foreign warmth that brushes against her divine senses doesn't despise her in the same way it despises Tyranos. That surprises Sophia, all things considered. But maybe, just maybe... her father hadn't hated her for what she was. Maybe, somewhere along the way after letting Ferro convince him to spare her and binding her true domains, he'd even been able to love her in his own way.

Law is dead. But his essence remains and it sees her as an ally, much to Sophia's shock. And if his essence sees her as an ally then...

Moving slowly, Sophia begins to circle around the edge of the room, towards her father's throne. Given how Tyranos and Oren are fighting with one another, it's not too hard to do so. Oren is being thrown about quite rapidly, but she just needs to move in the opposite direction of their fight. Until eventually, Sophia is just a few feet away from the throne.

Just three more steps between her and the power to potentially end this.
Three more steps between her and salvation.

“Niece... what do you think you’re doing?”

Sophia freezes and turns to see Tyranos looking at her with Oren at his feet, his head tilted to the side quizzically, as if he can’t quite figure out what she’s up to. But then... understanding dawns in those glowing red eyes and she can practically see him putting two and two together in real time.

In that moment... everything happens at once. Sophia sprints for the throne, knowing full well that there’s not a chance in Creation of her reaching it before Tyranos can cross the distance between them and run her through.

However, in this case... the chance she needs doesn’t come from Creation. It comes from outside of it. Even as her uncle begins to take the step that will send him across the room and allow him to kill her, he finds himself stymied by her Otherworlder Lover as Oren reaches out with lightning speed and grabs Tyranos by the ankle, holding him in place.

He doesn’t hold him for long, with Tyranos snarling and lifting his plated boot to slam it down into Oren’s head, the blow sending him sprawling back in a daze... but it’s just long enough. Long enough for Sophia to complete the three steps she needed to complete. Long enough for her to sit down on her father’s throne.

Tyranos appears before her just as she’s coming to a rest, his sword thrusting out towards her chest to impale her right then and there... but the blow never lands. Instead, the Ancient God’s blade is caught by shimmering golden fractals that hold it in place and block his strike. When

he tries to yank his arm back, he finds himself unable to get his weapon free, even as a smile begins to spread across Sophia's face.

"You... how dare you! That throne is mine by Rite of CONQUEST!"

It's as though she were blind and can now finally see. Power like nothing before courses through her body as Sophia sits upon her father's throne. Still smiling, the goddess leans forward as she looks up at her uncle, uncaring of his sword mere centimeters from her chest.

"Then perhaps you should have been a little quicker in claiming it, uncle."

She can do so much from here. Far more than just Misfortune and Folly. Reaching out, Sophia's first order of business... is to heal Oren of his injuries. As Tyranos continues to struggle with his blade, trying to tear it out of the barrier holding it in place, Oren slowly rises to his feet behind the Ancient God.

Sophia smiles softly, meeting her lover's eyes for a second and giving him the faintest of nods as she pushes a bit of divine power into his sword as well.

Oren takes a step... and Tyranos jerks, his entire body tensing up as he freezes in the midst of his struggles. Slowly, the Ancient God looks down to behold the tip of Oren's sword poking out of the front of his chestplate. Between Sophia's power and the strength of Oren's sword arm, they've managed to punch right through the God Killer's breastplate... and right through the God of Tyranny and Conquest.

"Goodbye, uncle."

Oren twists and then pulls his blade free and Tyranos drops to his knees at the foot of the throne, nerveless fingers releasing his hold on his own sword as it continues to hang in midair, seemingly stuck there.

Reaching out, Oren grabs the top of Tyranos' helmet and rips it off of him, exposing the Ancient God's expression, his scarred face twisted in agony as blood seeps out of both his back and his front.

"Foolish... children. This was... my birthright..."

Sophia just frowns.

"You only have yourself to blame, uncle. You brought Oren to our universe. You stole him from his home, tore him from his world, and turned him into a weapon. You brought this on yourself."

Sneering spitefully, Tyranos lets out a huff and then grins a bloody rictus of a grin.

"Good luck to you then, niece. The last goddess standing. Good luck with the world I've left behind. Good luck putting everything back together without becoming the very monster you see me as. Good luck."

Sophia would be lying if she said his final words don't unsettle her just a bit. And yet, in the end... she gives Oren a single nod and without missing a beat, the Otherworlder separates her uncle's head from his shoulders. Tyranos' head rolls across the sanctum floor and his body remains on its knees for a moment before slumping to the side.

It's over. It's finally over. Right? No... as Sophia stares down at her uncle's corpse, she realizes it's not quite over. Not yet.

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A/N: So uh, just a heads up, story ends tomorrow on Chapter 62. I've toyed with the idea of writing some Bonus Chapters, but honestly I'm leaning more towards not doing so at this point. Really appreciate everyone who's come along for this ride, hope you enjoy tomorrow's finale.

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