

The feel of something wet beneath the knight grem's feet caught the two grem's attention. The shard brought them to yet another unfamiliar place; a beach, waves gently pushing against Noctis's paws as the black moon peeked over the dark horizon. The reflection off of the water's surface perfectly mirrors it. They were still in the nightmare, no doubt, but it all felt too calm. Too serene.

It took them a second to realize as the next wave hit their feet, it didn't retreat back. It began to rise, moving past Noctis' paws and soon they were nearly knee deep in the water. The beach behind them disappears underneath the waves. Noctis growls as a warning to Grimm to be prepared for what may happen. Soon Grimm spots something in the water, a massive shadow creeping closer to them until it stops directly under them.

A giant hand emerged from the dark waters and grabbed the back end of Noctis, dragging the two grems down into the murky depths. They both held their breaths as they lost sight of the light just beneath the surface. Grimm found it hard to hold his breath much longer, not wanting to die like this, not when they were making progress...

A gasp escaped the witch grem, only to be caught surprised by the lack of drowning. They were able to breathe as if they were still on the surface. This must have been the work of what dragged them here.

The two grems find themselves at the bottom of the ocean, but their movement stays, not weighted down by the gravity of water. The sound of what sounded like a woman sobbing caught their attention as they turned around. A pile of sea creature carcasses laid in a mess, not one piece of meat left on the old bones.

Sitting on top was a massive skeleton, more humanoid than the others, at least until you get to the head. Giant waves acting as a curtain or a shawl that draped down from the side of the skull to the ocean floor, almost enveloping everything around it including the two grems. Her chest glows a soft blue that attracts smaller fish to swim around and through her bones. The sobbing was coming from her, a single tear running down one of her eye sockets. Grimm can feel the pain in the sobs.

The dark orb floating on the top of her head told them that she must be the next god. This must be Mare, but unlike that version of Lapsus, she didn't make any moves. She just stood sitting, watching the two grems intently. Waiting.

Noctis studied the skeleton god for anything that may prove useful, but he couldn't find anything. Even if there was a brain, reaching her head is impossible with the waves. Despite her chest glowing, he didn't see a heart anywhere inside, but it did seem like a spot she guarded heavily. Maybe that's the spot, but how to attack it?

The sound of bones rattling pulled Noctis out of his thoughts as one of Mare's hands began to slam down onto the ocean floor, nearly missing the two grems as the knight grem reacted fast enough to move away. Another sob escapes Mare.

"The water," Grimm broke the silence. Noctis only hummed in confusion.

"While the ocean water doesn't seem to affect us, it's attached to her. Perhaps a little *jolt* could do her away?" The witch grem twirled his wand around in emphasis, slight electrical sparks jumping off of it. Noctis smirked and nodded.

Before they can put their plan to action, Mare swipes her other hand at the two grems causing some of her waves to crash against them. While Noctis was able to hold his ground after dodging, Grimm was knocked off and landed several feet away. Their bad leg was sore but otherwise they were okay. Noctis started to run to Grimm, but the witch grem raised their wand as a way to tell him to stop.

"I'm fine Noctis, just buy me some time! Conjuring this spell won't be instant."

Noctis hesitated for a moment before nodding, turning his attention to Mare. With his sword in his mouth, he dashed towards her. The sound of sword and bone clanging filled the watery air.

Grimm stood up, planting his feet firmly into the ocean floor sand as he held his wand tight. Ignoring the pain in his bad leg he began to conjure a lightning ball spell. It took a lot of concentration and energy, but it's their best shot right now.

While the witch grem worked, Noctis kept the skeleton god distracted blow after blow with his sword causing slices and even pieces of bone to fly off of Mare's hands. The god let out more sobs. Soon the god got the upper hand, while she deflected a sword attack with one hand she swooped to grab the knight grem with the other. His sword fell to the sand with a muted thud as he was being squeezed tightly by the boney hand.

"Hold on, Noctis!" The witch grem was feeling the exhaustion begin to creep in his body. His panting felt deep in his chest. With one more push of energy, it was complete. A quick swing of his wand released the energy, a massive lighting ball hurled towards the skeletal god striking her right in her chest.

The impact caused her to drop Noctis who landed onto the sand with minimal damage. The god reeled back as a screaming cry came from the large beast, the electricity surging through her body.

"Thank... you..."

Mare's body, once composed of bone and sadness, now washed over the skull pile and the two gremms as water. Sitting on top of the pile of skulls where she once sat was a shard, black as night. Their last destination.

Noctis quickly rushed over to Grimm's side as the witch grem fell to their knees. They may have overdid it, but it was necessary to their victory. The knight grem headbutted Grimm, how chuckled.

"I'm okay Noctis, really. I just need some time to recharge."

But time wasn't on their side and they both knew this. Grimm climbed onto Noctis' back as he led them to the last shard. With a sigh, the witch grem touched the shard as they were transported to the realm of darkness once more.