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He lay on a shore of bones, in Hell. He was surrounded by demons, and now that he was above the surface of the red water with a second to listen, he couldn't not hear the screams of all the people being butchered, people just like him. The demons were killing them, tearing their chests open and ripping out their hearts. They were eating the people's hearts. They'd probably done that to Mia. They were going to do that to him.

He was intellectualizing and rationalizing again, describing reality like it wasn't happening to him. That was fine. He was going to die anyway, or suffer eternal torture or whatever, might as well keep that reality at a distance instead of having it scar him.

"Eat?" one of the demons asked the other.

"Take to Diogo?" another asked.

The closest one shook her head, before grinning down at Davidww@Novelw@rM.com

"I eat. Unmarked might be strong. Special! Tasty."

Another demon shoved her. "No! Mine!"

Another one of them came closer, and started clicking. Not tongue clucking, but clicking, in the throat, like a dolphin, fast trilling sounds.

The first demon shook her head. "I said mine! I said--"

David stabbed her in the eye with a bone. He had one good arm, and for some reason, his hand had dug through the stones and bones until it found one with a pointy tip. So, while still on his back, still completely fucked, still doomed, he swung out with his good arm and managed to sink what looked like a broken femur into one of the demon's eyes. Did it seem like a good idea at the time? Nope. But, he did it anyway.

The demon shrieked. The other demons laughed, pointed at her, and laughed some more. David lay there and didn't do shit. They had him surrounded, so random stabbing wasn't going to work anymore. Best he managed was an extra ten seconds before they ate him like a pack of hyenas.

"Eat! Eat!" One of the male ones with hooves hopped over, and flapped his wings enough to increase his jump so he landed on David's gut hard. "Unmarked is strong. Will taste--"

The demon flew to the side as something red and black smashed into it. They rolled down the shore into the river, shrieking and clicking, one wing broken, and the arm looked broken, too.

Well, that was strange.

David lifted his head up, and looked around at the five remaining small demons, as they all dove at the two demons rushing toward them. One of them had a tail. Oh, that's what had knocked the demon off him. A long tail sticking out of the back of a gargoyle that must have been nearly seven feet tall.

A feminine gargoyle, with a human face, sorta? She had a couple big fangs, and a couple giant black horns sticking out of the top of her skull. Black hair. No, not hair, more like black rope hanging from her skull. Tendrils? Whoever, whatever she was, she was much bigger than the other demons, and she half roared, half banshee shrieked, as she pounced on one of them, and ripped them apart.

David rolled over. Oh, there it was. Pain. Yeap, that was pain. Falling through the tunnel to Hell, through a sky of fire, crashing into a river hard enough to dislocate his arm, and getting his stomach kicked in, that hadn't registered. Rolling over with a dislocated arm? Yeap, that fucking sucked, and he screamed as it flopped onto the stones and bones. It didn't matter. He had to see, had to know what was happening.

Four of the little demons dove at the much larger demon. She had armor too, more bent black metal that looked like it'd been hammered on and strapped on with leather and chains. The smaller demons had human skulls dangling from various parts of them, some strapped on too, but this gargoyle didn't. Every skull attached to her body had horns.

One of the demons went for her back, but the big gargoyle woman spun around, and her long tail slammed into them, too. The tail had spikes sticking out of the back of it toward the base near her spine, but most of it was bare and smooth, except for a couple metal chunks that were strapped to it. She hit the smaller demon with one of those metal slabs, in the face, and teeth and fangs flew out of their mouth. But the other three demons surrounded her and-wwNovelw@rM.com

Got run over by the other demon. The new demon was only half a foot shorter than the tall gargoyle, ran on hooves, and had no tail or wings. A satyr? A satyr with four curling, huge black ram horns. A satyr with no eyes. Two of her big, curling horns came out of some sort of black bone mask plate thing over where her eyes should have been. Like her gargoyle friend, the satyr wore armor, more black metal, leather, and skulls. And like her gargoyle friend, she didn't hesitate to run into the smaller demons, literally. She smashed into them head first, hard enough to knock one down and break bones, before she got her claws into them and tore them apart.

The smaller demons were clearly outmatched, but they didn't care. They didn't fly away, or run away, or hop away. They let out demonic roars and angry shrieks, and threw themselves at the two other demons. No sense of self preservation?

David snapped his eyes around, looking to other demons, but most of them were upstream, not close enough to interfere. Not close enough to give a shit either, considering not a one of them so much as looked their way, all far more interested in catching themselves a human or two before they got away. A few demons did look down the river toward them, but shrugged and went back to their own hunts.

The gargoyle got her claws into one of the small demons, and ripped their wings off. The roars turned into screams, and ended just as fast as she ripped the demon's throat out. Another one got their chest kicked in by the satyr, metal breastplate dented deep enough to break the bones underneath. They went down clutching at their chest, gasping for breath, only for the next kick to break in their skull. It left the satyr's back open, and one of the demon's jumped her, only to land on the many spikes that covered the satyr's back and shoulders. Not enough to get injured, but enough to give the small demon a hard time.

Enough time for the gargoyle to dash around, rip the demon from her friend's back, and rip their throat out. Always the throat, the reddest place on the smaller demon's bodies. The reddest place on her body, and the satyr's body, toowwNovelw@rM.com

The little demon with the broken arm rushed out of the river, past David, but someone grabbed their tail and made them fall. Oh, wait, that was his hand, doing its own thing again. The demon turned around and shrieked at him, but turning his back to the other two got him pinned to the ground and his throat ripped open a second later by the satyr.

Which left David, on his stomach, staring at the satyr and gargoyle, with six demon corpses around.

"Heh, you got guts, fresh meat." Chuckling, the gargoyle squatted down beside him, turned the small demon over, ripped off their armor, and tore open their chest as casually as a lifetime hunter would skin a rabbit. So efficient and fast David almost didn't notice the gore, until it flowed between the stones. "Daoka, you good?"

The satyr came over, clicking in her throat like the small demons had a few times. She had a sharp chin and cheeks, with small lips. Unlike the gargoyle, she was bald, and the four huge ram horns looked almost like a hat, or a crown over the dark red, almost black skin. For a second, he thought maybe she didn't have fangs, but when she opened her smaller mouth to bite into the heart the gargoyle ripped out of the small demon and handed her, he could definitely see them.

"Cannibalism?" he asked.

The gargoyle looked at him, blinked a few times, burst into laughter, and grabbed another demon corpse. With strength he'd only expect to see on a male powerlifter, she ripped the demon's armor off its chest, drove her claws into the chest, tore out its heart, and ate it. She took several bites, each big and messy, and blood flowed down her dark red skin and down over her armor as she walked back over to him while the satyr tore out some more hearts.