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David and Mia are cast into Hell, and they do not belong.

~~Mia~~

The twisting path between the mountains and rocks erupted into chaos. Screams, blood, figures in dark red cloaks, wielding big black swords and axes.

Humans. Humans with demon weapons, wearing demon armor. Humans with wide, crazy eyes. Humans screaming with... not rage. Hunger. Screaming with hunger, and grimacing with effort to lift the heavy weapons.

Mia, Hannah, the two men, and the two sex demons Diogo had brought with him all pressed against each other, back to back, as they watched the humans run at them. Whoever these other humans were with dark red cloaks, they weren't looking to talk, or negotiate, or anything. They ran at Mia with all the subtlety of a raging lion.

It was dark. The sky of fire still burned, but it looked more like dying embers high above, and the amber veins in the mountain had grown dim. Bright enough to see, not bright enough to see things hiding behind rocks, and the demons were already dark red and black, like the stones. Natural camouflage. It was probably why the humans wore those leathery cloaks, but they'd exposed themselves first. Because Mia and the others were bait.

Diogo and the other demons jumped down from the cliff overhead. And the ambush became a maelstrom of violence and blood in seconds. Five of the humans died instantly as Diogo and his two brutes each landed on a different human, and the two tigers did the same. The snap of bone was louder than the battle cries of the other seven, and the humans turned around.

Mistake. Adron and the other vrat jumped down near Mia, and rushed the humans in the back, and they had their own swords. Loria swooped down from above, wings spread, grabbed one of the humans by the shoulders, and lifted them up. The human had an axe, but they couldn't hold onto it with the gargoyle's claws sinking into their flesh. It landed hard enough to make sparks, and bounced toward Mia's feet.www.novelform.com

She tried to pick it up, failed, and almost laughed. It was really heavy. No human could go around wielding weapons like these unless they were on steroids, and ridiculously big and tall to begin with. And she could see it in the way the humans moved. They weren't looking to fence, or fight with any expectation of surviving. They put their whole body into every swing of the weapons, leaving themselves open every time, fully expecting to either get the kill with the swing, or to die right after.

They all died, right after. It wasn't a battle. Caught off guard, the humans didn't stand a chance against Diogo. Two of them did manage to hit Diogo with the weapons, but he was the last target they should have gone for. One of them managed to draw blood from the giant brute, but it was barely more than a paper cut, and the other might as well have hit Diogo with a wiffle bat for all the damage they did.www.novelform.com

Ten seconds. That was all it took for the bait plan to work, and for twelve humans to lie dead. Blood soaked into the stones, and most of it disappeared, flowing away into the cracks and crevices, some of it soaking straight through the ground like Hell itself... herself, wanted it.

It only got worse. The succubus and incubus joined the other demons, and eventually so did Hannah and the two men, in collecting their bounty. For the three brutes and two tigers, ripping open rib cages looked easy. The two vrats and gargoyle had a little more trouble, but not much, no more than someone cracking lobster claws with their bare hands.

The succubus and incubus split a heart among themselves. The other demons each took one except Diogo, who took two of course. What Mia didn't expect to see, was Adron handing a heart to Hannah and the two men, and for the three of them to split it into chunks using one of the axes. Watching demons eat human hearts was enough to make Mia sick, but some part of her accepted it as normal. Absurd, but normal.

Seeing humans eat a human heart, made her feel like dyingwww.novelform.com

She stepped back, dropped the axe, and looked away as she covered her mouth. The old urge to vomit came up, like she was sick, but whatever strange rules the afterlife followed didn't include a normal, working digestive system. You didn't really eat or drink, or shit or piss, or any of the normal, grimy crap that came with life. No vomiting, no matter how much she wanted to.

"Don't want any?" Hannah asked, coming over to her. "I know you just had a fruit, but better to stay topped off, you know?"

Mia gulped down nothing, and forced herself to look at Hannah, and not at the chunk of flesh in her hand.

"I'll pass."

"Suit yourself, Mia. You'll regret it if you get injured."

"Yeah, I probably will." But it didn't matter. Just looking at the meat in the girl's hand had her gagging. The memory of her brother on a metal table, getting his chest cut open and inside examined, only made things worse.

Her brother.

She forced herself to walk past Hannah, into the larger area of flat rock where she and the others had been playing bait, and she watched the demons devour. It hurt to look down at the corpses, but if David was in there, she had to know. One by one, she checked the bodies, each one of them on their backs, each one with open chests. It was easier if she thought of herself as a detective, in a cult crime scene, looking for someone she knew.

But David wasn't here.

"Got a fascination with the dead?" Adron asked, finishing up his meal and squatting beside her.

"N-No, no..." She stepped back, and did her best to not look into any more open chest cavities. "Just, still kinda... getting used to all this."

Adron raised a brow as he watched her, but shrugged after a few seconds. He and the other demons each grabbed a body, and tossed them over the ridge into another nearby small ravine. The valley between the mountains was full of them, and cliffs, and large sharp rock faces, perfect for an ambush. Diogo was smart to pick this spot for the counter-ambush. If he'd wanted, he could have just rolled some big rocks down and probably killed a few of the humans before the fight even started. Or maybe just stay hidden and let the humans go past.www.novelform.com

Judging from the sounds some of the demons had made during the slaughter, they'd enjoyed it. They wanted food, and they wanted violence.

So did the humans in cloaks. The look in their eyes had been more than just hunger. It'd been inhuman.

One of the tiger ladies grabbed a corpse, and made quick work of collecting a skull as casually as someone replaced their shower curtain with one from a dollar store. Apparently one of the skulls on her belt had been damaged. Unlike the remnants they'd slaughtered, human bodies were a lot more durable, and the corpse resisted being skinned. But the tiger demon removed the skull and skinned it smoothly regardless, like a serial killer working on preparing their thousandth trophy. Probably more reality than simile.

"We sleep for the night," Diogo said. "Adron and Loria, first watch."

"You got it, boss," Adron said, smirking slightly as he helped toss the last body away.