

1119

~~David~~

Again, they were too exhausted for sex. He was tired, and they were utterly drained, panting and groaning with every step. They needed sleep, and it wouldn't be long before the demons needed to eat. Grems and imps occasionally glided overhead or ran past, but were far too fast to catch. Not exactly a reliable source of food.

He smiled at Dao as she sat across from him in the small cave, and bumped her closer hoof against his ankle. It was a very small cave, mostly a vertical crevice, one of many, and the amber veins within showed it came to a dead end. A safe place to sleep, mostly.

"It's so weird," he said.

"What is?" Jes asked as she sat down beside him, on the inside of the alcove. Naturally she let Caera take the outside.

"If I want to sleep, all I have to do is close my eyes when it's dark. And I can sleep all twelve hours of the night if I want to, or just eight."

"You've been in Hell, what, four days? This'll be your fourth night sleeping here, and you figured that out already?"

He shrugged. "Can't help it. I like to think about stuff." *www.NoveLworm.Com*

Jes rolled her eyes, but ultimately laughed it off as she stuck her tail up from between them, and wrapped it around Daoka's closest hoof. A few tugs earned some clicking giggles from her lover.

"You and Caera will get along, I'm sure."

He smiled at her, and then the tiger lady, who sat in the entrance with her back mostly to them. Keeping an eye on the exit.

"I hope so," he said, "but I never was good at history. Got a shit memory for things like names and places."

Caera half snorted, half chuckled. "I do like those things." She didn't sit very far away, maybe five feet, and her long tail swayed left and right slowly along the stone. If he just reached out, he could grab one of the big spikes lining its top.

But he wasn't that dumb. Jes insisted Caera used to be fun, but this Caera didn't seem like the type. Any demons being 'fun' was a strange idea, but Jes and Dao definitely were. He lucked out, meeting them.

"I don't dream, either."

"Be happy you used to dream at all," the tiger lady said. "Demons never dream."

"Never ever?" *www.NoveLworm.Com*

"Never ever."

"That... kinda sucks, honestly. Dreams are amazing things." *www.NoVél(w)orm.Com*

It was Jes's turn to half snort half chuckle.

"Scrying pools don't show us what goes on in humans' heads, but it does show us what happens to humans on the outside when they have big time nightmares, or night terrors. Some of the shit I've heard sounds worse than anything I've seen in Hell."

"You haven't seen much of Hell," Caera said.

Jes frowned up at the tiger, but shrugged and resumed playing with her tail, tracing its tip up and down Daoka's leg where it touched David's.

"Correction, then," David said. "Dreams are usually amazing. My dreams were usually fun, stories that played out in my head while I slept. Fantasy, scifi, everything in between, complete with sword battles and romance."

Daoka clicked twice and tilted her head to the side.

"Describe them," Jes said, translating. "What's it like to dream them, specifically."

"Oh, what's it like to dream? It's... hard to describe it, honestly. It's such a mess of images and sensations. I usually know exactly what's happening and why, and even think of it as normal, when I'm in the dream, even though it makes absolutely no sense. And because the dream flows to whatever you think about, trying to figure out the dream always leads down a rabbit hole of one thing leading to another. I could be driving, and think about how the road twists and turns like a snake. Suddenly I'm driving on a literal giant snake, and in my head it makes perfect sense, because of course winding roads are actually giant snakes we drive on. Before I know it, I'm driving a flying car, involved in a film noir mystery, and I'm investigating the giant turtle the city is built on. And at no point do I think any of this is weird."

The two demons with eyebrows cocked them as they looked at him.

"That's... pretty damn strange," Jes said.

"You've never seen or heard someone describe dreaming in a scrying pool? Or down here?"

"Nope. I've seen a lot of things in scrying pools, but not that. Can't know everything."

Daoka clicked away, and gestured to him.

"She wants to know more about you. You know about us now." Jes poked his leg with her tail. "Tell us about you. I mean, more than we already know, nerd."

He frowned, but Jes's smile was playful. No intent to hurt his feelings. Of all the people he'd known in his life, it was the loud, fun types who teased each other relentlessly as a form of friendship and communication he found himself watching from the sidelines the most. How did people enjoy that kind of friendship, every interaction a barrage of playful, sometimes-witty-usually-not insults? Even with his sister, they were usually sincere when they said anything, be it compliment or insult. Usually.

Maybe now was a good time to get used to someone like this? Not like he had much choice.

"Not much to tell, really. Orphan. Grew up with my sister. We bounced around from caretaker to caretaker, and never found parents or a parent to take care of us. I guess we were a little... off-putting."

Daoka clicked once, head tilted.

"I mean, we didn't really ever try and be... be normal kids. I had my own thing, my own interests. Mia had her own things and interests. And we... we wanted a home, but something about parents, someone else looking over our shoulders, telling us what to do and how to live our lives? It never clicked. So, lo and behold, we never really got a home. But thankfully for us, Mia and I did very well in high school, got some good scholarships, and went to university. I--" He stopped, and smiled.

"What?" Caera asked.

"I just realized. I don't have to pay back my student loans." *www.NoveLworm.Com*

Caera laughed, and lay on the ground near him, head beside him and resting on her arms underneath it.

"I got to admit," she said. "That is... a very boring backstory. I mean sure, being an orphan is at least slightly interesting, but it sounds like it led to nothing. You just... lived a normal, boring life?"

"Yeap. And I loved it. Spent my free time just gaming, reading, masturbating, and having the smallest hopes and dreams. Never really wanted for anything. Figured I'd get a job at a game studio, or maybe a software company, and just kinda... laze my way through life, you know? Do nothing, be nothing, just enjoy my little vices."

Daoka clicked a few times and looked to Jes.

"I dunno, Dao. I don't think I've ever known a human quite as boring as this kid."