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"I'm not going to let this go," he said. "I have to find out. I have to know. I have... I just have to." How could he explain? It wasn't the first time he ran into this wall, and it was like trying to communicate with someone who didn't speak his language. It was written into his bones. He had to know, be it why he was unmarked and in Hell, or why his computer lagged an extra few seconds when opening a random program. Stay up all night, no sleeping, no eating, and all-consuming need to know that sank into him until he was searching online for answers for multiple days straight, until Mia demanded he take a shower and eat something.

He knew that about himself well enough. But apparently he didn't know much, if he wasn't even human. He had to know. www.novelworld.com

"You're going to get yourself killed," Jes said. "You can do that after Diogo's dead."

He grinned at her. "Of course."

Dao clicked a few times, but sighed after a while and patted his shoulder.

Everyone got quiet after that. No need for a translator. Dao didn't want him to go.

He smiled at the satyr as he slid in to sit beside her, back to the wall, and leaned against her good shoulder. Her leg and arm looked a lot better, still swollen but healing. Jes's wing looked better too, and her ankle. Demons healed crazy fast once they had some food in them.

"How long till we're good to go?" he asked.

"Two more rekindlings at least," Caera said. "More, if Dao and Jes need to fight anything. And Mia's probably already at the spire." www.NoëlleWorld.com

"Can we get eyes on the spire? Maybe get to a spot where you and I can at least see it?"

"Yeah, sure. Tomorrow." Nodding, Caera prowled over toward the entrance, and slid something along the ground toward him. It scraped the stones, making a very unpleasant noise. A black sword, its blade and handle big chunks of metal beaten into shape, literally. It was like a giant with a mallet had grabbed a bunch of chunks of metal and smashed them together, with zero smithing skill or anything. It didn't matter. A sword was a sword and as long as it didn't break, it didn't matter how shitty it looked.

Problem. He wanted to break it.

Groaning, he got up, and grabbed the big hilt with both hands, and--

"Damn." He stumbled, rocking back and forth slightly with the blade held up. "I'd... kinda hoped..."

"Hoped what?" Jes asked

"I dunno. Apparently I'm not human, so I'd kinda hoped after eating a heart, maybe I'd be stronger? Demon strong?" Nope, not happening. He let the sword's tip fall, and it clanked against the rocks hard enough to leave a dent. Not stronger, or different in anyway he could tell. Damn. So much for that fantasy. "Alright. I'm gonna need help breaking this."

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~~Mia~~ [www.NoëlleWorld.com](http://www.NoëlleWorld.com)

"P-Please don't eat me." It was out of her mouth before she could stop it.

Zel chuckled. Giggled? It was more feminine than her tall, alien, elegant body and face looked like it'd make.

As Zel stepped toward her, Diogo stepped aside, bowing slightly again for the tetrad demon. The ruler of the Death's Grip spire squatted down in front of Mia, and was still taller than her, four giant black horns a crown on her head, with the amber, glowing horn sticking up from the top of her forehead, between the four others. The thin tall body, the four arms, the hooves and lack of tail or wings, it definitely made her look distinct. The fact she was almost a foot taller than Diogo, the biggest demon Mia had seen so far, only made things worse.

She was beautiful. Seeing her up close, too close, didn't change that. She did have a nose, but it was subtle, almost completely flat to her face with two tiny nostrils barely noticeable. It gave her face a smooth, almost mask-like alien quality.

From underneath her giant horns, long black tendrils dangled from her skull, like Adron's except a bit thicker, and pierced horizontally with tiny bones up and down their lengths. They weren't the only bone decorations on her body. While she only wore a few pieces of white sheer silk, nothing more than long scarves that only casually and accidentally covered her moderate breasts, she had what looked like a belly chain under her long set of abs, and a few skulls dangled from it. The chain was made of black metal. She wore a necklace, too, the same sort of skinny black chain, and it had a few skulls dangling from it as well. Some were human, some were demon.

"And what is your name, unmarked one?" Just like her laugh, her voice was quite feminine, and soft, and elegant, and playful. It was almost like the sort of voice a bitch in high school might use to manipulate someone, while pretending to be kind and sweet and innocent.

"M--"

Diogo got a fraction of a second into the word, before Zel shot him a look, shutting him up instantly. Holy shit.

"Mia," Mia said.

"Mia. What brings you to the center of my kingdom?"

Mia blinked at her, and looked up at Diogo. The brute stood there, said nothing, and glared down at Mia. Enough said. Lying was not a good idea.

"Diogo noticed I was unmarked, and thought you... might want to see me."

Zelandariel nodded, red and black eyes staring straight into Mia's soul. "I see."

"And... because, apparently, I... have an aura."

The demoness raised a dark eyebrow before standing back up. God, she really was taller than Diogo. Mia's head barely reached the underside of her hip.

"Diogo," she said, eyes still on Mia, "describe this aura to me."

"Similar to a vola's aura. It became problematic when she nearly fucked Adron. It's a... very powerful, very wide aura."

Mia squirmed. Zel didn't so much as glance Diogo's way anymore. Like a scientist analyzing a pet project, or maybe a dominatrix watching her sub squirm, she kept her eyes on Mia, one set of arms folded across her chest, the other resting on her hips [www.novelworld.com](http://www.novelworld.com)

"A sexual sin aura, from a human? And an unmarked human at that. How interesting. You were wise to bring her to me, Diogo." Nodding, Zel reached down with one of her lower arms, and set a hand on Mia's shoulder. Long claws. "I knew strange things were afoot, but I did not expect them to manifest in such an unusual way."