

## 1190

Another click and nod. Right, it wasn't like Adron would need to use the aura to get Hannah in the mood, given the girl's personality. That'd been entirely for Mia's benefit.

"Think Hannah is in Adron's room?" A room the vrat had gotten now that he was officially Hannah's second bodyguard.

Kas clicked once and nodded.

"I think I'll go pay her a visit." Nodding, she touched her necklace, moved toward the opening door and its parting teeth, and stepped out onto the balcony, high in the spire. Kas groaned, and followed.

They didn't get far. Zel hopped up to join them, accompanied by Saldavin and Diogo. The two male demons, monstrous and enormous, both wore armor, slabs of bent black metal held snug to their chests, arms, and legs, by leather straps. Diogo wore far less, skin darker than the larger demon's and probably thicker, but he still wore more armor than usual. Something was up, and she was very tempted to ask.

No, bad idea. Zel did not look happy. Something happened that'd pissed her off, wiping away her usual playful exterior and revealing the cold, hard, throat-slitting brutality of the demon underneath. Not a bear worth risking poking.

Kas clicked at her a few times, earning a harsh glare from his master. Even her odd, amber horn in the center of her forehead glowed a bit.

"Gorlus has not returned," she said to him.

Slowly, the shark turned his head back to Mia's room, and aimed it at the giant closed window. He clicked twice.

"We don't know," Saldavin said. "He's--"

Zel gently hit the winged goliath with the back of one of her hands, before she gestured to Mia.

"Trouble forever rains on my horns. Come, Mia, we cannot wait for yet more chaos to dirty my doorstep. We have work to do."

"Oh. Okay, I--ah!" She squeaked as a big arm scooped her up. Kas. She wrapped an arm around his neck, since his shark head leaned forward, making it the perfect thing to hook her arm around while sitting on his forearm. His neck was massive, and she hugged it snug while her other hand grabbed the horn in front of her.

It was a good thing she got a tight hold on her bodyguard, because the group wasted no time. Zel jumped down the spire's center hole, the brute and the korgejin tetrad followed, and Mia and her bodyguard followed them. Back to the bone cathedral? No. They went deep into the spire, and deep into the guts of Hell, but they stopped shy of the bottom. A couple stories above the bottom, Kas let her off, and she sucked in a hard breath as she looked around

The depths of the spire were darker than the higher levels, with none of the fire sky's light able to reach down into the guts of the tower. Fewer amber veins or hanging braziers also meant less light, which gave the increased amount of remnants better chances at grabbing her.

Adron, already waiting for them, stood among a few dozen dead remnants, body covered in blood. He pushed aside gore with his tail, and bowed slightly to Zel before stepping aside.

Zel paid him no mind. Across the bloody mess and metal floor of the balcony, she pushed open two massive doors of black metal decorated with skulls and chains, and stepped into a new tunnel.

"Adron, Diogo, stay here," she said. They did, while Mia, Zelandariel, and Saldavin entered a world of metal and stone.

The tunnel didn't have the usual flesh and bone everything else did. Instead, Mia's bare feet walked on warm metal, and many skull braziers hung from chains, almost blinding her with the new light. The walls were metal, and covered in spikes, many holding either chains, bones, or what could only be torture devices, oddly shaped metal tools probably used to cut someone open without killing them. Zel didn't pick one up, thank god.

"Um..."

"Do not worry, young soul. I do not bring you here to torture you. We are going to perform an experiment, you and I, painless, and you will return to your room later."

"Oh. Good." Nodding, Mia gulped down a few boulders that threatened to choke her, as the tunnel opened up.[www.W.NoveO.W6rm.Com](#)

It was a dungeon, and a torture room. There were cells, with bars made of the same sort of teeth the door to Mia's room was. No one was getting out of their cell unless Zel used her spire powers to let them out. There were chairs, made of the same bone, tilted back so anyone who sat in them would feel like they were visiting the dentist. Considering the torture tools on the walls, and the hundreds of bones and skeletons sitting in some of the chairs or in the cells, it might as well have been a dental treatment room.

The only reason the place wasn't covered in guts and gore, was Hell's propensity to absorb fleshy stuff, liquids and sweat and blood and guts and whatnot. And with every bit of wall, ceiling, and floor made out of metal, there didn't seem to be any remnants either. But there were still screams.

It didn't take long to learn why. They continued past rows upon rows of cells, the screams grew louder, and Mia forced herself to look away from the inevitable. Demons and humans alike were in the dungeon, being tortured. No one tortured them, but that didn't change they were held down by chains covered in tiny barbs. Every breath they took cut into them. Chained down to chairs, or strapped to walls against the many spikes covering metal surfaces, dozens of demons and humans were kept in perpetual agony.[www.W.NoveO.W6rm.Com](#)

"You might be surprised," Zel said as she walked the hall past victims, "how often a demon attempts to violate my rules, or a human attempts to steal what is not theirs. They surprise me, all too often."

Mia didn't look. She'd seen enough death and brutality in less than a week to put her in therapy for the rest of her life, and the only thing that kept it from eating her up from the inside out, was knowing this was Hell, and the people deserved it, hopefully. But even knowing that, it'd only be a matter of time before all this death and pain would screw her up.

Eventually, she put up both hands for horse blinders, and kept her eyes on Zel.

They stepped into a tighter hallway, free of cells and screams. It went on a ways, deep into the bowels of Hell, and it took a minute of walking along the warm metal before they finally reached two colossal doors at the end. Zel's amber horn glowed, and she pushed them open.

"Saldavin," she said. "Remain here."

The korgejin tetrad nodded, turned, faced the hallway they'd come from, and Mia and Zel stepped into the darkness.

"I can't see."

"Of course." Zel's extra horn glowed, just enough for Mia to see the big, empty, black metal room, as Zel reached past her and closed the doors behind her. Just Mia and Zel, all alone. Double uh oh.[www.NoveO.W6rm.Com](#)

Zel walked past her again, to the opposite side of the room, and pushed open another pair of enormous doors. The room was like an in between room, then, so people wouldn't... what, hear whatever happened in the next room? Whatever the reason, Mia was happy to follow Zel into the next chamber and its light. Skull braziers hung from the ceiling, fire burning in their empty eyes, and Mia breathed relief as she stepped around Zel into the giant, lit space, before Zel closed the doors behind her again.

Something stirred, quietly, barely moving. Enormous, alive. It... He breathed, and Mia froze as the presence of the creature summoned goosebumps to her skin. It was strong. It was so very, very strong.[www.NoveO.W6rm.Com](#)

"Holy..." Mia sucked in a breath, and stared up at the new demon strapped to the wall.

"This, young soul, is Vinicius, a ragarin. Last child of Belial." The demon queen chuckled as she walked up to the titan strapped to the wall, and poked him in the chest with one of her claws.

"Perhaps there are others, but none that I have found. No. He is most likely the last."

Vinicius. A very fancy name, and rolled off the tongue with all the flair of a big evil snake speaking elegantly. He did not look fancy. He looked like Kasimiro on steroids.

The titan who stood against the wall, trapped, was at least twelve feet tall, maybe taller, and anyone with two feet on Zel's height might as well have been a t-rex compared to Mia. Her head didn't even reach his crotch. His four arms were bound to the metal surface by black chains thick enough to hold a battleship's anchor, and his giant, thick, very spiky tail was chained, too, the black metal snagged on its spikes. His thick legs stood on raptor feet, with a huge spike on each knee, just like his elbows. He could barely wriggle any of his limbs.