

1245

~Mia~WV(n)wewo(m)M

Everything was going from bad, to worse, to worser to worst.

Hannah was dead. Adron was burned, badly, by her new slave. Vinicius, already wounded by Zel, was bleeding from new wounds in his arms, burned gashes from the rider's weird axes, but not burned enough to stop the blood from dripping. Diogo and Acelina were trapped in the dungeon with the rider, which was actually a good thing, but short-lived if the heavy crashing against the double doors behind Vinicius really was the rider.

David was alive! David found her! David looked like shit, favoring his left shoulder and bleeding from a really nasty-looking nose. And he'd said he'd run into Kas fighting the rider. The rider was terrifying, the aura he emitted was terrifying, and he was chasing her, and David, like some Hell version of Jason or Michael Myers who could run instead of just walk everywhere. The chance Kas was alive was small.

But not none. He could still be alive, and she needed to know. There was no chance she was leaving Kas behind if he was alive, unless he didn't want to come.

Vinicius wanted control of the spire, but it was obvious he was a giant asshole. No way she'd let him have it. But how else could they get control of the situation? It was all chaos, and now they were stuck with no options.

David usually had a plan. Him not having a plan was enough to have her ready to panic, but she would not panic. The fact touching him seemed to summon the runes from the spire's book back to her mind was a new level of insanity she couldn't think about right now. Right now, what mattered was escaping.

Hell had different plans.

Mia, David, and Adron all fell hard as an earthquake ripped through the tower.

"What the fuck!?" David yelled and followed it with a yelp as he landed on his bad shoulder.

"David!" She tried to get to him, but the earthquake didn't so much as let her crawl on her hands and knees. Vibration ripped through her, heavy and chunky, and pulsed through the floor.W(w)w.Nv(t)wó(m).C.M

Adron. Poor Adron. He must have been in so much pain, from the burns and from aching to take out his anger on the rider and Vinicius, and able to do neither. And now the vibrations pouring through the tower had him grinding his teeth, biting back more pain from his ruined skin.

"What's going on?" she asked. "Did someone take over the spire?" Her voice barely made it over the rumbling.

"No." Vinicius said. "The ritual takes time, and drowns the spire in light."

Killing Zel had been unusually anticlimactic for multiple reasons, one of which was how the spire barely noticed except for opening the teeth doors and some other stuff. No giant explosion, earthquakes, or big light beams. And if the earthquake now had nothing to do with that, then what the fuck?

The world of Hell ripped itself apart. The parts of the spire's walls that were metal fought against the vibrations, but the parts of the tower that were flesh and bone couldn't resist. Giant white rib bones that connected balcony to balcony snapped in half. Layers of muscle and tendon stretched and ripped apart. Blood poured from the walls, and the remnants cried out as the surfaces they grew from or were trapped within split open.

"W-What..." Mia dragged her butt across the balcony and sat beside Adron, and she grabbed his unburned hand. Both of them, backs to the wall, watched a new Hell open on them.

Blood rained over the balconies. Deep in the spire as Mia and the rest were, many of the floors above unleashed their death and agony over the metal as they ripped apart, and poured blood and guts down the center hole of the spire. More than just blood, but bodies, too, remnants and their soft flesh succumbing to the earthquake. A few remnants nearby were torn free from their walls by sheer vibration, and others were squashed by the walls of muscle shifting and flexing like real muscles trying to keep the spire together.

The muscles failed. Mia screamed and clutched Adron's arm. The heavy thudding behind Vinicius stopped. The small fires and amber lights in the spire trembled, and drowned in new beams of light that cut through the shredding walls.

David fell. Already on his hands and knees, falling meant landing on his hip and bouncing around like a rubber ball on a subwoofer speaker. He drifted her way, and without thinking about it, she grabbed his hand.

Again, the strange sensation flooded her. Just like playing the weird instrument inside her, reading the ancient language, and thinking about those strange runes the tower's book had put inside her, something in her brain, or maybe her soul, recognized the sensation. Communication? Exchanging information, or something else? The fingers inside her did more than pluck strings. They drew symbols in the dark matter in her skull, and sent them across the aether into David along the strings.w(w)w.Nv(t)wó(m).C.M

There was something there, inside her and her brother, or maybe beneath them, something they walked on or swam in. She had it, or could interact with it, and David could, too. And like one of them was negatively and the other positively charged, electricity flowed from her to him. Not as strong as the first time, but still, enough that she recognized the symbols their touch summoned to her mind each time.

"Mia," he said, pulling his hand away, "maybe--"

The earthquake doubled. Mia tried to scream, but nothing came out. All she could do was hold on to Adron's arm to keep from bouncing around, the much heavier demon her anchor. Vinicius would have been better, but he was ten feet away and she couldn't even move two feet without getting tossed.

The new beams of light doubled in size as the walls continued to rip apart. Bone and flesh peeled away from metal and slowly revealed thick metal beams covered in enormous spikes hidden behind them. The metal skeleton of the spire.

Hell crumbled, and a third of the tower's flesh ripped away from its side like someone peeling a fingernail off the finger. The balconies remained, firmly attached to the skeleton of black metal beams and their serrated, enormous spikes, but the flesh and bone walls could not remain. The fire sky came in and bathed the spire's depths in light, and the bodies of demons rained on the growing canyon. Canyon?w(w)w.Nv(t)wó(m).C.M

The earthquake, or hellquake, only grew worse. Adron, Mia, David, and even Vinicius bounced and slid across the balcony as each new vibration that hit the spire felt like a bomb. She tried to hold on, but Adron's arm grew more slippery with every passing moment, until gravity and a hard thud into the metal balcony sent them flying apart.

"David! Adron!" Mia screamed. This didn't make any sense! Why was she sliding across the balcony like it was tipped over!?

Because it was tipped over. She screamed louder and pressed her fingertips against the balcony metal floor, but all they found was blood. Remnants screamed as they fell, and their soft bodies tumbled and fell apart as they rolled down the balcony toward her.

She was falling. The spire was tilted. Some part of her refused to accept that a spire as absurdly tall and as ridiculously deep as Death's Grip's spire could just... fall over. She turned her head and looked down at the oncoming outer edge of the tower. The wall wasn't there anymore, and if she kept sliding, she was going to fall between the metal columns of the spire's skeleton, and into the growing canyon.

A canyon. That's what her eyes told her it was. The wall of flesh that'd once been on the side of the tower was not only gone, it'd been pulled away, attached to the canyon wall that slowly pulled further and further away from the tower every moment. Strands of muscle still connected to the spire ripped apart as the canyon wall moved further, taking with it the fleshy spire wall and leaving behind the naked, spiky metal pillars and columns of one side of the spire's Hellish construction.