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The gargoyle poked him with her closer wing's thumb claw.

"That why you've been staring off into space so much?"

"No... No, it hasn't been."

"It's not?"

"There's... something else."

"Something else?" Jes asked.

"Yeah. It... It started when I touched Mia."

"Touched her?"

"During the rescue, we hugged, before we fell out of the spire. And... something went through us. Or more like, from her, into me? Like electricity, I guess." They may not have known a hurdy-gurdy, but they knew electricity. Thank god for scrying pools. "And I've been seeing symbols and runes ever since, in my head."

"Symbols?" Caera said. "Runes? Like the ancient language?"

"No. Something new, and weird, and... and I can't understand them."

"And you waited until now to tell us?"

"Sorry. I wanted to wait until I had some clue what was happening, and that I wasn't just going crazy."

"Okay," Jes said, "the crazy argument makes sense, I guess. But still, fucking tell us when shit happens, you dumbass. I want to get clear if you go nuclear."

The satyr clicked a few harsh sounds, earning a wince from her gargoyle lover.

"I will," David said. "I mean, I could have waited weeks, right? Just needed a few days to make sure it was happening and I wasn't just seeing things." He held up a hand in front of him, and slowly squeezed and released a fist. "She touched me, and put these symbols in my head."

Caera sat up. "Can you draw them?"*www.NoVeLworm.com*

"Nope. I'd only draw what I'm seeing, and there's more to these runes than the visual part. That's why I'm so damned stumped. It'd be like trying to draw a tesseract on a flat surface." The ladies all looked at each other again, and David laughed. "I mean, there's something to these runes, something I can't wrap my head around. But, they're real. I know that because... because after I had that dream, or vision or whatever, where that girl died, the runes got brighter. Brighter, and a bit more defined."

"Defined?" Acelina asked.

Everyone looked the huge demon's way. It was the first time she'd shown any interest in the weird things happening to David.

"Y-Yeah," David said, eyes on the spire mother. "Like, I can kinda see them better now? Kinda wrap my mind around them a bit more?" He shrugged. "No idea what that means, yet."

"This gonna be a problem?" Caera asked. "I mean, with visiting the Cainites."

"I don't think so? It's just a puzzle that keeps popping up in my head." Whether he wanted it to or not. "I'll ignore them until I know if there's something I can do about them. Or with them." He squeezed his hand in front of him again. "A few, I know the names for. Batlam, potram, and royam. But that's all so far."

Acelina ruffled her wings slightly, earning some glances from the rest of them, but she said nothing.

"Old stories I've found talk about runes," Caera said. "Powerful things. Angels use them, supposedly, but there's no details about them anywhere."

"Then I guess I got a few things to figure out while we're on the way to the Forgotten Place. On the way to..." He squinted down at the ground, and tapped his temple. "The... Frozen Heart."

"Frozen Heart?" Jes asked.

"The... real name for the Forgotten Place, according to the runes in my head." This one he could draw, and he scratched it into the ground with a stone.

Jes threw up a hand. "The real name? What the fuck? That--you know what? It can wait. We didn't find anything on our hunting trip, so we should get going. Better hunting grounds out there than here." Once she was up, the gargoyle stretched out her wings, and Dao hopped over, clicking and chirping. "Yeah, good idea. We should get higher and get some eyes on what's going on below."

David got back to his feet, put his clothes back on, and ignored all the wetness still coating him. It'd be gone in a few hours, but that didn't mean it wasn't annoying in the meantime. Hell needed paper towels.

"Is it safe to go higher?" he asked. "I thought we were hiding."

Caera got up on her hind legs and got to work putting on her own armor.

"Death's Grip is a mess right now. I'm not sure it's any worse out there where demons can see us or not. Besides, not every demon is going to want to fight. Some will respect Zel's dueling law. Most might even think twice about considering us an easy meal."

Acelina chuckled as she scooped up her myriad of chains and slipped them back on, including a few around the waist, ankles, wrists, and even a few, short, dangling chains on from wing fingers. Thankfully, they didn't jingle as she moved. *MuchWWW.NoVeLworm.com*

"Not that that would stop a demon," Jes said.

"It'll stop some," Caera said. "I'm more worried about hellbeasts. Better we get up high before we stumble onto a pack of goorts and get trampled to death."

Dao clicked some more as she came up behind David and hugged him. Only to squeak when Jes whipped her ass with her tail.

"No time."

Sighing, Dao gave David a quick kiss on the cheek, and followed Caera as the tiger took the lead. On all fours, her huge spiky tail swayed side to side, and David and Acelina fell behind it while Dao and Jes walked on her left and right.

Walking beside Acelina was problematic. She wasn't aroused or anything, her skin dark red, nearly black in some places, so her breasts and ass weren't exactly jiggling and rippling. Except, they were, particularly her breasts. They were simply too large for her firm skin to hold snug.

"David!" Jes yelled. "I can feel that aura. Fucking christ, god damn pile of bones. Didn't Caera just fuck you?"

"Sorry, sorry." He looked down.

Acelina chuckled. Better than the harsh growl she would have given him a few days ago.

Daoka clicked a few times and gestured back at him, eyeless gaze pointed over Caera and at Jes. Sighing, the gargoyle nodded and turned around.

"Alright, fine. Let's get this over with." *WWW.NoVeLworm.com*

Before he could say anything, they pounced him.

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