

1305

--Mia--

They ducked low into the ravine, but no matter where they looked, they couldn't find a tunnel. Go back, climb the mountain, and go to the tunnel Vin had pointed out earlier? Too dangerous going up and exposing themselves. They had to go down.

She almost called out to the angels, almost waved her hands like she was stranded on a desert island and trying to get a passing plane's attention. But the moment she'd raised her hands, the memory of the other girl hit her hard. The angel, a cold and ruthless instrument, had stabbed the girl through the heart. And as much as the idea of it sickened her, she couldn't deny that the girl in the dream had probably been unmarked, and the angels flying around were out to kill people like Mia and David.

Zel had been right. The angels were on a mission. Back then, Mia thought they might have been her ticket to freedom. Not anymore. (w)W@.noVeLWōŘm.(o)óm

There were at least three pairs of wings up there, and they moved ridiculously fast in a big circle, a little too similar to vultures for her liking.

"They're searching for us," she whispered. On Vin's back, body pressed to it, fingers holding spikes and head peeking up over his shoulder, it was easy to whisper right into his small ear.

Demons had slightly pointed ears, but they were usually hard to see or notice with their big black horns or black dreadlocks in the way. Vin had the horns, but no dreadlocks, and with her lips only a foot from his head, whispering to him was no problem. Good, because each time she glanced up, the angels were closer, and with how uncharacteristically quiet her giant bodyguard prowled along, she was afraid to so much as breathe too loudly. (w)W@.(n)oveLwoŘm.c(o)m

"Searching for you," he whispered back. Hearing the colossus use the whisper voice without vibrating his vocal cords was interesting. And terrifying. He was concerned.

"Just me? Not you, a child of Belial?"

He clicked for yes and ducked low around a boulder. Boulder turned into steep cliff face, and Vin crawled on all... sixes, as he looked up at the fire sky while keeping the cliff to his side.

"Angels do not care about me or battles between demons. Now be quiet."

They were being quiet. Not like the angels could hear them whisper all the way up in the sky. Oh god, could they? She gulped hard and squeezed Vinicius's spikes harder. Her fear could have been unjustified, but the vision stuck out in her mind like an infected wound, painful and screaming at her to notice it. Do not trust the angels.

If the angels didn't care about demons doing demon things, though, then why did they show up here, now? Vinicius was a big boy, and with the angels soaring the skies so high everyone below must have been a tiny dot, Vinicius and his size stood out. Maybe they were looking for him, specifically. Maybe they knew she and Vin were on the run together, and knew if they found him, they found her?

Chills ran down her spine. The stories Vin had told her about angels being dangerous had felt so distant at the time, but now that the white-winged agents of Heaven soared above, all she could think about was the vision. That angel had stabbed her, executed her. And now they were looking for Mia.

Vin rumbled, trying his best to stay quiet, but as they drifted through the ravine, the lack of tunnel or cave was quickly proving ridiculous. Death's Grip had plenty of both, but Hell was a cruel bitch and kept either from making an appearance. With nowhere to go, Vin stayed as low as he could and crawled along the stone, to the point he was horizontal and Mia was lying on top of him as she held on.

Sound drew her eyes up. An angel had stopped overhead and was descending straight toward them. But instead of doing a dive bomb, the angel held their sword in both hands, and was coming at them feet first, letting gravity do the work while pointing the sword at them. A man. And his sword and wings both glowed gold.

"Vin..."

Vin clicked once, rumbled a heavy growl, and burst forward. Only Mia's feet pressed to some spikes underneath her kept her from falling off, because the demon broke into a sprint nothing that size should have been capable of. Harsh cracks announced the shattering and falling of rocks as the giant monster's talons ripped up the stone underneath him, and a warm gust of wind hit her face with the onslaught of speed. Vin stood up but remained leaning forward.

She was riding the back of a fucking T-Rex.

The sound of Vin's panting and the hammering of his talons against rock disappeared under the explosion that detonated behind them. Mia screamed, but her voice did little better, a quiet ringing in her ears compared to the roaring of destruction.

She looked behind her. God was attacking.

A giant beam of gold hit the rock and stone, ripped it apart, and didn't stop. It had to be at least five, maybe ten feet wide, and it zig-zagged over the ground, trying to swerve and hit Vin as the demon bounced off the ground onto the walls of the ravine that trapped them, and then back down only to do it on the other side. It was like a satellite laser of doom was chasing them, and lagging behind.

"Vin!" (w)Www.nóvÉl@ôr(m).c(o)mm

Vin roared and kept moving, each breath coming in hard like a panting animal. He didn't look behind him. This wasn't the first time he'd fought angels, and he had to know what to do, had dealt with giant laser beams of doom before, but each step he drove into the stone as he ran sent a hard jolt of terror up through Mia's body.

He was running. Vinicius was running.

She looked up at the angel. The laser satellite comparison was too apt. The angel floated there in the sky, not even flapping his wings as the force of the beam coming out of his sword drove his large body upward, armor and all. He was shaking, almost as much as the ground underneath Vin shook, and the roar of the beam drove the mountains to vibrate. Boulders in the distance fell, each announcing their impact with a thunder crack and echo.

Vin bled. Wounds reopened. It'd only been four days since the fight, and he'd only just finally gotten a full belly. He needed more time. But even as his reckless pace tore his own body with its insane mass, he kept running, occasionally leaning forward and putting weight onto his hands to get over a boulder or out of a ditch. The ravine continued on, giant flat walls of stone on both sides. The angels had waited for them to enter it before attacking. The angels were herding them.

The laser beam stopped. Mia looked behind her and sucked in a hard breath. A new ravine followed them, freshly carved, smoking and smoldering in some places, and chunks of the mountainside on both sides of it fell into the new crack in the ground. Bits of Vinicius's blood littered the stones, smoking from the heat of the beam.

The angel above held his sword at his side, wings flapping, and while the armor covered him head to toe, the posture said exhausted.

"Vin, I think he's--" (w)Www.novél@o(om).om

Movement, from ahead. Another pair of wings appeared, dropping in from above and crashing onto the stone in front of them.

Vinicius did not slow down.

The angel held his spear out to the side and slammed his giant shield into the ground in front of him. Again, the ground shook, and rocks splintered underneath the slab of shiny, reflective metal outward as if it weighed ten thousand pounds.

Vinicius did not slow down.