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Whoever they were, they wore bits of meera metal on their body, bent chunks held on by leather straps, and they wielded a colossal black sword in hand. Like the armor, it was the most crude weapon Mia had ever seen, a mess of black blades someone had smashed together into a big, thick sword.

A gorujin tetrad. Mia had never seen one before, but there was no chance she wouldn't recognize one. Similar to korgejins, but gorujins had raptorial feet and a tail. Similar faces, too, demony and skull-ish. The one coming down at them was no different, a giant of a creature with several dozen skulls dangling from chains hanging from his waist and other bits of his armor.

He landed hard, directly in front of Azreal, and roared down at the angel as he spread his wings like he was issuing a challenge, and bathed the angel in shadow. Azrael froze. Afraid? No, but from the look on his face, he was completely caught off guard.

"Wh-What?" Mia asked. "What--"

More noises. Mia spun around, and her heart sank as an array of horns poked around the curve of the battle-charred ravine behind them. Then her heart jumped as four incubi came into view. Faust!

"Romakus!" Noah yelled. "You--"

More movement came down from on high. White movement. Oh no.

The tetrad gorujin -- Romakus, apparently -- jumped back and landed beside Vin, opposite of Mia, as a new set of angel wings landed between the two big demons and the three angels. A woman, wearing the same sort of armor as Noah and what Shir had worn, and she wielded the same sword and shield. She glared at Romakus as she pointed her sword at him, and her obsidian eyes held concentrated malice. Dark skin, but the helmet hid her hair.

Chuckling, Romakus spun his sword around a few times in a flourish.

"I was distracted," he said, voice a playful, bassy purr. "You should have struck me down." *www.novel.com*

"You weren't distracted," the woman said. "Your feint would have worked, if I had attacked. But I am no fool." She tilted her head enough to look past him at the incubi in the back, who now scaled the ravine walls with their much, much lighter-than-Vin weight. Soon they stood on vantage points up high. "Noah. Azreal. Shir."

"Yosepha," Noah said.

"We should retreat."

Noah grimaced. "We can't--"

"Listen to her," another voice called. Everyone looked up. Oh god no, not another one. Whoever this fifth angel was, they hovered far above them, and had a beautiful bow drawn with a shining arrow in hand. Their armor wasn't nearly as thick as the others, and their helmet did nothing to cover any part of their face. Bits of white silk flowed from the armor joints.

Wait, what was it Vin had said? Mikalem, rapholem, and gabriem? Three kinds of angels?

"What're you two doing here?" Azreal asked, never taking his eyes off Romakus.

"Rescuing your impulsive ass," the angel above said. "More are on the way." He gestured to the four incubi getting closer, each taking their time and making sure they kept a healthy amount of rock and stone between them and the angels. *www.loveworm.com*

An angel, saying ass? The other ones talked super officially and all high-and-mighty and whatnot. Not the one with the bow.

Azreal and Noah shared a glance, Noah borderline growling, Azreal silent and waiting.

Noah wasn't so easily deterred.

"Shoot the unmarked, Galon!"

"Try," Romakus said, chuckling as he held out a wing, blocking much of Vin's body, and thus Mia.

"Enough," Yosepha said. "Galon is right. Azreal, help Shir. I'll cover you."

Noah grit his teeth. "You can't--" *www.novelworm.com*

The sounds of clinking metal cut him off. The incubi each took their swords, and tapped them to the ground in unison and on a beat, creating an almost tribal sound as they smiled at the angels. How oddly unsettling.

"She's right," Azreal said. "We took too long. We must retreat." With an almost subtle shine of gold light, the giant shield and spear Azreal wielded disappeared, and he scooped Shir up into his arms. He struggled. From the way he walked, he probably had a dozen broken ribs, but he held the woman in his arms horizontal, and took to the air, regardless. He struggled with that, too, as if he weighed a million pounds, but he managed.

Yosepha stayed with him, shield up and sword pointing, and her nearly black eyes glared daggers down at Romakus and Vinicius. She didn't want to leave. She wanted to fight. Only when she had some distance on them, hovering high in the air where the demons couldn't reach, did Yosepha finally look at Mia.

That was a strange look. She didn't have the same 'I must kill you to save the world' look in her eyes Noah had. If anything, she looked sad. Or maybe regretful?

Mia took a breath she didn't realize she'd been waiting on for the past minute, and rested on Vin's shoulder as she looked around at the chaos. The angels went up and up, until their white wings blurred into the fire sky, high enough they touched the flames. They didn't seem to mind, and flew off toward the vortex.

"Um, hi," Mia said, and she offered the giant gorujin a small wave. He was small compared to Vin, but a ten-foot-tall demon with mega wings was a fucking giant compared to Mia. Best to be respectful. And looking up at him sent an all-too-familiar chill down her spine.

It only got worse when he turned and looked at her. The classic demony skull-ish face was common in Hell, but his big, happy psycho smile was not.

"Hi," he said.

"Um..." She gulped and glanced back at the incubi, who were coming to join them. Join them, and not eat them, based on the casual way they were walking. "I'm Mia. You... saved me?" *www.loveworm.com*

"I did save you." He turned around completely to face her, hooked his wings snug to his back, stabbed his sword into the ground, and leaned on it like it was a fancy cane, complete with crossing one leg over the other at the ankle. If he'd had a cup of tea in hand, or a top hat on, it would have fit. What the fuck.