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Vin, rumbling and growling, turned his head enough to glare at Mia, and the rage in them sent yet another chill through her. But she glared right back at him. She would not be intimidated by her bodyguard. Romakus, on the other hand, full intimidation completely warranted.

"Th-Thank you," she said.

Romakus blinked at her, twice, and laughed wWw.n(0)v8lwoRm.c(0)m

"Holy shit, Galon was right. You unmarked really don't belong here in Hell."

"Galon... the angel? What? w(0)w.0δV8lwoRm.com

The tetrad winked. "Galon met your brother. Yosepha, too. Told me he was a softy, like he'd walked right out of a scrying pool." Shrugging, Romakus gestured to the incubi with a wing. "You were right, Gallius."

Gallius stood beside Faustinus, and both of them gave Mia perfect, sexy smiles.

"I'm just glad we told you in time," Gallius said.

Romakus shrugged. "I was already chasing the angels. I would have shown up in time."

"Maybe," Faust said. "Yosepha probably didn't like you doing that, did she?"

"She doesn't like anything I do. That's part of the fun."

Mia threw up her hands. "What is going on!? I... I... what? Someone--" Vin fell over. Mia outright squeaked as the titan fell on his side, almost straight on her toes. "Shit! Vin, I'm sorry! I didn't think... I mean, I didn't..."

On his side, breathing and grunting, Vin let out a long sigh and glared up at Romakus.

"A vulture, come to eat me? wWw.NOv8lwoRm.com

"Oh I'd love to, believe me. But I saw what happened. You're bound to the unmarked girl, right?" He stepped around Vin and smiled down at Mia. "I could just take that necklace, and make you my bitch, couldn't I?"

Vinicius growled, but each attempt to push himself back up to his feet failed. Using the leash on him when he had so many nasty wounds did a number on him, and now Mia was defenseless. Wonderful.

"You... could take the necklace," Mia said. "But you won't, right?" Cue her best big, cute, innocent smile.

"I won't," Romakus said, licking a fang. "For now."

"And, you um... you know those two angels?"

"He does," Faust said.

"And you--wait. Vinicius. I need to help him. He's bleeding and--"

"He'll be fine," Romakus said. "Faust told me he'd gotten a full meal earlier. He'll heal, with time." Leaving his sword behind, he reached down, grabbed one of Vin's arms, and yanked him up to sitting. He was not gentle, and Vinicius snarled straight at the demon. If he'd been feeling better, he'd probably have incinerated the gorujin right there. "He's pretty fucked up, enough that I'd be worried for my life, but a child of the Old Ones? He'll recover. He'll be hungry again, but he'll recover."

Romakus talked weirdly. He talked... like a modern human, a young one.

"Good, good." Sighing, Mia came around and stood in front of Vin, straight between his legs, ignored the blood pool under her feet, and glared up at him. "I'm sorry. I know, it was stupid of me to stop you from killing those angels. They would have killed me. We got lucky we were saved."

"Luck had nothing to do with it," Gallius said.

She spun around and glared at the incubus.

"So I'm seeing!" she yelled. "Someone please explain to me what's going on!?" For some reason, she felt yelling was the best course of action.

Gallius blinked at her, and even took a small step back. Romakus, on the other hand, laughed, a little too hard. It was weird seeing the big, scary demon with all the skulls dangling from his waist, be the very human and very... eccentric demon, when four incubi all stood only ten feet away.

"Romakus works for the Damall," Faust said. "So do we. We were following you. Romakus was following the three angels. Then he spotted us, and we were talking nearby when the fight started."

"Damall?" she asked.

"Long story," Romakus said. "Needless to say, we don't want angels killing the unmarked."

"And, um, Yosepha and Galon?"

"Friends," Faust said. "Sort of? They were nearby, too, hiding from the angels and doing their own... private scouting missions. They joined Romakus a few days ago, before he ran into us moments before now."

"Wait. So, Yosepha showing up right after Romakus saved us? That was..."

"Theater," Romakus said. "I'm a good actor, aren't I?"

"She looked like she wanted to kill you!"

"Oh, she does want to kill me." With another big, hearty chuckle, the giant squatted down in front of Mia. Even squatting, he was still taller than her. "But she won't. She likes my dick too much."

"Likes your..." She forced herself to look the crazy demon in the eyes. "You... and the angel?" There was confidence on his face, playful charm, and for a second, he seemed all too similar to Adron. Gorujin and vrats even had similar faces. But, unlike Adron, this Romakus dripped with the same sort of innate assurance a movie serial killer did, complete with the solid eye contact they might use on a potential target. It was unnerving.

"You don't think an attractive demon like me can bag an angel?" With a scoff, he touched his chest and stood up. "You wound me!"

"I... I..." Okay, Mister Romakus was chaos incarnate. She'd have to be careful with him. "I'm still confused about all this. A few angels dropped on us out of nowhere, and they were... scouts? Why would they do that? Why not bring an army?"

"Angels are deadly," Faust said, "but only when they have room to maneuver. If you saw a hundred thousand white wings in the sky, what would you have done?"

"Hid, deep in the tunnels, I suppose."

"Exactly. The last thing an angel wants to do is deal with demons inside the tunnels, so they usually have small scout groups out and about, doing... things." Faust shrugged and gestured to Romakus.

"Don't ask me," Romakus said. "Yosepha doesn't tell me nothing."

Gallius laughed. "Don't believe Romakus. Ever."

"I am a bastion of truth."

All four incubi rolled their eyes.

"Anyway," Faust said, "there's been scouting parties exploring Death's Grip, and maybe even all of Hell, for over a month. We didn't know they'd be willing to die for their orders, though. Even Yosepha didn't see that coming."

"Okay," Mia said. "Angels are going around in scouting parties and ambushing... unmarked?"