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She also had four swords, to go with her four arms. With hooves, a tiny waist, muscular but feminine shape, and four big black horns, she did look a lot like Zel.

The other woman was a tetrad too, and one Mia hadn't seen yet. A fujara, another female demon with four arms, except she had raptorial feet and a tail. Just like how the two male tetrad breeds were similar in that they had wings, female tetrads were similar in that they both had four arms, and she had the same armor setup, too.

"Unmarked," the Zel-look-alike said.

"M-Mia. I'm Mia."

The demon grinned. "Livian."wWw.n0(v)el@Or(n).com

"Julisa," the fujara said. "So this is the unmarked." With a predator grin, Julisa squatted down in front of Mia, and tested her talons on the ground like a bird nestling on a branch. "Cute little thing." Unlike her companion, Julisa was bald, but considering tetrads had four big black horns, she almost looked like she was wearing a crown.

"Um... thank you."

"How'd you catch her, Romakus?"

Romakus squatted down behind Mia, chuckling and grinning as he did. Mia did her best to not shiver.

"The rumor was true. The unmarked girl escaped the spire, and she's been traveling with Zel's prisoner."

The bolstara Livian also squatted down in front of Mia on her hooves, beside the fujara, effectively surrounding Mia in a very awkward triangle.

"You have Vinicius?" she asked, looking at Mia.

"I... do." She clutched her necklace.

"She's got him on a spire leash," Romakus said.wWw.m0VEfw0Rm.com

Both demon ladies gasped in a playful, girlish gossip kinda way. All three of these tetrad were quirky.

"Where is the ragarin?" Julisa asked.

"Closer to the spire-bound entrance," Romakus said. "Very injured. He had a run in with angels, and Yosepha and I had to rescue him."

"Vinicius is injured?" The fujara moved to stand up, but Romakus waved her back down.

"He's not going to remember you, Julisa."

"Says you. I'm very memorable."

Mia tilted her head slightly. Unless she was going crazy, that was a little desire in the big demon woman's eyes, like, maybe she liked Vinicius and wanted to go see him? Or eat him?

She walked off, tail swaying, hips swaying too, and she gave a tiny wave over her shoulder with two of her four hands, before disappearing into the tunnel full of remnants.

One less tetrad in close proximity gave Mia enough mental capacity to look around a bit more, especially as other sounds she hadn't noticed died off, and movement cropped up around the big rocks nearby. Other demons. No more tetrads, but there were a few vrats and gargoyles, a few brutes, one tiger, and a couple minotaurs and bat girls. The minotaurs -- borjins -- and bat girls -- dilojas -- stayed behind the others, peeking around rocks and brute muscles to get a look at Mia. Curious, or hungry.

"You're all a part of the Damall?" Mia asked, gesturing.

"Wow, she's bold," Livian said. "She just outright asks questions."

"I like it," Romakus said. "Too many souls afraid to talk."

"I wonder why," Mia said, glaring at the two giant demons.

Livian whistled. Like Zel, she had one of those beautiful, but oddly alien faces, with a subtle nose that almost didn't exist, giving her a mask-like quality. Seeing her whistle was strange. Romakus, of course, laughed, and seeing his big crazy predator smile on his demony face was the opposite of strange at this point.

"You're correct. We're all part of the Damall," he said.

"And... you demons... keep things from changing?"

"Yeap."

"What's that mean?"

He shrugged. "Demons killing demons. The spires fighting each other. A never-ending buffet of souls getting dumped on our doorstep. Even souls getting uppity, grouping up, fighting back, inevitability joining that Cain cult. That's the status quo. That's good."

"Good?"Ww.w.n0v@()w(0)T.M.c@m

He leaned in close, close enough she could have punched him in his big mouth. Like Vinicius, his breath didn't smell bad, but there was no mistaking the scent of blood.

"Hell has a pretty good system down here. The angels leave us alone, and we get to fight, fuck, and everything between, all the time."

"B-But... demons die. All the time! You kill each other, all the time!"

"We do," Livian said, leaning in closer, too. "And we like it that way."

Mia frowned and folded her arms across her chest, but didn't snap back. There wasn't any point in trying to make demons understand they didn't have to be so mean and cruel to each other, or even to the souls they were going to eat. And much as the thought of it sent painful needles through her limbs, she had to abandon the idea that people should be nice to each other innately. This was Hell, and it had different rules, even if she didn't like them.

"So, the problem," Romakus said, standing back up, "is there's been a lot of changing going on. Last time that happened, it was because a child of the Old One Abaddon held False Gate, and got it into his stupid, thick skull that he could challenge Heaven. Angels came down, slaughtered demons by the tens of thousands, and stirred the pot so bad it was centuries before Hell settled back into its usual patterns. And power vacuums are always problematic."

"But," Livian said, standing up as well, "that's nothing compared to a giant crack splitting an entire province of Hell in half. And it did split in half, all the way from the inner shore to the outer edge."

Mia gulped. "Wow."

"The reason you're still alive," Romakus said, "is because we need to know what happened."

"That's... the only reason?"ww(w).m.r@e@w0rm.com

"Well, that, and because the angels are trying to kill the unmarked. Which makes me want to know what's so special about you. If the angels want you dead, maybe I should help them, or maybe I should stop them. I don't know yet." He gestured to her with one of his colossal wings. "There's definitely something special about the unmarked. Faust was right about that aura, too, tiny, but there."

"Tiny for now," Livian said. "Faust also said it doesn't stay so tiny. You had every soul and demon nearby in the Spire blind with arousal at certain points, according to him."

Oh no, not this again. She squirmed a little, but pushed down the reflex to blush and look down. Maintain eye contact.

"I don't know what to tell you," Mia said, "especially if telling you stuff means you're just going to kill me."