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Muscles working again, he grunted and groaned, and lifted the damn thing until he got it upright, tip to the ground and hilt up and in palm. It wasn't all that big a sword, not much bigger than the typical one-handed sword a human wielded, with grip just barely big enough for two hands. But it weighed almost as much as the axe.

"You looked like you were about to do something," Jes said. "Like with Caera's seal."

"Y-Yeah, same thing I guess. The sword has been infused with a rune. And... I can... kinda see it, kinda understand it, like Caera's seal."

Acelina hissed, picked up the sword, and rotated it in front of her.

"Here," she said, tapping a claw on the hilt, before she tossed him the sword again. Literally. David dodged aside, let the meera blade bounce around on the ground, glared at the huge demon for a few seconds, and again picked up the heavy thing.

"Oh hey, yeah, there it is." A tiny rune carved into the hilt. He touched it again, but nothing happened.

"What's it mean?" Caera asked. "You read mine."

"It means... Fuck, I don't know. There's something about... destruction. It's similar to the symbol for hellfire. But, different?"

They all stared at him. They did not look impressed.

"Oh come on. I'm trying to learn a language that doesn't make any sense."

Caera gestured to the sword. "And the ancient language has nothing to do with it?"

"They're similar, but not in any way I can use. But..." He let the sword go, and it clanked uselessly.

"Ugh, something has to click before I go insane. It's right on the tip of my tongue, or whatever."

With a quiet snarl, Caera gestured down at the weapon *Ww@.noœe(1)œœRm.cœm*

"If the hellfire-infused sword stops working after the wielder dies, and the wielder was just a regular soul..." She walked off, and came back with a corpse. And with a little more brutality than was required, she checked the body for--yeap, a rune, right on the palm.

Daoka clicked, grabbed the sword, and put it in the corpse's hand. No response.

With a harsh snarl, Caera slashed down at the man's chest, hard enough the body half flew to the side and got stuck in some bloodgrip. She'd cut the corpse hard enough to get through the leather straps holding its breastplate on, and she didn't waste time following it up with another swipe, and another, to get through the chest and sternum.

"Caera--"

She reached into the chest, yanked out the heart with a jerk that splashed everyone nearby, David included, and tossed the organ to him. Again, literally. But a heart he could catch, and it landed in his palms against his chest.

"Eat. Maybe it'll help, if this person is marked." She gave him a nod, a do-it-now glare, turned, and joined the imps and grems getting food. Jes turned, did the same, and Acelina and Daoka eventually followed.

David found a patch of ground not covered in vines or blood -- he had to go back a ways to do that - and sat down. A human heart sat in his palms, again, and he waited for it to spring to life, beat, leap from his hand, do all the stuff a heart organ from a nightmare would do. It did none of that. It sat there, warm, wet, waiting to be eaten.

He took a bite. Caera was right on the money. First, the memories of the soul, some bastard who'd abused animals to set up those fake 'look at me save this random animal' viral videos. A lot of animals. But once that horrible shit ran through his consciousness and found a slot in the growing library of memories that didn't belong to him, safely out of the way where he didn't have to think about them, something else followed.

A rune. The same rune. It flared in his mind again, and this time, something else came with it. Affect? No, affect didn't fit right. Bind? Attach? Infuse? Infuse made sense. A rune circling a rune circling a rune, swirling around each other like strands of DNA.

And it made sense. It actually kinda made sense, fucking finally, and his hand squeezed the air as it looked for the tool it wanted to use to craft the rune. One hand for the implement. One hand for the power source. A center point, a catalyst between, a structure, to create the foundation of the change. *Www.ñ(œ)œèl(œ)œœ.M.Cœm*

Daoka joined him. Squatting in front of him, she chirped a few times, and gently shook his shoulder.

"I'm alright," he said. "Better than alright, I think." The heart waited in his hand, half eaten. He'd taken more bites than he realized, and the heart and its delicious warmth invited him to indulge. He did not. "Want the other half? I'm full. And I want to know if you see anything, like I did."

She tilted her head, looking at him with her eyeless gaze, but he smiled back at her, and eventually she took the heart and ate it.

"Anything?"

Shaking her head, she sat down beside him, and made a few more happy chirps as she finished the heart.

"I saw some things," he said. "Something, or someone, branded that Cainite, and the weapon, too."

Daoka clicked a few times, shrugged, and gestured down the tunnel. They'd probably find out sooner or later, following the path they were on. Caera's warpath.

"Yeah, you're right." His eyes ran down Dao's leg, and the micro cuts on her calves and shins. "It'll be twilight soon, right?"

A click for yes.

"Think we'll find a spot to rest?"

Another click.

"Good."

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They found something pretty rare, and something all the demons, even Acelina, were excited to find. An alcove in the ceiling. Cainites couldn't reach it, and the demons had to work together to get claws on the entrance's lips. Only Acelina could reach it without help, and even then, just barely. But it was easy enough for Acelina to help Jes and Dao up into the five-foot-wide hole, and then for them to help everyone else up.

Everyone else included the impas and gremlas, too. They squeaked and cheered, waving their arms around as they waited beneath them for their turn.

"We pulling them up?" David asked. "I think we should. They've been good to their word, and useful in a fight."

"Of course you think we should," Caera said, rolling her eyes. But she didn't argue. She half lowered herself down the hole, tail first, careful of her bleeding arm, and the little demons came up over her shoulder a second later. All those back spikes made for easy climbing *WWW.NoVèèLwœœr.m.cœM*

"Yay!"

"Yay!"

"Not hungry anymore!" *Ww.w.Noœ(œ)Lworm.cœM*

"Full! Food! Wanton violence!"

Wanton violence? What the fuck?

The four Las jumped around in a circle, before settling down beside the hole and looking around the alcove. Not the biggest cave, but big enough for the five of them to sit comfortably, imps and grems included. So, nine of them. Plus, it had enough amber veins they could see without issue, and it didn't have any remnants or bloodgrip. A perfect place to stop for the night.

Acelina sat in her usual feminine way, and immediately tended to her wings. Jes sat opposite of her. David sat between them, and Daoka sat between him and Jes. There was room for Caera to come sit, too, but she lay by the hole in a defensive position, and waited. The four little demons looked at Caera, the joy drained from their eyes, and they very carefully -- and exaggeratedly -- tiptoed around her, before coming over to the group.

"We stay?" Lasca asked.

David looked past her to Caera, but the tiger said nothing. Classic obsession mode. Anything and everything would be a distraction to her until she met her goal.

Jeskura shrugged. "Yeah sure. But try and eat our pet and we'll rip out your guts. Understand?"

The four Las cheered, again, and all four ran up to David and sat down by his feet. With the way the cave was shaped, by his feet also meant sitting by Jes's talons, and Dao and Acelina's hooves.

"Pet human is smart!"

"Pet human is like humans in scrying pool!"

"Scrying pool human!"

"Scrying pool human!"

Oh boy. More TV addicts.