Two Sides of Hell

By : TatteredTime

The sequel to Two Sides of Earth. This novel continues in the future where Korbin and Taylor Arcana now have a teenage daughter Isabella Arcana. She finally turns 16 and is about to adventure into a Hell that is currently shifting it's shape for the future. Her life of trials and triumph is just beginning...

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ï¿½"Arcana. Isabella Arcana!" A voice shouted clear in my ear. I jolted awake from my daydreaming. The teacher was looming over me with an angry expression on her face.

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"Isabella, could you kindly answer my question?"

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"Could you repeat the question...Please?" The teacher sighed and looked at her book to relay the question.

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"Tell me the all of the still functional houses of Devils in Hell."

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"Lucifer, Phenex, Tepes, Astaroth, Belphegor, Forcas, Leviathan, Beezlebub, Malphaes, Gorgon, Behemoth and my family Arcana."

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"That's correct. But please do pay attention next time."

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"I apologize."

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"Good. Anyways, as Isabella Arcana answered these are the remaining strong faction of houses in Hell. There are lesser devils and higher devils but these are the main houses that hold a sense of royalty and spots for the political market. Due to the collaboration of Lucifer, Arcana and Belphegor the Underworld now has a stronger place of organization, education, ethics, science and more. One could even say we're mimicking the humans style to advance our own kind..."

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That's right. My father, Korbin Arcana, has taken a lot of risky steps in his short time here. Well, marrying into the fifth strongest household in Hell would put you at some point of authority. Still, being able to become close to the Devil King Azure Lucifer my father has been able to push Hell to new directions. His ideals match that of Azure Lucifer's and now we have schedules, ethics, schools and sciences that nearly copy the humans. Then again, that's probably because my father was once a human.

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"Oh, back from class already Isabella?" my father asked me as I opened the door to our mansion. My father, Korbin Arcana, is wearing a black royal-like robe. The robe is trimmed with delicate brown fur and underneath the robe he wears a black suit combined with a red shirt and no tie. The suit is usually undone and it's combo'ed with black pants, with chains on each side shaped like a 'U' on each end.

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"You would know, you're the one who opened up the schools for public use." My father simply smiled with a slight chuckle while laying back in one of the main halls chairs.

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"True but it's good to engage in conversation with my beautiful daughter."

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"D-Dad! Stop it!"

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"Haha! I can't help from speaking the truth!" I walked towards my dad who was beckoning me to come near him with his hand. Standing next to him I can see a very passionate smile.

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"Happy birthday Isabella. You're finally sixteen." I hugged my father tight.

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"Thank you dad." He only nodded in response but soon spoke up once I let go.

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"Now that you're sixteen, you're old enough to have your own servants."

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"Servants?"

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"I'm sure they've taught you at school. At least I hope so. Anyways, when devils of higher ranking families turn a certain age they're allowed to have servants. The servants are limited and bound by contracts. You remember how the contracts work right?"

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"The [Contract Card System] isn't it?"

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He nodded in response. "That's correct. The [Contract Card System]. This is a system that is relatively new and I developed it along with Syris Belphegor and had it approved by Azure Lucifer. There are five cards in total but taking out the King, that would be you, you're left with four [Contract Cards]. Queen, Jack, Ace and Joker. You're the King so you're already contracted to the King Card but now you are free to own the four other cards to get servants of your own."

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"Father I...I don't really like the servant idea."

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"I know Isabella but I'm sure if it's you, you'll treat them more like family than 'servants'. That's alright isn't it?" He held out the four cards prompting me to grab them. I grabbed the four cards holding them in my hand. I was about to slip them into my pocket until he took out the King Card and showed it in front of me.

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"Notice how this card says King with our royal crest and the other four cards are blank? That's because they're not contracted yet. Once they do, their type will be decided upon their traits and your own feelings of what you believe they should be." He then handed me my card and the five were placed into my pocket.

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"Now that you're sixteen you're also allowed to leave Hell and go to the human world. Though..." I immediately perked up in curiosity and stared at my father with pleading eyes.

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"Though as long as you stay out of trouble it wouldn't hurt to go there at least once."

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Yes! I've always wanted to see the human world where dad's from! He says it's really different from here and I've heard so many stories how could I not want to go?

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"But...You have to conceal your wings and tail while you're there. Well, I guess that doesn't matter much since you don't usually have them out anyways. No magic, no attacking and follow the rules of the human world. I've told you most of them since you were a child so I think you'll be fine."

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It's right then footsteps could be heard from behind us. We both turned around to see it's my mother, Taylor Arcana, the woman who invited my father to this world. She's wearing a similar royal-like gown, sewn in a light purple that descends to her feet. It's trimmed in the same delicate brown fur at the cuffs and bottom of

the dress. Her lush green hair is folded in the back and cascades, only complimenting her crimson eyes. Despite being older than father, my mother still holds ultimate beauty even amongst the most high class devils.

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"Don't be so rough on her Korbin."

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"I'm not being rough, I'm just making sure she's prepared is all."

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"Still as worrisome as always huh?"

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"I don't need to lose another Bell..." my mother put on a smile that feels like she gave in and gently kisses father's head.

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"She'll be fine. Trust her Korbin."

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"Taylor you know I do, I just-"

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"Shush. This is a woman's time to talk."

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"..." My father knew at this point he couldn't retaliate. In fact no one can retaliate to mother. She may be older now but she's apparently still as sly and fiery as she was before I was born. According to father at least.

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"You'll be fine right Isabella?"

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"Yeah! I know the human world can be tough but if you survived in it I can too!"

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"She's as chipper as you were back then." Father joked.

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"Oh come on now, don't say stuff that will embarrass me." She smiled shyly.

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"Do you have somewhere on Mid Land you specifically want to go to dear?"

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"Mhm! I want to go to where father grew up." When I said that the room fell slightly silent until father spoke up.

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"I won't say you can't. You'll end up going anyways but that town is filled with supernatural phenomenon. Since you plan to go there be extremely careful. Got it?"

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I nodded. I know how dangerous it could be. It's where everything started for him. But I've heard stories about it for years how could I possibly not choose Clairview as my first destination? Father said not to bring weapons but I'm quite proficient in magic use so I shouldn't be in too much trouble even if I do run into problems.

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A few minutes later in the garden plaza outside, mother has prepared a travel portal from here to Mid Land, Earth. She handed me a card and informed me it's to teleport back. I just have to put magic power into the card. I placed that card into the same pocket as the [Contract Cards] and stepped into the intricate portal on the ground. What felt like quicksand sucking me up, I felt my entire being transporting itself into a different location. It's a weird feeling that only lasted for a little while. Opening my eyes, my vision is pure white for a few seconds and then the world began to create as the whiteness faded. Tall concrete skyscrapers, green trees filled with life, humans walking on the streets, the sun and the clouds, it's all such a new experience that's so refreshing. The Underworld doesn't have things like the sun or clouds but an artificially create one from magic and technology, but this is the real one! It's so bright and the heat could be felt on my skin.

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I began walking down the street. Humans are everywhere! Father is right their numbers far passes ours thirty fold! Boards of advertisements for products and stores that humans shop at filled the streets. It's no wonder mom lived here for so long before coming back! It feels like true peace here, like a base of paradise! I wish I had a notebook with me, I'd definitely start jotting down notes of this place! Following directions father wrote down for me, I came across a tall building with many windows.

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"So this is the apartment complex where dad and mom both lived? It's vastly smaller than our home!"

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Continuing my walk around the town, I remembered something father told me before I left.

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"Whatever you it is you do, don't go to the park near the apartment complex. You can go anywhere in the town but not that park. Do you understand?" He was scarily serious...I wonder why can't I go to a park? I know I should listen to him yet I can't pass up this opportunity to see everything! I ran the opposite direction of the apartment complex and soon found that park entrance that he didn't want me to go to.

ï¿½

"Sorry dad, but I can't help but be curious!" I walked through the entrance into the park. It's honestly really beautiful. Tree's and flowers blanketed the area in a beautiful bouquet of nature. I sat on one of the benches in the park and stared at the tree canopy's. I wish the Underworld had this many tree's!

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"What're you lookin' at?" I heard a male voice speak behind me, tilting my head back I see a boy roughly my age looking down at me. I jumped startled by his sudden appearance and accidentally headbutted him.

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"O-Ow..." That really hurt! Why was he so close?!

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"Jeez...What lady headbutts a guy the first second she meets him?"

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"How rude! It was you who startled me!"

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Finally getting to look at him, his attire seemed to be a little different from the other humans. His hair is pure white and his eyes a radiant bright blue. His outfit is a dark blue jacket with a zipper and flaps at the top that go outward from the neck. A white shirt is underneath the jacket and thick gold colored bracelets are on each of his wrists. He's wearing navy blue cargo pants sporting multiple pockets, a white belt around the pants and brown boots that reach up to the mid calve area with two belt straps on each boot. Though perhaps the strangest part is a long bag on his back held by a strap that goes around his body.

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"So, what's your name? Never seen you here before." He suddenly asks me. Calm down, I just have to respond normally.

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"I-Isabella. I'm just touring is all."

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"Ah, well I'm Dust. Dust Marrow. Nice to meet ya."

ï¿½

"Yeah..."

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"Still, this town is pretty boring to be touring around here." He looks all around him as if viewing the area himself.

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"My father and mother lived here when they were young so I wanted to see the town where they lived."

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"Oh! That's different then. How about I give you a tour then?"

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"T-That's nice of you but I've seen most of the town already. I just really wanted to see this park. It's beautiful" I smile earnestly and for some reason Dust turned red.

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"Something wrong? You're a little red."

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"W-what? No, nothing, nothing's wrong!"

ï¿½

"You sure?" I walked closer to him and suddenly his eyes turned serious and he glared at me.

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"Yes...?" I'm confused. Did I say something abnormal?

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"You...I didn't feel it when I was that close to you before because you hit me out of nowhere but..."

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I don't understand. What's going on? What did he feel? Also, sorry about hitting you, I was just really startled!

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"You're not human are you?"

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"!!" I stepped back in shock. How? How did he figure it out? My tail and wings aren't even showing!

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"You seem a bit confused, let me explain. See, one of my parents is an ancient hero. So I can generally feel disturbances in energy. Though I've never felt energy like this before, I can clearly tell it's not human. Are you a devil?"

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"W-Wait! I'm not here to fight! I just wanted to see the town!"

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"Devils always lie and make excuses, that's what we heroes have been taught!"

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Hero? What is he talking about? Is he some hero that is bent on destroying my kind? He took the bag off his back and threw it off, revealing a sharp brandished long sword. That sword...It's definitely not a normal one. There's a strong energy coming from it!

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"You feel it right? This sword is imbued with the power of light. The very power to destroy evil like you!"

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"Please wait! I'm not evil! I'm honestly just visiting! What kind of hero doesn't listen to other people?!"

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"You're not a person, you're a devil!" He charged at me with the sword ready to slice. I created a barrier of magic to deflect the attack. He continued to slice relentlessly forcing me to continuously create various layers of magic walls to block his shots. His attacks are too much! I can't keep making shields forever! And I left my rapier at home, damn it! I was about to release my wings to fly away but then he stopped and pointed behind him.

ï¿½

"Gonna fly in this public view? I don't think that would be a very good idea."

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"You bastard! What did I ever do to you?"

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"You were born a devil that's what!"

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"Are devils really that bad to you!? Are we really in your way? Are we HONESTLY doing anything bad to you right now?!"

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"W-Well no but..."

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"I just wanted to see the human world for once! Is that such a crime? Is it such a crime to explore to the world?!"

ï¿½

"Argh! Damn it, shut up you stupid demon!"

ï¿½

I used magic to make my fingernails longer and sharper, almost like ten daggers in my hands. This is the best I can do for now! I charged at him this time. He's a little off guard but quickly fixes himself and slices horizontally. I block with all my fingernails. Twisting around his body elegantly I slashed his side. His clothes were ripped and blood could be seen slowly trickling down from his cuts.

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"Tch, you're better than I thought for a clumsy devil."

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"I'm not clumsy!" I charged at him again, spinning my body rapidly, my nails cut and dug into the tissue of his skin. He held the deepest wound with one hand and fell on his knee.

ï¿½

"Damn it...I guess I still need more training. Not!" He charged arrows of light in his hands and shot them towards me. I dodged and weaved through them but one grazed my right shoulder forcing me to hold the wound in pain. It burns! It burns like if I just touched a scorching hot pot! It really hurts!!

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"Don't take us heroes lightly!"

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"I don't care! I just want to go home! I don't want this!"

ï¿½

"How dare you try to run away from battle! Are you a coward?!"

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Damn it! He's REALLY starting to annoy me now! I dashed at him with unhuman speed. His face is that of complete shock. I pulled my hand back and stabbed into his stomach with all five of the fingernails on my right hand. I could feel that they punctured through his body and out the other end. I released my hand and stared at him with pain in my eyes.

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"Why...Why'd you make me have to do that?"

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"B-Because...You're a devil and..."

ï¿½

"Who cares about any of that! I didn't want to kill anyone! I...I..." I fell to my knees and stared at my fingertips covered in blood. His blood. A humans blood. I didn't want any of this! I just wanted to visit the town!

ï¿½

"Are you...Crying devil?"

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"Of course I am! I killed a person! All I wanted to do was visit the town my parents once lived...And now...I did this! This is the worst birthday ever..."

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"Birth...Day?"

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"Yes...And now it's the worst one I ever had. I waited for this day for so many years and now look...I'm so sorry. But I didn't want to die..."

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I couldn't help but cry. I waited for so long. I was finally going to be sixteen, see the human world and become a contractor. But now...I killed someone. A human. What's father going to think? I can't bear to tell him the truth... I felt a tug on my shirt.

ï¿½

"Don't cry...Isabella. It's...My own fault. Maybe I should have listened to you. Instead of being...Ignorant. Don't feel bad...This is my own fault. Heh, I've really lost a lot of blood..."

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His body soon went limp and fell to the floor. I stood up horribly shocked. A [Contract Card] fell out of my pocket from the sudden movement and one landed on his hand covered in blood. A shining light was then emitted from the card. The card levitated itself into the sky in front of me. I grabbed it noticing the royal crest of my Arcana family and the words Joker. Wait...

ï¿½

I looked back at the body of Dust. His hand begun to twitch and he slowly began to move once again. He's...Alive? He pushed himself up sitting down, looking at his chest the wounds begun to heal and close up. Did he just become...Contracted?

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"I'm...Alive? But I swear I died! I even saw Heaven and everything!"

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"It's...Because of this." I showed him the card and he took it with confusion.

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"A card?"

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"Not just any card, a [Contract Card]. It fell on your body when you died and...I guess it accepted your blood on the card and you became one of my servants."

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"Wait...Doesn't that mean-"

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"Yeah. You're a devil now."

ï¿½

"...HUH?!"

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Using the card mother gave me, I teleported both me and Dust to Hell. Arriving in the same garden from earlier mother and father were waiting for me. They noticed an unfamiliar guy with me and that I was covered in wounds. From my father I could feel a strong energy surging and mother remained surprisingly composed.

Though, I'm not quite sure what she thinks right now...

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"So this...Guy...Attacked you, you killed him in self defense and now he's contracted to you. What's more is, he has the blood of a hero flowing in him and he's now a devil. That's the gist of it?"

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"R-Right. I'm sorry father I didn't listen!" He sighed and looked at me with passionate eyes.

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"It's alright. I'm just glad you made it back safe and sound. I'm sorry you had to go through this rough experience alone. Next time I will go with you the Earth."

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"Y-Yes..." I guess it would be safer with dad. Still it feels like a bit of a punishment...

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"And as for you, 'hero'."

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"Y-YES!?" Dust is clearly jittery. He's in a new world for him, one he always thought was evil and what's worse is that he's now contracted to such a high devil family. Alse...I'd be scared in front of father like this too.

ï¿½

"I won't comment on the fact you attacked my daughter and intended to kill her since she in turn killed YOU. Also considering the fact I was once a human AND that you're now contracted to our family, I have even less say in the matter. So I'll just talk as a father. If you DARE as lay another hand on my daughter, I'll have your life in Hell literally turn into it's meaning. So be a good boy from now on." With that my father stood up and walked away. He's clearly mad, the difference in how he treated me and how he treated Dust is as clear as the difference between black and white.

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This time mother walked forward and patted my head gently.

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"Welcome home Isabella. How's your birthday?"

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"...It was a little scary but, since I didn't 'technically' kill anyone I feel better. Thanks mom." She hugged me tenderly and I hugged her back. Father's always been kind to me and so has my mother. In a way, I'm very blessed to have such a caring family.

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"U-Uhm. Excuse me." Dust shakily spoke.

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"Yes?" My mother turn to him.

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"S-So, I'm a devil now right?"

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"That's right."

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"And this is where the Arcana family lives?"

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"Yes, that's also right."

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"So, does that mean I have to live here too?"

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"That's correct. We have many rooms for guests, but I have prepared a room for you. Initially my husband, Korbin, wanted you to sleep in the eighth floor of the basement but I told him a servant needs to be close to their master so he changed his mind. You're room is the first on the right upstairs. Now it's been a long day, the two of you should get some rest."

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Mom was about to walk away until Dust asked her again.

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"W-What about my parents?"

ï¿½

"Oh that's right. Well, I'll have Isabella and my husband pay them a visit tomorrow."

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"Oh okay...Wait! My moms an ancient hero though, things might go bad like today!"

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"Oh don't worry. Korbin won't hurt your mom too much."

ï¿½

"..." He instantly fell silent.

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With that, the long day has passed and it's now night. The Underworld doesn't technically have a night but we have an automated sun and moon for a day and night cycle mimicking the human time. This is a concept also developed by my father and approved for by Azure Lucifer, the Devil King.

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I turned to my side to see Dust still confused and silent. I walked up to him and he promptly backed away. I guess that's understandable...I hung my head in rejection.

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"S-Sorry. I'm just not used to this. You know, devils and all. Well, I guess I am a devil now...I wonder what my mom and dad are gonna think tomorrow? I seriously hope everything turns out alright."

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"I'm sorry, this is all my fault..." He shook his hands.

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"No no! The fault is all mine. I...I was too preemptive. This is my just deserts. Plus, I've been given a new life. I really have no right to complain haha. Still, I always thought devils were evil and I had to exterminate them and everything. Guess times have changed a bit."

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I turned around and looked out the window at the setting sun with melancholic eyes.

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"No. Things haven't changed too much. It's true my father and a few of his political partners are helping to change Hell for the better. To make it more accessible for all devils, to establish education, science, medicines, technology and more but there are a lot of devils that still contract humans for selfish needs and goals. There are still devils that pillage and murder. There are still devils of high class that think they can rule Hell with power alone. It's just that my family happens to be from a more peaceful side. Probably because my

dad was once a human and my mother spent a lot of time in Mid Land. So in a way you're still right."

ï¿½

"I see...But, if it's here, I really don't mind being a devil ya know? Despite how I treated you, your father and mother still took me in. Then again...They had no choice, even so I really felt kindness when they were talking to you. I thought, 'If all devils were like this, maybe humans and devils could co-exist' or something like that." He turned to me with a naï¿½ve, bright smile. I couldn't help but smile back. That's because I agree. If all devils were like my family, perhaps we could co-exist with humans. Maybe even the angels...There would be true peace.

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"Is this little shack really your house Dust?" My father, Korbin Arcana, questioned the little house that's not even as big as our storage space.

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"Yeah, it's not as fancy as your mansion but it's still my home."

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Dust opened the door and let us in. His home is very close kept and peaceful. Even I wouldn't mind living here.

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"Mooom? Daaad? Huh, where did they-" Suddenly loud stomping could be heard from upstairs. All of a sudden a beautiful blond woman with bright blue eyes like Dust's ran down the stairs from the second floor and tackled Dust to the ground in a big tight hug.

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"Wha-hey! Stop it mom! I brought guests and have something to say!"

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"How could you leave home and not return alllll night! Your mother was really really worried you know!"

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"Sorry mom...Things happened. Can we all sit down so we could talk? Also where's dad?"

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"That's right, you did say you have guests. Your father is out today, though he might be back later this afternoon if you're guests are staying that long." His mother looked at me and father with serious eyes that

soon broke out into a bright smile.

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"How sly of you Dusty boy to bring home a beautiful young lady. And who's this handsome man?"

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"This is Isabella Arcana and her father Korbin Arcana. They're sorta rich and famous."

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"Rich you say?!"

ï¿½

"Mom!"

ï¿½

"Sorry, sorry! Anyways I'm Dust Marrow's mother. Jeanne Marrow, but you'll probably know me better as Jeanne De Arc. Nice to meet ya!"

ï¿½

""What?!"" Both me and my father shout in surprise at the same time.

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"What's wrong? I did tell you one of my parents is a hero didn't I?"

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"Unbelievable..." father whispered. It's true. He did say one of his parents is a hero but I never could have fathomed it's the legendary Jeanne De Arc!

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