

Dark and Light

Chapter 19 - Dark

Lily

She awoke inside a cocoon of red and black leather. Warm arms wrapped around her, legs intertwined. Large, firm breasts as Lily's pillow, more comfortable than any bed.

Lily murmured something. She didn't know what, exactly. Her mind, sluggish as it was from sleep, was barely able to hold two thoughts together, much less make sense of them. Her eyes flitted open for a second. Just long enough to see a portion of Kiera's demonic wing.

Cooing and gentle stroking lulled Lily back to sleep.

The next time she woke, her cheek and chin were slick with drool. She mumbled, shook her head to rub her face dry on her pillow.

Only for her to remember what she was using as a pillow.

That realisation blew away her grogginess like an explosion.

Heat rushed across her face as she lifted her head away from Kiera's drool-covered breast. A breast, it took Lily far too long to realise, one of her hands was still holding onto.

She snatched her hand away on impulse, was immediately thrown off balance, rolled right off Kiera's body.

Kiera's wings opened as Lily rolled aside, though the succubus didn't rise. She simply watched Lily stumble to her feet, a coy smile on her face.

"I'm sorry!" Lily said quickly, glancing at the glossy breast. "I didn't mean- I-"

Kiera raised an eyebrow at her, looked down at herself.

When she saw what Lily was talking about, her smile widened further. She moved a clawed finger over her breast, wetting it in the drying saliva, and lifted it. Lily gulped as Kiera pressed her now-wet finger to her lips.

"Hmm..." Kiera purred. "Tastes better from the source."

Lily stammered, flailed for something to say. Some witty retort. All she ended up with was a deeper blush and the overwhelming urge to hide her face.

She spun on the spot, eyes darting around for a distraction.

"It's- It's almost midday," Lily clutched onto the fact like a lifeline. "Shouldn't we be moving on soon?"

"You have such a cute butt," Kiera purred, still lounging on the ground, tail whipping about. "Don't move. Let me get a nice, long look at it..."

Lily squeaked. Panicked.

She did the first thing that came to mind; summoned a big blanket from her storage place and dropped to the floor, wrapping it around herself and hiding from the world. Kiera's beautiful laughter sent warm tingles coursing through her as Lily curled into a ball and tried pretending she didn't exist.

"Sure you don't want to fly?" Kiera asked.

Lily shook her head quickly, her stomach rolling and recoiling at the thought. She'd eaten a large breakfast not ten minutes ago. If she tried flying now, she was *certain* she'd vomit. No. Much better to stay grounded, at least for the next hour or two.

"Later," Lily answered softly. "Maybe."

Kiera nodded, smiled her understanding.

They walked in calm silence for a few minutes. Enjoying the sights and being in each other's presence.

All around them were sprawling, green hills. Grass as tall as Lily's knees, moving like ocean waves as breezes and winds swept over them. Each stand of grass shuffling

and singing with the motions. A song of flowing meadows.

"Kiera," Lily said, mustering up the nerve to ask a question that'd been brewing in the back of her mind.

"Yes, Flower?"

"What's the deal with the Eternal Light and your mother?"

Kiera winced at the question. Or, perhaps, at the reference to her 'mother'. Lily wasn't quite sure.

"I know bits and pieces," Lily said. "But not the full picture."

Kiera was silent for a long time.

Then, sighing, she pointed her thumb up at the bright blue sky.

"You can't see them right now, *He* blocks out anything that contradicts His claim of 'ultimate power'. But they're up there. Countless stars and the countless perfect black spots in between them."

It wasn't hard to imagine the night sky. After so many nights spent staring up at it in Kiera's embrace, how could she not?

"All of those," Kiera continued. "Every star and every pocket of total blackness is a deity. Countless 'Eternal Lights' and countless 'Infinite Darks'. The pair that made this world and everything in it are not as *unique* as people believe."

Lily blinked, absorbed the information without comment.

"One day, a bright star and a black star, wanting more for themselves than just existence, teamed up. The Eternal Light and the Infinite Dark. 'Father' and 'Mother', if you will. Together, they combined their wills and powers, made a world full of plants and animals and people and change. With the understanding that each would share rulership of the world. Father would reign all the land touched by the light of day, Mother would reign everything shadowed by night."

"I'm gonna go out on a limb and guess that didn't last," Lily hummed. "What happened?"

"Father got greedy," Kiera said. "Came up with an evil plan to bring daylight to the dark of night. He created a big mirror in the sky. Something to reflect the sun's light. *His* light."

"The moon?"

Kiera nodded her head. "Mother found out before He could complete his plan, stopped Him from setting it there permanently. But the damage was done, and Mother knew He'd not give up his ambition. He'd do whatever it took to claim all the world for Himself."

"So they went to war..."

"They couldn't do it directly, not without both being destroyed. So they made a deal. Each would *create* an army of minions for themselves, the same number on either side. When one of them ran out of minions, that one would forfeit their stake in the world and leave forever. Neither would interfere, and neither would create or alter anything in the world until the wager was over."

"The steppe," Lily said, remembering. "The crater lakes. That's where the battle happened, right?"

"The first one, yes. Father created Mythics to be powerful and driven by purpose, with a hierarchy of strength. Mother, on the other hand, created a host of Darkspawn with no purpose and total free will. Weak and directionless, they were massacred. Only the clever, the cunning, and the cutthroat survived. Battle after battle took place, until only a handful of Darkspawn remained. The Dark Princes of today."

"But more Darkspawn formed," Lily said. "And the Princes grew stronger and stronger as time went on."

"And that was Mother's gambit. If the Mythics couldn't wipe out her 'children', then Father could never win their bet. It'd only be a matter of time before the Princes grew

strong enough to kill off the Mythics. So, Father basically had no choice but to accept Mother's terms for peace. The Pact."

"What is The Pact, exactly? What're the exact terms?"

"Can't say," Kiera shrugged. "Only the two divine fucks know the specifics. As I understand it; The Pact compels both of 'em to take a hands-off approach to the world. No creating or altering anything, no interacting or communicating with anything or anyone. Passive observers and nothing more."

"That doesn't make sense," Lily said, frowning. "I get why the Eternal Light agreed to it – He was in a lose-lose situation. But why did *She*? The Infinite Dark. Your 'mother'. Why did she agree to The Pact when she could've just waited and won the war outright?"

"Who knows," Kiera grunted. "Ask the bitch yourself, next time she decides to pop into your dreams uninvited."

"Something else which doesn't make sense," Lily grumbled. "Breaking The Pact would be like breaking themselves, right? It's something they're literally incapable of doing."

"It'd be suicide for them," Kiera answered hesitantly. "I think. I'm not exactly an expert..."

"So how can She communicate with me?"

"I don't know," Kiera said. "It shouldn't be possible."

"Just like it shouldn't be possible for Dark to be transformed into Light. And how it shouldn't be possible for the Eternal Light to have given me and my friends these powers."

Lily summoned her special gemstone, showed it to Kiera to emphasise her point.

"That's a lot of impossible things," she continued. "What's so special about me and the guys that-"

It hit her then. A sudden realisation, so obvious that she wanted to bang her head against something hard for not thinking of it sooner. She considered the possibility, knew it'd be impossible to prove either way. But, as far as theories went...

"Me and the guys," she said slowly. "We're not *from* this world. Or even this dimension – universe? – whatever! Maybe *that's* why the usual rules don't apply to us."

"Possibly," Kiera shrugged. "Does it matter?"

Lily paused. Pursued her lips.

"Leave the gods to their games," Kiera told her. "They set the world on fire for centuries, sacrificed who-knows how many lives trying to one-up each other. Getting mixed up with their schemes seems like a good way to end up dead. Better to just avoid it, let someone else figure it out."

As dismissive as Kiera was trying to sound, Lily caught the undertones of concern and worry in her voice.

Lily's heart ached for her.

But still. After that last, ominous dream...

She shuddered, remembering it.

"I..." Lily gulped. "I don't think we *can* ignore it. Not forever. One way or another, it'll catch up to us."

The pained expression that crossed her lover's face told Lily everything. Kiera knew it was true, even if she didn't want to admit it. Whatever was going on, the pair of them were already in the middle of it. Avoiding it wasn't an option.

Kiera was just trying to protect her. Keep her safe from harm.

And Lily loved her for it.

"I think," she said, inhaling a deep breath and blowing it out. "I want you to teach me how to fight."

Kiera's eyes widened in surprise.

"It's past time I learned to take care of myself. I want to get stronger. To defend myself," *and to protect you*. "But I can't do it all by myself. So... will you help me? Please?"

Kiera

"When I asked you to help teach me to fight," Lily said, sounding more than a little dubious, "I was expecting something more... *magical*."

"Learn to walk before trying to run," Kiera smirked.

"But..." Lily scrunched her face. "Wrestling? *Really?*"

"Hand-to-hand combat," Kiera said sagely, "is an absolutely vital skillset to have. Say you're exhausted magically, unable to cast a spell, and you've been disarmed. How will you defend yourself?"

Lily scowled, looked down at herself, then back up at Kiera.

"And we're doing this naked because...?"

"More fun that way," Kiera winked.

For once, the petite girl didn't blush. At least not as much as she usually did. Instead, Lily rolled her eyes at Kiera. She stepped into the circle, raised her hands and took what Kiera assumed was a terrible fighting stance.

She didn't really know. Wasn't like she'd ever needed to learn hand-to-hand fighting herself. Not with all the inhuman strength at her disposal.

What need did Kiera have to learn how to fight? One finger flick from her could blast apart a castle wall with ease.

Still, best to at least *pretend* she knew what she was doing.

"Feet further apart," she said with faux confidence. "And straighten your back a bit more... Yes, like that. Now, clench your fists and-"

Kiera lunged forward, taking the petite girl by surprise.

Lily yelped in surprise, stumbled back with her hands raised. Before the girl knew what was happening, Kiera had her pinned to the floor, a wrist in each hand and her knees planted either side of Lily's body.

She smiled down at Lily's wide eyes.

"No fair!" Lily pouted.

"Expect the unexpected," Kiera winked. "Can't afford to be taken by surprise like that. Now I have you at my mercy."

To emphasise the point, Kiera leaned down, pressed her lips to Lily's neck.

Lily let out a little gasp at the contact.

Then she whined, wiggled under Kiera's grasp.

"C'mon," Lily mumbled, cheeks red. "Let me up. We've got to take this seriously and- *oohh*."

Another kiss. This one on Lily's collarbone.

"Kiera..." Lily pleaded.

"This is your punishment," Kiera whispered, sliding down Lily's body and kissing her chest. "Best way to learn is with punishments and rewards..."

"Doesn't seem like-" Lily gasped when Kiera spread her lips around a nipple, gave it a teasing lick. "Like... like a punishment to me..."

"Would you rather I spank you?" Kiera purred.

Lily's only response was to moan.

"Just wait 'til you see what your 'rewards' are gonna be."

"Don't..." Lily breathed. "Don't need to..."

"Oh?"

"I alrea- already know what my reward is..."

"Yes, Flower?" Kiera purred.

She felt Lily's hands on her wrists. Kiera's own grip on the girl had waned when the playfulness had begun. Now, it was Lily's turn to push Kiera onto her back and climb atop

her. The pair rolled over, switching positions in a heartbeat.

"You're being naughty," Lily pouted above her.

Kiera grinned, leaned her head up.

Lily met her half-way. Their lips collided.

For the next minute, they lost themselves in the kiss. Hand slid across bodies, the pounding of Lily's heartbeat loud in Kiera's ears. They rolled and tumbled, kissing all the while, until Kiera couldn't tell which way was up or down.

"Flower," Kiera purred, kissing the corner of Lily's mouth.

"No fair," Lily panted softly. "You're supposed to be teaching me how to fight..."

"I am," Kiera chuckled. "Lesson number one; always look for an alternative. No point in wasting time and energy that'd be better spent elsewhere..."

"Make love not war?" Lily asked with an adorable smile.

"Exactly," Kiera grinned.

She kissed Lily's cheek, then her jaw. Her neck.

The petite girl moaned, shuddered.

"No fair," Lily complained half-heartedly.

"Lesson number two," Kiera said teasingly, kissing Lily's neck again. "Never fight fair."

Yasra

"Disgusting," Yasra spat.

The embarrassment of a Darkspawn had the audacity to raise an eyebrow at her. A *human* eyebrow.

"You shame yourself," Yasra growled, took a menacing step forward. "Where is your True Form? You insult us all by taking this... *shape*."

"Always nice to see you Yasra," the male Human Form said sarcastically. "The exit is *that* way."

She slashed out with her tail, stopped it right at the Human Form's throat. The arrogant fool didn't even flinch. Just raised its eyebrow higher.

How easy it'd be to obliterate and devour this one.

How *tempting* it was...

But removing this *embarrassment* from the world wasn't the task she'd been given. Her Prince wouldn't be pleased if she stepped outside the bounds of his command.

Still, she kept the sharp tip of her tail to Darumaug's throat.

A threat. And a promise.

"Where is she?" Yasra demanded coldly.

"I'm afraid you're going to have to be more specific," Darumaug shrugged. "Which 'she' are you referring to?"

"Don't play games with me!" Yasra snarled.

She pressed her tail harder against the Human Form's throat, piercing the shell and causing a sliver of Dark to leak out.

"Kiera," Yasra snapped. "Where is Kiera?!"

"Hmm..." Darumaug tilted his head back thoughtfully, exposing more of his throat to Yasra's tail – completely unafraid. Which made Yasra want to sever the head and disincorporate the dragon all the more. "I'm afraid I haven't seen Kiera in some years."

"Liar!"

"Me? Lie to a superior?" Darumaug placed his hands over his chest, covering a heart that didn't exist. "Never."

She should've destroyed the smug bastard right there and then. It would've been too easy. Indeed, the temptation to do just that was almost overwhelming.

The only thing that held her back was her orders.

The Guardians of the Paths were off limits. Only a Prince could condemn one to destruction; something that'd never happened before.

Yasra snarled.

"I will find her," she promised the dragon.

"When you do, be sure to tell her to come visit again soon," Darumaug smiled. "I miss the company of her last stay."

Yasra shot a cruel smile at him.

She turned away, followed her highly attuned senses.

Kiera *had* been here. Yasra could *feel* an echo of the traitor's power. An invisible trail that'd lead Yasra right to Kiera. Only... There was something else. Another echo, muddying Kiera's scent.

Had the traitorous bitch found some way of masking herself?

If so, it wasn't quite good enough.

The path was there, if indistinct. And it'd lead Yasra right to her.

The hunt was on.