

Dark and Light

Chapter 2 – Dark

Kiera

She tilted her head back, enjoyed the sensation of Lily resting on her. The girl's head on her chest, pillowed by Kiera's breasts. Kiera's arms around Lily's torso. Both of them soaking in the perfectly warm water of the brass bathtub.

Her true form was gone – huge wings and a long tail would've made sharing the bathtub awkward, to say the least. So, in human form, Kiera relaxed. Let her mind empty. Basked in this moment for as long as it'd last.

It was the closest thing to sleep that Kiera could experience.

Total relaxation. Body and mind.

Funnily enough, it was Lily who seemed most awake. After everything they'd just done together, Kiera would've bet money on the petite girl being too exhausted to move. Yet, here she was. Drawing lines in the air with one hand, holding her little gemstone in the other.

"What do you see?" Kiera asked, curious.

"Menus," Lily yawned. "Lists, options. There's so much..."

Kiera glanced at the mess of tangled lines glowing in the air. No hint of the menus or lists. Just finger trails floating above the bathtub.

"Spells?" Kiera guessed. "Magic?"

"Mm'hm," Lily hummed, moving her fingertip through the air lethargically, drawing more glowing lines. "Spells, abilities, powers, passives. There's a map tab, a journal, a section filled with stats. Can't find any kind of messaging system, though..."

"Messaging?"

"The way we left," Lily shook her head softly. "I didn't get a chance to explain things to the guys. They've gotta be so worried. I was just thinking... Maybe there was some way to message them, let them know everything is fine. That they don't need to worry."

"No luck?"

Lily shook her head again.

A silence filled the air then. The soft sloshing of the tub's water, distant activity outside the inn. Lily stopped drawing lines in the air. The worry that radiated off the girl was palpable.

Just as Kiera was opening her mouth, about to commit herself to the decision she'd just silently made, Lily spoke.

"There's an 'information' tab too," the petite girl said, voice brighter. The worry radiating off her vanished, pushed down and replaced with that same simple joy that was so intoxicating to Kiera. "Filled with lore on places and people and organisations, even a bestiary."

Lily's hands swept through the air, searching through her invisible lists until she found what she was looking for.

"Only two entries," she said, tapping the air and leaving a glowing dot hanging there. "One is about 'Lesser Runts', talks about how they're 'mindless abominations' and a 'mockery of nature'. I'm guessing that's what we came across in that cave?"

"Runties," Kiera nodded her head.

"The other entry," Lily continued, "is about Succubi. Funny, I always thought it was 'succubusses'. The more you know."

"Oh?" Kiera chuckled. "And what does your little rock have to say about Succubi? Nothing too bad, I hope."

"It says..." Lily tapped the air, left a glowing dot there. "That you're high-level

demons. Very dangerous. That you feed on despair, take pleasure in corrupting men, that you can't be trusted. Apparently, you're the 'whores of the underworld' and the 'unholy daughters of the Dark Princes themselves'. Lots of warnings and what-not."

"Naturally," Kiera said with a roll of her eyes. "The Priests do love their melodrama. If it doesn't claim that a succubus can suck a human's soul out through their genitals, I'll be very disappointed."

"It might mention it," Lily giggled.

Kiera squeezed her, kissed the top of Lily's head. The petite girl relaxed into Kiera's embrace, dropping her raised hand and closing the other around her small gemstone. The glowing mess of lines and dots faded away.

"Can't say I've ever sucked someone's soul out," Kiera whispered, voice laced with her sly smile. "Especially not through their 'genitals'. But I wouldn't mind giving it a try, if you'd like..."

Lily

When she woke, it felt like she'd entered a dream.

A stunningly beautiful woman next to her, with a smile that set Lily's heart racing and eyes that sent tingles down her spine. Wrapped in furs and blankets, sunlight streaming in through an open window.

"Finally awake?" Kiera said, voice almost a purr. "Guess I didn't suck your soul out after all. I was beginning to worry..."

"What..." Lily croaked, throat aching. "What time is it?"

"Early evening," Kiera shrugged.

"Wait," Lily blinked. "*What?*"

Kiera raised an eyebrow at her.

"It can't be... We didn't stay up *that* late. Did we?" Lily shook her head, forced herself to sit up. "Why didn't you wake me?"

Kiera shrugged again. "Should I have?"

"It's so late!" Lily said, looking out the window. "I *never* sleep in this late."

"The last few days have been... Interesting," Kiera said, sitting up in bed next to her. "Makes sense that you'd be exhausted after everything."

"My Circadian Rhythm is going to be so messed up..."

"Your what now?"

"My sleep cycle," Lily said. "I'm gonna be wide awake tonight, and super tired tomorrow. Don't suppose there's caffeine in this world, by any chance?"

"Never heard of it," Kiera smiled apologetically.

"Just my luck," Lily sighed dramatically, shook her head, grinned. "Oh well! I can worry about it tomorrow. Right now, I'm *starving*. And I *really* need to pee. Don't suppose this place has a working toilet? They've got a bathtub, so there's gotta be plumbing..."

Kiera stared at her for a several moments, eyes unreadable.

"Or I could pee into a pot again," Lily said, cheeks flushing pink. "That's fine too, I suppose..."

"Being human," Kiera said at last, the corner of her mouth quirking up. "Sounds like a pain in the ass."

"You have *no* idea," Lily grinned.

"Tell you what," Kiera said, leaning in and kissing Lily's nose. "You take care of your *business*, and I'll go out and get you something to eat. After that? Who knows..."

A pang of disappointment rose inside Lily as the succubus climbed out of bed. But that was quickly replaced with appreciation as she watched Kiera's bare hips swaying, naked butt bouncing, as the woman walked away. Clothes materialised on Kiera's body a

moment before she reached the door to their large, lavish room.

"Now *that's* just unfair," Lily muttered.

Kiera looked over her now-clothed shoulder at Lily, flashed her a cheeky wink. Then she was gone. Through the door and out of sight.

"I wonder if there's a way for *me* to store stuff away," Lily said, clutching her twenty-sided gemstone. "When I was looking through it last night, one of the tabs I found was an inventory. It was empty, so I don't know if it's an inventory for items, or for something else..."

She looked up at Kiera, who was watching her thoughtfully. Lips pursed, head tilted to one side, eyes unreadable.

"What is it?" Lily asked, glancing around nervously. "Is something wrong? Did I say something?"

Kiera's hand on hers silenced Lily.

A gentle squeeze, reassuring and soft.

"There's something I want to show you," Kiera said. "It's not far. Come with me, okay? No talking or thinking. Just... follow."

Lily blinked at her, confused. But, slowly, she nodded her head.

They both rose from the bed, where they'd been sitting. Kiera taking the lead, holding Lily's hand as she guided them out of the room and through the inn. When they stepped out into the street, the evening sun glowing in a cloudy sky, Lily's curiosity doubled. But she didn't speak, not a single word. She let herself be led down street after street.

Some deep, dark part of her mind whispered warnings to her. Told her not to trust the succubus. That she was in danger. But she knew what that voice was, refused to listen to it.

Her fear. Her insecurities. That voice? It was cowardice. Fuelled by the things those Priests had told her, by what she'd read about succubi last night, by her natural bewilderment at being in this strange, new world.

Deep down, there was a fear and mistrust. A voice telling her not to follow Kiera. But Lily knew to ignore it.

She *knew* Kiera. Trusted her completely.

And so she followed wordlessly, without complaint or question, until they reached their destination.

A little hillside that looked out over the city's harbour.

Huge ships and little boats, their sails a rainbow of different colours. The sky above, a vibrant white-blue fading into fiery orange. They were near enough to hear the ocean and the squeaking of gulls, splashing water and the voices of men and women. But not so close that the sounds were too loud in Lily's ears.

As Lily stared out at the view, she saw the ocean sparkling. White foam and sapphire waves and a blazing horizon.

"Stop thinking for a little while," Kiera told her, still holding Lily's hand. "And just... enjoy the moment."

Lily looked at her quizzically.

"Look," Kiera said, nodding to the amazing view. And so Lily did, turning her gaze back on the harbour and the ocean. "No thinking. Just look. Beautiful, isn't it?"

Lily nodded.

And, for the next few minutes, neither spoke.

It was a subtle thing. The tension inside her. She wouldn't have noticed it, if not for the way it slowly faded away. Something deep inside, a strain she hadn't noticed until then. But, looking out over that view, enjoying that simple moment, unravelled it.

"A lot has happened over the last few days," Kiera whispered, voice soft and

soothing. "This last week or so, it's been the most eventful week of my life. And *that's* saying something. I can only imagine how wild it's been for you."

Lily shuddered, nodded her head.

"It's okay to go slow for a bit," Kiera continued. "I know you want to learn everything you can; about this world and about what you and your little gemstone can do. Just don't rush yourself, alright? There's so much for you to take in, and you don't need to do it all at once. You - we - have all the time in the world."

"You think I'm overwhelming myself?" Lily asked in a whisper.

"I don't know," Kiera smiled. "I've never really been this close to a person before. Emotionally, I mean. It's all new to me. I just know... Sometimes it's good to take things slow. Enjoy the little things."

"It's... It's new to me, too."

The words were past her lips before Lily gave herself a chance to consider them.

Kiera's smile widened. She squeezed Lily's hand.

"I guess," she said, voice quiet, "we'll just have to figure it out together, won't we?"

As they walked the city streets, a chilly breeze tickled Lily's cheeks and set her shoulders trembling. She leaned closer to Kiera, who glanced over at her with a smile. A moment later, a wave of comforting warmth washed over Lily. Her hand – the one with fingers intertwined with Kiera's – tingled with heat.

"Sorry," the succubus said. "I didn't realise it'd gotten so cold out. Is that better?"

Lily nodded, cheeks pink. "Handy trick."

"I suppose," Kiera shrugged, a happy little smile pulling at her lips. "It's not too difficult or anything. Just have to know how to balance it properly; enough heat to push away the cold, but not so much that it'd singe."

"Redefining what being a 'hottie' means," Lily whispered.

The happy smile on Kiera's face spread a little wider, and Lily couldn't help but see the innocence in it. The simple, beautiful honesty of those lips. Kiera liked it. Enjoyed Lily complimenting her. Which was interesting, considering just how jaw-droppingly sexy Kiera was. Lily would've thought the succubus would be so used to compliments and being drooled over that she'd be indifferent to flattery. Yet here she was, with a cute, happy smile at Lily's simple words.

It made her want to shower Kiera with praise, make the woman smile more and more.

But the idea of doing *that* fawning over Kiera, showering her with compliments and telling her just how amazing and beautiful Lily thought she was, was too embarrassing for her to even *think* about.

"So," Lily said, trying to ignore the hot blush forcing its way onto her face, "where're we headed?"

"Local Guildhall. You want adventure and excitement, right? We'll find both there, I promise."

Adventure and excitement? True, she'd enjoy those. But, more than anything, Lily wanted to be back in their inn room. Under the blankets, cuddling Kiera, listening to her talk for hours and hours – just to hear that husky, teasing voice. How every word spoken made Lily's insides glow, how the end of every sentence seemed to carry an unspoken suggestion, a hint of flirty naughtiness.

"Uhh," Lily gulped. "Y-yeah. Sounds good!"

Kiera's laugh sent jolts of pure bliss coursing through Lily's body. Her heart soared.

"Don't worry," Kiera said, grinning wide. "We'll just check out the public jobs they've got listed. Won't be anything too wild. Might be some delivery jobs, a few hunting or slaying contracts. There'll be recruitment leads too; guard positions and mercenary companies – nothing for us to waste our time with."

"So, it's like a job application place?" Lily asked.

"Pretty much," Kiera shrugged. "For wanderers, adventurers, vagrants. The Guild takes a big cut from every job, but otherwise the pay is decent enough. It'll be a good starting point for our travels."

Travels. With Kiera. Alone.

Lily trembled with excitement.

"Still cold?" Kiera asked, glancing at her. "Want me to heat up a little more?"

"No, no! I'm fine!"

Kiera stared at her for a few more seconds, eyes twinkling.

"If you say so," she smiled. "It's just around this corner. "It's getting late, so there shouldn't be too many people around."

The Guildhall, it turned out, was a massive stone building near the heart of the city. A street away from the governor's palace and just across the road from a cathedral that was, thanks to elongated towers, slightly larger than the Guildhall.

Architectural dick-measuring?

Against the darkening, post-sunset sky, those cathedral towers and spires looked daunting. A fortress of stone, standing out against the navy sky and twinkling stars.

Lily looked away from it, to the much warmer-seeming Guildhall. Both buildings were stone, but there was something infinitely more welcoming about the elegant masonry of the Guildhall. Pillars and statues of mythical creatures and heroic figures, windows glowing with candlelight, the sound of laughter seeming to echo through the building entrance.

Kiera led her towards the Guildhall's open doorway – one so big that a truck would've had no problem driving through. And, as they stepped through the threshold, Lily felt her gaze snapping all around, struggling to take in everything.

A massive entry hall spanned out before her, dozens of people milling around in small clusters. A lot were dressed in bright clothes, but more were clad in armours of different styles and shapes and materials. There were men and women, knights and sailors and barbarians and mages. The hum of countless voices filled the air, footsteps and shuffling as people moved around the edges of the huge entry hall, looking over the hundreds of contract posters attached to every wall.

Some areas had dozens of contracts pinned up, other sections of the entry hall had barely any. And every section had two stone statues standing either side of it, each pair unique.

"Messenger jobs," Kiera said, nodding at a section flanked by two statues holding stone letters, "are over there. Easy, low-paying jobs. More of an excuse to travel than anything else. But good for starting out. Over there is the more lucrative stuff."

Lily followed Kiera's gaze to the two least-occupied sections. One section with two bow-wielding hunter statues, the other guarded by menacing stone knights.

"Hunter jobs and Slayer jobs," Kiera said, an odd, distant tone in her voice. "Best paying jobs for non-Guild members."

"What's the difference?" Lily found herself asking, though she already knew the answer. "Between Hunter and Slayer jobs, I mean."

"Hunters hunt animals," Kiera said softly. "Bears, wolf packs, foxes; pests that farmers and the like want removed. Slayers, on the other hand, slay monsters."

"Darkspawn," Lily said.

Kiera nodded her head, staring at that wall and its half-dozen open contracts.

"Messenger," Lily decided, squeezing Kiera's hand and leading a surprised Kiera towards that section – away from the Hunter and Slayer areas. "It's a good place to start off, right?"

"Lean back," Kiera said, smiling down at her. "All the way back."

Lily obeyed without question. Without thought. She leaned back on the bed, head resting on a pillow, heart pounding. Her clothes felt heavy on her; a bright, colourful tunic and long skirt.

She should get up – take the clothes off. They'd get in the way soon. She'd have to remove them anyway...

Kiera climbed onto the bed, still in her bright red dress. A dress with a plunging neckline, a narrow waist. Lily's eyes were drawn to those huge globes, the dark valley of cleavage illuminated by firelight. A tremble of anticipation shot through her. Raw, erotic energy.

Her hair was messy. She should take a quick bath, clean up before... Before Kiera and her...

Loud, rapid beating. Her heart racing. The rhythmic, excited *thump thump, thump thump*. A roaring sound in her ears that drowned out all other noise.

"Look at you," Kiera said softly, sultry, a half-cocked smile on her lips. "So cute and innocent. And yet so naughty and desperate. I can *feel* it, Flower..."

The woman crawled up the bed, each movement agonisingly slow. Her body swaying side to side, breasts and cleavage shifting with every motion. Lily's eyes were glued there, torn between Kiera's too beautiful face and her huge, round, gravity-defying breasts.

A tingling warmth spread through Lily. From her fingertips to her core. Electricity begging to be unleashed.

"We should..." Lily tried to say, feeling more breathless now than any run she'd ever gone on. "The fire... Put it out... We..."

Kiera silenced her with a kiss.

A soft, intimate moment that ended *far* too soon.

"You're cute," Kiera purred. "Tell me what you *really* want."

"I..." Lily blushed, couldn't meet Kiera's steamy gaze. "I don't... We should..."

Kiera pulled back, sat up and straddled Lily's waist.

"I'm going to ravish you," Kiera said with a teasing smile. "Strip these clothes off you and play with you, lick you and taste you and make you moan and beg..."

Lily groaned, hips thrusting involuntarily. Body happy to confess to the desires Lily's lips couldn't.

"Tell me to stop," Kiera purred, placing her fingers on Lily's chin, "and I will."

Lily opened her mouth, let out a shaky breath.

Panting. She was *panting*.

The thought set Lily's cheeks ablaze.

"We can put out the fire," Kiera hummed, trailing her fingers down Lily's jaw, her throat. "Sit up and talk, maybe take a bath, go to sleep. No need for me to have my way with you at all. Just say the words, pretty flower..."

Her fingers reached Lily's collar, stopped when they touched Lily's tunic.

"Or," Kiera said breathily, "don't. And I'll make sure tonight is one you'll *never* forget."

Lily bit her lip, looked into those blazingly intense eyes, nodded her head. She held her breath, the world freezing around them. There was only the crackling fire shining in Kiera's beautiful irises.

"Good girl," Kiera smiled.

An odd sensation washed over Lily. Like a breeze rushing down her entire body. A split-second later, her clothes vanished. Evaporated into nothingness.

Lily gasped.

Kiera chuckled.

"You can have them back later," Kiera said. "After I'm done playing with you."

Grinning, the succubus slid her fingers lower, over Lily's chest. Barely touching skin,

she drew little circles around Lily's hard nipples, chuckling as Lily writhed and moaned. She trailed around the edges of Lily's areola, kissing Lily's neck and leaving warm, red marks on otherwise pale skin.

Kiera's gentle touch slid lower down Lily's body, drawing little loops as she went. Gliding over sweat-damp skin, tickling Lily in a way that dialled the petite girl's senses up to eleven.

"I love the sounds you make," Kiera whispered in Lily's ear.

Plump lips pressed to the corner of Lily's mouth. A kiss she couldn't quite return. She was at Kiera's mercy. A puppet being pulled along on strings of lust, wordlessly begging and hoping for sweet release.

"Ugh," Kiera half-grunted, half-moaned. "You're too *cute*. I can't *handle* it. I want you so bad."

"Have me," Lily begged. "Please!"

"I will," Kiera promised. "So, so much."

Kiera

"How does the whole messenger thing work?" Lily asked.

It was an odd question. Not exactly the topic of conversation Kiera had been expecting post-orgasm. But then, what *was* a normal after-sex chat?

"Two main types of job," Kiera said, holding Lily close. Her chest to Lily's back. "Local and long distance-"

"No," Lily shook her head quickly. "I mean, if I wanted to send someone a letter, how does that work?"

Ah. That made a lot more sense.

Lily was worrying about her friends again.

"You go to the Guild, give them your letter and tell 'em where you want it to go and who it's for. They set a price. You pay. They take the letter, rewrite it using a Guild cypher, make a few copies of it, put up the contract. Anyone who wants to take the contract gets one of the copies and is sent to the Guildhall nearest the recipient. First one to deliver gets paid. From there, that Guildhall deciphers the letter, puts up their own local delivery contract, and it's up to whoever picks up the contract first. They take it to its final destination and job's done. Contract closed."

Kiera hadn't ever sent a letter or message through the Guild. There wasn't exactly anyone for her to send letters *to*. But she'd delivered more than a few. Knew enough about the inner workings of the Guildhalls to put the pieces together.

"How... How much does it cost?"

"Depends," Kiera shrugged. "How far away the recipient is, how many copies and redundancies, if you'd want to use a cypher or not. If you want to guarantee a successful delivery, it's not cheap."

Lily was silent for a long while after that. Not asleep, though. Just thinking.

Kiera was half tempted to use her senses, read the petite girl's mind. But no. She didn't want to rely on that ability. *Wouldn't* use it against Lily. When the girl was ready to share her thoughts, she would. Until then, Kiera could wait.

"Tomorrow," Lily said at last, breaking the silence. Her voice was soft, barely more than a whisper. "I'd like to go to the Guild and send a letter."

"To your friends?" Kiera asked. "Let 'em know you're alright?"

"Mm'hm," Lily nodded her head, snuggled closer to Kiera.

Kiera considered that for a moment before sighing, pushing away from Lily and climbing off the bed.

The wide-eyed, scared look in Lily's eyes made Kiera's heart melt. That terror Lily

was feeling; the fear she'd said something wrong, had overstepped in some way, was written all over the girl's face.

"What's the message?" Kiera asked softly.

Lily blinked at her.

"Leave a letter with the Guild and it might be weeks before your friends get it. I'll deliver it. It's still early, not even midnight. Flying alone, I can be there and back by sunrise."

"*You* want to deliver it?" Lily asked, sounding surprised.

Kiera didn't, not particularly. If she went the rest of her life without crossing paths with Lily's idiot friends again, that would've been fine by Kiera. But this was the right thing to do. For Lily. It'd help put the girl at ease. And that alone would be more than worth it; spending the night flying. Even if she *would* have preferred to spend that time cuddled Lily instead.

"Better than leaving it to the Guild," Kiera shrugged. She focused for a moment, transformed into her true form and spread her wings. "With me, it's service and satisfaction guaranteed."

"Don't I know it," Lily muttered under her breath. Blushed. Then, louder, she continued. "Do you have a pen and paper? Or a pencil? Something to write on?"

Kiera waved her hand, summoned blank parchment and a quill, a small ink vial. Handed it all to Lily.

A few minutes later, Kiera was launching herself skyward. Already regretting the decision not to stay in bed with Lily. Cuddling the girl as she slept, enjoying every moment of her shallow breathing and gentle expression.

Something for her to look forward to. Motivation to get this 'delivery' done with as soon as possible.