

## DEMONS 741

### Chapter 741 FIYAH

Eventually though it was time for lunch. Kat's hearing was good enough to hear Callisto cooking underneath them and while Kat could safely skip meals without suffering any ill effects, in fact she struggled to eat three meals a day for extended periods of time, Sylvie needed the nutrients. Not only was she still growing, her short stature meant she potentially still had a lot of growing to do. Kat picked her sister up alongside her as Kat left the bed. "Where are we going?" asked Sylvie.

"It's time for lunch," answered Kat. Sylvie pouted, not believing that food was worth the interruption at all. Still, she showed her maturity that had been lacking the past few hours and simply nodded. Settling into Kat's arms properly.

When they got downstairs Lily was missing, Kat quickly searched their link to see that Lily was asleep once again. Deciding against summoning her girlfriend Kat took a seat as Callisto finished up with whatever she was making. Vivian came downstairs a short time later and grabbed her own seat as well.

Callisto had some difficulty on deciding this lunch. She wanted something that would cheer Sylvie up. A wonderful idea in concept but something that was difficult in execution. Sylvie was mostly ambivalent to various foods on offer and even with Callisto's excellent cooking skill she just didn't enjoy food all that much. Perhaps something she caught from Kat, or because she ate the same things in a routine for so long growing up.

In the end, Callisto decided to make things fun in a different way. Callisto brought out an exceptionally large platter with only a few bits of food on it. Oh, there was still quite a good deal of it in total, but Callisto had made sure there was ample space around that food. There was a row of thin steak slices, a row of bacon, and at the bottom in the final row was piles of freshly baked potato chips. Kat didn't really get it but Sylvie and Vivian had looks of surprised understanding so apparently there was something she was missing.

"Sure it looks nice... but I don't get it..." said Kat after a few seconds.

Callisto smiled, "Knowing you would not be eating with us for lunch I took the time to... make things a little interesting. There is enough food for everyone to have two piles from each row with a single pile left over. The final pile was potentially for Lily but I see she is not hear. That is fine, the game works just as well.

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"See, I have spiced everything here to a slightly excessive degree... but only a few unlucky ones from each row. The first row has only one super hot piece of steak. The next row has three and the final row has five. Everyone is likely to find at least once thing that I've spiced... but we'll have to see how lucky everyone is. The others have varying levels of spice of course, but nothing as extreme as the super hot ones,"

Vivian gave an exaggerated frown at the explanation and turned to Kat, "What Callisto is trying to say, is that it's bully Vivian lunch. Callisto and Sylvie can handle their spices fine but I can't. I'll probably be crying before the end of this even if I don't find any of the super hot pieces. At least you're skipping out

on this. I don't know if my poor heart could stand watching you down a super hot piece without flinching,"

Kat glanced at the plate again, not feeling the slightest amount of heat either from the cooking process or any of the chili that may or may not be on the pieces. "I see... quick question though. Doesn't Callisto know where the spicy pieces are already?"

Vivian nodded, "Yes but I pointed that out to her before. This isn't a new game Kat, just one that we haven't played with you and Sylvie before. Callisto has probably told her about it," Sylvie nodded, "and we came up with the work around for it ages ago. I select Callisto's food. Not that it really makes much of a difference. She'll happily eat the spicier stuff on her own initiative,"

"Yes but only because the one time I made things even hotter you complained," Callisto informed the younger two attendees.

Vivian pouted exaggeratedly once again, "Fine fine make me out to be the bad guy. Not like I'm usually the one to propose this game. No, I'm the one stifling your creativity by limiting yourself to spices that us mere mortals can withstand!" said Vivian in as epic a voice she could manage, complete with sweeping hand gestures as well.

"Wait... do you like spicy food or not?" asked Kat confused.

"Oh I love it," said Vivian reverting to her normal face. Which was of course, her bright smile and calm bearings. "I'm not great with spice and I'm not lying when I say I'll be crying by the end of this whole thing regardless of what I pick... but I'd do it again in a heartbeat. Remember what I told you about masochists Kat?" Kat nodded very slightly and looked away. "Yeah, not sure if I am one or not. I certainly don't get sexual pleasure from this but it's the good burn you know?"

\*No Vivian. I have no idea what you're talking about and I'm not sure I want to. Should I have been blocking Sylvie's ears as well? I don't really think she should be learning about this either... but she also knows what sex is because of her research into her father.\*

"Well, any other questions? Kat? Sylvie?" asked Callisto, but seeing no reaction she continued, "Right in that case-" only to be cut off when Vivian stood up and heading for the fridge.

"I've gotta get myself some milk first. I nearly forgot and that would be a catastrophe," said Vivian as she grabbed out the milk. Milk secured Vivian also grabbed a glass from the cupboard because while she was sure she'd need more than a single glass she wasn't a barbarian. Returning to the table Vivian poured herself a glass of milk and then slid the rest of the carton onto the floor in case it was needed. Vivian glanced over at Sylvie, asking if she wanted any, but Sylvie shook her head and tapped the water already present on the table.

"Now we can dig in. One each please," said Callisto.

Sylvie grabbed a random slice for her plate and Vivian prepared one for herself and Callisto. Callisto gave nothing away when she saw the choices. Everyone picked up their steaks in sync before Vivian and Callisto swallowed it whole and Sylvie took a large bite. Nobody begrudged her not simply eating the whole thing, it was a bit big for her much smaller mouth.

Vivian was already sweating, but based on the fact Kat noticed Sylvie's face heating up as well, chances were it was actually Sylvie that picked up this rounds extra hot slice. Nobody said anything though. Sylvie finished the first slice completely and then as one Vivian and Sylvie grabbed enough for the second round.

They ate a slice in sync once again. Vivian's face was bright red but she uttered no complaints, simply taking a small sip of milk. Callisto still looked completely normal and Sylvie's cute little cheeks lost a bit of their colour already. Once again, nobody said anything. Kat wasn't sure if that was part of the game or not, but if it was they all seemed to know it without Callisto mentioning the fact.

They went of the bacon next. Kat wasn't exactly sure how you made spicy bacon, but considering it was there on the plate, Kat wasn't going to question the possibility. Three pieces were chosen, and three humans bit down in sync once again. Sylvie smiled slightly as her piece gave a large crunch, but didn't seem to heat up at all. Callisto seemed to pause for just a second on her piece but finished it anyway. Kat glared suspiciously at that, moderately sure Callisto found a spicier piece but the maid's body betrayed nothing. Vivian had actual tears in her eyes at this point, but she was smiling through it all and didn't have a pained expression on her face. Kat was counting that as a win at least.

The next round was unremarkable really. Nothing Kat didn't expect so it was on to the final two rounds. Vivian dished out four piles of chips split between herself and Callisto while Sylvie grabbed two of them for herself. Kat raised an eyebrow at the change but didn't say anything. They each lifted up a single chip and bit down.

Callisto let out a quick breath but otherwise remained stable. Vivian... well she didn't change much but the spice had already been getting to her. Still, she didn't make a sound. Sylvie just looked like she was eating a normal potato chip, if one that was a bit oversized.

They went in for the final round. Every took a bite all at once. Callisto instantly gained a bit of colour in her cheeks the first change Kat had definitively seen. Sylvie was sweating heavily now and Vivian was sniffing as tears run down her face in between gulps of milk. She quickly poured herself a second glass, smiling all the way.

## Chapter 742 Popping the Question

After the challenge was over Callisto and Sylvie had a good time watching Vivian run around panicking. To Kat's now semi-trained eye though she could see Vivian wasn't panicking at all. She made careful steps, never knocked into anything except for her empty glass that went straight into Callisto's hand and the milk carton she left on the floor was certainly in her path but it was avoided every time.

Kat didn't say anything though. She let those three have their fun until Vivian announced she needed to shower and wash her face, leaving in a flurry of actions that resulted in the glass going to the sink, the milk back the fridge and her chair neatly tucked in. Callisto actually finished off the remaining food, which after recent information was a surprise. Kat had assumed that it would be a midnight snack for Callisto.

Sylvie smiled at the whole thing anyway before letting out another yawn. Despite the short nap it'd still be an emotionally charged morning. Callisto glanced over at Kat who returned a quick nod before they separated, Callisto to do the washing and Kat to put Sylvie to sleep.

When they got upstairs Kat was prepared to sit with Sylvie again, but her small charge had already nodded off on the way. Kat gently put Sylvie down on the bed, pulling the sheet up to cover her and moving one of the extra pillows into the bed around to Sylvie's front where it was instantly snatched and cuddled around. Kat couldn't help but smile at the scene as she walked out of the room.

Once that was over Kat moved to Vivian's room. She hadn't actually been into it before but from soft footfalls and the fact the water wasn't running she was pretty sure the woman was currently available. Kat considered knocking but she didn't want Vivian to yell out a reply and wake Sylvie, not when she'd just fallen asleep. One quick check to confirm that Lily was also still asleep, Kat opened the door carefully and was hit by a mess of colour.

On the one hand, you'd expect an interior designer to have a nice looking room. On the other, perhaps this was all for testing purposes? Every two metres the colour on the wall changed and the carpet swapped styles. Some sections also had a painting on the wall and two had wall recesses with a sculpture that sort of fit the nearby colours but not really. The hall took you down past the area where Kat's own bedroom was before opening up into a large room that took up a most of that side of the house. Halfway down the hall was a bathroom, where Vivian was currently humming to herself.

Vivian was in the same clothes as earlier, though now she had a towel wrapped around her hair and was carefully working the water out of it. Kat couldn't really understand that, much to used to her hair that could take a beating and remain shiny and smooth even before her demonic transformation upgraded it. Vivian's hair clearly needed some regular attention.

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The blonde managed to catch Kat's entry into the room through the bathroom mirror and said, "What can I do for you Kat? I'm just towelling off my hair but that doesn't take much thought. It's all automatic at this point even if it is a little annoying,"

"Well... I've got something to talk about but I'd really appreciate you not sharing it too far. Lily knows of course because of the mental link... but I'm not sure I'd have told her if she didn't know already. It's... kind of a big deal? I'm not sure how big but... it's rather awkward?" explained Kat carefully.

Vivian frowned as Kat continued the explanation, "I don't mind awkward, I can handle that but... I'm not sure I can promise not to tell anyone. Callisto at least might need to know, and if she knows Sylvie will probably find out in short order. So... is this really necessary to keep quiet? I can if you want but I'm not really one for secrets,"

"That's pretty much the issue. I know something. Something I have recently learned... and I'm not sure I should share it around. It would help provide answers to a question that currently doesn't have an answer and... look it's a bit awkward talking around the topic but this mostly involves Sylvie. I don't want to keep secrets from her, but this is BIG. I don't know if it'd be better to give her options. The issue is if I offer knowledge she'll want it. Which, I don't know if I want to say, and the second thing it'd lead to would be more knowledge. Callisto, as much as I trust her, might be too interested in what it means to keep an even head about this," said Kat carefully, winding her way around revealing too much information.

Vivian paused in her drying to turn to face Kat fully instead of through the mirror. "Kat. I have learnt that it never pays to keep secrets from people important to you. Despite this, I also work on secret projects from time to time and I see no issue with them, or keeping those secrets. What I will promise, is that I won't say anything at all about it for two months. I can't give you any longer than that. I'm just not built to keep the kind of big secret you seem to be building up to. I can keep secrets in groups, but for just myself... my resolve is weak,"

Kat bit down her answer of 'well ok thanks by' or something along those lines. This was important and Vivian putting a time limit on things was awkward but Kat still felt like she needed this advice. Lily and her weren't equipped to deal with this kind of thing by themselves. It would open a whole new can of worms and there just wasn't a clear answer. So Kat took in a deep breath a few times as Vivian turned back to the mirror.

"Right. Ok. I can accept that. It's not ideal but I do really need advice on this. So... you remember when Callisto said that maybe Sylvie's grandmother's soul might have left already?" Vivian gave a nod so Kat continued, "Yeah well... um... I queried D.E.M.O.N.S. about it mostly as a joke, sort of 'well there's no easy answer to that' only for it to inform me that... the dream smoke thing that I do? It doesn't work on things without souls.

"Which I mean. That makes sense? It's what determines an acceptable target. I know some plants can become sentient now magic is involved, and what separates them from normal trees or whatever? So... I mean... what that ability would let me do is... I could go visit the hospital, try to phase into Grammy's mind and if the abilities fails... we'd know. But... but I don't really know what I'd do if it worked?

"Like... there's so much that could be an issue there. Is it safe to be in the mind of someone with dementia? Would I be able to find the real Grammy? If I can does that mean I'd be doomed to play telephone with her instead of letting Sylvie reconnect? And then... and then... outside all the issues succeeding brings up. What does that mean for Sylvie? She's said it, she grieved for Grammy already. I'm not sure I'd be able to tell her it worked, even if my truth compulsion means I can't lie about the fact,"

"Ah" said Vivian.

Just that single word. Vivian stared into the mirror until she finished up with her hair only to keep staring at it, just to avoid turning around. When she finally did, it was with a whirl of movement and a bob of her head, "You certainly don't come to me with easy questions Kat. This... this was a bit more than I was expecting and now I definitely get why you told me and asked for it to stay secret. I... hmm... I'm not sure exactly either.

"The best case scenario might be that you go and test things ahead of time to make sure we'll know it's going to fail? That feels horrible to say, but... I also don't know what we'd do if it works just well enough to know she still has a soul, but her mind is too fractured to speak to her or something. That would crush Sylvie... and Callisto... well she'd say go for it. The chance to understand the ways those kinds of diseases effect the mind...

"Then again... if there was anyone she could put aside her thirst for knowledge for it'd be Sylvie. The big issue is that Sylvie didn't give us any names and she's a smart little tyke. If we fished for them she'd figure out something was up and then badger you for answers because not only do you collapse to her

puppy eyes you can't lie either. Hmm... we really might have to keep this one to the side for the moment. I don't really know what to do either,"

#### Chapter 743 Long Distance Telegram

Kat left Vivian to freshening up and stood awkwardly in the hallway. The house had plenty of space, but currently Kat had no idea what to do with any of it. Lily was asleep in Kat's room. Sylvie was asleep in hers, and Callisto was probably now in her room as well. Kat never really got into the habit of watching TV on account of there not being one at the orphanage, something Gramps had tried to rectify a few times but there wasn't anywhere the children would agree to put it. There wasn't space for a new TV room and as such it got shelved time and time again.

Another option was to go for a run, but that wasn't terribly appealing these days. Not only was her body more than strong enough for such light work to have no effect at all on her physique, plus Kat wasn't sure working out would do anything other than helping with muscle memory, Kat also had one final issue that was the real nail in the coffin. She couldn't hide her wings or horns. Walking around in a busy shopping district was one thing, people in crowds might stare but they'd make no real fuss. Running around the block though, that would be memorable in all the worst ways.

So Kat was wishing for something to distract her when she got an alert from D.E.M.O.N.S. Checking it out revealed that it was a message from Kamiko, a long one for once. Kat had kept up with Minor, Kamiko and of course the people at home. She never provided proper details, they were best told in person, but it was more to inform her friends and family she wasn't dead just yet anyway. This message from Kamiko though, it was a bit more detailed, and certainly interesting enough to focus on for a bit.

Hey Kat!

So, I'm informing you that, you and Lily need to come in for a check-up tomorrow or as soon as you can if that doesn't work. I'm not quite sure if you are busy in your home dimension or whatever. Now that the boring bit is out of the way though... I've finished my Contract and Sue is apparently 'celebrating' the completion of her own. So we'd all be free tomorrow and maybe the next day as well for a sleepover? I mean, if you're interested. No pressure of anything.

I just thought it'd be nice to do and I mean you have to come here anyway. Sorry, I think I'm rambling? I don't really know what constitutes rambling or how long people usually make messages like this. I just have my family for reference and I don't think that counts. Sue's expressed some interest in meeting up again but I'm sending the request to her and you at the same time so I don't know for sure that she's going to be there just yet. Um... I can let you know when I find out if you want? I don't mind but because it's so soon I'm not sure there's time to send so many messages back and forth.

Anyway. Just, let me know if you're interested. You can come for the check-up whenever though, it's part of Mum's work and she can make time for that.

From Kamiko

\*Sounds interesting. I'll just have to check with Lily... who seems to be waking up sort of? I think that's what I'm feeling through the link. Her mind is waking up? Maybe? I should probably pay more attention to it occasionally to see how it reacts in different situations.\*

Kat paused at the door to her room, wondering if opening it would be enough to wake the sleeping cat. Deciding to instead wait a bit for confirmation, Kat stared at the door for no longer than thirty seconds when she felt Lily starting to wake up for real. Opening the door, Kat managed to time it to just as Lily started looking lazily around.

Faint amusement trickled across the link as Lily stared Kat down, [How long did you have to wait for that?]

“Not long actually. I was only outside the door for a minute tops. I think I could feel you starting to wake up through the link a bit before it happened. That’s why I was waiting. It was both confirming a hypothesis and making sure I was here to greet you when you woke up,” said Kat as she strode over to the bed and started scratching around Lily’s horns. The Memphis immediately dropped back down flat on the bed and started to purr.

“So, I got a message from Kamiko offering a sleep over tomorrow. Are you interested in going?” asked Kat.

Kat was confused when she felt a flash of unease through the link and Lily sent, [No I’ll be ok. You can go by yourself if you want.]

Kat nearly paused her petting of Lily with how surprised she was at the response. Only the fact that she wanted to keep her girlfriend calm helped her push through that surprise as she started to use two hands for this. Lily’s unease slowly dissipating. “Now why would you say a silly thing like that? Surely you haven’t forgotten we come as a package deal already, right? If you don’t want to go together we can stay home?”

[No no... I do want to go... I just... she’s your friend and I didn’t know if you’d want me there...]

“Ok. Lily, I’m going to stop you right there. Why would you ever think that? Leaving aside the fact I literally couldn’t go without you, I wouldn’t WANT to anyway. Well, the fact it’s in the demon Hub would make it more difficult if you weren’t a Memphis because of the risk to your health but I’d still want you there regardless. Now that you can come, and safely at that, why would I not want to go with you?” asked Kat concern lacing her voice.

[Sorry. I... I don’t really know why I thought you’d want to leave me behind. I guess... I guess I’m not quite as secure with myself as I thought. I mean... I... I guess it wasn’t really an issue before because we didn’t have any other friends. I didn’t have to worry about being replaced a second time because there wasn’t anyone around to be a replacement. Now that you have other friends though... I guess the other part was that because they would be hard to visit it wasn’t a big deal but now you can...]

[I get that I’m worried about nothing really... but I guess I still have a few hang ups from Stella. It’s not really that similar but now you have demon powers and access to new worlds. That’s a lot more distance between us then moving to a new school and getting popular. I... sorry. I know you’d never do that, intellectually but apparently my heart isn’t so convinced...]

\*Lily...\*

Kat let out a puff of air as she tried to think of a way to reassure her girlfriend. Clearly the whole ‘bound for eternity bit’ hadn’t sunk in for Lily as much as Kat thought it had for herself. \*I don’t even know if I

appreciate it. Maybe... maybe we rushed this a bit... but it's not like I could have kept Lily from magic any longer and this really was the best race for a variety of reasons. The link is a drawback because normally you wouldn't find two willing parties for it...

Still. Maybe it would have been better for Lily if I proved I was happy to stick with her forever before the bond got involved. I sincerely hope she isn't thinking that's the only reason I stick around.\* "Lily, I'm not going to leave you behind. Not only are you my girlfriend, but you are my only friend I still have from when I was human. You stuck by when I turned into a demon from hell Lily. Most people would have freaked out a little bit," said Kat.

[Well it's not like you as a Succubus could make me feel anything I didn't already. I already loved you and had to struggle against many desires to picture you naked a lot of the time or doing something lewd. Do you KNOW the struggle I experienced when you just let yourself get hit by water all the time? I don't know how I managed to tear myself away from just staring at you till your shirt dried. It wasn't such a bit deal sticking by you honestly.]

Kat rolled her eyes. "Lily, I'm pretty sure we've both established at this point that neither of us plan to go anywhere. I do understand that in some ways this looks a bit, just a smidge, like what happened with Stella. Here's the difference though Lily. This time, it'll be as a pair. I'll stand beside you... well when I'm not carrying you around. Kamiko is very sweet and a bit like you. You'll get along just fine.

"Sue... well... if she doesn't make at least one joke about 'liking pussy' I'll eat my hat," finished Kat.

Lily mentally chuckled now she lacked the physical equipment for it. "She'd be right though. And you don't own any hats!"

#### Chapter 744 Silly Serious Ideas

After the chuckling died down Kat spoke again, "Ok, so we can table the sleepover for just a bit. I do want to come back to it, but more importantly... are there any other worries you have that I need to soothe? I don't mind. I don't want there to be issues like that between us Lily. I'm perfectly happy to tell you anything you want until you're skilled enough to just look over my memories through this link,"

[I... I don't know? I mean... I didn't realise I even had an issue with you getting other friends. It just hasn't come up before now. Oh dear... I hope I haven't accidentally prevented you from getting new friends before now? I... I could see myself doing that if I wasn't really paying attention. Being snappy with people who get too close... but I don't think I did? I'm also pretty sure I avoided glaring at anyone checking you out because I caught myself doing that a few times early on in our friendship. I'm thankful nobody noticed...]

Kat couldn't help but picture them both back in school, sitting down side by side in the library with Lily looking over Kat's shoulder and hissing at people checking her out. Kat then added cat ears and the entire thing was adorable. The juxtaposition of Lily trying to be scary while remaining utterly adorable was awesome. Kat pushed her feelings down the link, letting Lily have a bit of a taste of how much Kat really did care.

"I can't help but find it amusing. I do also wonder if other people noticed and just didn't say anything. The bitches three might have been a constant issue but we didn't exactly have problems with the rest of the school. They might not have been willing to befriend us but it's not like we made any enemies.



Honestly, I'd say the chances are pretty high at least one person figured it out. It'd be even more likely if there were other lesbians in school but I don't really know how common that all is," said Kat.

Of course, the try purpose of Kat pointing that out, was because Lily had certainly researched the numbers. It would help getting Lily's mind off her recent issue and give Kat the chance to just listen to Lily ramble again. [Yeah you and me both. I mean, the data is really bad. It's still not something a lot of people like to admit to.]

[Most official sources I could look into never really had anything above 5% with less being quite common. But that was for gay men, gay women, and bisexual people. All adults though, people more set in their ways. I'm sure that there are more people who aren't straight that just grew up thinking that was the only option and are too set in their ways to admit it now.]

[So it really makes it hard to tell. The studies done on teens aren't very reliable either. A... maybe this is unfair... but from what I've seen of the studies, not that they were super formal, but... quite a few teens just claim they aren't straight to annoy their parents or to seem different and not because they actually aren't.]

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[Which would be fine except for the fact that the adults are likely underreporting. So overreporting teens, underreporting adults, and those few people who are very secure in their sexuality like myself are left not really knowing how common it is. I mean, just based on natural logic most people shouldn't be gay.]

Kat raised a mental eyebrow at Lily and sent her confusion along the mental link. [That might have sounded wrong. Look, obviously I have nothing wrong with it, but the way genes are passed on of course when two people have kids together. Gay women and gay men can't have kids ergo it shouldn't be common at all...]

[But a rather interesting fact I found is that while the numbers have never been particularly high... people have been attracted to their own sex for basically the entirety of recorded history. Which is weird isn't it? I mean if theoretically the gene can't be passed on it shouldn't continue to propagate itself through the species. It's really quite fascinating when you think of it from that perspective. The counter argument of course is that it's not a purely nature thing.]

[The nature vs nurture argument is an old one that we'll never really figure out with any certainty. It does however complete the sexuality question because if it's always been around, and the people it applies to, theoretically only go for their sexual preference, they shouldn't... no that sounds wrong. The WON'T be having biological children. If that's the case. Is it a nurture thing some how?]

[Sadly I didn't really find any studies that covered that line of enquiry. Not really anyway. I'm not sure how it would be tested for anyway. It's not like there's a definitive gay gene or something so we can't know people's sexual preference ahead of time to then take into account specific environmental factions.]

Kat smiled as Lily started to go into the studies she'd read about it and which ones she felt willing to trust. The problem with self-reporting and the issue of 'how bisexual' someone needed to really be to count. Kat couldn't understand, but apparently it wasn't uncommon for other girls to recognise each

other as sexually attractive. It was just a question of how many of them looked at each other the way Kat looked at everyone, pretty art pieces essentially, and how many looked at other girls with the same eyes as Lily. Well, the little Memphis only had eyes for one person so she was perhaps not the best example...

Kat was just enjoying the sound of Lily's mental voice. It didn't sound any different to her voice under normal circumstances. It changed slightly depending on if Lily was excited or not. Really the only difference was that Lily didn't feel the need to stop talking to breathe. Kat found herself taking a strange enjoyment in working out which places Lily would normally stop during her rants to get in as much oxygen as possible before continuing on.

Eventually the topic had to run dry of course, and Lily had already made several branching points, [... so really I guess what I'm trying to say is that a properly working gaydar as a commercial device would make collecting this data so much easier]

Kat didn't really know how to respond to that. Or how exactly Lily had got onto that particular line of thought. She'd been a little lost in Lily's voice and the details had already fled her mind. Kat was sure she could find them if she really wanted, but she didn't really feel the need. "Lily, I feel like you'd run into the issue of homophobes using it to cause issues if we could more accurately identify gay people. Sure it'd be nice but bad actors would make things a nightmare really quickly. It'd also have to be really accurate and not insulting somehow? Like how would you decide how attracted you need to be to both sexes to show up? What would such a device label ME for example?"

[I'm still not really sure what I should refer to you as either. Technically a lesbian is just 'a woman who is attracted to other women' which you aren't... but most people don't really account for asexual people. The fact that you're dating a lesbian probably means that even if the term doesn't fit technically, it's the best one they have...]

[As for the theoretical device. I'd imagine depending on how it worked, you'd either not show up, or be labelled straight if the device is just measuring your attraction to other women. Hmm... I do wonder what the best way to design something like that would be. Maybe hormone response when the subject looks at other individuals? I feel like it'd be a much larger machine for that though... more 'wheel in to use' and less handheld device.]

"Well I'm glad you've worked out those truly pressing questions. Now that you've had a chance to cheer up though, I'm going to ask again. Do you want to go to the sleepover Kamiko is probably hosting?" asked Kat, concern lacing her voice.

[Yes I do. I mean, it's not ideal and I'd prefer being able to talk to them as well... but I can deal with it. You're right as well. I should start to meet your friends because they'll need to be my friends as well. Or at least, it'd be good if they were. I'm not really sure how well I'll handle Sue... but... I don't want to say she means well but she at least doesn't mean ill.]

"Yeah... Sue will probably decide you're her new favourite person if you start blushing every time she makes any comments even vaguely lewd. She seems to enjoy getting that reaction from people. I believe I've mentioned it though, she's very straight, so you don't need to worry about her stealing me away. Or Kamiko for that matter."

[I know. It'll be fun.]

## Chapter 745 Stupid Book

[Now Kat you have distracted me long enough. I MUST read that new book on paper magic]

Kat couldn't help but laugh as she gave Lily a few more scratches before she got up and grabbed the book. Book in hand Kat set herself back down on the bed before shuffling things around. Lily needed to read the book but there wasn't any great ways to do that. The best Kat could come up with was leaning against the backboard herself with Lily wrapped around her neck and the book off to the side. Kat had mastered the technique of turning pages with just one hand after Lily taught her in the past so she didn't need to lose any comfort.

Lily would give Kat a slight mental nudge every time she wanted the page changed. Kat also found the book had a particularly interesting form of protection even from her True Sight. When she glanced at the book instead of Lily, instead of hiding part of the information, the book somehow managed to throw the entire contents of itself straight into Kat's eyes. Even with her perfect memory it was too much information in a single moment and she couldn't deal with it. The words got all mixed together making it basically useless.

With the pair settled that's basically all they did for the next day until it was time to head in for their check-up. Vivian had been informed of their activities. Sylvie had pouted but said nothing while Kat gave her head pats. On Lily's end of things she was absorbing as much information from the book as she could. Despite its small size it contained many more pages. A simple thing for a paper mage apparently.

Just the introduction was taking her a long time. It was all about the most efficient way to picture your spells, and the potential ideal paths for moving mana throughout your body. Lily was rapidly learning the 'potential paths' were basically endless. Slight variations, complete reforms and abstract oddities were everywhere. It was probably easier to just say 'go with what feels best' but apparently whoever the previous paper mage was, they loved to have people read their work. It wasn't necessarily poor writing but Lily, as a researcher at heart, could already tell it was organised to a barely acceptable level with additional details that were completely useless for most people.

The fact that when talking about mana pathways they simply went through the 'common' types but then it was in the variations section of each common type that it started specifying what species and gender these variations were commonly found in. It was irritating because quite a lot of the pathways were completely invalidated by Lily's body. Her ears and tail weren't regularly accounted for. The fact she had wings in one form but not in the other. The fact she was a beastkin at all.

Even accounting for the fact the author had likely never heard of a Memphis any beastkin reading this was in for a terrible time. Lily wasn't sure what race the author was though. She was leaning towards elven, for that seemed to be the standard, until they talked about variations for people without wings as if that was the norm...

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Only to then speak about fey a paragraph later and the variations required for them. Lily considered the possibility they were a beastkin with wings... but they barely took into account other beastkin and she felt no beastkin would organise the book so poorly for their own kind. For they really did have it the

worst in this section. Variations for ears but not tails, variations for ears on head and to the side, even variations for no ears. But it was almost never a standard feature of the pathways.

Now, one might hope the next section was on how to cast your first spell. A very basic step in any budding mage's education. For most it was a simple command spell, not full manipulation, just 'higher' or 'lower' or 'move left'. Basic stuff that you can do with every element. Not in this book. Instead, they go on to list not a series of exercises, but a series of series of exercises. Each built supposedly for people with different mindsights to help with controlling paper. It might have been more interesting if they had details for who they were for. Instead they were just 'mindset one, mindset two etc...' and it went on and on. Lily was currently at 'mindset 57' and there was still more. She was mostly skimming things at this point because a lot of the exercises were slight variations for previous mindsets but they weren't in any coherent order.

For example, 57, the current exercise series she was looking at, was most similar to 13, with a little bit of 27 thrown in for some of the later sections. Which sounded fair until you realised that 13 was a combination of mindset 3 and mindset 4 but 27 had no similarity to anything that came before it despite 26 and 28 both sharing similarities to mindset 8. Lily couldn't even test any of them because she couldn't feel her mana just yet.

Sure she wouldn't have been able to cast a spell even if she'd gotten to that section, but that didn't mean she was happy about the fact this book seemed to just be wasting her time. Lily was starting to notice her claws extended and trying to dig into Kat's flesh. Kat didn't so much as twitch. She was half in a meditative state, exploring her mind pool while keeping enough physical awareness that she could turn the page on command.

That was the only thing she could do without breaking the state... and it wasn't as if Lily's claws could actually cut Kat's skin. In fact, they struggle to break through her clothes. Without mana flowing around her body she just wasn't capable of testing any of them out. What was annoying Lily further was that from what she noticed during the tournament, this sort of minor elemental movement shouldn't require these kinds of intense mental exercises.

Best Lily could figure was that they would improve her control in minor but noticeable ways... but that was a generous interpretation. There just didn't need to be so many alternatives. Only the fact that Lily had to stop occasionally for short naps due to her new body let her continue working. Her body was helping her sleep more and her mental fatigue was making it harder to ignore. For the best perhaps, but rather annoying.

The second time Lily woke up during her massive reading binge she complained mentally, [GAH! This doesn't feel like a book for paper mages. This feels like the DRAFT for a book for paper mages. Nothing is proofread, they haven't tested out which of these techniques are common or even work consistently...]

[I haven't even SEEN the rest of the book and I can tell that this author was using these more as a notes journal with minor organisation than a training tool. I'm pretty sure that they've thrown in anything that might even be remotely valuable and are counting on their theoretically large number of students to essentially be the trail group where they test what works best for them and then somehow get the information back to the original mage.]

[The thing is, not even Thyme is sure if they're still alive and there is still only ONE rank five paper mage. I initially thought it's because it is a rare element, and while that's still true I'm now wondering if this isn't a form of subtle sabotage. I mean, if I actually believe that whoever made this didn't completely sabotage their writings out of some sort of professional pride.]

[The chance of picking the wrong mana path or the wrong set of mental exercises is ridiculously high. I haven't even gotten through all the exercises yet! None of them stand out to me as 'the one' and ok maybe I'm doing something wrong but... I just don't know how useful this can actually be without just wasting time testing things. Could I be missing anything?]

Kat thought for a moment. She didn't really know anything about paper mages, what the book actually contained or how likely Lily was to find something useful. She did however know at least a few things about fantasy cliches. Ones Lily should know as well considering she was the source of most of Kat's own knowledge. "So... not to discourage you at all... but... I have an idea..."

Kat waited for a few moments trying to figure out how to phrase it the best only for Lily to give her a mental 'get one with it' shove. "Ok fine. See... it opens for a paper mage... but perhaps it reacts further to your mana?"

Lily let out a hiss as the understanding hit home. [Of COURSE it's a MAGICAL ARTIFACT. Why did I think I could just read it without mana? I'm either looking at everything, even the stuff that can never be relevant to me... or this is protection of some kind. Maybe a kind of double confirmation? A paper mage has to be looking at it and supplying it with mana?]

#### Chapter 746 SLEEPOVER!

Kat gave Sylvie a kiss on the forehead, Vivian a hug, and Callisto a salute. Lily just sat in Kat's arms. Then the fire engulfed them, taking them to the waiting room at the hospital. Nira was there and waiting to take them straight to the exam room. What followed was a quick and visually mundane series of tests with the final conclusion being 'nothing wrong yet, but we didn't expect there to be'.

Lily and Kat weren't terribly surprised to hear that. Even though it was a somewhat experimental procedure demons were so far technologically and magically advanced that they were both sure there was some way to limit or completely mitigate any issues that arose. Lily was a little annoyed they didn't have an estimated time for her return to human form. She was apparently closer to it but they could tell her nothing else which was more than a little disappointing. Apparently the reason for this was they weren't sure if Lily's soul needed to be completely integrated with the body for the change, or if just 'close enough' would be ok. Normally it would, but the presence of both demonic energy and mana made things involving the soul more questionable.

Once that was done though, Nira escorted them to a part of the building accessible by teleportation and dragged them both back to her house. As Lily looked up at the structure she couldn't help but think, [I was expecting it to be... more... just more something I guess? It just looks like a normal house. Sure the it looks a bit rustic for earth... which may or may not be REALLY rustic for the demons, but I guess even with your descriptions I was expecting it to be made out of obsidian or for there to be fire or rivers or lava.]

\*Huh... I see what you're saying but I never got that impression about the Hub. I mean, my first experience with it was a perfectly normal hospital room or the accountants office if you count those things. Then when I was let out into the wider world, I saw Wrath and it was styled like some sort of carnival. Really, an old English looking cottage isn't a surprise at all.\*

Before anything else could be pondered Kamiko threw open the door. She'd replaced her normal Miko outfit with a fluffy robe over a shirt that was at least two sizes too large that was the same pink as her hair and had little copies of herself wielding various weapons in chibi form printed on it. Her pants were a darkish red and looked had very slight vertical lines on them. "Hi Kat! And is that Lily I see? Come in come in! Sue's already downstairs but... yeah she really shouldn't come to the door..." said Kamiko.

Nira smiled and gave everyone a light wave before disappearing, likely to return to work. Kat followed Kamiko into the house, the pathway to her bedroom familiar after the week she'd stayed. When the bedroom door opened, Kat was in for another surprise. The floor had been covered in all sorts of blankets of various types. Pillows were piled high against the walls and Sue was sprawled out across a few of them at the foot of the bed.

It seemed Kat was the only one not in 'pyjamas' though it was questionable as to if what Sue was wearing could really be called pyjamas. She was wearing lacy lingerie complete with stockings and a garter belt. The sad truth of the matter though... was that it actually covered more of Sue's body than the first outfit Kat had seen her in. Sue's normally neatly done hair was spilled out EVERYWHERE. When it was neatly bound it was hard to really tell just how much hair Sue had. Now without it wrapped on her arms it covered a massive area in a corona around her head. **nOvElExt.cOm**

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Sue's eyes immediately sprung to Lily, and apparently she'd already been informed as to who exactly the Memphis was because she said, "Kat! So nice to see you. Though... I thought you were asexual. Considering your clear fondness for pussy I'm starting to doubt that claim!"

\*I FUCKING CALLED IT!\*

Kat gracefully sat down stealing a bunch of wall pillows to make herself a little fort. Kat wanted to stay somewhat upright so she piled a few in front of her before stretching out and looking over the rest of the room on her belly. Lily had hopped up to rest of the pillows next to Kat's head and looked at Sue as well. Kamiko, not wanting to sit on her bed while her friends were on the floor grabbed a couple of blankets and took the space on the wall that still had pillows so that she was in the middle of Kat and Sue.

"Your jokes are getting old Sue. I made a bet with my girlfriend that you'd say exactly that. I'm both smug and disappointed. No new material?" asked Kat.

Kat was clearly forgetting the first rule of lewd jokes though. Never go up against an expert. "I've swallowed plenty of new material since we've last spoke. It's even gone in a few other holes as well. Then again, same stuff usually so I guess I could branch out, maybe look for a kitty of my own, see if it scratches any itches for me."

Kamiko was already bright red and Kat could feel the embarrassment radiating off of Lily. For Kat's part, she was able to adapt fairly well to the onslaught of innuendo. Mostly by taking it very literally and just

not considering other options. It required only a small amount of mental gymnastics on her part to treat Sue like a normal person instead of what she was. Sue was of course going to try and correct that.

[How do you even react to something like that?]

\*Practice. She gave me plenty of practice when we were on a mission together to take out some rats remember? I guess I didn't cover exactly how bad she could be but honestly... it phases me less and less every time.\*

"Well I'm afraid I'm unavailable for such services and my girlfriend is off limits. If you want to look for others though... don't report back. I don't think I'd really like to know," said Kat.

Sue pouted theatrically moving her chin down and pushing her chest up to emphasise her massive breasts, "Are you sure I can't tempt her? A little spice for two likely prudes is probably a good thing for both of you?" said Sue, clearly not all that serious about the attempt.

Kat could feel Lily's slight arousal from the site before it was quickly replaced with a deluge of Kat in similar positions, increasing the response but completely shifting Sue from the equation. \*You know you are allowed to admit she's hot Lily. Just because I don't get it doesn't mean I don't understand the fact you like women. We've been over this. She's a hot naked demon girl right in front of you. I'm not going to get mad about you finding her attractive. This is literally what Sue does.\*

[Sorry. Sorry. I mean, I'm not sorry? Wait... no I'll. I'll try not to let it bother me. Wait. No, what I should say is, 'I'm a leg girl I'm afraid. Take your balloon tits elsewhere' or something. Would that be appropriate as a response? I don't really... have experience interacting with this kind of person...]

\*Not sure. I mean, maybe? Sue's definitely straight and has no true interest in seducing us both. It should be fine either way. Just... just keep in mind that while she is straight, very much so, I'm also pretty sure if you expressed genuine interest in sleeping with her or with both of us she'd give it a go just because a friend asked. She seems to really like sex and is adventurous in her pursuit of it. So just... yeah. Keep those things in mind and you should be good.\*

[Ok. Feel free to tell her that then]

"Back with us Kat? Enough colluding with your snuggle buddy?" asked Sue.

"Yes, I have. She wants me to inform you that she's a leg woman and that your balloon tits have minimal effect on her" replied Kat in the driest voice possible.

Sue burst into laughter, she struggle to come up with reply for a few moments as her laughter continued to ring out. This caught Kamiko a bit as well, who started to giggle, looking away as if she was being inappropriate.

Eventually Sue recovered enough, not to stop laughing, but to make a show out of it. So, when she breathed she made sure her chest heaved up in down, her bra barely keeping the motion constrained. She also, knowing now where Lily's interest Lay posed with her legs out at various angles. Lily had to admit they were nice legs. Not as good as Kats, but Sue WAS a Succubus after all.

Chapter 747 Pushing that Teen Rating

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Once the laughter finally calmed down Kamiko got a strange look on her face before asking, "Well Sue... I know I'm going to regret asking this... but what have you been up to recently?"

Sue's eyes lit up before dimming slightly then lighting up once again, sly smile on her face. "Well, seeing as you did ask... I got her pretty much right after I finished up enjoying my victory orgy. It was pretty good but honestly, more work then you'd think. It's hard managing multiple guys at once all sticking it in me at the same time and apparently I'M the one whose hands start to wonder I'm 'killing the mood' doesn't matter I'm taking three dicks at once no. MY wandering hands are the real issue!"

Sue took a slight glance around, "Actually... I don't know if I want to dump this on the pair of you but is it alright if I complain a bit?" Kat and Kamiko shared a look that said 'we're going to regret this aren't we?' while Lily answered Kat with [We are probably going to regret this... but I really want to know WHY. The horror and embarrassment pales compared to the idea this is the only way I can find out WHY and it eats at me!] After the glance all three girls, one Memphis and two demons, nodded at Sue.

"Oh thank god. My other acquaintances, not really friends, and I'll complain about them in a bit, they wouldn't really understand. They'd be all like 'why are you whining, you got an orgy in your honour, be grateful slut' which considering they're just as bad as me, is a bit like golem shouting at the rock monster. ANYWAY. The issue is that unlike them I have a bit of pride. I actually like to engage my partners regardless of how many there are. Oh, and K's my particular Succubus trait is that I've got a lovely set of extra muscles in a few places," Sue brushed her fingers along her throat then just above her genitals "which does help...

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"But it's a fucking pain to manage them all the time. They don't DO much unless I'm controlling them manually. So dealing with multiple partners is fucking exhausting. Trying not to just dead fish on one or two of them is difficult and I get basically no pleasure from it because the whole thing is exhausting. It's a fun novelty for a bit but it's just not worth it. That's the problem with most orgies. Too many guys and not enough girls.

"Like, I don't mind being roughed up a bit, that's half the fun, but when you NEED to be servicing at max capacity and then kicking them to the curb once they've planted their seed so that next in line can do it... it's just a never ending stream of exhaustion. Then when people notice you're the only woman actually trying and..." Sue rolled her hand around and around. "It's just... so not worth it.

"That's not even getting into how... how vanilla a lot of these guys are. That's something you don't really notice right away actually but a lot of guys are happy to do crazy stuff to YOU or watch you do crazy stuff as long as it doesn't really affect them. Like, watching an orgy? No problem. My hands wandering a little bit towards their caboose? Instant turn off. I got told of fucking TWICE for that shit yesterday.

"Fucking amateur hour I tell you. The other girls were a mixed bag as well. Sure some of them could take a few customers but except for this one redhead, not like your red Kat, more like redish blonde, she was the only one actually going quality work like me. Fuck, if she wasn't clearly an elf I'd swear she was a Succubus as well. She missed her calling in life I'm telling you. Anyway! They're just... whiny. Don't do this, don't do that, oh that hurts, stop bending that way. It's like MATE. I'm doing the best I can with three of you. Maybe coordinate or go for someone who isn't trying if you didn't want me to do anything but suck ya dick."



Sue let out a big sigh. The others in the room were sort of checking out of the conversation but Sue didn't notice. They didn't say anything either though because it was clear she wanted to get this off her chest. "You know. There was one guy, second Contract I ever did. Wonderful man. I wish I'd given him a beacon to summon me ANY time. He was willing to try some crazy shit... which... I guess I won't go into details with ya poor innocent souls. Probably stepped over the line already. He had a GREAT personality." Sue paused, "Wait... that makes it sound like I'm calling him ugly or something...

"Which he WAS. I mean, absolutely horrific. I just kinda doubt I'm the first person he fucked. He was willing to go all out and even had a few crazy suggestions for me. He wasn't a wuss about it though. No, 'sure if you want to' it was, 'Yes, No, That could hurt' and yes I did not that, I wasn't an idiot. Sometimes I wanted it to hurt a bit. ANYWAY. My point is, because he was me second Contract, I didn't realise just how rare someone with that sort of attitude was. He was an elf but I swear he must have had some orc or something in him. We went for TWO DAYS. Breaks for food and water only.

"Hell, I would probably KILL for a meeting with him or someone close enough. You just don't get it apparently. Adventurous, willing to give and take, and the sexual stamina of a proper capital G-God. Aw well. It is what it is," said Sue with a sigh.

"Wait gods are real?" asked Kat.

Sue gave a 'so-so' gesture, "Sort of? When you say it the words have a few extra meanings. Gods are... essentially the culmination of a species belief in a higher power actualised with Mana or Qi. They're... fucking weird actually. They have nearly unlimited power in their dimension IF and ONLY IF it involves their domains and doesn't contradict any myths about them. Like... hmm... what's an example...

"There was this one God who was in charge of all the rivers. That meant he could control every single bit of water in the rivers... until it reached the sea. Then he couldn't do anything more than stare at the waves. That's the sort of weird shit Gods do,"

"Huh..." said Kat. That's interesting. "So they can't move between dimensions at all?"

Sue shrugged and glanced at Kamiko who gave a similar shrug and said, "I don't really know. I mean that's what we were told but it's not like gods are actually super common. They don't tend to get all that much power until you wander into a world that can support them. Not every world actually can. Plenty worship gods that don't exist... and a lot of worlds where the gods DO exist they also don't DO much because people believe they don't intervene in mortal lives except in extreme circumstances so they... well they don't?

"Gods aren't really people and its actually an assignment I had in school to take a stance on the debate if they are sentient or not. Personally I didn't think so but there was this one boy in my class, a beholder, who argued for BOTH sides. He had a really compelling presentation as well, that... and I'm oversimplifying here...

"That the more power a god had, the more free they were to act outside of their domain. The broader their domain the more decision making they needed to do and the more higher energy made up their body. The more higher energy they had, meant the more worshipers, and more worshipers meant a less unified mythos eventually reaching the point where the god themselves was able to choose one action over another and reaching sentience.

"Of course, the argument another student presented was that Gods are essentially just magically capable artificial intelligences that liked to pretend to be sentient. The argument was that they were just slightly more complicated speech bots that could fake being a real person poorly but well enough people didn't question it because 'we mortals were not meant to know the minds of god' even if they say or do something stupid."

\*Gods are weird.\*

[Sure you're saying that now. I'm more concerned about the fact that they're REAL. I wonder if the Christian God is real? That's a lot of belief but probably not all that much magic to go around... but we do have a lot of people maybe?]

\*Yeah but our whole universe is weird, even suppressing Demonic Energy. Is that necessarily natural?\*

[DAMMIT KAT]

Chapter 748 Sue's Backstory!

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Kamiko looked over to see if Kat had any more questions about the gods and seeing as she didn't, asked her own question, "Um... could you... um... tell us about your other friends?" asked Kamiko with only some slight stuttering.

"Ah, don't worry about them Kami" said Sue with a wave, "I call them acquaintances because that's all they are. See... hmm... guess I'll have to start a bit further back. You ladies getting sick of me talking yet?" seeing a round of head shakes Sue continued, "Right, glad I can keep speaking. So... to explain I have to go back to the beginning really. My father and mother both work for the mining company that Stone works for. Him and Dad are old drinking buddies at this point. Dad is a foreman as well, just for a different dig though they used to work together once upon a time.

"Mum on the other hand is Dad's secretary. She wears a lot of hats but she also thinks part of her job as Dad's secretary is to blow him under the desk. So... she does good work but she doesn't usually get recognised for it. That's sort of how some of my problems started. See, the mining kids all sort of ended up bundled together during work hours. They have facilities for it and a few demons whose job it is to keep us from doing any serious damage to each other.

"And I was the only Succubus there at the time. So I was the obvious outsider to pick on. I'd get bullied for my looks, which were fabulous by the way, and my hair which was long even back then would get pulled all the time. They'd make fun of me for my 'weird coloured skin' which is rich coming from the people mostly made out of ROCKS but whatever. Kids can be assholes. Eventually one of the kids starting talking shit about my mother...

"And that was real confusing let me tell you. They said things like 'your dad only keeps her around as a cock sleeve' or 'she just got the job to sit under his desk all day' which... I don't know how the OTHERS learnt that sort of thing but I was just confused. So I go home to my mum and ask about them. She gives me the such a confused look and with a completely straight face says, 'I sit under your fathers desk because I get a tasty meal and can skip out on my lunch break with a full stomach' so it was already too late for me at like, age five.

.....

"Mum was perfectly happy to share that sort of thing. So when it came up next time, I just explained it to them like Mum explained it to me... and all of a sudden I was the weird kid in class for it. Even the teachers were weird with me after that. Fucking prudes. So anyway, I wasn't exactly the popular girl growing up. This followed me for quite a while because my school zone had a bunch of those miner kids in it and even though there were now more Succubus girls around it didn't help a tonne. I was still kind of an outcast and everyone knew my mother was quite sexual...

"Which in my teen years led me to getting involved with the... I suppose you might call them 'early bloomers' who went for sexual encounters really early on. I... I'm a bit of a mummy's girl so I asked her and... she sat me down and gave me a really long talk about it. She didn't sugar coat anything but was also quite clear about the fact that she did what most of the other girls were doing. Sleeping around as soon as it was even remotely viable, normally with demons older than herself. Sometimes a bit too old in an attempt to piss off her parents... but my grandparents are as bad as me. They just hid it better from Mum and managed to pretend to be prudes. Must be something in our genetics.

"Anyway, it might surprise you to learn that I didn't actually jump straight into sex after that. I was like... thirteen maybe? Not that old really... and sure I WANTED to but I mostly just lived vicariously through the others, not realising I'd rapidly become an outcast with them as well because I wasn't already trying to fuck everything in sight. They're still sort of my friends now, we keep in touch...

"But consent has always been a big thing for me. Maybe it's because my tastes are so broad and I love experimenting but your partners consent is CRUCIAL and I just didn't believe I COULD consent properly until my sixteenth birthday passed and I got fed up of waiting. Probably still a bit young, but my mother, my grandmother, me. We all get into sex at some point and it's just... it's great really it is. Still..."

Sue gave a shrug, "It caused issues. Plenty of them. The school didn't always like hearing about what we did and I got in trouble for stuff I didn't do a few times. That's probably the only reason I wasn't completely ostracised from those girls, at the time, women now. I took the groups punishment without protest despite every single one of them knowing I hadn't done anything. I got a lot of the respect I'd lost back for that,"

Sue had a smile on her face now. Not the snarky one she normally wore but a genuine full faced smile, reminiscing over simpler times. Eventually Sue seemed to return back to the moment and sighed. "Honestly I probably liked them all more back in school when I couldn't sleep around. I just don't get some of the things they do these days. Quite a few of them got pheromones at Rank one and they just... let it all out.

"It's not quite bad enough to be mind control but I'd argue it's a lot like asking someone who's completely drunk if they're interested. People CAN say no but most of them won't have the willpower for it. They also don't appreciate the time and effort I put into getting better at sex. To a lot of them... there is no such thing as 'better sex' just 'not enough' and they're just WRONG about it."

Sue took in a deep breath. "Is it weird I think you three virgins probably understand better than they do what I mean? I'm not saying sex is some magical thing you should only do with the person you love. It's great fun and should be enjoyed by many, at least I think so. It's just... why don't most people

understand that there's nuance to it? You can be better or worse in bed. It takes practice to be good. Do they think I never practice? Test which of my techniques work the best on which kinds of people?"

Sue was clearly expecting an answer despite the question looking someone rhetorical. The issue was, nobody really knew how to answer her. Until Lily proposed, [I think I can actually empathise with her somewhat. I mean, very much not the same and it'll be embarrassing for you to relay but... remember how I talked about how nobody rated you right at the top of the girl or guy lists despite my opinion that you were far and away the best? Not sure if it'll help but you can share that if you think it will?]

\*As crazy as an idea that is... I think it might. Sue can understand that sort of language.\* "Hey Sue?" said Kat softly. Sue's eyes drifted to meet Kat's with a raised eyebrow. "Right well... Lily" Kat gestured at her girlfriend, "mentioned that while she doesn't know exactly what you're feeling. She has somewhat of a good idea. Back in our school it was pretty common amongst both guys and girls to rate how attractive people are. Based on the fact we're dating, you might be able to guess Lily thinks quite highly of me.

"In fact, she thinks there was literally no contest at all... before I got all my Succubus bonuses. She couldn't and still can't really, understand why nobody else seemed to notice. Though unlike you she was quite happy about that fact. No competition."

To Kat's shock, Sue started nodding like that made all the sense in the world. "Yes! Yes exactly. It's like we're talking about two completely different things when those friends of mine mention sex and I do. It's completely different and they're just so BLIND sometimes that I wonder why I still spend time with them. Of course, I know the answer is because I do still like hanging out with people and sometimes they have great stories. Not usually, but sometimes."

#### Chapter 749 Kamiko and the Ice Chest

Sue lets out a puff of air before turning to Kamiko, "Well, you've heard me complain enough for now. How was your last job Kamiko?"

Kamiko hesitates for a moment to look at Kat for permission, causing Kat to just raise a confused eyebrow. Blushing Kamiko turns back to Sue and says, "It was... interesting? I guess? If I'm supposed to be complaining I'll say that I've never wanted my wings to let me fly more than I have the past few days. It wasn't a horrible mission but I couldn't help but think it'd be so much easier if I could just fly!"

"Well, you'll have to explain it to us," said Kat, "Last time we talked about it you weren't too worried because it was clear you'd be able to fly eventually when you got stronger,"

"Yeah... yeah I guess so. Ok, my most recent Contract involved me searching for this box. I don't know what was in it but apparently whatever it was, was important enough to make not opening the thing part of the Contract just as high a priority as returning it to them. I also wasn't called in for my strength or any of my unique abilities.

"It was an ice world that was just heading into winter. See, whatever the box is, let's just call it 'the relic' was desperately needed in the capital for some ceremony or ritual or something. They were pretty cagey about it so I didn't push too hard. Just that I needed to find the relic and get it back as fast as possible, though I dodged that being part of the actual Contract just in case. The race there was one I'd never heard of before..."

“They were sort of a combination between bear beastkin and walrus beastkin. They had thick fur that was usually brown or black with large tusks and a thick layer of fat on their entire bodies. They didn’t exactly look fat because it was distributed really specifically but you could tell by how they all moved and how parts of their bodies... bounced for lack of a better term when they walked. They also had large tusks that could NOT be easy to deal with. They stuck up to be about as high as Kat’s horns.

“I’m also not sure if there was a difference between genders either. I might have only seen one, I only met a couple of them before I was sent out, but... I think there was at least one of each on the streets surely. Either way, the main way that they differentiate themselves was by braiding their fur in different ways. Braiding different sections, different coloured ornaments. They normally stuck to wooden beads but they also had a few of them with varnished sticks and stones, feathers. Didn’t wear any clothes though,”

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“OOoh, did you get a good look at the goods?” interjected Sue.

“Thankfully no,” said Kamiko with no more than a slight twitch of the face. She’d been waiting for that one and reacting meant that Sue won. “If they even had genitals they were certainly covered by the fur. Now, despite the fact their whole race has adapted to living on what is essentially a frozen hellscape they still have their limits and in winter it gets really bad. The relic was lost on one of the nearby mountains and while they can survive outside in the winter without too much trouble. Outside in the winter on tall mountains was beyond them.

“So I was sent out instead. It did actually take a fair bit of arguing back and forth before they accepted my Contract which was annoying. I’ll... I’ll just play it out roughly I suppose,” Kamiko trailed off as she sucked in a few breaths, did a few test hums and then started up once again in a much deeper voice.

“Where is your fur? How can we trust you to brave the winters without proper fur?”

“I’m immune to the cold I don’t need it,” Kamiko swapped back to her voice for ‘her’ lines.

“You do not know the chill of an Arctlan winter. You will freeze out there and we do not want to be responsible for it,”

“No I will not. It doesn’t matter how cold it is outside I am immune to it. It is simply part of my abilities. It is the reason I was summoned. Not all demons can survive this cold but I CAN”

“You are tiny as well. While demons are supposed to be strong, we’re not sure if we can trust little bald girl to find our treasure. Even with the locator we will be providing you,”

Kamiko shifted back to her normal relaxed position. “So it went on like that for a while, I got annoyed and offered them a chance to feel my cold fire. If it didn’t chill them they could refuse my service. I did warn them to be careful, repeatedly, but the volunteer stuck his whole hand straight into my demonic flames.

“He LOST that hand and was lucky someone was paying attention because they chopped it off before my fire could devour his arm. They stopped complaining after that,”

Sue’s eyes went wide. “That’s brutal girl. I can’t believe you just froze a guys hand off like that!”

Kamiko shrugged and said, "It's just a hand. With a bit of effort they can heal that up. Surely if they were important enough to be at my summoning they can afford such a thing or if it's all community barter they'll be able to get healed and pay it off later somehow."

Sue gave Kamiko a bit of a strange look. "I know your Mum is a hotshot healer but like... demonic fire wounds are pretty bad. It'll take more than just a regular healer to fix the hand. You need to remove the surviving skin around the area very carefully and then you have to sort of... coax the hand back into a proper state otherwise it'll just heal back improperly. Demonic fire like that isn't enough to cause corruption but it is enough to sort of... cling to the wound and cause healing to fail. Even demon healers can have issues with it,"

Kamiko's eyes went wide, a somewhat horrified look on her face. "No!"

Sue looked a little apologetic but couldn't let up, "I don't want to lie to you Kami. Not that I can. You should know that as well as I do,"

Kamiko bit her lip and took in a deep shuddering breath before looking to Kat for reassurance. Kat couldn't though. She didn't really know how bad such a thing was or how skilled a healer needed to be to fix something like that. "Is it really that bad?" asked Kat.

"Well. Sort of. Demonic fire can be sort of fought off by coating your body in mana or qi because it'll 'burn' that stuff first. Then if you can like... scrape the skin off and just let it scar over naturally it's not so bad. It's something about the healing process that doesn't play nice with demonic fire. Natural healing, if you can manage it, tends to give pretty good results actually. Though... how do you not know this Kami?" explained Sue.

"Um... sorry. I... maybe I did? I... I feel pretty bad about it now..." mumbled Kamiko.

Sue sighed dramatically, "Look Kami, the guy will live. Don't worry so much about it. They clearly didn't complain about the result otherwise you would have mentioned it already. Let's just go back to the story. Get your mind off it,"

"Right..." mumbled Kamiko, not quite as thrilled as Sue seemed to be but she did manage to keep explaining. "So... I left there... town? City? I'm not sure how many people they need. It was a pretty bit settlement but very spread out so it's somewhat hard to judge. Anyway, I left town with a bag of food and the compass thingy and headed for the mountains. What I didn't appreciate at the time was that instead of a normal 2D compass it was a little glass globe. I don't want to even think about how long I'd have been digging through the snow otherwise.

"See, what I didn't know was that the mountain was FULL of tunnels. So I spend a full day heading pretty much straight on to my destination, just trekking through the snow and dealing with it. I might be immune to the cold but sometimes the snow still gets stuck in my boots or worse MELTS. Like... WHY? I don't have proper body heat?

"Still, I dealt with that. Managed to get to the place and it was this big snow drift. Apparently somewhere under all that was my box. So I build a little makeshift igloo and set up camp for the day. Urgh... just looking back on it makes me so annoyed. Poor past me had no idea what she was about to be in for."

## Chapter 750 Got the Box

"So, camp setup, I've spent all day walking to the location and I find that it's a massive snow drift. I was also warned the tracker isn't quite accurate enough to give me something much better than 'around here' because it starts spinning wildly which hasn't quite happened yet. It's getting darker though and unlike Kat who has NIGHT VISION. Which is BULLSHIT, I didn't think to pack a lantern either. So off I go to sleep," said Kamiko.

"Yeah how come you have night vision?" asked Sue, "That seems like an extra ability and you've already got a few of them... oh the crazy shit I could try with regeneration!"

Kat shrugged, "My best guess is that it's part of my true sight. The thing is though, I can be forced to see darkness either through magic or just by lining the walls with black cloth and making it look like darkness. Apparently magical shadows don't count as illusions."

"Hmm, I dunno Kat. Maybe they do count but only if you're at a higher Rank. True Sight is a bit niche but is basically in its own weight class when it comes to detection abilities. Not much gets through it. Heck I've heard rumours it can even see-through clothes eventually so our friend might be a bit of a voyeur," said Sue with a cheeky grin.

Kat rolled her eyes. "I doubt it actually lets you see through clothes," \*Almost entirely based on the fact I'd have no interest in such an ability. Maybe other Succubi would gain it but I have no use for it.\*

[What if Sue's being silly but only in how she phrased it? Nira does medical stuff right? Well what if Sue left out that yes, it can see through clothes, but it also sees through skin and muscle as well letting you look over people's bones and find any hidden weapons or something.]

\*That... hmm... I feel like it'd still be its own ability but it's also more likely than my scenario. With Nira and Kamiko's fancy eyes I think chances are high that Nira already has such a skill and Kamiko will probably develop it at some point. Maybe eyes that can shoot X-rays and have a 'deadly' and 'vision' setting? Not sure how big of a deal radiation is for magical creatures.\*

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Kat glanced over at Kamiko who seemed uncertain. So to give her friend a slight push she said, "Kamiko, would you like to keep going with the story?"

"Oh. Oh yes right..." Kamiko fidgeted a bit. "Um... where was I? Um..."

"Sleeping" answered Sue.

"Right. Right... sleeping. I didn't have a tent or anything but I know how to make a little igloo so I was cosy enough. I was smart enough to grab a thick... not really a tarp or a blanket it was sort of a combination of both. Soft enough to help smooth out any sticks or rocks underneath it but hardy enough that I wasn't worried about the snow soaking through it like I would a normal blanket. I could complain about it a bit but Mum taught me not to be too picky during Contracts. Well, that or to carry a backpack with camping supplies but I'm really bad at setting up tents for some reason and I dropped that idea fast.

"Morning rose eventually and I got up, stretched a bit and started to clear away the snow. It took me a good few hours and what I should have clued onto was the fact the orb wasn't spinning. Still, I was standing exactly where it told me to go. I'm sure you can guess it but it was deeper in the mountains in one of the tunnels. I just didn't realise that yet. So I'm standing on packed ice. Massive amounts of snow cleared, and no sign of any caves so far.

"I decide to start digging a bit with my hands but unlike some people," Kamiko glared at Kat, "I'd have rubbed my hands raw digging at the dirt for too long and I can't just expect my body to fix the damage instantly. The last thing I needed was an infection on a snowing mountain. While it might not be bad for me, it would mean chances of rescue are low. See, a bit of a fever isn't enough for the System to call us back. If it's not life threatening it just won't bother. So if I caught something bad and got laid out for a week I'd be hungry and weak but not quite dead enough to just leave.

"After some thinking, I decided I needed a shovel. My backpack had supplies, rope and some knives included, so I got to work on making... well it couldn't really be called a shovel. More like a rock on a stick but it did give me more leverage and it helped save my hands even if it didn't dig very well..."

Kamiko trailed off and the other three waited for some sort of continuation. A minute passed and Lily decided to carefully make it known they wanted to continue. Hopping down from Kat's pillow pile Lily sauntered over and took a seat on Kamiko's lap. Kamiko sighed and started to run her fingers through Lily's fur. "Thanks Lily. I'm not exactly proud of myself but... I kept digging. For basically the whole day.

"It was only when I hit solid rock that I got fed up with things and stomped back to the igloo to check the dial again. I walked it over to the bottom of the hole... and no spin. It kept pointing down. That's when I remember how it worked and I was NOT happy realising I'd just wasted a full day digging. I wanted to set out right then and there to keep going... but it was getting dark so I curled up and tried to sleep.

"Tried being the key word here. Might have gotten a few minutes here and there and maybe an hour in the early morning but it was eating at me the whole time. I stomped around for a while. It'd snowed of course so I couldn't just retrace my steps and I didn't bother to follow the road once I got on the mountain so I was... I don't want to say lost because I had another compass for getting back to the city, but I didn't want to backtrack too far and managed to waste another day searching for a path.

"It was dark but I finally managed to stumble onto a cave just before all the light was gone. I'd probably left it a bit late because if I didn't find that cave I wouldn't have enough sunlight to build a new igloo. Anyway, it wasn't THE cave. Just a small cave that only went so far into the rocks. Slept there the night and got back to exploring. Around lunch time I finally found the path. I checked with the 'city' compass to make sure I was heading away from it, and checked my 'relic' compass to see that I was heading in the right direction and to my surprise, I WAS.

"So I followed that path for a while until the relic dial turned off to the side. Followed it for a while but making sure to only head straight and make a deep groove through the snow so that I could easily find my way back... and nothing. Walked for about an hour and not a cave in sight. This is where I really started to wish I had wings. I could have canvassed the area much more easily if I had the ability.

"Sadly, it was another day of wandering through the snow. Found a few caves and one that was decently long but it ended after 30 minutes of walking. I do mean walking by the way. Without any kind of light I



had to rely on the very slight glow from the compass and letting my hands run over the wall. I would occasionally use a flash of my demonic fire to check something but it was much too taxing to use often.”

“I’m not sure how much detail you want but I slept, kept searching and eventually found the box the next day. It was in the middle of a frankly massive tunnel that I nearly didn’t bother with. It also looped back around itself a couple times and I was worried I was heading in the wrong direction because of the compass. The only reason I stayed onboard was that I found this big clump of matted fur that got caught on a rock near the entrance. Lucky I did because I FOUND THE BOX!”

Sue bit down hard on her lip. She wanted to make a joke about Kamiko’s excitement. Perhaps something like, ‘found yourself someone’s treasure?’ or ‘You seem excited, did you lick it or did it lick you?’ but Kamiko’s frustration with the whole scenario had clearly been building in the background and it was only Lily keeping Kamiko’s hands busy that stopped a complete blow up. So, Sue took the high road. Allowing the smugness of that fact to keep her from blurting something annoying out.