

DEMONS 551

Chapter 551: Mounting Pressure and Closing Deadlines

Kat watched as Lily started to squirm in her arms and a frown started to appear on her face the longer it was being dragged out. "Are you ok Lily? You know you can tell me anything right?"

"NO!" shouted Lily suddenly and Kat froze. "I mean... yes... I mean... no... I... Um... look... Kat... I... I don't know if I can."

Kat wrapped her tail around Lily and tightened the hug. "Yes you CAN Lily. I swear to you that no matter what it is you can tell me. I don't know what's gotten into you but I swear it will be fine"

Lily felt her heart burning at the words. So much of her wanted to believe what Kat said but... *I already thought that was true once. I... I don't know if I can do this again. I NEED to do this though. Oh why can't I just SAY IT. It's not hard. Just a few words.*

Lily bit hard on her lip and drew a small amount of blood. The pain didn't help clear her thoughts at all though. Despite what she'd wished. Kat felt Lily tensing in her arms and smelt the blood just faintly, the tinge of copper and let her eyes go wide. "Lily. If you aren't ok I can help. Please just let me know what's wrong..." murmured Kat.

Kat please. I... I want to but I can't Kat. Why did it have to be like this? I didn't want this to happen again. I knew it was though. This isn't a surprise. I've known for MONTHS. Months and I didn't say anything. Now I need to make life altering decisions and the transformation I want will bind me to Kat forever. I need to tell her beforehand. I can't just... not tell her. But I can't. Why do you have to be so perfect yet so dense?

Lily wrapped her arms around Kat, and pulled them as tight as possible. It wasn't even a slight problem for Kat's demonic physique and it actually did make Lily feel a bit better. Still... emotions burned in the smaller girls chest. So many complicated feelings mixing together into a searing combination of guilt, joy, love, regret, happiness, and fear. All clumped together and making her feel like her throat was going to be filled from emotions alone.

Lily tried to calm her breathing down. She knew she was letting things get out of hand. She just needed to say a few things. Just three words. That would be all it took. *All it takes to break everything...* A traitorous part of her mind whispered. And despite how much Lily wanted to ignore it. Her past had shown her just how true those words could be.

"Ok" said Lily sucking in as much air as she could. "See... the um... the thing is... well it's just..." Kat tightened her hug fractionally and started to draw slow circles on Lily's back. "Thanks... um... right... it's just..." Lily took a second deep breath, somehow already out of air. "Right. This... um... transformation you see..."

Lily let the words hang there. A desperate hope that Kat would pick up her tangled train of thought and unravel it for her. Sadly, Lily wasn't making that easy on her 'friend' and Kat jumped to the wrong one. "Are you having second thoughts about it? You don't have to if you don't want to. I just thought you might like the chance. Being human is perfectly fine Lily. I won't be annoyed at that. Did you think I'd get mad for you turning down the offer?"

Lily wanted to scream but she bit back on the urge. She was already losing it slightly, she didn't need to be yelling at Kat. *Whatever I do. I can't yell at Kat. This isn't her fault. It's not her fault she's naturally so nice. So kind. So protective. So attr-* Lily cut off that last thought as if fearing just letting it play out in her mind would allow Kat to hear it. "It's not that" said Lily.

"Oh?" said Kat confused. "So... you do want to go through with it? That's fine as well... but what's the issue?"

Oh Kat. There's no issue with the transformation at all. It's everything else that's the issue for me. I so dearly wish I could explain that properly but apparently, I can only rant in my mind. Why are there no good books on this subject? Lily thought blatantly ignoring the fact she avoided those kinds of books on principle for the last few years.

Lily sucked in more air, part of her wondering how she was still feeling like she didn't have enough, as she took another attempt to explain things from her. "Right... um... so I found a transformation I like. I... I initially discounted the beastman transformations because they... they just weren't as useful or... or so I thought. See... um... it turns out that I was only looking at the naturally occurring races and um...

"You see... the list of races I can become that exist naturally... is not the full list. There are quite a few things that were on offer that... aren't natural. They are the result of... um... magic and rituals and whatever else... then... there are a few more that are just um... just ideas. Practically guaranteed to work but... not certain and... um... there is ONE exactly that really interested me..." Lily found herself trailing off. Her courage mostly spent and she still hadn't quite gotten to the crux of the issue.

Kat, trying to be helpful jumped in and filled in the dots. Incorrectly. "Are you worried about taking that risk? I can understand that, but if it's really what you want then I have no trouble going along with it. I just want you to be safe... but if picking up this experimental beastman race would make you happier. Well... this is a once in a lifetime opportunity."

"No!" croaked Lily somewhat forcefully. "I mean... no... it um... that's not quite it either. I... um... I was assured that if anything went wrong... it could be reversed before um... issues occurred and it wouldn't cost the token because it was an experiment but um... whoooo. Ok... Kat look it would... ok maybe I should just tell you what I'm looking at. Go through things from the top."

Kat nodded and Lily shakily continued. "So... I'm looking at the Memphis beast person transformation. They leave practically forever... and have really good growth potential. I can also pick any two extra affinities, and assuming I already have one that would make it three. Now, I'd be stuck not as a Memphis, or appearance wise at least, a cat person... instead I'd be an actual Memphis for a while... see... um... my soul and body would need to stabilise a bit... so I'd basically be a cat for a while."

"That's perfectly fine. I'm sure you'll be adorable" Kat cut in with a smile.

Lily felt like the world might be out to get her. She choked on the next words as she tried desperately to recover from that blow. Her face was crimson and the embarrassment and worry was trying to claw its way back up. She marched on though. As best she could. "Right you see... um... Memphis produce demonic energy... but they can't use it. They can store quite a lot before they have issues but not forever... so... um... they need to be bound to a demon. That... um... that would be you."

"That's fine" said Kat with ease. *Because of course she can say that easily.* "I'd be happy to be bound to you. Was that what you were worried about?" *No. No Kat it isn't. It's this next part. Oh god. I can't say it... but I have.*

Lily pressed the words into her mouth forcing them to be spoken and just barely managed to blurt out. "The problem is I love you"

Kat, perhaps not willing to recognise her own feelings on the matter, or perhaps not properly considering the nature of the conversation and the way it was said responded very happily with. "I love you to Lily, you're my best friend and I wouldn't have it any other way"

Lily felt something crack. Just slightly as she screamed in her mind. *Is she doing this on purpose? Tears were fighting for the right to exit her eyes but Lily fought them down. No. I will not cry. I... I need to know. God DAM IT KAT. I don't know what to think. Kat what the hell sort of answer was this? Is this one of those stupid moments in a love story I'm just supposed to nod my head and pretend I didn't just confess my feelings.*

That slight crack in Lily seemed to feel a force wrap around it. Determination burned through her mind. Lily's eyes started to burn, not from tears, but from force of will. I will not let this go unresolved.

So, she did the only thing she knew to force the issue. She turned herself over stared Kat dead in the eyes and kissed her.

Chapter 552: Cracks

Back to Kat's perspective

Kat completely froze. Lily's mouth on hers. Lips locked together. Kat's mind shut down at the same time as it exploded into a million questions. She would never know if she reflexively extended the moment or if the perception change was completely in her head but nothing seemed to move. Nothing could move as she desperately tried to scramble her mind into anything resembling working order. Kat.exe had crashed and wasn't willing to reboot.

Then all of a sudden the warmth on her mouth left and she started to hear sniffing. Kat's mind came aware just enough to see Lily, tears in her eyes pulling away but she couldn't make any sense of it just yet. Kat stayed staring, unmoving. Unable to properly deal with the thoughts thrust upon her as Lily backed up slowly looking Kat in the eyes the whole way as the tears started the flow further.

A deep sob came out as Lily turned and tried to spring away. At that point EVERYTHING that was Kat screamed in protest. Lily was crying and trying to run away. She was hurt and KAT WOULD FIX IT. She was a blur of movement. She was faster than she'd ever been on Earth. Faster than she'd ever been off world. But before she knew it, she was beside Lily before a second step could even be taken and Kat's hand was locked around Lily's arm.

Despite the haste though, Kat's grip was soft as a feather. A single tug from Lily would free her but now she was just as frozen as Kat had been. "I'm sorry" were the words that came out of Lily's mouth but they rang so wrong to Kat. Her mind struggling to comprehend them, and figure out why they were uttered at all.

What's going on? Why is she apologising? She has nothing to apologise for. Why is she sad? Kat asked herself these questions but her mind was in no state to figure any of them out. She was still trying to recover her full mental faculties from being kissed, and now she was desperately trying to figure out what was wrong with Lily, these clashing sources of confusion were doing Kat no favours.

Lily gave a light tug on Kat's hand. So light that it didn't even budge Kat's fingers the slightest. There was no weight at all behind the tug for Lily truly had no desire to escape. Still, her words repeated, "I'm sorry".

Kat decided that was enough for her. She didn't know what was wrong, or why Lily was sorry but no longer was allowing Lily to run an option. Kat brought her other arm up and around Lily before wrapping her tail around the girl as well. Once secured she carefully released Lily's arm just to lock it into place around Lily's waist. Kat, with no trouble at all, carefully pulled them both back onto the bed but as soon as they made it there, the tears started up again.

Lily curled up into Kat's embrace and just cried. *What do I do? What's wrong? Why is she so sad? I just... did I do something wrong?* Kat couldn't quite work it out, and she felt her own heart starting to burn with sadness of her own. Still, Kat fought back her own tears. Lily was crying and right now she needed to take priority. There was no other choice in Kat's mind. Of course, had Lily heard that conclusion much of the crying would have stopped.

This continued for a while. Kat was in no state to even think about the amount of time passing and Lily was the same. Eventually though Vivian opened the door with a camera and a bit smile on her face. It froze instantly when she got a proper look at the scene and that smile quickly turned into a frown. Letting the camera drop from her hands to hang on its cord she stared at the two.

At some point, Lily had fallen asleep, still sniffing occasionally and burying her face into Kat's outfit. Vivian took note of that particular detail and carefully and as quietly as possible worked her way to Kat's side. "What happened?" whispered Vivian so low no normal human could hear it properly.

"I... I don't know Vivian" said Kat, and the heartache bled into every word. She didn't know, and it was PAINFUL. As this continued Kat was starting to feel that pain overwhelming her. She knew that without an answer she'd be crying shortly as well.

Vivian let out a long sigh and looked between the two. She tried to think of scenarios for what she was seeing but the pain on both of the girls faces removed many of them as contenders. "Can you go over everything for me?" asked Vivian softly.

Kat nodded and repeated everything. She used her perfect memory to repeat the entire conversation, word for word, gesture for gesture. She left nothing out as she tried to piece her own answers together but she was too distraught to see the bigger picture. Vivian wasn't though. She just didn't exactly know what to do with that picture.

Eventually seeing the pain on Kat's face continue Vivian decided to act. She started to lightly shake Lily's shoulders until the girl woke up. When she did, Lily looked around and met Kat's eyes before her own went wide. "I'm so sorry" mumbled Lily, her speech shaking and her words barely audible.

"Now stop that both of you!" said Vivian with a soft authority. "Now. Lily. I need you to calm down and tell me what's wrong dear"

Lily swallowed and looked between the two other people in the room. "I'm sorry" said Lily, and Vivian glared straight at Lily and put a hand on her shoulder before tightening slightly. "Sorry. Um... sorry I'm... I'm sorry for falling in love with my best friend again"

Kat's eyes went wide but she wasn't in any proper state to process all the implications of the sentence right now. Vivian however was putting her full mind to the task. "Lily dear. That's not a problem. There's nothing wrong with that. Do you think you can tell me why you think you've done something wrong?"

Vivian made sure that Lily's whole focus was on her, distracting the younger girl from Kat and just trying to get her talking. A dark shadow passed over Lily's eyes as she considered it, she tried to turn away but Vivian placed a light hand on Lily's cheek and forced them to keep eye contact. Seeing the soft caring look in Vivian's eyes Lily's resistance crumbled.

"There was a girl named Stella" said Lily, her tone dead but her eyes hopeful. "We grew up next to each other. Her mother and mine became good friends. They didn't know each other before but because they got pregnant at the same time they bonded and from that point on we were nearly always together.

"I was always the quiet child, even as a baby. I hardly cried... but when I did you'd think that the world was ending. Stella cried often, even over little things, but she always tried to fight it. She was a fighter you know. She'd try her best not to make a sound. Or at least... that's what I was told later in life..."

Lily lost her thought for a few seconds but Vivian just started to lightly rub a finger around Lily's shoulder encouraging the girl to go on. "... right... um... so we were always together and never apart. We used to play together all the time. She was always more active than me, a sign of things to come I suppose. She was always dragging me into adventures you see. She'd pull me into the backyard to play in the mud or to go adventuring down the street.

"I on the other hand, would force her to sit still at story time. She'd hug me and I'd hug her as we were wrapped up in blankets and sat on someone's lap together. Normally it was Stella's mum's while mine told the stories but they swapped it out sometimes. Despite the crying we were happy little babies.

"She was the first to walk you know? She didn't abuse that though. As soon as she managed it, she toddled right up to me and tried to get me on my feet as well. I've seen the pictures and it's adorable. I didn't have my frizzy hair yet but she had tufts of ginger that would grow out beautifully later. Um..." Lily stalled for a bit and sucked in a breath. "No I'll get to that later. The pictures... um... yes. She taught me how to walk. How to walk together."

Lily stared off past Vivian as she tried to stop the influx of memories now that she'd begun talking. They threatened to overwhelm her but she bit back more tears. She had a story now. A story to tell and she would SEE IT THROUGH. She would not break down just yet. Information needed to be shared right now and she'd do it.

Chapter 553: Drifting Apart While Clinging to the Lost

Lily sucked in a deep breath and steadied herself to continue the tale. "That was really the core of our relationship when we were young. Stella would be with me every step of the way. Now some things I'd pull her into. The big one was reading. I started trying that out before we got to school and I tried reading to her. She'd even sit and listen to me thought truthfully I doubt it made much sense to either of us just yet.

"We did play with other kids at that age, but I don't remember them and none of them are that important you know? She was my best friend and I was hers. Even as babies we knew that if we had each other, we could do anything. We slept together a fair bit you know? One set of parents would take both kids for the night so the other set could get away. It happened so often that we probably spent more time in bed together than apart." Lily let out a forced giggle that didn't sound anything other than pained.

"Then we started school I suppose. That was terrifying for a younger me. I didn't know what to do. There was all these people and I didn't like ANY of them. Stella to the rescue though. She found me crying in a bush out in the playground easily and stuck by me. Promised to defend me from anyone. I still remember it to this day. She said 'It'll be ok. I'll protect you. I won't let anyone be mean to my best friend'. She might have been missing a few teeth at the time...

"She lived up to her promise for a long time though. A few kids tried to pick on me. Normally boys. They'd call me a cry baby and talk about how I didn't really deserve to be there because I couldn't deal with not having my parents. Stella jumped in front of the first ones and told them off, called them 'Big meanies that only felt good picking on little girls'. They didn't like that at all so they tried to punch her but she dodged a few clumsy strikes, using her natural athleticism till a teacher came along and saved us. She was my hero though.

"It happened a few more times, but what ended it was when someone finally got a hit in on me and I REALLY started crying. Stella came flying in from the side and jumped the poor kid that attacked me. She bit and scratched at him, and didn't let him go. By the end of it he was bleeding quite a lot, actually ended up with scars from it, or so my mother said. A teacher came over and asked what on earth was going on and... somehow Stella didn't get in trouble for it. She was defending me.

"Sometimes I wonder if that was the beginning of the end" whispered Lily softly. The story stalled for a bit as Lily gathered herself but Vivian could see how this all ended. The painting may only be partially finished but the lines had all been drawn in. Kat was getting most of it but her mind didn't want to connect the dots. Refusing to consider what horror awaited Lily at the end of her tale.

"Never mind..." said Lily taking in a deep breath. "It probably wasn't. Anyway, after that was elementary school and THEY had a library. I'd find myself there when I could. Stella would join me sometimes but she was always very sporty. She'd drag me out to the big free for all soccer game many a time. This is where she started to gather other friends. In elementary school.

"That was ok though. It was always Stella and Lily, the two strange best friends that didn't share a lot in common. We had each other's back though. I'd help her with homework every day after school except Tuesday because that was sports practice. I think she played soccer but I don't know for sure... it changed to tennis later on. I remember that clearly.

"Anyway, we started to have a friend group. I don't really remember any of their names and there was just so many. I didn't really talk to the rest of them. Stella was enough for me. I'd hang out with the others for her, and that was all. Eventually I started to help them with homework sometime as well, in later elementary years but not all the time. Mostly just the hard stuff. Stella I'd do it with almost every day.

"On the weekends I'd still get together with her and one of our parents would watch us. Sometimes we'd go out. We went bike riding, roller blading, mountain climbing, you name it. Stella always said that we lived in my world throughout the week at school, and so I could spend the weekend living in hers. A nice sentiment I suppose. And a cruel irony if looked at from later on..."

Lily sighed, the lights dimming in her eyes again. Kat was now enraptured in the tale, her sadness mostly forgotten and replaced by great joy at hearing Lily talk and even greater joy from hearing about the girl's past. So Lily continued, "Perhaps I should skip forward a bit. Nothing much happened in Elementary School other than that. A few more bullies tried things, but they never worked. I had Stella and she had a posse.

"But then come High School. Everything changed. For both me and her. Firstly, Stella got really into tennis. A few friends stuck around for that, but a lot left. That didn't matter because she picked up a whole new set of them. I do know their names but... they don't really matter either. I don't want to think about it.

"Anyway, we were in High School and Stella had started to... really develop. She wasn't my little red haired best friend now she was... ok she was HOT. Ahead of her years in many ways. At this point... ok well it isn't really fair to compare but in general well... she had long red hair, though less red than Kat's, and she I doubt she was as tall. Oh and she was tanned from all her time out in the sun. Something I never really managed.

"That was when I started noticing things. Realising what I found attractive and what I didn't. Something happened that first year at high school, that I buried deeply for some time. Still it wouldn't really matter that first year.

"The second and third though. That's where all my problems were. See, once she got into tennis Stella started to play competitively and she was good. Suddenly she was one of, if not the most popular girl in school. She had a big group that followed her, a bunch of boys that were interested in her, and she didn't exactly have time for the nerdy best friend any more.

"I actually did try. See I... no I won't say it just yet. Anyway, I tried to be around her as much as I could at school... but we didn't see each other for homework often and occasionally I'd do both sets alone. When we were in school, I didn't really get to talk to her with other people monopolising her time...

"Then they started talking about boys and how good they looked. Something I just... couldn't comprehend. That... I think... was the real beginning of the end. See... before that, she played tennis because she enjoyed it. She was popular because she was attractive and skilled. She stayed popular because she played the game of school."

Lily let out a long sigh but didn't stop long. "She started to pick on other... kids? Were we kids at that point? I guess so... but I doubt Stella would like to hear that. Looking back on it... I wish I'd stopped her but... after I told her off for it once and she berated me for 'getting worked up over nothing' I didn't have the heart to deny her.

"So the terror began. She established herself at the top of the pecking order and what little time I spent actually talking to her more or less vanished. I didn't even notice it at the time. I still sat with her. Still ate lunch. Still lived next to her... but I know now she wasn't my friend any more.

"This all came to a head one day when a boy asked to talk to her alone after school. So obviously she invited all of her friends... even me. I think it was the first time she'd spoken to me directly in months at this point and even though I had a bad feeling... well I went with her... and it was uncomfortable. I didn't like what I saw... and I ignored most of it.

"What I saw was Stella systematically tearing into this poor boy. Devan? I think his name might have been. Pointing everything possible that was wrong with his appearance, his life choices, and talking about how he had the gall to ask her out when she didn't even like him. How much of an idiot he was. Still... that was nothing compared to the idiot I was about to become."

Chapter 554: It was Perfection. And it was Pain.

"The worst part was... when I lay in bed that night. I didn't feel bad for Devan anymore. I didn't hate the person Stella had become. No. In more foolish, naive, gravely incorrect mind. I thought I had a chance." Lily let out a shaky breath. Looking away from everyone but still willing to continue her story.

"I'm sure you've worked it out at this point but I was in love with my best friend at the time. Stella. It wasn't necessarily hard to work out. I may have stared a bit long when I saw other girls change a few times... I found myself wondering what it would be like to kiss Stella more than once... and a few other girls as well.

"I found myself drawn to romance novels from a guys perspective, mostly because I couldn't find any Lesbian romance. Yes I said it. I can do this. I've said most of it. Come on." Lily let out a long breath and steadied herself. At this point even Kat could see where this was going but couldn't find it in herself to tell Lily to stop. To tell her it was ok. To tell her she knew what was wrong now.

But the story continued. "So I'd figured out I was gay. Devan was turned down and I decided that maybe I had a chance with Stella. I mean... despite all the horrible stuff she'd said, Devan was actually a pretty cool guy. He was nice to everyone, liked to play basketball, he was tall? I think he was attractive... maybe? Obviously not to me... but I remember some of the other girls liked him at least.

"So I asked Stella if we could hang out just the two of us. She shot me down... but I kept pressing. I brought up the old days even knowing it would be NOTHING like them. I asked her quietly for a few weeks until eventually... I don't know if she figured it out, or was just done with me asking her and decided to get it over with. She said yes, but we were going to play some tennis.

"I said this was fine, spent the afternoon losing to her horribly of course but that was fine. Eventually when I can hardly move she comes over and says, 'so what's this really about?'. I'm actually on the ground at this point. I can hardly move, I'm face up on the ground and she staring down at me. At the time I thought it was one of the most breathtaking sights I'd ever seen. Now I like to say I didn't have enough air from all the exercise.

"Still, I steeled myself, getting to my feet was a challenge but I did it. I looked her in the eye and asked her if she wanted to be my girlfriend. Stella laughed in my face. I was shellshocked, and when she finally stopped laughing she said, 'Fucking dyke. We aren't even friends anymore, haven't been for years. Why would I ever want to date you even if I was faggot like you?'

"Then to rub it in further, she walked away, swaying her hips, in that way some women do when they want you to stare at their ass... and walked over to a friend of hers and gave them a high five while laughing and asked if they had it all on camera. The other girl said yes."

Kat's eyes widened in horror but Lily put a hand to put a stop to anything Kat might have said so she could keep talking. "Now, the idiot had the lens cap on, and you couldn't hear anything. A saving grace if there ever was one... still by the next day the entire school knew. Suddenly I was the only target for Stella's groups bullying. Every single one of them took a crack at me. I didn't hear the end of it until I broke down from the stress. My grades were suffering. My parents were worried. And one day I just collapsed in the middle of class. That's when my mum heard the whole story."

Lily sighed the wind starting to leave her sails somewhat before suddenly she got a second wind. Her eyes started to gain that light back in them as she glanced between Kat and Vivian. "So, I was pulled out of school. A broken girl. I spent about a month doing home school stuff before I went back for just a day and nearly collapsed again after they all came after me again, talking about 'my poor constitution.' As if they hadn't been harassing me for ages. I couldn't do it and I left that school for good.

"I spent another... month? I think... recovering at home and we moved. I moved here in fact. Going in to a new school was terrifying, but I knew that nobody would have heard about my sexual preferences... so I hoped it would be better. Instantly I picked up a trio of bullies you know very well Kat..."

Kat nodded and hugged Lily tighter burying her head into Lily's frizzy hair just to get the sense that she was ok. And Lily... kind of was. The momentum from her story continued to build and she just took Kat's actions in stride. "Then in swooped you Kat. If I was terrified of school... initially you were my biggest nightmare. I say that with utmost affection. You were everything that Stella was and more. You had better legs SOMEHOW despite not playing sports. You were taller, you have nicer breasts, your face just looks nicer, you have perhaps the best hair I've ever seen, and you did back then before you turned demon and now it's BETTER SOMEHOW.

"Your ass is alright. Honestly... Stella probably still wins that department but that was never my fetish." Lily shook her head, clearly away her lewder thoughts. "Right... anyway. So the best looking girl at school, who looks like my ex-crush except better in basically every way and definitely all the ones that matter starts defending me from bullies and I start freaking out. I don't know what I'm supposed to do with this.

"But you're so nice. You sit with me. You listened to me talk. You'd join me in the library and just... just sit with me. And... OH GOD. It was nearly too much in those first few weeks because I just didn't know how to handle it. Your body was already great and then you had to show your personality was just as good if not better. I didn't know what to do.

"And then came the day. The day you told the bullies to target you and not me. That you wouldn't even fight back if they did." Lily sucked in a deep shuddering breath as tears of joy started to leak from her eyes, "I cried that night you know. I gave up fighting my crush on you and decided to be your friend as soon as I could work up the courage.

"I decided that same night I wasn't going to tell you. You were too nice. Too perfect. I half believed you'd say yes to a confession just because it would make me happy. I wasn't going to ruin something by telling you. Never. So we became friends and they were the happiest days of my life.

"Then you became a Succubus and... GEE Kat do you even know what that was doing to my insides. My dreams took a... so much more... specific and erotic nature after that. I tried. You were my friend it was wrong to think that about you no matter how much I loved you but... I couldn't stop them any more and frankly didn't want to try."

Lily let out a long breath that somehow just seemed like her winding up for the next blow. "So then you fulfill my other dream. You just basically hand magic to me 'here you go Lily you can have magic now'. It wasn't even a question for you. I was your friend and you... you were just HANDING ME the one thing I'd dreamed about since I was a small child. Something I had long since considered impossible.

"I nearly confessed to you right then and there. It was so close. But I chickened out. Then I tried to stick to my promise once again... until we got here. I found out that the best race would quite likely be a Memphis Beastman... and I would be bound to you forever. Oh it was everything I could ever want...

"But I also felt like a disgusting shell of a person. I knew I could go through with it easily. You'd say yes Kat. Of course you'd say yes... because you're just that nice. I'd have everything I'd ever want... and it would be a lie. I'd have betrayed the trust of the most important person in my life. And I couldn't do it.

"So here it is Kat. My confession. I'm in love with you. I had a crush on you since we met. You are beautiful. You breathtaking as a human and NOW you are otherworldly gorgeous. Your personality is brilliant and you are so kind. And I love you dammit. I just needed you to know"

Chapter 555: Kat's Response

Huh. That explains some things.

Kat forced her mind to overdrive as her emotions threatened to overwhelm her forcing her mind to speed up as the world practically froze. Then the guilt came. The idea that she was abusing her abilities just to have more time to react to Lily's statement somehow struck her as decidedly unfair. Lily didn't have this chance, and a large part of Kat felt that she shouldn't either. Despite that, the much stronger part, the one that knew this had to be done right slammed down on the guilt forcing it deep into the corner of her mind and crushing it so that it would not bother her right now.

The next thought that welled up was for Kat to just return the kiss. She reflexively went to shove that thought away as well but before she could, her thoughts paused. When they started moving again Kat took the idea and carefully pulled it to the side, letting it rest in her mind but no longer in the front of it. As much as Kat did want to let Lily know she cared... starting things off like that would be dishonest.

I cannot simply kiss her. As much as I might like to do that... it would only be returning the gesture as a show of how important she is. I don't feel the same attraction she feels for me... or well... not in the same way at least. I'm not sexually attracted to her... but I don't think I'm attracted to anyone like that. So, what should I do? Honesty is best I think. Where do I start though?

Kat wondered on that question and looked to Vivian as if she would find answers... only to realise that at some point the older woman had left. When did that happen? Kat looked through her memories and found that Vivian had actually left towards the end of Lily's story and closed the door behind her as Lily spoke the last words. *How did I not notice? Ok fine I was obviously paying too much attention to Lily at the time...*

With that way of finding answers Kat tried to think of her other options but her gut was telling her it was best to be upfront. To tell Lily the truth as she saw it and pray that an answer would come as she spoke. Kat let her mind speed up... and got to work. First Kat picked Lily up and turned her around so that the shorter girl was practically straddling her. This caused Lily to blush bright red which only got worse when Kat put her tail on the other girl's lips.

Kat started her words slowly, each carefully stated so there was no confusion. "I have some things to tell you as well Lily. Now please, I beg of you to let me say them all before you react too much. That might be hard but I need you to promise me ok?" Lily nodded still blushing but it was dying down and there was determination in her eyes to see this through.

"I don't know that I'm attracted to anyone" Kat said and watched Lily instantly tense, "sadly this seems to include you... but I have no preference for male or female, no childhood crush to match your own. I... I'm not sure that I can." Memories came to Kat, the strange questions Sue and Lillian had asked. Their reasoning now so clear. They were trying to work out who or what, if anything, she was attracted to. Lillian at least seemed to guess that nothing was an answer.

Kat blushed as she thought of the next part. "I haven't really considered... being like that with anyone. Oh sure... I've had ideas of marriage in my head as an idea. Someone to grow old together with... but... I never managed a face. Not even a dress or a suit for whoever would stand across from me. Just... the idea of it seemed nice... but I never fancied anyone. Not like that.

"I... um..." Kat felt her own blush creeping but knew it needed to be said, "I haven't even err... explored myself all that much. It um... it wasn't really a concern for me when I went through puberty. The first time I ever found out was when a younger girl at the orphanage asked me about it... and I had no idea what to say.

"So I... went looking and... none of it really made sense to me... I just... I didn't feel the need. Never did and still never had. I did try... exactly once... but it just... just was. Sure it was a more sensitive area... but I didn't get enjoyment or... um... any sort of release from it so... I never tried it again and I don't really want to.

"I... I have heard... that um. I think I've heard anyway... that um... some people that don't... that don't... er... um... those that do feel like me. That don't need sex actually find it disgusting. I um... don't feel like that... but it just... it's like... it just sort of is you know?"

Kat let her words stand as she saw Lily deflating slightly and a sharp pain shot through her chest. Kat felt her mind slowing once again as she tried to piece things together. *Well that's something.* She could still feel that odd uncomfortable feeling in her chest that was telling her something was wrong. *Why am I feeling like this? I didn't say anything bad. I was honest what am I afraid of? Lily leaving or something?*

As soon as she voiced the idea a massive well of panic assaulted her mind and Kat struggled to keep herself in slowed time. She pushed against the worry and fear and the sharp pang of loss that just didn't want to stay down. *Oh god. Do I... but... it's different? Or is it?*

Kat's thoughts swirled as she continued to try and beat back the worst of the feelings assaulting her but they didn't seem to be letting up. *Do I love her?*

The emotions stilled slightly as the words hung.

Kat wanted to say no. That she didn't love Lily in the way Lily wanted to be loved but her emotions boiled at the idea of speaking those words, of denying that she loved Lily. *But it doesn't make any sense. I have no desire to kiss her or sleep with her... I just want to hug and protect her and keep her safe from everything, and make sure she's happy and stand by her side forever and OH GOD I LOVE HER.*

Kat felt the weight of the knowledge settle on her shoulder like a ten-tonne weight but she'd never felt stronger and the weight rested on her easy. For a just a moment. Then the guilt came again. *I still can't love her as she does me though... I'd kiss her if she asked. I'd hug her every day... but would I be willing to take things further?* Kat didn't know. The idea wasn't horrible but it didn't exactly feel right either she couldn't properly picture Lily pleasuring her. Then another thought occurred to her Lily may want Kat to return the favour. *That opens up a whole other can of worms... could I do that?*

Kat didn't know. Her mind alone could not give her the answers to these questions. Still the thought of leaving this as they were. Of not letting Lily know how much her company truly meant. The mere idea of it burned at Kat.

So Kat swallowed the spit in her mouth and continued to speak. "Lily... Lily I... I don't know what that means for us. I don't know that I can ever love you the way you care for me but... I do love you in my own way. You are the most important person to me with Sylvie as a close second. I... I don't know if I would be good for you but I want nothing more then to keep you happy forever..."

Kat tried to continue speaking, to ask Lily to find someone else but the words wouldn't come. They were lies. Kat did not want Lily to find someone else. As much as it pained her to admit it even internally without concrete thoughts. Even if she didn't feel the lust for Lily that Lily did for her... she wasn't willing to give up.

"I wanted... I wanted to say that you should find someone who can return those feelings to you... but I can't say that honestly. I don't want you to do that. I don't know when it happened but I really do love you as well. I don't know if I can be what you want but I'm yours if you'll have me." Kat finished softly as she slowly unwound her arms and tail from Lily leaving her free to do what she wanted.

Chapter 556: Lily's Answer

This perspective starts just before Kat saying "I don't know if I'm attracted to anyone"

Lily sat enraptured. Her emotions had already been going all over the place before Kat spoke any words. The loving way she was being held was taking her mind places that certainly weren't appropriate for two friends. *Is this a sign? Is this part of Kat's answer?*

Lily didn't know. She also didn't know if she wanted to know. When Kat finally spoke though, she had Lily's full and undivided attention. So those first words "I don't know if I'm attracted to anyone" hit her hard in the stomach. Even though just before this Kat had said to listen to everything before making judgement, she couldn't stop the sharp stab of pain that occurred.

Still, Kat continued speaking and the words were not welcoming. Despite this... Lily couldn't help but find a spark of hope building. As counterproductive as it was Lily could feel that Kat was building to

something. She knew her friend well, and knew this wasn't the end. If Kat was going to simply shut her down she knew Kat would have been blunt about it.

When Kat spoke about how she'd never considered being with anyone that pain returned but it was subdued. Lily knew there was still more to this story... perhaps much more. So she listened, and tried not to let her heart be stolen by the girl she'd been placed upon. Blushing deeply when Kat brought up the fact she had only played with herself once. Lily's mind started all sorts of fantasies based off that one line even as she dragged her focus back to Kat. This was important and she was now determined to seer this conversation into her mind.

When Kat passed back into deep though, Lily saw only an instant where Kat's face morphed through a dozen different emotions, perhaps more before Kat's eyes went wide and settled into determination. When Kat started to speak, there was a sad finality in them and Lily felt her own heart breaking as the words spilled out of Kat's mouth.

Until Kat stopped. Until she was stopped. Lily couldn't help but find her heart soaring and she didn't know why as Kat said her final piece on the matter. "I wanted... I wanted to say that you should find someone who can return those feelings to you... but I can't say them honestly. I don't want you to do that. I don't know when it happened but I really do love you as well. I don't know if I can be what you want but I'm yours if you'll have me."

Lily hardly heard the words. Her mind panicked horribly when she felt Kat's tail leaving her. When the arms no longer supported her she wanted to cry and scream at the world... until those words finally caught up to her. "I'm yours if you'll have me" Lily felt her mind explode in that moment. Tears sprung unbidden from her mind.

Oh Kat. This is more than I could hope for. I don't care. I'm not even surprised. I love you Kat and this is enough for me. I can see... I can see that you love me as well. I can only hope that our love is compatible.

Lily leaned forward unsure. Eyes locked on Kat's for a moment before darting to the Succubus' lips and back to her eyes. Lily continued to move in slowly giving Kat practically an infinite amount of time to stop her. To push her away. Even if this wasn't something that Kat desperately wanted as she did. Lily felt it in her bones. This was something she NEEDED. This was a moment she'd never forget and it needed to be sealed.

When Kat made no hint of reproach, no movement away, Lily watched as Kat moved her arms up and felt the tail starting to wrap around her own midsection once again. Heat and joy bloomed within her and finally she made it to Kat's lips pulling the Succubus in tight.

Light exploded. Lily felt perfection well up within her. From an outside perspective. It was clumsy. Their faces pressed together too much, teeth pressed against each other when the appropriate response would be to open their mouths a bit. Noses crushed slightly by each other, Kat's own giving way a surprising amount for the moment. It didn't matter. To Lily it was the greatest feeling she'd ever experienced.

The feelings burned within her and she knew, whatever else may come in the future. She had made the right choice. Kat had responded. Likely using her instincts as a Succubus and not following her own lust...

but Lily cared not. Kat had responded in what was to her the most beautiful way possible and Lily already loved it. Wished things to never end.

MINE

Lily pulled back eyes flying wide as Kat's did the same... but now they were bright purple and glowing. The voice had been strange to her. It was clearly Kat's and yet... it wasn't. *How did I... how did I hear that? What was that?*

Lily tried to take things in around her but couldn't help but feel a further surge of joy that made her feel like bursting when she tried to think about the words. Something ancient had decreed her Kat's... and she felt no fear. As if things were now as they always meant to be. Of course... then she realised she was on fire. Literally.

Purple flames surrounded her and Kat, linking them both together yet it didn't hurt. It felt like the gentlest embrace shared between two lovers that have a lifetime of love tying them together. Lily felt the future, the past, and the present in these flames. They were a shock, but she had no fear from them.

Of course. The questions burned in her mind and despite how much she dearly wished to savour this moment. To try and recall what Kat tasted like as she'd been too distracting in the moment to figure that out... the question wouldn't stop. So she asked. "Um Kat... not that I don't absolutely love this but... why am I on fire?"

Kat's eyes unfocused slightly in the way they always do when she's asking D.E.M.O.N.S something. It was a look Lily could recognise anywhere... alongside a dozen other faces of Kat she'd engrained into her memory. So she knew an answer would be forthcoming... but it wasn't the one she thought. "Um... so... apparently it's a thing that Asexual Succubi have... there aren't a lot of details on it but... it's apparently a thing to help us deal with love? I don't have the details on it but... it's basically confirmation that yes we can be together. I asked it a follow up if it meant we were the only ones for each other... I... I couldn't help but asked and it said no. All this means right now is that we have potential... but I'm ok with that I think. Lily... I said it before but I love you. I don't want some instinct driven thing to force that. I want to work on it together with you"

I dunno Kat... I think I'd be just as happy if I knew we were the only ones for each other... but I understand where you're coming from. You don't want magic to force it. You want us to just love each other. And I... I can get behind that. Of course... I get to be magically bound to you forever anyway because of the Memphis transformation... so I suppose we both get what we want.

Lily sighed in joy as she pulled Kat in for a hug burying her face into Kat's hair and taking in the precious scent of grass, the slightest tinge of smoke, and the fresh morning breeze and it was wonderful. "I want nothing else Kat. I love it, and I love you, and I'm so happy." Lily felt herself tearing up again.

As if I haven't cried enough on Kat today... but I can't bring myself to care. I'm still so happy that I really just can't imagine an issue with it. "I was so scared Kat" said Lily softly into the bundle of red hair she'd commandeered. "I'm not any more... but I was so... so scared Kat. I don't know how I managed to finally tell you but I'm so glad I am."

Kat shifted in place slightly so that she could press Lily's body into her. Lily instantly got several more embarrassing thoughts that she tried to squash on reflex before pausing. *No. We're together now. I

CAN have these thoughts.* Lily nearly laughed out loud when the realisation hit her. "What does this make us Kat? Are we... are we dating now?" asked Lily hesitantly.

Kat answered in her typical fashion. "I don't really care Lily. I love you, you love me. I'll call this whatever you want."

Lily felt herself practically purring in Kat's arms. As silly as the answer was, and as much as she may have wanted something more concrete. It was a very Kat answer. It was perfect. She wanted nothing more.

Chapter 557: Settling into things

We now return to Kat's perspective

Kat hugged Lily close to her. At some point they'd shifted so that Lily was practically laying on Kat with her wings around them both and tail wrapped around Lily's waist. Her left arm partially pinned but hugging Lily the best it could, while her right casually stroked Lily's side. The pair were happily dozing, not slipping into sleep, just letting the moment wash over them in full.

Kat was surprised by the warmth. She'd felt happy spending with Lily before... but it was lacking such an intense feeling of contentment that she wasn't sure could be matched. Lily was warm somehow. The temperature of the human body shouldn't be enough for Kat to notice, but she did. Perhaps it was part of the weird fire that had covered them, perhaps not, but it was warm and ever so comfortable. She had no desire to move.

Lily seemed to have similar ideas, curled up and resting her head in the crook of Kat's neck. Lily's soft breath blew a few of Kat's hairs around. To a normal person it might have been arousing, for Kat it was just soothing to hear and feel Lily breathing. To know she was there. Lily on the other hand was taking full advantage of it. Letting Kat's scent fill her lungs and desperately tried to keep her mouth closed lest she start cackling from sheer joy. Never really believing this day would come.

At some point Vivian poked her head in with the camera. Kat heard the door and cracked an eye open just for a second on instinct but saw it was Vivian and her brain immediately classed that as 'safe and less important than Lily' and shut back down promptly... something Kat would later be embarrassed about but Vivian would forever find exceptionally adorable. Eventually, Kat would start to think on things somewhat. Her thoughts never strayed far from Lily though.

Why didn't I do this before? I mean how did I not see it? What could things have been like if we'd got together earlier? A traitorous part of her mind whispered that without the proof from her demonic instincts that this could work she'd probably have tried to set Lily up with someone else, but Kat was willing to ignore that for now and fantasize. The thing was though... not much would have changed.

Kat realised that any time she didn't spend helping out at the orphanage was time she spent either sleeping, eating, or spending with Lily. They did all their work together, they had spent practically all their free time together, and even if they couldn't always get together on the weekends, they managed it pretty frequently. They'd probably have spent even more time if Lily's parents were happier to see Kat.

Wait a second. As that final thought ran through Kat's head it felt like a record scratch had sounded off. *Is that the reason they didn't like me? They thought Lily was latching on to the first attractive redhead in the area and assumed I was going to destroy her the way Stella did? Oh... oh dear. I... hmmm... I wonder how angry I can be at them knowing they really did have her best interests at heart and aren't just rude. Still they didn't even try to know me! Then again I guess they'd known Stella for a decade and that still ended horribly. Maybe I should ask Lily?*

"Hey Lily?" whispered Kat not sure not quite sure she wanted to disturb her friend? No... girlfriend? Neither felt quite right but that was something to deal with later.

Lily, while very comfortable, would never miss the chance to respond to Kat's voice did so, "Yes?"

"I was just thinking..." started Kat

"Oh no" whispered Lily with a giggle, still riding the emotional high of the moment and willing to be sillier than normal

Kat rolled her eyes and continued "Right, so I was indeed thinking, about if I should be annoyed with your parents now. Before they were just assholes at worst, and quite rude at best... but if they just didn't want to see a... is it ok to say it? A repeat out you know what?" *novelnext.coM*

Lily twisted herself slightly so that she could sort of see Kat's eyes. She wasn't willing to leave her very comfortable spot for something as seemingly meaningless at that moment, as eye contact before saying, "Yes it's fine to say it. I... I might react a bit badly in the future if you bring it up but it's something I've mostly dealt with and I won't hold it against you mentioning it. I'm sure this" Lily dragged her hand all the way up Kat's side, who was surprised to find herself gain some goosebumps from the gesture, "has helped me immensely. It already makes me feel silly that I thought you were going to stop being friends with me, or even start bullying me if you knew. Oh sure past me still would never believe we'd end up together, but she should have at least realised you were good enough to understand.

"As to my parents..." Lily let out a long sigh, "I'm honestly not sure who I'm more annoyed at. They both knew. I had that conversation with them multiple times. I told them you were nothing like Stella, that it was different, that you'd befriended me first and it surely wasn't just to torture me later... but they didn't want to listen. They just saw the big scary redhead... with legs for days and such wonderful eyes... and I shouldn't be saying that about a fr-" Lily stopped and her eyes went wide. "I can say it!"

"Yes, yes I can" Lily let out a few giggles as she wiggled in place as if it would get her closer to Kat than she was. Unlikely considering she was basically plastered to Kat's side, but the attempt was made, "I can actually talk about how attractive I find you. God I didn't know I had a fetish for thighs before I got a crush on you and now I wonder how I missed it. Anyway, sorry I'm getting distracted. Even if I'm allowed to now I shouldn't blow off your original question." Despite Lily's worries though, Kat smiled. The compliments did surprisingly little for her, but it was the JOY in Lily's voice and the passion she spoke with that warmed Kat. "So. Parents.

"I don't really care if you stay annoyed at them. I told them. I told them multiple times. Mum refused to move on really. She was scared that I was just one or two comments away from turning into a crying mess again. Sure I had nightmares occasionally which I bet didn't help, but they certainly weren't about you." Lily paused to say the next part under her breath "No, it was other dreams you featured

prominently in," so of course Kat heard it perfectly well. "But she was ruled by her fear. So very scared that history was going to repeat itself...

"But here's the thing. She didn't even really DO anything you know? Sure she was a little rude to you, and prevented us meeting up a few times but she didn't even have the decency to really put her neck on the line for me and tell you off. I think on some level she knew you were a good person, and I'm certain she knew you were my only friend... so she didn't simply chase you off. No instead she was just bitter about the whole thing and I think that might be worse than just doubling down and being truly horrible for what she thought was a good reason, or just swallowing her pride and being nice.

"Dad on the other hand. Just did nothing. He'd go along with Mum when she was around and more or less ignore you when you weren't... but I could tell he didn't believe for a second you were a second Stella. He just went along with it because it was easy. Because it was what Mum was doing. And yeah now that I'm saying that, I really do feel more annoyed about him. Even though he's gotten a little better recently.

"Because at least Mum, in her twisted way, was doing what she thought was best for me. She did it out of love. She was wrong, but at least she cared. Dad... he just followed Mum along. And maybe you could argue that he did it because he loves her but... I imagine he did it because it was easier. He didn't really want to take a stand and knew I'd probably forgive him for it. So he listened to Mum because she might not have if they really got fighting, or that's what he'd say. I don't believe they'd? really get so far into the argument that it'd cause real problems for their marriage but I'm pretty sure that's what Dad would say if pressed.

"So... no, I think we can still be annoyed at them. And ooh boy are they going to be pissed when I turn into a cat. I can't really find it in my to form any remorse for that though. I want it more than anything and this can be my bit of petty revenge"

Chapter 558: Weird and Wonderful Relationship Questions

"What about your family?" asked Lily suddenly. It had been a few... ok a considerable number of moments since Lily had finished speaking of her issues with her parents. Neither minded, and Lily certainly wasn't going to leave Kat's embrace any time soon if she had anything to say about it.

"What do you mean?" asked Kat

"Well... I mean, is there anything I should know about the orphanage or Gramps or Vivian, Callisto and Sylvie? I may have talked for a while but my family is much less complicated even if they are more annoying" said Lily softly into Kat's ear.

Well... I don't really have the same issues and I think everyone on that list actually likes Lily. "I don't think anything really comes to mind Lily. Gramps would probably find some way to make a joke about it. Maybe ask for a rug as dowry or something. The rest of the orphanage... well the little ones would either be confused that I picked another girl, or they'd just be happy I found somebody I like. We don't really have that many old enough to understand the implications properly or have their own opinions. Even if the teens say otherwise don't listen to them.

"Um... Vivian, Callisto and Sylvie... well I'm pretty sure Vivian would have adopted you already if it was socially acceptable. She hasn't been too happy with your parents and she likes you quite a lot," Lily gained a bit of colour in her cheeks at that.

"A good thing she didn't. I'd hate to try asking you out after you become my sister. That'd be so much harder" grumbled Lily good naturedly. As Kat grimaced at the thought.

Oh yeah. I'm really glad that didn't happen. I would have certainly justified the fact that I don't feel any lust when I looked at Lily as familial love. That would have ended horribly for everyone. The me in that timeline would be miserable. Or at the very least never know how happy this has already made me. I could sit here with Lily for a week and stay happy.

"While I can see how you might find that funny Lily, and I'll admit it is a bit, imagine how it would have played out. I would have justified away my own feelings and maybe yours as well if that happened. It would have given me such a convenient excuse," said Kat

Lily grimaced as well and buried her head into Kat's shoulder to let out a long groan. Kat just held her closer and continued to lovingly run her fingers up Lily's side. "It's fine Lily. It didn't happen. Plus, your parents would have to be much worse for you to end up living here"

"Maybe... but Kat..." said Lily with a slight tinge of sadness, "if somebody had put the idea that you only love me a sister in your head before now... wouldn't things have been just as bad?"

Kat swallowed heavily realising that Lily was probably right. So she pointedly ignored that and went back to the topic that got them started down this rabbit hole. "Callisto probably likes you enough" Lily sighed and leaned in to Kat, which was a surprise to the demon, that she was just willing to go with the sharp topic transition, "...it's just really hard to tell with her if I'm honest. I doubt she'd complain... but she may have started taking notes on our private lives."

Lily's eyes actually lit up a bit at the idea as she started to giggle with words breaking free every now and again. "Oh Kat... Kat I can picture it... hehe... how many times we kiss in a day... how often we sneak into... each other's rooms... maybe even how long it takes... takes us to kiss... because I'm sure you can hold your breath longer than... me... hehehe"

Kat started to laugh softly as well mostly just being uplifted by the sound of Lily's own laughter. It was uniquely her. Even the giggles were in oddly hushed tones, as if Lily was afraid to laugh in the library lest she be overheard. Still, the sound was clear and very pleasant to Kat's ears. "She might start noting down how many hours of the day we spend hugging each other" added Kat

Lily continued to laugh, "No, no no Kat. She'd need to mark how many minutes we spend apart. It'd be less time to keep track off"

The girls burst into shared giggles after that and found it a struggle to talk for a while. They didn't even need to add anything more to it. They both tried, but as soon as they caught one another's eyes they burst into laughter again and it continued. This repeated for a surprising amount of time, and once things calmed down again the new couple were quite happy to just enjoy the moment again.

Eventually, Lily did ask, "What about Sylvie? She's the only one you haven't mentioned"

"Hmmm" Kat hummed at the question as she thought it over. "Really I foresee one of three paths Sylvie could take. She's surprisingly mature but also still a kid sometimes. She's either going to be very happy that I found someone. Two she's going to be annoyed about me not spending as much time with her. Or three, she's going to nod as if she knew this was going to happen the whole time and continue on business as usual"

"Yup that does sound scarily accurate" said Lily with a slight shiver as she prated for option one or three. "I mean, I wouldn't want to take time away from her. Trust me I know what it's like to not get to spend as much time with a loved one as you want" Lily poked Kat lightly in the side, "but she's free to hang out with us. She's adorable and important to you... and I doubt I could say no if she asked. Plus... well what sort of things will be doing?"

"Um... like... oh" Lily started to gain a pink tinting to her skin once again, "I... I want to ask what... um... what limits we have? Wait... don't answer that. Um... what... what I meant to say was... um... what do you want to do? Like... I get that you kissed me. Trust me I LOVED that. I would never say no to more... but... does that sort of thing make you uncomfortable? What about in the future when we want to go further... or well... I guess that'd just be me. Um... still the question stands"

"Well, certainly nothing inappropriate when Sylvie's around regardless." Said Kat firmly.

Lily just smiled and gave Kat a quick peck on the cheek. "Oh? And what do you consider inappropriate? Does kissing count?"

*That's a good question actually. Probably not? Where do I draw the line exactly? This feels like a weird question. I've seen Lily naked before, and I'm sure... well at least I think she's seen me naked. She always used to look away with a bright red face. Which makes a lot more sense now than just her being shy. Anyway... what does count as inappropriate for kids? I don't think Sylvie would care about cooties or something silly like that, but if she doesn't fully understand that kissing people on the lips is only for when you have a partner you really love... nah she's not that dense. I'll explain it to her if Vivian won't but yeah. Kissing should be fine.

More though... I don't really know. I'm certainly not going to be feeling Lily up or anything because that isn't a particularly big draw for me... should I stop her doing the same? I doubt I'd really react too much unless she went right for the... um... sensitive areas which I'm sure Lily can tell is very inappropriate. But what are the between steps? I... I find myself not actually knowing? What comes between kissing and sex?*

"Lily I have had the startling realisation I don't know what comes between kissing and sex." Stated Kat

Lily chocked on air. "I'm sorry what?" Kat repeated the question. "I'm still quite confused... I mean... no what are you talking about?"

"Well... er... I mean..." Kat felt embarrassed now for not knowing what seemed to be common information, "So. Kissing is fine around Sylvie but sex isn't. Those are clear... but what happens in the middle? Surely there's something else in between?"

Lily paled slightly as she looked at Kat. "Oh please tell me I don't have to go through this with my girlfriend" whispered Lily but seeing Kat's honestly confused expression caused her to sigh "Oh god she really doesn't know..."

"Ok. Um... look. There's a difference between a somewhat chaste kiss on the lips and me trying to stick my tongue down your throat alright?" Lily glanced at Kat to find only more confusion.

"Why would you want to do that?" asked Kat genuinely wondering why that would be enjoyable.

"Nope. Nope Vivian can explain this to you. This should NOT be my job" groaned Lily

Chapter 559: Realising that Boundaries Need to be Set... Reluctantly.

"So... um..." Lily stumbled slightly on the words. Even knowing that Kat had a lot to learn when it came to stages of relationships, she felt the need to ask. "what... um... what are you comfortable with when Sylvie won't be around? I don't want to push you of course... I just... where do I stand?"

"What do you mean?" asked Kat

"Well... I mean... it's embarrassing to say this... but... does kissing make you uncomfortable? What about going further? I don't want to rush of course but... um... well... I'd just like to know what's possible I guess" murmured Lily. Once she finished speaking she buried her red face into Kat's side to hide it.

Kat just smiled and started to let her fingers trail through Lily's bushy hair. "I really don't mind Lily. We can take this at your pace. I've seen you naked before and it's never been a problem before. If you want to go further then that... well we can try. We covered this though. I don't feel grossed out by the idea at all but I'm not called to do it. I feel a stronger desire to rub my face against yours or give you a hug and wrap my tail around you then kissing. Not that it isn't nice. It was... fine? I guess? I was freaking out a bit both times so I don't really know how enjoyable it would be when calmer"

Lily sighed. Kat's answer didn't make things any easier on her, but she also knew that she wouldn't trade making things simpler for someone other than Kat. "Kat you can't just ask me something like that. I have so many conflicting answers. Obviously a large part of me wants you to just... just... go all the way... BUT. That's the very horny part of me that's freaking out over having a Succubus for a girlfriend.

"The more rational part of me wants to take things much slower. While you might not know much about kissing... I did... no ok you know me well enough I'm not even going to pretend. I did a lot of research on the subject, and... I think we can take the time to explore that before going any further. Oh, and while you might want to say that I can take the lead again... please take a bit of initiative as well. I... I don't want to be worried about if I should kiss you or not all the time, and it's going to take a bit for me to realise that it's ok you know? So... as long as it's nothing too extreme I want you to take the chance if you can. More for my benefit than yours I guess... but if you don't mind... that's what I'd like"

Well even I'm not so dense as to miss a cue like that. Despite Kat's thoughts Lily was just being honest. She wasn't trying to signal Kat in any way... so when she felt her body being lifted she was somewhat surprised. When Kat, trying to 'take things slow' gently brushed her lips against Lily's before letting their mouths meet, Lily's mind had already turned pink.

Kat stepped things up though. Somehow just listening to her instincts she lightly sucked on Lily's bottom lip as the kiss went on and Lily felt her mind explode. Kat might have just been enjoying the fact they were sitting together but Lily was experiencing whole new worlds of feeling. She felt like she was flying yet at the same time had never felt more sure of her place in the world. Part of her wanted to wrap her

arms around Kat and deepen the kiss. That part was rapidly overwhelmed by pleasure when Kat very gently bit into her lip and she blacked out for a second.

When Kat pulled back, she looked at Lily for a sign that she'd done well only to be met by glazed eyes and a smile as wide as it could go. *Hmm... did I overdo it? Is she ok? Why does she taste like cherries? These are the questions I want answered... but they don't feel important right now.* Kat pulled Lily in closer, rubbing the side of her face against Lily's as she tightened the grip she had around Lily's body.

It took a little while for Lily to come back to the land of reality, and feeling Kat's smooth skin rubbing against her face was such a wonderful feeling she nearly lost herself in that as well, moving her head in concert with Kat. If asked, she'd say it was practice for when her Memphis instincts take over soon. Of course, unlike Kat, she can lie about things, so she could get away with that excuse.

Eventually, Lily's breathing calmed down and her mind returned enough to pull away and snuggle back into Kat's arms. "Yes, exactly like that" panted Lily. "I don't really understand what you did... but that was great. I... I think I made the right call limiting you to kisses. That was already nearly overwhelming for me." Not willing to admit it wasn't 'nearly' anything.

Kat was surprised to find herself actually blushing at that. *Why am I blushing? Am... am I embarrassed at knowing how to kiss? Why? Also why do I know how? Is it all natural instinct now? Hmmm... I doubt I could have managed something like that as a human... seems like the Succubus transformation gets another mark in its favour. Not that it really has anything marks against except for not being able to hide the demonic appendages.*

"I'm glad you approve" said Kat before giving Lily another quick pick on the temple. She felt Lily's whole body shiver at the touch and watched the smile that was slowly returning to content go straight to full power again.

When Lily spoke, her voice was slightly heavy as Lily had somewhat given up on reigning her rampant feelings and breathing in at this point. "Definitely. Top marks go to Kat" *NOvelnext.coM*

Kat grinned wide letting the slightest bit of teeth show, "Oh? Top marks from the researcher herself? Why I can hardly think of higher praise" Kat felt a burst of warmth at actually being able to say the words, finding they rang truer than she'd thought when she started the sentence.

Huh... I wonder if that changed now that we're together... or if I always held her opinion in such high regard? Especially the way she said it. I can't help but feel inordinately pleased with myself for some reason. Aw well, it's not important.

Lily flushed at the praise, especially as she knew Kat couldn't lie, just one of the many things she'd engraved into her mind about her crush. "Thanks" mumbled Lily, as she tried not to let her heart burst out of her chest.

The pair lapsed back into silence for a while, before Kat decided to bring up, "So how are we telling people? I doubt you want to hide this, and Vivian already knows, but what about the others?"

"Wait Vivian knows? I mean... I'm not terribly surprised but how does she know?" asked Lily

"Oh right... you probably weren't paying attention but when we were relaxed together after our first proper kiss where we both participated and I wasn't just standing there like a dead fish... she sort of

peaked into the room and took a few pictures. I... I wasn't really paying attention at the time? My mind basically registered has as unimportant and not a threat and went back to enjoying hugging you" answered Kat.

"Oh..." said Lily, then more implications hit her. "OH. Wow... I'm surprised you were so out of it. I mean... I know I was but... I thought... well... no I'm just really happy now" Lily took in a few steadying breaths now forced to reign in some more of her feelings. She had already set the bar for Kat's reciprocated affections exceptionally low so as to not be disappointed. To find out Kat had all but completely ignored Vivian just to keep her full attention on their hug was a weight off her shoulder's she didn't realise she was carrying. "So Vivian knows. How soon before she just tells everyone?"

"Um... she'll probably want permission to share... but if Callisto catches her with the camera then Callisto and Sylvie probably know already" said Kat

"Hmm. I guess that's fine. I imagine their reactions wouldn't be too fun to see when they find out" said Lily with a shrug, "Well, Sylvie maybe but it won't really be the same. My parents though. Oh I NEED to be there when they find out, however we want to do this. Maybe I should just invite you over and kiss you..." Lily paused as her face turned bright red. "Nope. Never mind. Kissing you in front of my parents is too embarrassing.

Of course, Kat did what any good girlfriend ought to do in that moment. Kissed Lily lightly on the nose. It was a critical success.

Chapter 560: They KNOW

Before the kiss could properly deepen though, Kat heard the door open and pull back. The pout on Lily's face was adorable, and Kat thought it was worth remembering for the future. In small doses of course... likely with additional kisses afterwards to make up for it as well. Still, Kat dismissed the idle musings and turned to face the door, as she did so, Lily righting herself as well though unable to remove the blush on her face.

Vivian poked her head into the room slowly, as if giving them extra time specifically so that they were not caught out doing anything they didn't want known. When her eyes finally settled on the two, she started to poke her head in properly, and said, "You two want to come down and eat now? Food will be ready in a moment"

"Oh Um..." stuttered Lily.

Seeing her girlfriend's trouble Kat spoke up, "Sure that sounds good to us" and Lily calmed down. Vivian gained a massive grin on her face and pushed the door open allowing herself to return to full height as she did so. While that was happening, Kat got out of bed and practically carried Lily into an upright position. The girl in question action rather sweet and was glowing red when she got to her feet.

When they made it out to the hallway, Vivian said, "I see you've both sorted things out finally"

Kat frowned, "Wait... how long have you known Vivian?"

"Yeah, I thought I was... actually pretty good at hiding just how head over heels I was for Kat" said Lily softly, "I mean, I'm not too surprised, but I managed to hide my feelings once before, how did you guys pick up on it this time?"

Vivian grinned, "That's very simple Lily. Once someone spends enough time with you, it's quite clear that you have three smiles." Vivian set her face into a slightly more 'relaxed' smile that didn't look natural on her face. "The first is your polite smile. You show it when things are alright, when it is required of you, that sort of thing..."

Vivian then raised her mouth into what was a more fitting smile for Vivian, "Next is this smile, it's what I like to call your research smile. It means you've found something particularly interesting and must get to the bottom of it. Sometimes it moves around," Vivian tilted her smile from side to side letting some parts dip as others raised, and even crinkled it up slightly, her eyes shone to add to the effect and her ears even moved very slightly... but it was always a smile, "but it's very clearly still your research smile.

"The final smile, is the one you slip into when around Kat. Normally you just wear your research smile, but occasionally you slip up into your real smile. Now give me a second this one is a little hard to do..." Vivian stepped back slightly and schooled her face into a line. Taking in a deep breath, Vivian stilled... before Kat and Lily watched her whole face change.

At first it was like the research smile, large and vibrant, eyes shining with ears just slightly out of position, then it all changed. The barest hint of more teeth and Vivian's mouth practically glowed as the corners of her mouth took on slightly less sharp angles even as the smile remained just as large. Her eyes which were already shining now seemed to gleam but with more depth to them, the darker areas dulled out, unfocused, even as the brighter areas shined more. It gave her whole face a slight glow somehow that just radiated happiness and content.

Kat let her eyes go wide. While it did look slightly out of place on Vivian, the recreation was stunning. Kat's mind involuntarily spun through dozens of images of Lily giving that EXACT smile. A time in the school library where Kat had glanced over to her. Another when they had commandeered a tree to each lunch underneath. More recently when they had been on the couch together just earlier today, and a plenty of other instances besides.

Oh my god... how did I never see this? It's so clear! I mean, Vivian's ability to mimic the exact face is also a truly stunning fact that I should probably revisit... but she's so very correct. When Lily is around me and not properly focusing she DOES slip into that exact face. I... I never connected it with love. I wonder when it happened the first time?

Kat thought back to their first few interactions and couldn't place it. Certainly nothing in the first few weeks of their friendship... but there were slight glimpses of the face when she'd told the bullies to come for her instead. *That might be the moment... or perhaps just the beginning and the real moment of realisation is later... still... I just can't believe I didn't notice.*

Lily was taking a different approach to this. First, she was actually quite glad to know that she had a 'I'm in love with this girl' face and wouldn't change that for the world. To see how different it was, was also something she would treasure forever. The knowledge that Kat didn't just make her happy, but... whatever Vivian was projecting, was a wonderful bit of knowledge she burned into her soul. The question it raised though, knowing her observant the other two members of this house were... "Wait how many people noticed?"

Vivian let the mask slip and returned to her own signature grin. Kat noticed something at that. Despite just how perfect Vivian's replica faces had been... they'd felt hollow to her. This was a genuine Vivian smile, and Kat was quite happy with the knowledge she could pick them out.

"Most people who matter I imagine," said Vivian. "I'm great at faces and people so it took me all of a day for me to figure out you had a crush on Kat, and a bit of extra time to confirm it wasn't just a crush. Callisto and Sylvie have known for ages. Sylvie might have even known longer seeing as she knew you both first. Your parents... well I'm not sure if they've figured it out. It's not hard to pick when you know what you're looking for... but you did hide it pretty well"

"Oh dear." Said Lily with resignation, "I guess we better face the music. Let's go meet the other two"

Kat nodded and followed Lily downstairs. As soon as they hit the ground floor, Callisto glanced over for a moment as she moved around the kitchen and Sylvie pointedly stared. "About time" said Sylvie, "Now, did Kat figure it out, or did Lily tell you first?"

Kat narrowed her eyes as she sat down at the table next to Sylvie, "Why?" asked Kat

"Because Callisto and I have a bet going on" said Sylvie in a 'It's obvious how could you not guess' tone of voice.

"Er..." Kat glanced over at Lily not sure how to answer that. Technically speaking Lily didn't managed to SAY anything straight away. She'd panicked and kissed Kat instead.

Seeing that Kat wasn't going to answer Lily sighed as she sat down. "I couldn't get the words out and kissed Kat instead."

Sylvie nodded, "About time... but I'm not sure who wins the bet in that case... Callisto what do you think?"

Callisto glided around the kitchen as she finished plating a roast for everyone with a platter of vegetables for everyone to grab at off to the side. "That is a good question. I believe the terms were... 'what will happen first. Will Lily crack and admit her feelings, or will Kat figure out that Lily is in love with her before Lily manages to ask'... but I do not believe either of us consider that Lily would go for a kiss to start things off"

"Hold up" said Kat, "Does it count that Lily did admit to loving me first but I, like an idiot, said that we were best friends and I loved her as well?"

The other three girls all winced at that. "Kat. Kat I can't believe you did that to the poor girl" said Vivian halfway between trying not to laugh and being appropriately horrified.

Sylvie had given way to the giggles, "It's so Kat though. She WOULD say that. I bet there wasn't a second of hesitation, and that she said something like 'you'll always be my best friend' didn't she?"

The cringe on Lily's face was enough to confirm it and Vivian let out a pained cackle. "Oh my god she didn't? Lily please tell me our poor dense Kat did not, say you were friends in answer to your confession"

Lily cringed and replied, "Well... I mean... kinda? It... um... it wasn't exactly... I kinda just blurted it out? There wasn't that much lead up and it might have... well it was an easy mistake..."

"Nope" said Vivian, "She is never living this down while I'm in charge around here... and likely after that as well." Vivian turned to Kat, "Kat sweetie. We love you, and we think you're adorable and quite good looking, and a regenerating immortal succubus, but if I ever here of you doing something like that to poor Lily again I will find a punishment for you, and it will be burned into your mind ok?"

"That's not necessary" said Lily panicking, "I mean... it all worked out. We spoke to each other, I got a girlfriend, she's beautiful. It's fine if she's a bit dense when it comes to picking up romantic intentions..."