

## DEMONS 591

### Chapter 591: The Weight of Eternity and Permission to See it

Twenty minutes later Evaline was finishing her third cup of coffee and most of the pot at this point. She couldn't help but sigh at her daughter that was clearly stuck in her mind. Quite a few times she considered just getting her daughter's attention and snapping her out of that before deciding the potential for a fight wasn't worth it. On Lily's side of things, she was wrapped up over analysing every physical aspect of herself and trying to work out what things Kat might like. That was until a strange thought struck her.

\*Wait... after I have a Memphis form would Kat prefer that I stayed like that? I'm not sure if I prefer that or not...\* Lily started to picture herself curled up in Kat's lap and started to salivate at the idea. \*Oh yes. I have found the greatest benefit of this transformation, being able to envelope myself in Kat's thighs without people thinking its weird. I'll just be like a normal cat. Totally not because I have a leg and thigh fetish.\*

Lily let out a small giggle that caused Evaline to sigh heavy into her latest cup of coffee. She also decided that if Lily started giggling again it would be time to snap Lily out of her thoughts. Whatever place she'd ended up was clearly far removed from the issues she'd raised. "At least she looks like she's enjoying whatever it is now," huffed Evaline. The giggling however, reached Lily's ears and started to clear her mind slightly.

\*Ok whatever that was... I think it was a bit too far. I mean really Lily laughing is fine but giggling like a pervert is not the way to go about things. I'm surprised you didn't drool over everything. Yes I know Lily I'm you and complaining to myself but you know what. We deserve some criticism for it. Or I do? Not sure how I want to word that. Um... what was I supposed to be doing?\*

"Hey Mum..." started Lily

"Oh? You're finally back Lily," said Evaline cutting in, "I thought I lost you there"

Lily was about to retort before her eyes slowly glanced over to the rather empty coffee pot then over to the mug in Evaline's hand. "Oh" said Lily.

"Oh indeed" said Evaline with a grin.

"Um... how... how long was I out for?" asked Lily

Evaline smiled and fought down the temptation to say that it had been days as a joke Lily would never believe... then fought down the harder temptation to answer with an hour or two to humiliate her daughter a bit. "Twenty minutes" answered Evaline honestly though with some regret.

Lily winced. "Sorry Mum... I got distracted" as the words left Lily's mouth her mind started flashing back to her most recent fantasy and her eyes started to glaze over. Evaline wasn't having it this time and slammed the coffee mug down onto the table with decent force and snapped Lily out of it before she got too wrapped up in her fantasy again.

Giving and awkward cough Lily turned to the side in order to not be looking directly at her mother as she blushed. It didn't help too much but it was something. "Soo... what were we talking about?"

"Getting you ID" said Evaline. "We were talking about how hard that would be. As well as the potential for invalidated medical tests and vaccines. I mean... I can't take you to the hospital after this, or the doctors. Even if I was willing to blow your secret or you found some way to hide things it's not like they could actually help you. You wouldn't be human anymore and we hardly understand how to fix ourselves. What if you picked up some sort of magical disease? Then we'd really be in trouble"

\*ID shouldn't be too bad. I can probably hide my features for that somehow. Maybe do my hair up or wear a bow or something to hide my ears. On the medical side of things... that could be a bigger issue. Do I get healthcare as Kat's familiar? Actually, D.E.M.O.N.S do I get healthcare.\*

That information is not currently relevant to Acquaintance Lily and as such Acquaintance Lily cannot access it.

\*What does that mean? Maybe? Why isn't it relevant? I want to turn myself into a Memphis and bind myself to Kat... unless that isn't considered a familiar bond? Dammit I'll have to ask Kat. Now how do I answer Mum about everything...\*

"ID shouldn't be too bad" said Lily, "I'm sure I can figure out a way to look human for that... but medical stuff... well demons have good healthcare, and they would be doing the procedure so maybe I can get on that? If I can that would sort all my issues out."

"What are the chances they allow you to use their healthcare? You aren't a demon," asked Evaline firmly.

\*Well because I'll be magically joined to Kat I imagine the chances are decently high. Maybe like seventy, thirty, in favour of healthcare... but I really don't know I'd have to ask Kat. Or maybe Nira? She'd definitely know if Kat can't find the information though I'm not sure if Kat can contact her or not.\*

"I think it's likely?" said Lily uncertainly, "I mean, if I do go on Contracts with Kat, I should at the very least be covered for injuries or sickness I pick up while away from Earth but I'm not sure about more standard healthcare things. So... I definitely wouldn't die but if I had consistent migraines I'm not certain they'd help. I think they would, but I'm not certain"

"I suppose that's better than I was imagining. You really think demons of all people can be trusted with healthcare though?" asked Evaline with honest curiosity and a slight hint of distaste.

"Yes I do," said Lily easily, "I... I'm not sure why demons have such a bad name but they mostly seem like decent people. A little indulgent some times depending on what their vice is, but overall, quite decent. Their society seems more advanced than ours but also quite stable. I think it's because of how long they live. They got to a tech level that let them do practically anything easily and then slowed right down after that. Or that's my guess anyway.

"Kat doesn't exactly know a lot about them but based on what I know of history it's the only think I can think of. Otherwise, they should outstrip us by so much that it isn't funny. Unless Kat just went to a low technology area which... I suppose that's possible? A way to make sure nobody gets overwhelmed. They do seem to have older stuff as well. I think they keep multiple tech levels around so that everyone can use something."

"That's an interesting thought... and I admit I hadn't considered just how far ahead technology wise they might be. Medical care is probably much better for demons then..." said Evaline thoughtfully.

"Oh it's much better" said Lily, "mostly because they can use demonic abilities to heal people. Actually, I don't think we ever went into Kat's regeneration did we?"

"You brought it up briefly when lifespans came up" answered Evaline.

"Right well... um... Kat can take a lot of damage. Like... dammit I don't want to picture bad things happening to Kat. Ok, um... I'll use one that did actually happen. So, back before her wings were stronger she had to glide while carrying someone. Kat got up to speed and then crashed right at the end of the flight... into gravel." Evaline was already wincing, "yes and with Kat the way she is, she protected the other girl with her body.

"Kat broke multiple bones but the real icky part is that the gravel shredded her front and the skin around her throat. She had to spit up rocks for a bit" Lily shivered just thinking about it, "but she was fine. Completely fine, no scarring even though her throat and a good chunk of her face was torn up. So... yeah. And demons have skills to heal others that much"

Evaline sighed. It was a lot to take in and one of her few remaining reservations. Knowing just how easily Lily could get help if something happened to her eased quite a few worries. Evaline knew her daughter wasn't properly thinking of the long term consequences, but harping on too many of them would probably have Lily point out that these consequences really weren't that long term and she'd live more than long enough for them to be forgotten by the rest of Earth.

Evaline twinged at that thought. The realisation that Lily, if she went through this, would probably outlive not just people on Earth, or humanity, but EARTH. The whole thing. The solar system as well if she was careful. Seeing such a long life ahead of her daughter Evaline felt weary. "I wish you good luck Lily" said Evaline softly. "I give you my blessing... but you'll have to explain it to your father"

## **Chapter 592: The Path Back Home**

We return to Kat's perspective just as she left Lily's house.

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As the group walked away from Lily's house Kat tried to suppress her worry. She knew well enough that Evaline's dislike for her had never translated to issues with Lily outside of disparaging her choice of friends but Kat couldn't help but feel like she'd left her friend- girlfriend to the sharks.

\*She'll be fine. Lily lives with Evaline, she has experience dealing with this... but it's a lot to take in. I wish we weren't asked to leave. Then again... maybe my presence would have made this worse. I doubt I'd let her insult Lily at all and Evaline is more than willing to fight with me. It would probably be best if the conversation stayed calm and quiet for everyone involved.\*

"Something on your mind?" asked Vivian who was currently walking ahead with Sylvie in her arms. The little girl didn't really have a choice in the matter, Vivian just scooped her up after they left the house and Sylvie loved hugs so she wasn't complaining. Though, how Vivian knew Kat was thinking deeply was another question as Kat was walking behind her.

"I just wonder if it was right to leave Lily to Evaline. I mean, they certainly get along better when I'm not around but... I dunno it just feels wrong," explained Kat.

Vivian shifted Sylvie around so that she could shrug properly with both shoulders, "It's hard to say. Personally I believe we did the right thing otherwise I'd have just stayed if I thought it was going to be a real problem for Lily. Even if we stuck around eventually Lily will have to be alone with Evaline and all we would have done is pushed the real conversation back"

"I suppose so" mumbled Kat as she kept walking down the sidewalk. As that particular thought crossed her mind though she asked, "Wait why are we walking around the block?"

Vivian faltered in her steps just slightly but she recovered, while Callisto was the picture of calm and didn't stumble in the slightest at the start of their little train of people. Vivian glared at her friends back as she realised, she'd just fallen into step behind Callisto. "Yeah, Callisto why are we walking?"

"Evaline was watching us. If we simply headed to the back she may have noticed and I am not entirely sure if she knows where we live. I think it would be best for us and Lily if she did not figure it out" replied Callisto.

"Pretty sure I told her," said Vivian, "Or at least I think I did when we were delivering stuff... or was it back when I met her the first time? We might be ok though because I'm not sure if I was specific about it. Kat do you know?"

Kat quickly skimmed her memories but found nothing. "No idea. I could look but it would take going over the whole memory slowly."

"Don't worry about it then," said Vivian, "I don't think it's that important. If she knows, she knows. It's still my house I can just tell her to leave if it becomes an issue."

Kat wasn't entirely sure about that answer but she was willing to accept it. It did sound like something Vivian would do, so she was sure that if push came to shove Vivian would happily turn Evaline away. On the other hand, it seemed like asking for trouble and not terribly polite.

\*I wonder what Callisto would do. Sylvie would probably check who it was and just ignore the door if it was Evaline... but yeah no idea what Callisto would do. She takes the maid thing pretty seriously and I feel like that would mean she'd bring Evaline inside and distract her with tea or something but... with Vivian saying she'd just turn her away maybe Callisto would do the same? I wonder what takes priority... then again... if she takes the maid thing specifically and thinks of herself not as a maid but Vivian's maid... then how does that affect things? I... I don't really know.

Better question what would I do? Then again... I suppose if it really comes down to just me Lily would be around and I'd do as she asked me. If Lily wasn't there I can open it and let Evaline do whatever she wants, yell at me or whatever as long as it doesn't spread out.\*

Despite taking the long way around and living in the middle of the street the walk really wasn't that long and the girls found themselves back at home rather quickly. Kat let her shoes dissipate and found herself rather thankful she didn't need to bother with tying them up or taking them off anymore. It was one of the small benefits that offset how often the wings could get in the way of things. Of course, Kat thought the ability to fly more than made up for it already, but the other small things were nice as well.

Plopping down into her chair she'd left out Kat wondered about what she should be doing for a few moments before realising she had a bit of time off. \*I wonder if now would be a good time to learn how to use my fans? I really need to get around to that and if I have some time now that would be perfect. Hey system how long until I need to take another contract.\*

Arbitration results are still being processed. Time until next Contract is inconclusive currently.

\*Hmmmm. Not sure how I feel about that. Kat bit her lip as she considered that. Not exactly what I want to hear... but I suppose I have at least a few days? Maybe? I guess it depends on how my Punishment is counted. Is each punishment a Contract or is the whole thing one extended one? Aw well. I guess its fine. Maybe I should send a message? Actually can Minor summon me with the Emergency Beacon to start my training? Is that ok?\*

Accepting lessons is an acceptable use of the Emergency Beacon. User Kat and Summoner Minor will not be penalised for usage of the Emergency Beacon in this way.

\*Well that really is good to know. I'll have to talk to Lily about it, but considering she wants to go through the race change maybe I can learn while that happens... though actually... how long will the process for that be?\*

Race Change timeline unknown. Final confirmation of race required and Doctors for procedure need to be determined. The smallest time for such a change is 24 hours.

\*Well that doesn't really help. I guess I'll talk to her about it. Do I need to be there for the Memphis linking and stuff?\*

User Kat need only be present for the final step of the process of Acquaintance Lily chooses Memphis as new race. User Kat will be Summoned for it. Process does not need to happen immediately as build-up of Energy to dangerous levels takes time, especially in younger Memphis.

\*Well that's good news. I won't have to be constantly worried I'll need to be by Lily's side. Ok, I'll send of this message to Minor then asking about training... and maybe one to Nira telling her about the race change. She might want to participate as a doctor. It would be polite to let her know at least.\*

With that Kat started working on her messages. The first one to Minor was a bit more involved and talked about what she'd been up to explaining the punishment and the arbitration as well as the results of it all before she got on to her request. Kat talked about how it was fine to use the beacon for this and that she was free for a while but might need to leave quickly for a medical procedure. Kat didn't feel like mentioning exactly what Lily was doing over a message even if she was about to spill that secret to Nira, Kat wasn't planning to visit Nira.

Once the first message was done, Kat debated sending the message to Kamiko to relay to Nira or just straight to Nira. In the end, because of the fact she didn't have anything better to do or a limit on messages she decided to send one to each of them. Nira's letter went into more of the details explaining what Lily had been looking at and how Memphis beast person was the final choice Lily made along with her three affinities she wanted.

For Kamiko's letter Kat talked about how she now had a girlfriend and that she was seeking some advice from Nira. Kat decided to let Nira distribute the information on the specifics if Kamiko asked. After

mentioning Lily's knew status Kat did wonder why she hadn't mentioned that at all to Minor... but couldn't quite place why. Still, Kat had sent the message to Minor and couldn't change it now so she just shrugged and finished working on Kamiko's letter.

\*Maybe I should write one to Sue as well... hmm... no I'll ask Kamiko if I should share. That should work.\*

### **Chapter 593: Messages Messages Messa-**

It wasn't until the next morning that Kat read the replies she'd been sent. She did have a slight expectation of getting a response before she let herself fall asleep the day before, but there was no such luck. Sylvie had decided to join Kat in bed and was surrounded by her wing. Sylvie had joined Kat and quickly fallen asleep but Kat had stayed up staring at the ceiling for quite a while. She just wasn't tired and a full eight hours of sleep was more than she needed.

Whatever time she eventually managed to nod off, Kat hadn't received any messages the last time she checked, so to see one from everyone was a great surprise. There was a temptation to check them in order, starting with Kamiko's but Kat wanted to know if her training trip could go through first so she looked into the one from Minor.

"Hi Kat, it's good to hear from you. It's also really nice to hear what you've been up to. The weird flaming text thing did tell me you were unable to contact me for a bit and the punishment sounded pretty bad so it's nice to know I was worrying about nothing.

"In regards to your training I actually have great news. Grandma's friend was invited over soon after you left. She should be here either tomorrow or the day after actually. So I guess send a message through when you want to be summoned? I don't mind if you just want to hang out or something until she arrives. You're more than welcome to come visit. Only if you want though. Um... yeah... Anyway. Your teacher will be around for a while, she might even be teaching the rest of us at some point. She should be available for a few months while she hangs around if you have to put things off...

"Oh, and if you're wondering why I don't name her and keep calling her she all the time... it's because Grandma made me promise not to mention her name over the messages. I don't really know why. Clearly, it's attached to my mind or maybe even my soul. If it wanted to get the name it could no trouble but that's what Grandma wants so... yeah.

"Actually also. I don't know if it's important or not but when I see your messages, I see them. Not Major, ME. Even if I'm in her head and not watching her eyes, I see them. If I am watching through her eyes, then she can't see them even if I can. Though I can push the memory to Major and she can see them that way. It was actually pretty fun to play around with. Gave us something to do.

"Though I don't really want to get started down that tangent. I feel like I have so much to tell you but I'm not sure how much Grandma would be happy with me sharing. I feel kind of bad about that. You've told me all about your wonderful adventures but I can't even talk about the few things I've been doing in Major's head.

"So... ah... by by I guess? I don't know how to end this. Actually I also don't know how to send this. Wait... no I should remove that. How do I remove things? Um... bother. If you see this I guess I did figure out how to send it. By? Hi?"

Kat found herself giggling a little as she imagined Minor's panicked expression at the ending before clamping her mouth shut and glancing over at Sylvie who just shifted slightly and buried her face deeper into Kat's side.

\*Note to self. Do not laugh at funny things while Sylvie is sleeping next to you. In fact, don't do it while Lily or anyone else is sleeping. Though... if it's Xiang I don't think I'd have cared. Anyway, it's good to see Minor isn't having any problems and despite not having a body she seems quite cheerful still. Granted she didn't want a body but it was still worth worrying about I think.

Still, good to know I can come over whenever. I wonder when this was sent? Like... is today 'tomorrow' from the perspective of this note or not quite? I think not because of time zones. When I showed up at Minor's the first time it was late in the afternoon. So... she's probably asleep right now? I think? I guess it depends.

The question is, when do I want to go? I guess as soon as Minor summons me? I just have to let everyone know. I'll tell Lily when she comes over today or I'll go over and tell her if it looks like she isn't showing up. Do I need to take anything? I don't think so? Just my fans and I guess be ready to practice my but off.\*

Pushing Minor's message out of her mind Kat looked between Nira's and Kamiko's. She wasn't sure which to open first but Kamiko's was sent first, or at the very least received first, and that was enough for the tiebreaker.

"HI KAT! Oh I'm so happy to have my first letter. Also you work really fast. I'm surprised between you me and Sue it was the asexual one of us that got a girlfriend first. Though... I guess I don't exactly want a girlfriend, I want a boyfriend and Sue... I'm not sure what she wants. She seems very happy to keep sleeping around and I mean... if that what keeps her happy I guess.

"Still, I can't believe you and Lily got together. It was kinda obvious. I mean Mum did give me some big hints when you weren't looking, but still it wasn't hard to guess. I'm glad it worked out for both of you. Or well... it's just the start of things and Mum likes to say every relationship is a journey... but I've watched enough movies to know that sometimes the other person slaps you or spits in your face and you can never be friends again.

"Wait... speaking of friends... does that mean I'm your new best friend? I know you tried to avoid saying it before but it's very clear that Lily is? Was? Your best friend. How does this sort of thing count? I feel like the best friend spot is now open for me, but I can't be sure. Still, if I get to claim best friend by default I have no regrets or shame. None. I suppose I shouldn't get too excited but... well this is just adorable to hear about really. I can't wait to tell Sue. Though maybe you want to tell her? Hmm, I'll hold off for now but if you leave it for more than a month... no a week! I'll tell her.

"Mum isn't here at the moment so I can't ask her about whatever the other thing is but I hope nothing is wrong. Mum being a doctor makes me worry that's what it is... but I also feel like you would have told me if something was wrong with you or Lily. I can't really think of why you would ask. I mean, it can't be 'The Talk' because not only are you both girls, but because you're asexual you probably won't get into that any time soon.

"I could maybe see it being about handling your strength... but you don't seem to have issues with that. Some demons do, but you don't. Most of us have a sort of inbuilt limiter that makes sure we don't hurt our friends and family accidentally, even when they're quite fragile. It helps a tonne. Not sure where we picked it up though. Anyway, message me back when you can spread the news I guess. Oh and good luck with your training when you start that."

Kat smiled at the letter and didn't let any laughter out this time, she made sure of that. Still, it warmed her heart to think of Kamiko animatedly speaking out the letter in her mind. Kat was mostly glad her friend still sounded upbeat.

\*Though I guess she is my best friend now. If I don't send her a longer message before the end of the day I'll send her one letting her know she's now my best friend. At least she's not suggesting Sue for the spot. That would be a little too self-deprecating considering I hardly know Sue and definitely share no hobbies with her.

Well, now I have just one letter left. Nira's.? I wonder what she's going to say? Maybe I should have asked Kamiko for permission to share what was going on... but I think this is a nice thing I'm doing for her. Nira has a lot of knowledge and I bet it can be useful here.\*

As if sensing Kat's slight unease one of Sylvie's hands moved over Kat's stomach. It didn't really make it that far over because of her size, but it was very comforting none the less. Letting the doubts fade away Kat opened the last message.

#### **Chapter 594: Nira Post**

Kat sucked in a deep breath as she read the first line of Nira's message.

"Kat... I have no idea how you even managed to get this approved. I don't just mean the cost, which is surely exorbitant, but also permission for the procedure at all. Honestly everything in that message was a bit of a shock. I don't want to know how this is possible. I don't want to know how you got the money to pay for it. In fact don't even hint at anything. Make sure to prepare yourself and Lily to not tell me. I do not want to know. I probably shouldn't know. Let's just leave it at that.

"On the medical side of things... it's a little more complicated. I'd love the chance to be involved in a procedure such as this. They are rare things. Even if they weren't so expensive most people don't tend to feel comfortable abandoning their original race and that can really hamper the process or make it impossible. It was found out very early on in testing that you need to be completely willing otherwise the whole thing is a nightmare.

"Like... I've seen the recordings. They are ancient and very much not pretty. It's not even like we used prisoners for those experiments just animals that weren't anywhere close to sentient. It was horrific even for them. We couldn't figure out why for quite a while until someone, the name is redacted, decided to volunteer for the procedure. Everyone told them they were crazy but it actually worked. That's how we found out the creature had to desire the change.

"Never mind. You didn't ask for medical history. Still, I needed it to give you context to just how rare this is. It's expensive, which can cause feelings of buyer's remorse which hurt the process alongside a dozen other things as well if the person going through with it doesn't want it. I'm guessing that isn't the case here. That Lily does want to go through with this, and if so, I'd love to be her attending doctor.

"I'm not sure if I'll be allowed to though. This is already a high-level operation, though one I'm technically qualified for, her race choice, which we'll get to in a bit, is far above my skill level. If I was to take part, it would be just as the attending doctor. I'd be more like a glorified assistant than anything else. Still very much worth my time of course. The whole processing is fascinating to me and if I can get involved even as a secretary I'd jump at the chance so thank you for asking...

"But as I said, I'd jump at the chance. Practically everyone interested in the procedure would. The reason for that is because apparently you she was able to ask for Memphis as her Beastman heritage. To the best of my knowledge this has never been done. Never. Not once. I don't even know if there are Memphis beastmen or women that have been made naturally so Lily might be the first if this all goes through.

"So being involved in this, on top of being a rare chance and something highly sort after for Rank 5 medical professionals like myself. This operation is also likely to be historically significant. I might be able to get preferential treatment as a known entity to you but Lily doesn't know me so I'm unsure if it would be enough for me to get involved.

"In the end. I'll do what I can to assist Lily with this as well as participate myself but due to the nature of it all I might not be able to. Oh and Kamiko thinks it's really cool that Lily is changing her race to a Memphis so she can be connected to you. I don't know if that's quite Lily's reasoning and I know that Kamiko doesn't understand how big of an undertaking this is... but I suppose her heart is in the right place. Give Lily my best wishes and I hope to be involved. Nira."

Kat just stared at the flaming text for a few minutes unsure what to make of the new information Nira provided to her. \*Well. This has certainly become a bigger deal then I thought it would be... system how did this happen? How was I high enough rank for this to happen?\*

Checking data.

Scanning for irregularities.

Irregularity found.

Determining sequence of events.

D.E.M.O.N.S has determined that Rank 2 is enough to see race change as an option and as a Favour Token was being used it opened up the wider race options for Acquaintance Lily. However, the error occurred because instead of listing all tested and approved race changes it listed all possible race changes even those only possible in theory such as the Memphis and Memphis Beastperson options which while possible in practice have never been attempted.

Acquaintance Lily thus had access to a wider selection then possible under normal circumstances. Error will not be correct for Acquaintance Lily as Favour Tokens are promises to do all within D.E.M.O.N.S power to assist the holders once. Error will be corrected in the future however if User Kat wishes to exploit the same Error with the second Favour Token that will be allowed as the finder of the Error.

\*Well that's just great. Is this procedure safe?\*

If Acquaintance Lily truly desires to go through with the change it is likely within acceptable parameters. Anything short of catastrophic failure due to extremely Abnormal Cascading Errors in equipment will cause no lasting harm to Acquaintance Lily. Recovery time may vary if lesser issues appear.

\*Really not sure how I'm about to feel about that system.\*

Abnormal cascading errors are always possible User Kat. Abnormal cascading Errors require multiple instances of less than 0.1% chance Errors happening in concert and compounding the problem. They are such a rare occurrence that they are simply ignored. An example User Kat may be able to understand is waking up in the morning and being hit directly in the head with a meteor. The chance is so low the event in question may as well be impossible but cannot truthfully be said to be impossible. That is just one Abnormal Error, not a cascading series of them.

\*So what... it's like being hit in the face with a meteor ten times in one morning?\*

Yes. User Kat has suggested an adequate example.

\*Ok that does make me feel a bit better. I do kinda wish you hadn't mentioned it at all... but I suppose it wouldn't be truthful to say there was no chance of this going wrong. Well, I suppose I have a bunch of things to explain to Lily now. That I'll be off training soon, that her race change is actually a huge deal.\*

With that Kat tried to relax back into her bed for as long as she could. The temptation to get back up and pace was strong but with Sylvie using her wing as a blanket that wasn't a valid option. Instead she tried to think of anything she wanted to bring for her extended trip to Minor's but there really wasn't anything.

She didn't have any other clothes that fit her wings and tail so her demonic attire would have to suffice as it always did these days. Bedding was a possibility but based on the size of Enuco's house Kat doubted she really needed to. Food was the same, unnecessary. Though...

\*Maybe I should bring a picnic basket with some nice stuff from Earth? Callisto would likely jump at the chance to serve food for people in another world... but I don't know what they eat. Do Kitsune have special dietary requirements? Surely they can eat more than meat. I feel like they would have mentioned it to me.\*

Kat shrugged at that and decided to bring some food anyway. If they didn't like it she could eat it over the course of her stay. With food off the list though Kat couldn't think of anything else worth taking. Sure Sylvie and Callisto at least might want to come along for the ride but Kat knew she didn't have permission for that now. Maybe in the future when her Rank was higher but for now that was no go.

\*I wonder when Lily will be over... actually I wonder if she's alright? Should I go and check? Normally I wouldn't but normally she'd be much further away and I wouldn't be her girlfriend. Hmm... I don't really know how that changes things if I'm honest with myself. Should I just ask Lily? I wonder if it would be better to ask someone else... though last time I made that decision I ended up having Vivian and Callisto give me the talk and that was mentally scarring.\*

Kat pushed down the images that came bubbling to the surface when the dreaded words were uttered and snuggled closer to Sylvie. Hopeful her little sisters presence would chase away the bad thoughts.

## **Chapter 595: Soothing Silly Suspicions**

When breakfast had finished and Kat saw no sign of Lily... nothing happened. It wasn't unusual or strange in the slightest. Lily wasn't known for waking up early like Vivian's household and even then, getting up, showering, and walking around to Vivian's house was simply too much effort in Lily's mind for a better breakfast. Callisto was a great cook, but didn't really have the chance to flex overly much for breakfast so if there was a meal to take elsewhere that was the one.

However, when Kat was nibbling on a sandwich slice that had been shoved into her hands to stop her from wringing them, Kat might have been willing to admit she was starting to worry. Maybe. It wasn't as though she hadn't gone longer without seeing Lily, heck just recently while on she was summoned to other worlds it was sometimes over a week away. The difference was that it was always Kat that was more at risk.

The rest of the house politely ignored Kat's clear angst. They didn't need to guess what had Kat so worked up, and while Vivian was slightly concerned herself, Sylvie trusted Lily was smart enough to escape to their house if necessary and Callisto was unconcerned. She knew very well the signs one should look for when dealing with... questionable... parents and despite Evaline's clear distaste for Kat, Callisto didn't think she was actually a bad parent and as such wasn't worried about Lily's lack of appearance.

At some point Kat started to use her expanded hearing. Something she mostly ignored on Earth and wasn't all that effective anyway. The noise pollution was considerable and with the suppression of demonic energy it was hard to focus on just one spot. So really all this did was assault Kat's ears with countless additional sounds few of which she could make any sense of at all increasing the pressure on her mind and not helping her worries at all.

So when the doorbell rang Kat practically teleported to the door to open it. The house would thank the fact she brought her wings out to fly up and over things in her way as that saved her feet going straight through the floor when she started to move. Kat opened the door swiftly and as soon as the door opened, she scooped Lily up into a hug.

Lily found her cheeks hitting up just slightly at how forward Kat was being. This didn't feel like one of her normal hugs, this was a lot more possessive and Lily decided she had no complaints. "Um... Hi? What's the rush?" asked Lily

Kat felt her own cheeks heating up as she realised how silly she was being when Lily answered so calmly. "Sorry" mumbled Kat directly into Lily's hair, shifting it slightly and tickling her ears. Lily didn't know what Kat was apologising for but whatever it was, Kat was certainly forgiven because this was awesome.

Still, it was probably a good idea to ask what she was forgiving Kat for. Just to know... mostly so she'd have some idea of how often this sort of thing would happen. "What for?"

"Mostly for just leaving you with your mother... and maybe your dad later as well... I dunno. I know it was best I left, so you could have a calmer conversation but I still kind of feel bad about leaving" mumbled Kat, tickling Lily's ear some more.

It actually took a couple of seconds for Lily to stop enjoying the moment and remember she was supposed to respond. "Oh," was the 'intelligent' response she managed for the first few seconds as her brain reboot. "No... no it was fine. I mean, my conversation with my mother was fine. Not painless, but

fine. My father... well I just threw it in as he was heading to bed and I know he didn't really pay attention but I spent like..."

Lily tried to add up how long the conversation was while removing that section where she was completely dazed thinking about what Kat liked about her. Her thoughts threatened to return to those questions but feeling Kat's arms around her drove them away just as quickly as they appeared. So Lily's mind returned to trying to work out how long she spent talking to her mother... but it was hard. It wasn't like she'd checked a clock right when they started. "At least an hour? Probably more?" was her best guess in the end. "It was fine though Kat. Really I'm fine. I don't mind that you left. Why would you think that's something that would bother me?"

Kat bit her lip and hesitated. \*Do I really want to explain my strange worries? I don't know if I should or not... then again it's probably better to discuss this sort of thing.\* Swapping her hold Kat traded a hug for a princess carry and pulled Lily upstairs to her bedroom so that they could chat. With the others around the house Kat didn't really want them overhearing her lack of knowledge, while she knew Lily wouldn't mind. \*In fact she'll probably enjoy explaining it to me. She loves to chat about topics she's researched.\*

When they got to Kat's room, Kat set Lily down carefully on the side of the bed and said, "Look, I know it's kind of weird but I... hmm... how do I want to explain this..." Kat tapped the side of her mouth with her tail. "Ok, stop me if this sounds strange but... I'm your girlfriend now and I know that changes things... but I'm not sure about all of those things. Like... friend Kat." Lily got a bit of a strange look in her eye but did say anything. "She..."

"Well, yesterday she would have left easily. I trust your judgement, and what happens between you and your parents wasn't her problem until you made it. Now though... I mean... it feels kind of callous to think this way but at the end of the day, your family business wasn't her business unless you wanted it to be.

"I mean, don't get me wrong, if you'd asked for anything a week ago I'd still have said yes but now... I guess it's much more 'your problems are my problems' and... I just feel like maybe I should have stuck around? Even if your mum wouldn't have been happy with it... we're that much closer to being family I guess?"

"So... I... I think what I'm trying to say is that I want your parents to like me? Is that what I'm saying? Maybe but not just that." Kat trailed off as she realised she was starting to lose the thread of her thoughts. "So yeah. That." Finished Kat making it clear she was done.

Lily looked up at Kat with big eyes and debated internally what to do in response. She knew what she wanted to do. She wanted to kiss Kat for that sort of question. It soothed her heart to know that Kat had different but similar ridiculous worries. In fact, she knew she was having one now. Kat had said she wasn't put off by kisses or the idea of sex. Kat was her girlfriend. Lily should be allowed. So she did.

Lily was already bright red by the time her hands lightly grasped the side of Kat's face and pulled her down. When their lips met she might as well have been a neon sign in the dead of night. The kiss was awkward. Largely attributed to Lily having no idea what she was doing, and somewhat attributed to Kat's surprise but her mind was fast enough to catch up before long. Lily's mind stuttered a bit when their lips met and she pressed in a bit too hard teeth clicking together.

Of course, for Kat this was hardly any pressure at all, but somehow she instinctively recognised this wasn't ideal for Lily. Pulling back just a slight tad to relieve that pressure, but wrapping her arms around Lily tightly to make sure her shorter partner knew this wasn't from disgust or a desire to end things. Kat let the kiss go on until Lily ended it, which was a few seconds later and felt a lot of her worries drift away.

In fact both came out happier and less worried, despite the difference in experience. For Kat it was a physical sign that she was loved. For some reason having Lily kiss her was much nicer than simply kissing Lily, if it could really be called simple. For Lily, this was one of the few kisses she'd initiated. It wasn't great, her technique was bad and even she knew it as inexperienced as she was, but her mind was just as fogged over with pleasure and her smile wasn't going away.

"You should kiss me more often" blurted out Kat not really thinking.

Lily though, was completely on board with that logic. "Yes. Yes I shall"

### **Chapter 596: Insecurities on Both Sides**

"Um.... If we're going to be admitting to things..." started Lily hesitantly. Even with Kat's admittance Lily felt it was a more reasonable question. Kat simply didn't know, and ignorance was never something you should be made fun of for, especially in Lily's mind. Of course, she ignored this when it came to herself. Especially since a lot of her concerns had to do with Kat's opinions. Things Lily really had to ask to find out.

"I... see I was wondering..." Lily found the words hard to say, and Kat noticed this. She pulled Lily onto her knee so that she still had access to Lily's back where she started tracing circles. Lily let the motions calm her down.

\*Why is this so hard?! Kat was able to tell me she feels bad about the fact she left me with Mum even if it was the right thing to do. I didn't even really answer her. I said it was fine, and it was. I don't hold it against her and I don't even know what I'd prefer she did if it happened again. I mean I didn't even give her an answer I just kissed her. Which was great somehow despite my- No Lily don't get lost in the kiss. Focus. Just ask her. It's not hard. And think about a proper answer for Kat. She deserves one even if you don't have one. She deserves it.\*

"What... um... what exactly... no ok let's not do that." Lily aborted her attempt to ask Kat what she liked, thinking it might sound like fishing for compliments after Kat had shared genuine worries. "See... ok... look. With this Memphis transformation, as far as I'm aware they make a whole new body for me... so... I... would you like me to change anything?"

The look of utter confusion on Kat's face was a balm to her soul that she didn't know she needed. Lily felt herself shiver as she let out a long sigh. \*I don't know why I thought she'd do anything else. I know some girls that would kill for the chance to look better, many of them just to snag a boyfriend, and my girlfriend can't even figure out why I'd ask the question. If that doesn't destroy any body image issues I had nothing well.\*

Lily gave Kat a quick kiss on the cheek which brought a smile to Kat's face. Didn't chase away the confusion, but Kat would happily accept kisses. Lily seeing this debated explaining further or not but decided it was worth it. Even if Kat didn't want her to change anything she might. "I see you're

confused," Lily cringed as she said it, but didn't really know what else to start off with, "but what I mean is... I can basically design a whole new body for myself and I'm thinking about if I should change anything? What do you think?"

Kat still looked slightly confused but she answered, "I mean... that's completely up to you isn't it? It's your body"

\*No Kat. Well, yes, it is my body but I feel like you should get some say in this. I don't spend any time looking at myself. Actually, if we're thinking about it this way it's a much more important choice for Kat because she's the one that would get to admire the results more often.\*

"True but you're the one who would be looking at it most of the time. So if you had the chance to change anything what would you change?" asked Lily as innocently as she could, knowing this line on questioning was a bit leading.

"Nothing" Kat answered easily and Lily felt herself melt into Kat's side.

\*Oh yes. I have the best girlfriend. Given the chance to basically customize me she chooses to completely ignore the option. Then prompted to pick just one thing. Just one... and she still chooses nothing.

Ok now that I've soaked up that high praise I should explain why that answer isn't quite ideal.\* "Well, that's sweet and all Kat but some things will have to change. Like I'm pretty sure at the very least I'll end up with cat ears and a tail. Maybe a horn as well which I really hope isn't going to be in a place that's easy to lock with your horns. Then the eyes. I really don't know if I'll end up with cat eyes or not.

"Along with that... should I be taller? Shorter? With the tail and ears my balance will have already changed and my bones and muscles might as well. So relearning to walk would be on the list anyway. Oh and glasses. I won't need those afterwards. I guess I could ask them not to fix my eyes... but that feels wrong."

Kat first gave Lily a hug and then got a thoughtful look on her face. "Well... I don't really care about the eyes. I like your eyes, but if they have to be changed that's fine. I... I'm not sure if they'd be better or worse after the change, I guess I'd have to see... but I'll let you make that call yourself. I really have no idea.

"I totally agree with the horns. If you do still have one in your human form the most important thing is that it doesn't get in the way. Sadly I think it would get in the way pretty much wherever they are... so that might be an issue. Something we can work around easily, but an issue none the less. Um... as for height..."

Kat actually got a sheepish look at that and Lily found her curiosity peaked. \*I wonder what Kat's going to say about that. Does she like me being short? Would she rather I was taller? I find myself strangely curious. It's weird because I know it isn't a kink, but why would she focus on my height otherwise?\*

"I think it should stay about the same. I mean, if it changes a bit that's fine or if you really want to change it that's fine too... but it just works so well." Lily gained a slight tinge of confusion to her eyes which Kat noticed and continued to explain. "Ok, look... I hope this doesn't sound weird but you're like the perfect height when compared to me.

"You're just short enough that when I hug you, you can burry your face in my shoulder, but if you're sitting on my lap like this you can lean against my face. On top of that you aren't so short that it's awkward to lean down and kiss you, and you're tall enough to kiss me without trouble. Plus if we're side by side on the couch or something and I slouch you can rest on your shoulder and I can rest on your head. It just sort of works."

\*Holy shit Kat found a practical reason to care about my height. I mean... she's shockingly correct. I hadn't really noticed. I mean I did but I don't think I considered just how unlikely it would be for all of these things to work out. The most thought I've put into Kat's height is how long it makes her legs. Mmm. Legs.\*

Lily shook herself again, knowing that a serious conversation was not the time to think about how great Kat's legs were. Most of the time it probably wasn't quite appropriate but it was also well worth it most of the time so that was fine. Before Lily could get too lost though Kat actually had more points to make, which was a slight surprise. "I suppose you could make yourself taller, so that you were the same amount taller than me as I currently am you... but I just feel like my horns would get in the way."

"Ok so certainly no height change" said Lily with finality. "I don't really care about my height that much,"  
\*Because who cares how tall I am? My girlfriend's height is much more important.\* "so keeping it the same is no trouble. Are you sure about the eyes? What about fixing them?"

Kat shrugged. "I said already that you can make that choice. As to your glasses... well... I'm not so sure. I think it would look strange to see you without your glasses considering I've always known you to have them. I guess it would be up to you? I thought it looked a little strange those few times you wore contacts... but I could get used to it"

\*Hmmm, that's... I'm not sure what to make of that. I agree with Kat I like my glasses. I don't really want to get rid of them either... yeah ok. Keep the glasses. What about my hair though? I can change a lot about my hair...\*

"Hey Kat what about my hair?" asked Lily

"What about it? It looks nice and I enjoy rubbing my face in it. Wait... does that sound weird? I think it sounds weird but maybe it was just phrasing?" said Kat unsure.

\*My girlfriend likes my hair! My scratchy all over the place, overly bushy but plain brown hair.\*?  
Sometimes it was nice fishing for compliments. Even if it was an accident.

## **Chapter 597: Confidence can be Found in Strange Places**

Lily snuggled in tightly against Kat's body as she basked in the knowledge that Kat liked her features. Granted, Lily had never had any issues with her body like so many girls she knew of peripherally at school. She certainly wouldn't have rated herself as being in the more attractive half of the girls at school, not like Kat. Granted, Lily would have been willing to argue Kat was by far the most attractive girl in school before the Succubus transformation and won the argument a good number of times. After the transformation it was no contest... as long as you were willing to overlook the demonic features or enjoyed them.

So, Lily was quietly surprised that Kat found no fault with her looks. It was a bubbly feeling that she was happy to hold onto. Especially because she was so confident in the looks of Kat and many other girls at school. While she was never going to announce herself as gay to the school after what happened with Stella, she had never been uncomfortable with the idea. Except for a few days around the incident, but she was upset at a lot more things than just her sexuality at the time and it had let her see Stella's slow degradation of character after the fact.

So when Lily heard the locker room complaints or the whining voices looking in the bathroom mirrors back when she was still at school it was very hard for her to take a lot of those girls seriously. Granted she always held Kat as the apple of her eye, but that didn't mean she was incapable of picking out other treats in the crowd. The only exception to this was the three bullies that hounded her and Kat. Allegedly they were some of the better looking at school, and if others were to be believed, comparable to Kat. Lily never saw it. It was too hard to get past their horrid personalities to appreciate their looks at all.

Still, with her firm hold of her sexuality it let her gauge attractiveness better than most of the other girls. They were all guessing what parts of them were attractive to others. Lily, well she knew. It was her eyes that wandered occasionally, her mouth that would water at certain fantasies. Her eyes that would glaze over when she pretended to read a book but was actually imagining the various thighs in school and ranking against each other.

So to know that Kat truly saw no issues with her appearance, liked it in fact, it was such a funny feeling. Lily would like to say that she'd have believed Kat's words without knowing she couldn't lie... but that wasn't something she could admit. It was a surprising added layer of security for their relationship. It felt like a warm blanket. The fact that Kat would never lie to her. There was no niggling suspicion that this or that could be a lie. The security and knowledge that it would never be was something that she was starting to really enjoy.

\*Honestly I don't know if I'd have been so comfortable diving so far into this. Lily let herself simply enjoy Kat's hold on her. Lily knew she was practically plastered against Kat at this point. She'd pressed herself as deeply as she could against Kat, but it didn't feel scandalous for now. Just comforting. I mean... I'd like to think so... but some of it would have been hard. Hard to believe. I think I would have been stuck up on doubts about Kat lying for the sake of our friendship.

Granted I don't think Kat would have done that. With hindsight and a girlfriend to call my own I can see that Kat would have just hugged me and told me she loved me like a friend or a sister but that romance could never work between us if she actually believed that. Still, I don't think Lily of last week would have believed that.

A bit like Kat was saying she wouldn't have worried about me being alone with my Mum a week ago. A week ago I didn't have half the confidence I have now. Which still isn't much but... honestly who knew getting a girlfriend would help so much in that area? Actually...

Lily paused her thoughts for a second as a number of implications hit her all at once. Now that I think about it... it's actually pretty reasonable for this to happen. I mean, getting love and validation from the person whose opinion matters the most to you would probably help anyone's confidence. Hmm. I wonder if the bitches three would become better people if they got a boyfriend?\*

Lily cringed at the idea. \*Nope. No they probably wouldn't. There's two issues with that thought. The first is that I don't think I want to wish anyone was stuck with those three. Secondly... I'm not sure they are capable of caring about other people properly. I would do anything Kat asked and Kat would do anything I asked. I doubt they'd be willing to do anything anyone asks of them.\*

With that though, Lily decided she'd been down enough rabbit holes for now. Sitting with Kat was a joy all of its own even if she was a little distracted. Still, she wanted to continue the conversation they were having. It felt important. So she twisted around to give Kat a light kiss under the chin before leaning away slightly so she could see Kat's face better. When Kat's arms moved so that she was supporting Lily's body, Lily settled into the odd position and beamed. "I'm glad you like my hair. I think it could be better, but... more general stuff. Like how your hair is the same colour now but it feels a lot nicer and is much tougher. Not sure about my own brown hair... I wonder if I want to go something out there. I could go for blue or yellow or green or really whatever I wanted. What do you think?"

Kat shrugged. "I don't mind, I'm sure you'll look great with whatever. However... just be aware that everyone will ask you if it's dyed. New people always asked me that and my hair is at least a normalish colour. Sure it's more vibrant than most people could ever get naturally, but it's not too out there and I still got that question all the time. Even people who'd asked before."

Lily frowned at that. \*I see. If I did go that direction, it might be best to just say it was dyed. Much less effort that way. People would actually believe it. Do I want to go all crazy colours though? I feel like it might be fun for a bit but I doubt I'd want it bright yellow for a long time or dark green or whatever. Black might be nice. Certainly, nicer than brown. I feel like you can do more with that kind of hair.\*

"Thanks for the advice. I'll keep it in mind," said Lily, "After a bit of thought I'm leaning towards black or maybe a really dark blue, or just keeping it the same."

Kat smiled, and started to run her tail through Lily's hair. It was a little strange and not as nice as running her fingers through it... but her hands were needed to keep Lily in place at the moment so they were unavailable. "When are you thinking of getting this done. You seem to know what you want, and while it wouldn't be permanent demons do have a lot of ways to change your appearance. Fancy hair dyes and other things I'm sure"

\*That's a good point. I was just thinking of normal dye but with magic in the mix I could probably change everything if I really wanted to. Undoubtedly expensive over time but possible. Plus after everything yesterday... \* "Soon" said Lily, "I'm thinking sometime very soon. I could wait I suppose but I'm hoping to get the change done before you're forced to go on another Contract."

"Oh" said Kat as she digested that information. "Well, a few things then. First, for you I guess, Nira, Kamiko's mum, she's willing to be your attending doctor for the procedure if she's allowed." To Lily's eyes she could see Kat wasn't quite saying something but let it slide, "On my side of things though, that fan trainer I was promised by Minor? Well she's actually going to be arriving at their house some time within the next few days so... if you want to go and get your race change done I can go and practice. We wouldn't really be able to spend time together during either of those. It might have been nice to introduce you to Minor but nothing to be done about it really"

\*Hmm. Simply go and get it done before Mum has too much time to worry about it? Just rock up and home and say I'll be gone for however long it takes to get done? A little evil... but the idea has a lot of merit.\*

Lily gave Kat another kiss on the mouth for that suggestion. A great excuse for a kiss... and a second one just after the first. Maybe a few more after that. Why am I doing this again? Lily dismissed that thought as irrelevant. Kissing Kat was a good enough excuse to kiss Kat. No additional reasons required.

## **Chapter 598:**

Back to Kat's perspective

With the serious parts of the conversation out of the way Kat and Lily just let themselves enjoy some time together knowing they were about to be separated again. There was some thought on both sides towards choosing another deep conversation topic and keeping the serious atmosphere but that felt shallow. Kat was unsure why, but Lily could more accurately tell it was because she was trying to force the point. They didn't have anything serious to talk about anymore and if they tried it would have been a shadow of their previous conversation which brought them both a lot closer.

Kat's instincts were good enough to warn her away from the idea even if she didn't know why. Lily had to think about it, but came to the same conclusion. This also led them deciding to grab Sylvie to hang out with them as well, knowing the little girl would miss Kat as well. They found her playing chess against Callisto who was also drawing something on the side.

The match was close, or at least, it was close enough on the surface that Kat just counted the pieces and saw them as even. Lily, with more knowledge of chess tried to figure out who was winning but failed, but Callisto and Sylvie were much better at the game than her. What that meant though, neither knew because as soon as Callisto noticed the girls she forfeited and let Sylvie go with them.

Sylvie had a frown at that. When prodded though she wouldn't answer why, she just switched to a genuine smile and snuggled in between Kat and Lily when they made it downstairs onto that knew chair of Kat's. It did have to be moved into the centre of the room and expanded a bit for them all to fit, but Kat didn't mind the effort of moving it. She couldn't even tell if making it smaller changed the weight because her strength was enough to lift both easily.

Still, the pair did wonder about the result of that chess game. What did it mean? Was Callisto just that good at chess that she could do two things at once? Or was it her multitasking ability that was so good she could put her full mind to both tasks as strange as it might appear on the surface. Nobody except perhaps Sylvie knew and she wasn't budging in response to the light probing from Lily and Kat so it was quickly dropped for other topics.

While this was happening, Kat sent off her respective confirmation messages. Minor got one that said she was free to Summon Kat whenever the message arrived or was convenient. Nira got a message confirming Lily's willingness to go through with the change and her acceptance of Nira as her attending. A small note to Kamiko that Kat would have to see how things went but a visit was nice. For the message with Nira its contents was shared in full with Lily and a small note of her own was added to the bottom.

After this thing settled down but there was an odd note to the air. It was different air to Kat's normal departures. On the one hand this was the first time they were splitting up not as friends but as romantic

partners. That added a level of dislike to the separation. It felt more like it was an incorrect decision or perhaps one that was being made too lightly even if that wasn't the case. On the other hand this would also likely be the last time this happened.

With Lily's race change the bond would be forged and she would be able to accompany Kat on her future Summonings. This added to the air a sense of relief, of rightness, but it didn't directly counter the feeling of unease. They seemed to mingle together and pull the pair in differing directions. Sylvie could also feel the edges of this strange phenomenon. It wasn't as clear to her, but still very noticeable in the grander scheme of things.

\*Such an odd mix of relief, excitement and resignation. Still, the last feeling is perhaps the most correct, this needs to be done. I can't just go around punching things forever. Well, I technically could, with my lifespan, but practically it's a bad idea. I do wonder how much training I'll be doing and how much learning to later train myself. I don't know how much time I'll have just in general so I think the answer would be interesting.\*

At some point Vivian showed up, returning from the front door. This was actually a bit of a surprise for Kat and Lily not having realised that she'd left. Sylvie seemed less surprised but much of that was simply how she was. When Vivian saw the three camped out in the lounge, she decided to put aside her work folders and join them for a while, being able to tell that Kat and Lily too, was leaving soon.

There was some temptation in Vivian's mind to call out to Callisto but she knew that her erstwhile maid would appear when she wished to and not a moment sooner. Oh, she'd come if she was called of course but Vivian didn't like to do that and Callisto seemed to know when she was truly needed anyway so Vivian pushed the errant thought out of her mind and just enjoyed her time with the girls.

Eventually Callisto did indeed join the conversation but she split her attention between that and dinner. Lily waffled about staying but it didn't take much to convince her. The smell alone was nearly enough before Kat's presence was added to the scale which of course easily tipped it over the line. So they all ate a comfortable dinner together. Kat actually forced herself to have a full meal.

That really something Kat was against. The food was great and Kat ate it happily. She didn't feel overly full and there really shouldn't have been an issue. Still it felt like a waste in her mind. The years at the orphanage had hammered into her the idea that food shouldn't be wasted. It was a subtle thing. Gramps would never stop kids from taking too much food, but they were watched, and occasionally made to finish their meals next time they sat down to eat if they went really overboard.

So Kat was just picking at her food and enjoying the fact her tail was wrapped around Lily as she ate and let her thoughts wander. \*This just feels wrong. I know Vivian has plenty of money and such a small amount of food wouldn't even register as an expense but I feel like I'm doing something I shouldn't here. It's not even like I'm not eating it either. The food is great. Why am I struggling to much with this?\*

Kat didn't find any answers within herself and let the question drop. There was a temptation to ask Lily but she felt like it wasn't that important, and the chance her girlfriend new the answer surely wasn't that high. So she held the question in.

Keeping that question locked up however, did mean that she wasn't properly prepared when Lily had a question for her. "Shall I stay the night Kat? Or head back home? Actually that's not really what I'm asking. If I did head home it wouldn't be to sleep. I would be accepting the race change then and there."

Kat knew the answer she wanted to give instantly. She wanted Lily to stay. \*Is that the answer I should give though? I'm not sure when I'll be summoned, it might even be during the night and maybe she should see her parents before she heads off to the hub.\*

Kat opened her mouth to answer but before she could a flaming pentagram appeared beneath her feet. \*Well shit I guess that answers that question.\* "Well then. I suppose I have to head off then" said Kat awkwardly. She really wanted to kiss Lily before she left but she was also in front of everyone.

"Yeah" said Lily with a frown and Kat could see in her girlfriend's eyes that she was having the same internal struggle.

"Just kiss already" said Vivian causing the pair to jump in place and look over at her with confusion and tinges of hope. "Oh what? You think we don't know? It's fine just kiss or whatever and then give us all hugs"

Lily and Kat both awkwardly approached each other after this and gave each other a light peck on the lips. Kat didn't exactly enjoy the feeling and for Lily, while it was nice enough, she knew a good hug would've been better. So she glared at Vivian a slightly as Kat went around and hugged everyone and gave Sylvie a light kiss on the forehead.

When Kat walked back to her pentagram Lily lunged at her, wrapping her arms around Kat and burying her face into Kat's neck. "Boooo, give each other a real kiss" said Vivian running commentary in the background. Callisto lightly slapped the back of Vivian's head but it did nothing to remove Vivian's smile.

Kat and Lily let out a sigh and gave each other another tight hug before kissing lightly again. It wasn't quite what they wanted, but that was fine. They'd have eternity to get it right soon.

## **Chapter 599: Deep Thoughts and Weak Runes**

Kat felt oddly nostalgic when the colours exploded around her. Despite it only being a short time since she last used the transportation system it felt like a lifetime. \*From some perspectives it actually is. I'm a completely different person now then I was a week ago. I didn't really think my perspective could change so fast but it really has. A few words was all it took.

Ok that's not entirely fair because there was a lot building behind this. Lily knew she liked my... what romantically? Sexually? I dunno what to call it but she was clearly interested in me for a long time. How I never noticed... well I guess if she's really been interested that long she'd never need to act differently to me because she was always... I don't want to say in love. That feels a bit reductive... interested in falling in love perhaps.

I wonder when I noticed. Was this also building on my end? I wonder how much everyone I got to know in the Hub had to do with things. I can see now looking back they were practically hitting me over the head with the fact I was in love with the girl... but did that actually help? I don't know. I was figuring things out right?

No that's a lie. If Lily hadn't forced the issue I'd have ended up staying friends with her for the next decade. I wonder if I would have realised and then used excuses or if I'd have just not noticed. Two different but equally likely things. Though... if it came out that Lily liked women... I wonder if THAT would have forced me to act.

Perhaps. Perhaps not. I suppose it isn't something I need to dwell on but it's an interesting thought at least... now why is this taking so long?\* Kat looked at the colourful fire and smiled despite the question. It was always lovely to see the flames during transport. It felt like she could stare at them forever and always see new patterns and colours. Still, the time for this particular jump seemed excessive.

\*So... guess I just keep thinking? Maybe it's a sign? Anyone, more introspection I guess. I know that one of my main issues would have been the fact I don't find anyone sexually attractive, not even Lily. I probably would have used that as an excuse... but I don't know if I really understood the difference before so maybe not? I just knew I didn't feel like doing lewd things with anyone. It at least made sex ed less awkward.

Anyway, ignore that. What would you have done if Lily didn't bring things up? Oh no. What would I have done if Lily ever actually moved on without admitting her feelings?\* A possessive feeling welled up within her, and her blood started to boil as if her demonic energy was threatening to break out and set the world on fire.

Yeah... bad things probably. Kat let out a slight shiver. \*Then again... I would also always put her happiness first... but the first sign she was sad I would have gone to town on whoever it was. Which is... not healthy at all. There are ups and downs in all relationships and I would have been the stalwart best friend Lily's known for years who heard about the bad stuff first.\*

Then despite that being a natural part of relationships I would have absolutely destroyed whoever hurt her. Kat couldn't help the grin she gave at the thought. A part of her was saying not to indulge in the thought but the much larger part of her fought back with the fact it would never happen now so relishing in the idea of punishing anyone who hurt Lily was a fine image.

What Kat didn't know was that during this purple veins appeared around her horns, wings and the edge of her tail while her eyes glowed deep purple. The funny thing about this transformation was that it was purely cosmetic. Despite Kat's normally calm demon her demonic energy wasn't actually influencing her at all. She had always been careful with the kids at the orphanage because they were all under her care. She was also able to allow herself to be bullied at school in Lily's place because it was simply easier.

If push really came to shove though, and she was pushed a little too far Kat had always been prepared to exact terrible punishment on those who hurt those close to who. Sylvie and Lily both could easily have elicited this response in the past, but now Kat had much more power. Before the law was a bit of a worry but now, if she really wanted to go wild nothing could stop her. Not something she'd ever do of course, but fun to imagine of course.

Kat breathed out a sigh of purple flame and let her plans leave her mind. \*That was fun. A bit weird, but nice. I'm glad I admitted to myself I would obliterate anyone that broke Lily's heart. Man it is going to be a scary time when Sylvie wants to start dating. I'll need to get Lily on board to make sure I don't go too far.\*

Of course, Kat was unaware that at this point Lily saw Sylvie as her little sister as well. If she planned to be with Kat forever Sylvie was obviously coming along for the ride, at least for the first century, and the girl was adorable and worth protecting. So unlike Kat's thoughts, Lily would be on board and leveraging her considerable intellect to research the most painful way to destroy anyone who hurt their little sister.

A few more moments passed and just as Kat was about to think up another topic to pass the time the flames died down and Kat found herself in a small room that might have once been a closet. The faint lines on the wall where shelves may have once been helped support that notion, and the fact that the room was not quite as wide as her wingspan and only twice as long. The strange thing was the fact that the walls were not blank. They had glowing runes for days that lined practically every available surface. Kat's eyes lingered on them briefly but didn't feel threatened. Weather that was just ignorance was something she'd have to find out.

Standing in the doorway was clearly Major, the blue hair and face the spitting image of her mother and grandmother gave that away easily enough. It was the look as well though, the clear steady gaze that held Kat's own. The fact that despite the scarring across her face she looked beautiful and stood with perfect poise. "Hi Major," said Kat cheerfully.

Major's expression turned to a frown. "Hello Kat. I thank you for helping free me from my mind, but you have been spending too much time around Minor. She may have abandoned a proper name but I would request that you address me as Shizuka" stated the fox girl.

"Right..." said Kat uncertainly. "Where is Minor exactly and what's with the runes?"

"She's watching at the moment" said Shizuka, "she can see everything I do if she really wants. Currently she is upset about going along with Grandmother's plan. Despite my misgivings I believe it is worth going along with it.

"Grandmother wished to know if her skill with runes was sufficient to hinder you." Shizuka gestured to the walls around the room which seemed slightly more ominous now. "Minor is not happy with this and is, for the first time, fighting me for control. I'm actually quite happy with this development. She never seems to have her own desires and this was as much for her as it is for Grandma. I apologise Kat but feel no remorse for these actions"

"Ok...?" said Kat uncertain. "Is the tutor real?"

"Yes completely. If you manage to get through the runes you can... well she isn't here yet but you will be able to meet her when she arrives. The runes aren't even really for you, just demons in general. Grandma worries you know. Aw well." stated Shizuka with a shrug. "I personally hope you don't die in this attempt. I think it unlikely of course, but Minor would be sad."

\*Holy shit Shizuka's kind of cutthroat aint she.\* Kat waved her hands around and didn't feel any resistance. "So do I just walk out?" asked Kat

"Yes." Said Shizuka. "If you can."

Kat stepped forward. She felt nothing. She took another step forward and the runes glowed more brightly. But nothing happened. Kat started walking and reached the door. Nothing stopped her. Kat gave a confused look and a raised eyebrow to Shizuka who had paled slightly and stepped away from

the door opening the path for Kat. Frowning but willing to accept the gesture Kat took the last few steps out of the door, and felt nothing. "Was there a point to that?" asked Kat

"You..." Shizuka's voice wobbled. "You just walked through the most heavily warded room in the complex... without so much as a blink... I can't believe it... how?"

\*Personally, my moneys on the runes not recognising me because I lack mana but who knows!\*

## **Chapter 600: Sharp Words**

Shizuka reigned in her shock and turned around but she was still a bit pale as she led Kat through the house. Or perhaps estate was a better word. They occasionally dipped into outside areas and buildings that were mostly separate from the others. \*I suppose it depends on what you count as a house I guess. Do walkway connections make it the one house? I think probably not. It's all her home but not the same house.\*

Eventually they reached an elaborate sitting room. Euko was sitting on the floor behind a low table with a teapot and a number of cups on it. Behind her was a large wall scroll with calligraphy on it that took up most of the back wall with a number of vases on a long table below it. They seemed fancy, but Kat knew nothing about judging the worth of these kinds of things so just took in their beauty and stood awkwardly in the door.

Shizuka had moved off to the side slightly but hadn't sat down yet so Kat remained standing. "Greeting Kat. It is nice to see you unharmed" said Euko.

\*See, that. That right there. Now that she isn't desperately hoping I can help Minor she's gone back to her old ways of not really liking me. Which sure, ok fine. I can accept that. The runes though, that I feel was a bit much. I could have died. Sure D.E.M.O.N.S would have saved me but she doesn't know that. This isn't how you treat friends, or heck people you're indebted to. So why?\*

"Is it really?" Kat couldn't help but ask with a slight bite to her tone. "I understand you don't really like me but I thought we'd moved past that somewhat after last time." Kat let out a long sigh. "And look, I could overlook being stuck in a summoning circle for a bit. I don't know that it would have kept me in, but it wouldn't have been too bad. The thing is though, from what was hinted at, those runes were quite deadly and... I just don't understand? I mean... yeah why? Why try for deadly retaliation?"

Euko sniffed at the question but answered after slowly pouring herself a cup of tea... and not offering one to Kat. It wasn't that she necessarily liked tea all that much but it was clear Euko was trying for something here. Or at least, in Kat's mind it was. "It's nothing personal. I simply have no defence against demons and needed to test out some things. I thank you for your assistance"

\*She says that as if she wasn't testing potentially deadly weapons on me.\* However, Euko wasn't actually done speaking. "So how did it feel? Was it a slight annoyance? Was it a major problem you recovered from?"

Kat glanced at Shizuka again who paled and then winced as if she was struck on the side of the head but she steadied herself. Euko also narrowed her eyes at the interaction but didn't say anything further.

\*Now. Do I actually answer her? I already answered Shizuka but I'm not even sure I should have done that. I don't particularly want to answer Euko now that I've seen she's regressed a bit in attitude with

me. Then again... I don't want her harassing Shizuka for the answer or worse Minor for it. Dammit. Do I lie? Stupid question I can't lie... but I can maybe phrase it better? Yeah... I'm bad at that and there is no way I can get it past an old Kitsune who's at least a century old.\*

"Nothing. It didn't work" said Kat honestly but with a frown. She didn't think she could get away with lying and at this point didn't want to antagonise Euko for no reason.

Euko on the other hand seemed genuinely surprised at the answer and when Kat saw that she didn't really know how to feel when she saw that expression. Part of her found a slight glee in proving her wrong, but most of her was worried about the fact Euko thought Kat would get hurt trying to leave the room.

\*How do I even respond to this? I mean I guess I wait for her to say something but...\* Kat's attention was stolen by Shizuka who flinched in pain a second time. She looked more prepared for it and only moved her head slightly but based on the pained expression on her face it wasn't the best. \*I bet that's Minor voicing her issue with trying to hurt me... but I don't want her to stand up for me. She's likely in a much more dangerous position then I am already.\*

"Nothing at all in that room reacted to you?" asked Euko.

"I mean it glowed a bit more I think but nope. Nothing. Nada. Like walking through a room with glowing lights. The closest thing I took to damage was glare from the walls glowing," stated Kat as clearly as she could to ensure the truth was very obvious. *novelExt.com*

"Well I'm glad you're ok, but we did need to test those defences. I suppose I'll have to go back to the drawing board," said Euko in response.

\*I don't think I've ever wished for others to be unable to lie as much as I do right now. Like really? Really you're glad I'm ok? You seem genuine enough in that... but like where is the line? You clearly thought it was worth harming me, and while I'm sure Euko knows about my regeneration... I don't really know how to take this? Maybe just ask? Politely?\*

"Are you actually glad? I mean, this is just a guess but I doubt you run your other guests through potential death traps. Which, look. If I'm honest I probably would have agreed to test out for you if you'd asked politely and given a good reason for it... but you forced me to try. This is after I arrived specifically for lessons promised to me. Which... just seems really rude to me," said Kat.

She wanted to work up a bit more anger at it all actually. Euko wasn't trying to kill her exactly, but it was a known outcome that wasn't a major concern, or at least that how it seemed. But it just didn't feel real. The room did nothing at all as far as she could tell and that fact made it hard to summon up real care.

\*Why is it that I can take what is probably an unhealthy amount of glee in imagining the ways I'd horrible maim people who hurt Lily even slightly but finding out I only avoided death or injury because I was lucky and I just... I just don't really care outside of the rudeness factor. I think I'd care more if she slapped or insulted me honestly. Where's the anger?\*

"Minor" said Euko with clear distaste for the name but care in her eyes, "would be sad if something were to happen to you and I don't like to see her sad."

\*Clearly the idea isn't so bad because the attempt was made.\* "Fine. What would you like me to do now? I assume my teacher isn't here yet?" asked Kat

"Indeed" said Euko. "I suppose you may spend some time with Shizuka. I will see you later," and then in a flash she was gone. Kat was actually able to follow the movement despite its speed but she didn't bother once Euko left her eyeline.

Kat turned to face Shizuka who paled once again. "I am very sorry for that. It was at Grandmother's request as I said. I do not know what h-" a sharp spike of pain interrupted Shizuka's words. She growled at it in response. "I thought you didn't want a body Minor. Why is it a big deal now?"

An orange wave flashed across Shizuka's blue hair but Shizuka didn't react to it. Kat narrowed her eyes. \*What's going on here.\* "Fine then" said Shizuka out of the blue and suddenly her demeanour changed along with her appearance. Minor was in charge now.

"I'm so sorry Kat" said Minor, "I wouldn't have let them summon you if I'd known. I swear I didn't know. Also, Shizuka's being rude about it. She knows exactly what the issue is. Grandma hates two things equally. The first is demons, and the second is mind magic used against her. She had to learn about it to protect herself and she really isn't a fan. You are a demon that can enter peoples minds. Even if you're my friend and it's more than likely she helped you get that ability, she still hates it.

"In fact, she might be projecting a lot of anger she has at herself for essentially giving away that power to someone else and taking it out on you. Not sure about that one. Oh and Shizuka you know damn well why I wanted the body now. It's because my friend was being insulted in front of me, and then you tried to lie to her about it. I don't want a body, but I want my only friend lied to LESS"

The body then started to stumble as the red colour retreated starting at the tips of her tails before moving up to the hair on her head. It took almost no time for it to all turn blue again and now Shizuka had a frown on her face.