

# Demon Queened

## Chapter 47

Written by Princess Kay

## Lucy

Salina moved faster than I would have thought possible, rapidly coiling herself around Eena, and then holding her arms out wide in front of the girl. Her tail continued to move, too, piling coils higher and higher up around Eena's form.

"That's not funny, young lady," she said, her voice firm. There was a faint tremor to it, though. And the look in her eyes... it was anger, but also fear, and determination. *Lots* of determination. Like she was ready to throw her life away, if necessary, to protect Eena.

To keep her safe from *me*.

"I'm..." I hesitated, unsure what to say. That I wasn't joking? I wasn't! It's just... I never really considered what my role was like, on the other side. How demons viewed me... I always saw them as just people, like humans, but I never really thought about how *they* must have viewed *us*. Viewed *me*...

It suddenly occurs to me that I don't really know much about the war, or what it looked like from their side.

“It’s fine, Sallina,” Eena called out. Her voice was a little muffled, though - I couldn’t even see her past the coils that had built up. “She’s not like the *monsters* who came before her.”

I tried not to flinch at the raw hatred I heard in Eena’s voice when she described my predecessors. She’s... she always said her trust in me wasn’t about me being the Heroine... I guess it was in *spite* of it. We did kinda kill all her ancestors, after all...

Sallina’s face hardened. Her determination sets, as her body tenses. “You mean she’s actually...?”

“The Heroine?” Abigail supplied, from the side. “Yeah. Devilla has this crazy idea of actually *working* with her to bring about peace.”

“You’re the one who encouraged me to try!” Eena called out.

Abigail shrugged. “I said it was crazy, not *bad*. We’re kinda backed into a corner, here, in case anybody failed to notice. You die without having a kid, and the whole tower’s screwed... And also you’d be *dead*. Kind of a fan of any plan that *doesn’t* inevitably lead there, one day.”

“If it helps, I really don’t want to kill anyone,” I said. “I mean, I’ve never really believed that you’re evil, like the church teaches. I guess I *did* believe it about Eena, but I don’t anymore!”

“...Eena?” Sallina asked, frowning. It’s not an angry frown, though, which is progress! It’s mostly just confused. Though maybe there’s a *little* anger in it, still...

“That’s my pet name for Devilla,” I told her, deciding to push forward anyway. “It’s how she introduced herself to me, when we first met, back before I knew she was the Demon Queen.”

“When you first met...” she repeated, looking between me and Eena. Or I guess between me and the pile of coils that were currently surrounding Eena, since it was really hard to get a good look at her when she was all wrapped up like that.

“How long have you two known each other...?”

“A few weeks,” Eena admitted. “I got to know her while pretending to be human. Which is why I can tell you, without a shred of a doubt, that she’s *different*. She doesn’t view us as monsters to be slaughtered, but as people who are on the opposite side of an altercation. One she’s more than willing to bring an end to.”

“An altercation?” Sallina asks, her voice flat. “Is that how you want to define the genocide of our people?”

“I think-” Chloe started, only to stop when Sallina glared at her.

“Not right now, dear. I know you want to play peacekeeper, but... not right now...” Her red eyes turned back towards me. It was really hard not to flinch when they met mine, but I managed to keep her gaze. “You claim to see us as people. Perhaps you even do. But I can’t say I return the favor. Not when I’ve seen the things your people have done... the towns you’ve brought to ruin, the families you’ve slaughtered. And that’s just the common soldiers... Trust me when I say the Heroines are *far* worse.”

I wanted to speak up, but I couldn’t think of anything to say. The church’s claims painted the demons as being the bad ones - they said that demons torch human residencies, and kill children. Maybe it was even true, to some extent - but we weren’t the ones at the brink of extinction...

Sallina glared at me for another moment or two, before letting out a tired sigh. “That said... I’m quite sure Devilla’s had enough of her elders deciding who she can and can’t be friends with. Far be it from me to repeat the mistake of my predecessor. Especially when it’s part of a plan to save our people...”

“If it helps,” Eena said, as Sallina’s coils slowly loosened, “she’s quite harmless. I don’t doubt anyone in this room could match her for combat - and several of you could likely run circles around her.”

“You shouldn’t lie, Eena! Even if it’s to make people feel more safe about me...”

“I’m *not*. Lucy... I know you’re used to being the strongest human around, but that’s essentially the *baseline* for a demon. Or... at least I believe it is? I suppose I’m not entirely sure...”

“Why don’t me and her have a friendly spar, then?” Chloe suggested. “That way we can see how she matches up!”

“I’m not so sure that’s a good idea,” Sallina says, looking back and forth between me and Chloe. “For one thing, she has a sword.”

“We can fight bare handed!” I suggested, then flinched when Sallina glared at me again. “Not that I really want to fight? But if it helps you see how strong I am, I’m willing!”

“Why in the world do you think showing me your skills at killing demons would make me happy?” Sallina asked, putting her hands on her hips.

“Because as strong as I am, I’m still *really weak* compared to Eena! She could crush me like a bug, from what I’ve seen, and I’m pretty sure she hasn’t even shown me a fraction of her full power!”

“It’s true,” Eena agreed. “And I’m rather curious myself, how she’d fare against my cousin...”

“...Your *cousin*?” I ask, blinking. “Wait! The one your childhood friend is engaged to?” Come to think of it, Eena hadn’t mentioned exactly who’d be coming. She was probably going to, before I interrupted her by insisting on coming along.

“That would be me,” the brunette lamia said, crossing her arms in front of her chest. “Nivera. And if you so much as *think* about drawing that sword against Chloe, I’ll-”

“Do nothing,” Chloe interrupted. “I can defend myself! And also, it’s been *forever* since I had a good spar. All our friends are too easy... I’ve actually been thinking of asking if Devilla could introduce me to some soldiers!”

“I can put the sword aside, if you want!” I offered. I’d actually been considering giving it to Eena, since it was her mom’s, but it didn’t really seem like the right time to offer that. “Or just promise not to use it!”

“A promise not to use it is good enough,” Chloe replied, lacing her fingers and stretching her arms above her head. “Now, if everybody would back up a bit - maybe go sit on that *massive* bed? - me and Miss Heroine here can begin!”

Sallina sighed, shaking her head and slithering over to the wall, besides the bed. Eena frowned, but a quick smile from me had her shaking her own head and going there as well. Abigail looked like she wanted to say something, but she settled for just sitting on the bed and giving Eena’s hand a squeeze. Something Eena seemed to appreciate, I noted.

Nivera was the most confusing one, though. The look she gave me was a mix of annoyance and... pity?

“Alright then!” Chloe declared. “On the count of three, we go!”

“Is it really the best place for this?” I asked, looking around the nicely decorated room. “I don’t want to break anything...”

“We won’t, if we’re careful! And I don’t think Devilla’s particularly attached to anything in this room, anyway... Except maybe the bed?”

“I’m not,” Eena confirmed, blushing a little.

Seeing something so normal - and cute! - helped to relax me a little, and I smiled at her before doing my own stretches.



“Three!” Chloe declared.

“Two,” I replied.

““One!””

Chloe shot towards me like an arrow, head lowered, body bent slightly forward. I prepared myself to catch her, and maybe throw her towards the bed, but at the last moment she suddenly *jumped* in the air. I thought she was trying to do a flying tackle, but then suddenly she was a *fox* instead of a person, and she was sailing over my head. Her paws hit the back of my skull, and I spun around, finding her standing in human form again with a cheeky smile on her face. I punched forward, expecting her to block, but my arm went right *through her*, and her body disappeared.

I caught sight of a fluffy tail hidden behind the illusion, and then she was running between my legs. I spun again, to face her, only to find myself face to face with her human self, her face an inch from mine. A strong *push* against my shoulders had me flailing, but I managed to right myself in time to block Chloe’s kick.

It hit *hard* - way harder than most of my trainers ever managed - but I held firm against it until she backed off. This time, I kept my eyes on her - and not only

that, I borrowed a page from Eena's book, and spread my magic power out around me to detect her.

“Good trick!” Chloe complimented me. “But not without its flaws.”

Suddenly there were *two* Chloe's in my senses. I knew one of them had to be an illusion, but my magic couldn't tell the difference between them...

“Illusions are wild magic for us kitsune,” Chloe explained. “You're not going to see through them with basic detection magic.”

Both Chloes walked towards me. I was pretty sure which one was fake - I mean, one of the illusions had popped up from nowhere, afterall! But that assumed *either* of them were the real deal.

I wasn't going to take any chances. Instead, I drew my magic inward, towards me, and then blew it out again, forcefully moving the air. The hair and clothes of one Chloe - the one I'd been certain was fake - rustled, while the other stayed perfectly still.

I hesitated a moment, wondering if I should try to hit both... only to jump when I felt someone tap on my shoulder. Next thing I knew, my legs were being kicked out from under me and my butt was on the ground.

“Good try!” Chloe declared, with that same cheeky grin on her face. She held out a hand, but I hesitated a moment before taking it. “It’s real, this time! Promise!”

It was. Also strong - her grip was almost crushing, as she lifted me up to my feet.

“How did you manage to do that?” I asked her. “The illusion, I mean - when I tried to put an illusion on myself, earlier, it wouldn’t work. Eena had to do it for me.”

“That’s because Devilla’s floor is spy proof!” Chloe said. “Lots of magic is off limits! But illusions are fine if they don’t cover up your body.”

“...Spyproof?” Abigail asked. For some reason, her voice sounded a bit stiff. “As in... you can’t spy on people here?”

“Not magically!” Chloe confirmed.

“So you couldn’t, say... watch someone’s actions through a bunch of spiders...?”

“That’s an oddly specific thing to ask about... but nope!” Chloe confirmed.

“Araina can’t spy on this floor at all!”

“...Ah...” Eena muttered, sounding guilty for some reason.

I wanted to ask more, but Chloe gave my hand a squeeze to draw my attention and shot me another grin. “So, how about another spar? Now that you know my abilities...”

“Is that really necessary?” Sallina asked, from her space by the wall. “I think I’ve gotten a good view of her capabilities... Honestly, though, she seems roughly on par with the average demonic soldier. If *this* is the best humanity can come up with, I have to wonder how we’ve been pushed back so far...”

“I think it’s a good sign,” Eena declared. “It’s proof that she hasn’t killed any of us, so far - hasn’t grown in strength beyond her baseline. And I don’t think she ever will...”

“Well, I *have* been feeling a bit stronger of late,” I said, unable to help myself. “But that’s probably just the result of hard work! I don’t intend to fight in the war, or kill demons, or anything like that! I just want to be strong enough to protect people.”

“Well, you *are* pretty strong,” Chloe admitted. “That punch you threw looked like it would have *hurt* if it had actually connected.”

“It *will* hurt this time, then!” I promised. “...But not too much! I mean, it’s just for fun, right?”

“Yup!” Chloe confirmed, spreading her feet apart and settling back into a fighting stance.

I stood up, too. “On the count of three, again?”

“Three!” Chloe said, by way of reply.

“Two!”

““One!””

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## Feyra

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I stared at the horned wolf, laying on the forest floor. She stared back. Silently. *Awkwardly*. Not that I would have found it awkward if this had been just a day ago. Hell, if anything, I’d have called it *creepy*. But now that I knew she could actually talk, if she wanted to...

Well, it was still creepy, but it was *also* fucking awkward.

“Sooo...” I started, deciding that maybe a conversation was the best way to go. “You’re a demon, right?”

The wolf stared at me for a moment, before slowly nodding her head.

“Right... So... why exactly are you taking wolf form, still? I mean, it’s not like you’re fucking fooling anyone. Unless you just prefer it, or something?” Devilla *had* said something about her being born from wild horned wolves. The ones from the monastery’s experiments, too. It sounded kinda insane to me, but so did everything that came out of Devilla’s mouth...

I mean, she was the *Demon Queen*, but she actually cared about the Heroine? And was sleeping with her. Which would normally make me think she was trying to seduce said Heroine to the dark side, but I hadn’t actually seen her do or encourage any evil... Hell, rather than seducing the Heroine, it was more like she was getting seduced *by* the Heroine, from what I’d seen.

Honestly it felt like my world was being turned upside down. I mean, the greatest evil in the world wasn’t supposed to *blush* the moment kissing came up!

Just like the church - institution of the Goddess - wasn’t supposed to be involved in experiments to produce fucking *demons*.

I was distracted from my complaints about the world order by a growl from the resident wolf-demon. She stood up, and seemed to stretch for a moment, arching her back... except then she *kept* stretching, her body growing longer and thinner as her front legs lengthened into arms, and her paws turned into hands with fingers. Her hind legs kinda *bent*, growing sideways and shifting position as she gained *knees* and her legs divided properly into calves and thighs. Her chest first became thinner, and then started to grow *out* as two breasts came into existence, hanging beneath her form, while her snout scrunched inwards, reshaping into a face. Before I knew it, I wasn't looking at a horned wolf but a horned *woman*, kneeling on her hands and knees, with her long black hair trailing down towards the ground, not *quite* managing to hide her breasts from view.

“Green Hair think too much,” were the first words out of her mouth.

I looked hastily away, my cheeks bright red as I realized that maybe - just *maybe* - the girl had been staying in wolf form because she didn't have any *clothing*.

...Wait. “*Green Hair?* My name is Feyra!”

“My name Bailey, but Green Hair call me wolf,” the horned woman - *Bailey*, I guess - pointed out. “Not mind, though. Titles and roles easier to follow than names.”

“How is Green Hair a role?” I demanded, turning back around to glare at her. Which was a mistake, because now she was standing up and her breasts were right *there* and I was just... nope! Turning my head away from that shit.

“Green Hair sounds better than Complainer,” Bailey replied. “Or Doubter. Could call you Spotter instead? Since you see magic.”

“Yeah, no. How about you call me Feyra, and I call you Bailey?”

“Name’s usually hard to pronounce,” she repeated, frowning. “...But yours simple enough. Fey-ra.”

“It’s...” “I shook my head. “You know what? Good enough. Better than fucking Green Hair at least...”

“Could go for Complainer after all,” Bailey said. She sounded completely sincere when she said it, but I wasn’t fooled - not when she had a fucking mocking grin on her face.

“You got a problem with me?” I asked, crossing my arms in front of my chest.



She shrugged. “Not really. You bad to Queen. But everyone bad to Queen... Everyone but Heroine and Maid.”

“Well, yeah, of course humans are going to talk bad about her,” I scoffed. “I mean, she’s the *Demon Queen*.”

Bailey shook her head. “Not say humans. Say *everyone*.”

“Wait, you don’t mean... demons? What the hell? Isn’t she, like... Your *Queen*?”

Bailey tilted her head, like she didn’t understand the question, and I sighed.

“You know, the Queen! The one in charge? Who makes all the rules? Couldn’t she... I don’t know... order their heads all chopped off for disrespect?”

“Queen could,” Bailey confirmed. “Queen don’t. Queen act like she not notice. Act like it not hurt her. Says Queen deserves it...”

“...Yeah, that tracks with what I’ve seen,” I said, thinking back to all the times she’d insisted the Heroine would grow tired of her. I just sort of... thought it was an act, or something? I don’t know. I mean, that made more sense than her actually regretting her actions... Or at least it used to make sense.

*Nothing* made any fucking sense, these days.

“So what do *you* think of Quee- I mean, *Devilla*, ” I asked. Not that I really cared. I mean, she was probably just going to spin some fluff about how great Devilla secretly was, and how she didn’t deserve all the bad crap people said about her, but... I don’t know. Maybe. It wouldn’t be the worst thing to hear the perspective of someone on the other side...

Bailey didn’t say anything, though. She just sort of stared at me for a long, awkward moment. Then, when she finally opened her mouth, she just replied, “Queen too kind.”

“Too kind?” I frowned. “Come on, you’ve got to give me more than that. I mean, don’t you demons, like, worship the ground she walks on or... wait, no, you said the other demons just badmouth her, so I guess not... and it doesn’t exactly sound like they’re being ruled by an iron fist. At least these days... But come on, you’ve got to have more to say about her than *that!*”

“Fey-ra not understand,” Bailey said, shaking her head. “Queen too kind for own good. Spare me, when I attack. Clean me. Clothe me. Feed me... bring me to warm place, tell me I am Demon, and being Demon is *good* and not *bad*. Tries to teach me, so I can stand on own. So that not need Queen. So that I can *leave* Queen... because Queen expect everyone to leave her. Expect everyone to come to

hate her. To *hurt* her. Can Fey-ra do that? Help someone, expecting them to hurt you? Spare someone, expecting them to run from you? Befriend someone, thinking they will never love you... Look the other way, no matter how many times people hurt you..."

I didn't say anything. I *couldn't* say anything. All I could think of was when me and Devilla first met - when she got me out of trouble, and all I could think about was surviving long enough to get away...

I wondered what she thought of me that day.

I wonder what she thought of me *now*.

Bailey didn't say anything after that. She just went back to her wolf form, and started staring out into the darkness. Keeping watch, I guess. Like Devilla had asked her to. Keeping me safe, like Devilla requested.

The silence was even more awkward than before... but... this time I couldn't bear to break it.