

SOMETHING WICKED
IS COMING.

CITY OF SOULS AND SINNERS



A
HOUSE
OF DEVILS
NOVEL



KAYLA EDWARDS

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and SINNERS

A House of Devils NOVEL

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and SINNERS

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The light in my dark.

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Books by Kayla Edwards:

The *Ice and Iron* Series

Dreams of Ice and Iron

—

The *House of Devils* Series

City of Gods and Monsters

City of Souls and Sinners

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and SINNERS

A House of Devils NOVEL

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A House of Devils Novel
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For my family—
The light in my dark.

Welcome back to Angelthene

As always, we hope you enjoy your stay. Please avoid going out after sunset, and keep a form of protection on you at all times. The use of Blood Staves is strictly prohibited. Darkslayers operate in the city, so exercising a high level of caution in all districts is highly recommended for residents and visitors. Avoid unnecessary travel to the Meatpacking District, Hooded Skullcap, Stone's End, Ebonfield, Oldtown, the Narrow Hills, and the Black Alder District. Travel to Angelthene National Forest is recommended only between the hours of seven a.m. and three p.m. All cell phones within city limits are programmed to receive alerts regarding Blood Moons. If a Blood Moon is in the forecast, stay inside the forcefield until dawn. Report any suspicious activity to the Magical Protections Unit immediately.



DARKSLAYING CIRCLES OF ANGELTHENE

The Seven Devils

Marked with a horned letter S in the gothic script of an ancient world, they answer to Darien Cassel, Head of Hell's Gate

—

The Reapers

Marked with the cloaked and masked God of Death, they answer to Malakai Delaney, Head of the House of Souls

—

The Huntsmen

Marked with a Hellhound, they answer to Lionel Savage, Head of the Hunting Grounds and former Right Hand of Randal Slade

—

The Angels of Death

Marked with overlapping wings in white ink, they answer to Dominic Valencia, Head of Death's Landing

—

The Wargs

Marked with a crescent moon in luminescent ink, they answer to Channary Graves, Head of the House on the Pier

—

The Vipers

Marked with an animated striking serpent, they answer to Jude Monson, Head of the Den of Vipers

After the unexpected death of Randal Slade, who the Darkslaying circles of Angelthene answer to is to be determined. No one outside of these six circles may operate on Angelthene soil. To do so is punishable by death.

For a full list of characters, flip to the back of the book

PART I

THE DEVIL AND THE WHITE LILY

1

Being human in Angelthene felt a lot like walking into a party you weren't invited to, only there was no end to that party, no quick escape by simply walking out the door.

Loren Calla had spent twenty years getting used to that feeling. As one of the only human students at Angelthene Academy for Magic, the party truly never ended. The whispers were constant, chasing her down every hallway and into every classroom. Balled-up sheets of paper were forever thrown at the back of her head. Students made it their daily goal to trip or bodycheck her into rows of lockers. Sure, there was the odd time when she made it through a whole school day without being the victim to any of these things, but those days were rare. And when it wasn't whispers, paper cannon balls, or feet swept out to trip her, her problems usually involved trying not to be killed by one of the magical beings that made Angelthene such a dangerous place.

Whispers, paper cannon balls, and feet were far better forms of conflict than bullets, teeth, and claws. Bullies, she could handle. Bullies, she had a high chance of surviving, as long as their attempts at making her life a living hell did not extend beyond these walls. But vampires, werewolves, demons, veneficae, and hellsehers? She was still learning how to live with those.

A lot had changed for Loren since her first day at Angelthene Academy, but as far as the other students were concerned, she was the same person she had always been.

Human. Weak. Ordinary. An easy target.

That was fine with her. They didn't need to know the truth, nor did she want them to. Better to be targeted for being human than to be targeted for housing the coveted powers of a legendary magical artifact.

Loren was doing her best to ignore the students seated at the table behind her in history class, but as the minutes wore on, and more balls of paper

struck the back of her head, the harder it became to resist the urge to tell them off.

The students—three male warlocks who excelled at sports and not much else—were some of the most persistent bullies she had ever encountered. It hadn't taken long after her first day here at AA to conclude they were worse than the kids she'd dealt with in high school, the ones who'd vandalized her locker and poured orange juice into her lap in the cafeteria on a near daily basis.

But she wasn't the same girl she was back in high school, nor was she the same girl who'd stood outside on the academy lawn with the other freshmen of the House of Salt last Septem. She wasn't even the same girl who'd walked the hallways before Kalendae. And if they threw one more ball of paper at her head, she just might lose it.

Roughly three weeks had passed since the city had been leveled by the explosion of the Arcanum Well replica, less than two weeks since she'd met her father on the dock at Jade Beach, and she had yet to recover from the shock of both events. But she tried not to dwell, especially on anything having to do with Erasmus Sophronia, creator of not only the Arcanum Well but of hellsehers. Thoughts of the man who'd introduced himself to her as her father didn't just make her head feel like it was being turned upside down, but also like it was being shaken. Vigorously.

She hadn't seen or talked to Erasmus since that windy afternoon at Jade Beach, but she was supposed to meet him at his house for supper tomorrow. Loren hadn't thought twice before accepting her father's invitation. She was desperate for answers, and even having to wait these few days to get those answers was torture.

How was he mortal again? How was it possible that he could still be alive after his skeleton—*his* skeleton, this fact confirmed by a DNA test at Lucent Enterprises—had been dug up in a grave in Angelthene National Forest? Why had he waited until she was nineteen to come looking for her? Did he ever regret abandoning her at the Temple of the Scarlet Star when she was a baby? Had he missed her at all?

It was these gnawing questions—and plenty more—that had led to their dinner arrangement. Friday evening, six o'clock. But now, as the seconds ticked away, and tomorrow loomed, she felt less like the newer, braver version of herself and more like the old.

She propped her chin in her hand and chewed her lip, tapping the worn eraser on the end of her pencil against her notebook, eyes that were glazed with disinterest flicking about the spacious classroom. Professor Griffith's lesson was dragging by at a snail's pace, her monotonous voice droning on