

## **The Liv Anthology**

*Meet Liv, Kira's oldest friend, and experience her story of hardship and struggle with her relationships.*

### **The Story Where Everyone Is Mean To Kira**

Somehow, Kira found herself missing work when she was not there.

Usually the monotonous tasks requested of her would be seen as mundane at best and mind numbingly dull at worst... but maybe that was what she needed right now.

She let herself collapse into a semi-conscious state, as mindless as a machine, to use her muscle memory alone to complete her work.

She chose a spool of thread from her collection, threaded the needle, stitched the garment rightly, tied off the line, started anew. She must have completed twenty jobs by the first thirty minutes alone. If there were a competition for efficiency Kira would have been considered a monster, especially when she started secretly filling the quota of the other tailors too without a second thought. She cared for nothing about this work, nor anyone in it. Not when they weren't Rosie. Kira swam neck-deep in the distraction.

And she was like this for every day of the week.

Liv, ever absorbed in her own issues, took it upon herself to be the first tormentor.

She had no qualms with having Kira do her work for her. They were *friends* after all, and Kira *needed* the distraction. Liv would hardly say no to passing off her own responsibilities to someone so good at dealing with them, someone who would all but welcome the chance to bear them for her. Such a good friend she was. To Liv, whether she acknowledged it or not, Kira existed to be exploited physically and emotionally. To be mined for attention, affection, and emotion.

“If you could get these done before four that would be great. I want to leave early.”

Kira took the blouse off the top of the pile, looked for the rip, picked her thread, sewed it together and folded it up to put it to the side without missing a single step before she replied. “Hm?”

“Merick and I are going on a date...” Liv rocked back and forth on her feet, hands behind her back. It was meant to make Kira jealous. Again, she found a coat in the pile next and mended it with each step in an unbroken sequence before replying. “Cool.”

Liv leaned over the table. “We’re going on a romantic boat ride around the city... I booked it but, y’know, he’s gonna pay me back.”

Kira’s indifference seemed to frustrate Liv, who was doing her best to find any emotion in Kira at all to leech off. Eventually she plucked the needle from Kira’s hand and asked something that was sure to get her reaction.

“Are you and Rosie doing anything this week?”

“I dunno.” Kira said bluntly.

“Ohhhh... are you two okay?” Liv leered at her. This was what she wanted. “Now I mention it, I haven’t seen her pick you up from work all this week...”

“She’s dealing with something personal.” Kira said, but Liv never had the respect for Rosie to back off when it was good for her. She smelled blood in the water. “Oh... I see. Word of advice? When someone says they have ‘personal issues’ and abruptly stop talking to you... you should probably start looking elsewhere.”

Kira sat there and let the waves of insults slowly erode away at her, through the rest of the day and the rest of the week.

Liv revelled in it. Her own relationship didn't seem so bad when she created a fiction that someone else's was far, far worse.

On the Friday evening, Kira stayed late when everyone else had gone. She didn't have anything else better to do anyway and so she stayed to complete the last few orders that came in to be ready for next monday and hopefully earn a little more pay as well. Much to her surprise though, this shift did not go smoothly. She hears the sound of heels growing louder, and looked up to see Adrienne looming over her.

"Can I see you in my office for a moment?"

Kira sat in the chair across from her desk. Unlike before, Adrienne's full undivided attention was arrayed towards Kira.

"Is everything okay with you?"

Kira shrugged. "Sure."

"I heard from Liv that you're having some personal issues... now, I know that everyone has their own lives and I do hope you know you can *always* come to me if you have any concerns... but please have some professionalism? It's slipping into your work."

Kira frowned.

"You've been very rude and dismissive to your fellow colleagues, and they've lodged complaints about you. What's more... is that you haven't been reaching your quota."

"I... have?" Kira was confused more than anything.

"This isn't a put-down, Kira. I just want to make sure we're on the same page. We work best when we are on a team. You used to be the best of us, but now unfortunately others are having to pick up the slack for you... we might have finished by now so you would not have had to stay late if you had been doing your work."

Kira felt nothing, not anger nor tears. Could there even be any point arguing if she couldn't see it by now?

"You used to have such passion for this work, Kira. I miss that. What happened?"

Three words lingered on Kira's tongue, but she never spoke them.

"*You killed it.*"

Adrienne huffed. "Just make sure everything is done tonight. Mondays are busy enough without needing to catch up on work. Or shall I put you on the early shift?"

Kira nodded. "Okay." Adrienne could interpret that however she wanted, and she did not care anymore.

It was eight by the time Kira finished. She found herself lingering over a gown, thread and needle in hand, with half a mind to drop it and never return.

## The Story Where Liv Appears Again

Kira had lost Izzy, and Rosie, and Wren.  
There was no way this could possibly be rubbed in even more.  
But South Ward is a small town.  
Which makes it very, very hard to hide from people you don't like.

She actually got to the general store this time,  
A long trudging walk avoiding slippery invisible patches,  
She saw a few people around like Uncle Ling,  
And that sexy butcher guy with the huge forearms,  
But no one seemed particularly up for talking.

Winterveil music still rattled through rusty speakers,  
Decorations had been half torn down.  
General Store Sam was a fan, so she had assumed.  
She didn't really know him that well either.

Another problem with South Ward was that there were only a few stores.  
If you wanted to get what you came for, you went to see Sam.  
There was the expensive corner shop chain where even sandwiches were counted in silver,  
or little holes that sold more cigarettes than food.  
Unfortunately, that meant Kira ran into people who didn't want to see her.  
And squished down the narrow hallway, she realised she was queueing behind Liv and Him.

Zzt.

“Heuhauahauh...” He giggled, prodding Liv in the neck.  
She scrunched up and always seemed so uncomfortable around him. Maybe Lyra’s words  
fell on deaf ears after all.

Zzt

Zzt.

Zzt.

Liv brushed his hand away, and he prodded her in the leg.

Zzt.

Kira pursed her lips.

“Hey. Didn’t expect to see you two here.”

“Where else would you expect to see us?” Liv snapped.

“Heueheuehu... Kira, look what I figured out how to do.” He said.

He rubbed his fingertips together and little flashes came off them, and zapped Kira’s arm.  
The shock wasn’t really painful, but it was uncomfortable. She could feel her hairs standing  
on end.

“Static electricity.” She said.

“It’s cool right? You never told me wind powers came with lightning powers too.”

“How’d you get time to learn this...? Aren’t you busy with your band?”

“Liv’s helping me train, heueheueheu.”

*Zzt.*

*Zzt.*

*Zzt.*

Liv tried to pull away, but He grabbed her arm and zapped her again.

“Hey... I don’t think Liv is good with you doing that.” Kira said, running her mouth as usual.

“Leave off, Kira. Mind your own business,” spat Liv.

Against her nature,

And even her better judgement,

Kira stood and watched for twenty minutes as He electrocuted Liv again and again.

They were *only* little shocks.

She read the label on the back of her carton of milk.

Expiry Date: 7th January.

## Who Am I To Them?

Liv came home, threw her stuff on the floor, and sat on the sofa in a quiet dark room. She stayed there for ten minutes, maybe part of her had hoped that she wasn't alone there... but it was far, far too early for Him to come home. When she lit some candles and ate cold bread and some reheated beans for dinner, she didn't feel any less lonely for having done it. A bottle of Dalaran Red did, though. A nice bottle. She'd kept it for a date, but...

Liv rubbed her head, her mind pounding as the door unlocked. Merick came home. "Heyy babe..." He smiled, reeking of substance himself, and she almost thought for a moment they'd share a tender moment. Merick leaned in and began to kiss her on the neck. "No... not tonight, I'm too tired..." She grumbled, and when she pushed him away Merick's mood had soon turned to frustration. "Seriously? You said tonight..." He raised his voice. "Yeah? And what time is it... three in the fucking morning?" "It's not that late... come on..." Liv left for the bedroom and slammed the door shut. He could sleep out in the street for all she cared.

The next day, Liv wandered through South Ward and went to the market. She saw people all around, groups of their friends, smiling, chatting, holding their connections close. Liv spied from the corner of her eye something that made her want to burst into tears. She saw Kira, and Isabelle, and Tobbin, and Rosie, and Drake. They sat on a single table together. Kira had made herself a stone chair, Rosie was in Dragonmode and stood for none of the seats were tall enough, Isabelle laughed like she had known them for years... and none of them even thought a single thing about her. After all this time, all their friendship, everything they said and they just dropped her like that? Liv clenched her fists tightly. This is isn't my fault! This is theirs, it had to be.

Uncle Ling approached Liv from behind.  
"Excuse me, miss. I noticed you looked sad?"  
He couldn't even remember her name! Liv snapped and turned, screaming. "I'M FUCKING FINE!" And raced off to a park bench, wallowing in selfish sorrow. This had to be someone else's fault. It had to.

Liv sat and sat for hours and no one came to see her.  
She watched passersby and birds even after it started to rain.  
No one shielded her with an umbrella.  
No handsome boyfriend gave her his coat.

Liv saw Adrienne, walking past, furious.  
This was her fault. This was all her fault!  
In a single moment she could go up there and fix this.  
She bit her tongue so fiercely it bled.  
Liv went to stand up and saw Adrienne cross eyes with her.

But it was Adrienne who looked away, and it seemed like she didn't even recognise her. Liv slumped back in the chair, soaked to every corner of her being, both inside and out.

I am no one to them, she thought.  
And whose fault is that?