

The Witches of Eriadne: Toil and Trouble - Part 2: Reunion

by [The Space Witches](#)

{[Chapter 1](#)} {[Chapter 2](#)} {[Chapter 3](#)}



John, Lily and Luke

Chapter 1

Gideon sat in the co-pilot's seat in the shuttle, watching the planet get closer in the screen ahead. Trace was flying them down then taking the shuttle back to Excalibur. He could hear the others talking behind him, Max and Dureena on one side of the shuttle, Matheson and Raven on the other. They were speculating on what they'd find when they got to the planet. They hadn't been able to get through to them again, which worried Gideon. What had happened between his leaving the message and now? When they'd tried again they couldn't even get Deborah's answering message. He hoped it was just a problem with the equipment.

He found that he was surprisingly nervous about the reception he might get. The things Galen had said to him had bothered him. Had he misjudged Angel so badly? He already felt guilty enough about what he'd done to her, if Galen were right ... he pushed the thoughts away; nothing he could do about the past. But what about the future? How would Deborah react to his return? He'd been so sure when he left that she'd felt as much for him as he did for her, but now he wasn't so convinced. He remembered her standing at the foot of the ramp as he left, totally controlled. He'd thought at the time that it was just her usual protective shell, but what if it weren't? What if she really hadn't cared about

his leaving? He could hear the others talking about how pleased Lily and Ilas would be on their return. He wished he could be as confident about the welcome he'd receive.

The four women stood on the battlements of the castle watching the shuttle descend. Ilas and Lily were beside themselves with excitement and couldn't bring themselves to stay in the castle until their friends arrived. They ran from the castle to be ready to meet them as soon as the shuttle landed. Angel and Demon remained on the battlements in silence.

After a few moments Angel spoke. "Don't you want to be down there with them?"

Demon wished for the millionth time that she could tell what her sister was feeling. "No, I thought I'd wait until I can see him in private," she paused and swallowed hard to contain the emotions that were threatening to overwhelm her. "I wish I were as confident of the reception I'll get as Ilas and Lily are."

Angel turned to her and looked at her in surprise. "I didn't realize that you were worried. Why didn't you tell us?" She smiled at her sister gently. "Trying to protect us again? Oh Demon, just for once why don't you let someone else help you? You don't have to be strong all the time you know."

Demon hugged her sister awkwardly. "I know how difficult this is going to be for you, Angel, the last thing you need is me going to pieces on you. I just wish there were some way that we could both..." she trailed off hopelessly.

Angel reached up and brushed the tears away from her sister's face. "Go and wash. You don't want him seeing you with red eyes and a dirty face. Good luck." She kissed her sister's cheek then turned and left the battlements. Demon watched her go and wondered how they would get through the next few days without causing Angel too much pain.

Ilas and Lily waited as the shuttle settled, watching for the first sign of the ramp coming down. They were both jumping up and down with excitement. The ramp started to open showing a gap in the side of the shuttle, through which Max's smiling face was the first thing they could see. Ilas screamed his name and he waved down at her. All too slowly the ramp descended. Max was half way down before it reached the ground and ran to the bottom sweeping Ilas into his arms as he reached her. She was emitting shrieks of happiness as he hugged her fiercely then relaxed his grip as he realised that he was pressing down on her stomach. Dureena joined them and somehow managed to get her arms round both of them together.

Max looked down at Ilas's stomach and said, "So you were right. I couldn't believe that you'd know so quickly. I still don't know how it's possible. We couldn't possibly be genetically compatible."

Ilas reached up to kiss him. "I'm good at what I do Max. I'm a shape shifter, I can manipulate these things and I wanted your baby. So here he is." Max put her down and Dureena turned her around so Ilas got her first proper look at the little thief. She was shocked to see that Dureena's previously sleek figure was swollen and distended in the abdomen.

"Dureena? How did that happen? I mean, you're the last of your race and you told me that it took both other sexes to impregnate you. Where did the fathers come from?"

Dureena smiled at her. "You're good at what you do, Ilas, maybe better than you thought."

Matheson and Raven had waited a few seconds longer before rushing down to join Lily, but both had stopped dead in their tracks as they saw her. Matheson stood open mouthed in shocked amazement while Raven grinned in incredulous delight. He recovered first and swept Lily up into his arms, as she yelled, "Sad Eyes!"

Then he turned round towards Matheson as he held her and said, "What's the matter John, never seen a pregnant woman before?" Lily was kissing Raven's neck, face and anything else she could reach as he held her in his arms, telling him over and over how happy she was that he was here. Raven walked towards Matheson and when in reach stretched out his arms, with Lily in them. Matheson lifted his arms and Raven passed her over.

She exclaimed, "Sweet Face!" and immediately transferred all her attentions to him, kissing his face and neck, her arms wrapped tightly around him. Matheson couldn't stop looking at her stomach, swollen with the evidence of her pregnancy. She was so tiny that even at 20 weeks the bulge was prominent. He looked back up at Raven, seeing the delighted grin on his face and tried to sort out his own feelings.

Lily drew her head back and gazed up at him adoringly, then smiled over at Raven and reached out her arm to draw him close. He moved to them so that they each had their arms supporting her and she was pressed between them. Lily was almost fainting with delight at having her men back with her again. She couldn't wait to get them back to her rooms and start making love to them both. Matheson was kissing her on one side while Raven kissed the other and she couldn't think of how she could be happier.

Matheson pulled his head back and looked down at her stomach again. He had to ask.

"Do you know which of us ...?" Lily smiled up at him then at Raven.

Lily's smile seemed to fade slightly for a moment, showing some concern that she didn't voice, then she grinned up at him and said. "Does that really matter? They're *ours*!"

"They? You mean...?"

Lily's grin grew. "Twins! A boy and a girl!" Raven looked up into Matheson's grinning face and spoke.

"Congratulations. Looks like we're going to be fathers"

Gideon waited at the top of the ramp, watching the reunions going on beneath him. He'd been aware of Dureena's condition for some time; with the shorter gestation period of her people it had become obvious rather earlier than it would have done in a human. Her explanation of how it must have happened was startling to say the least. How the hell could the little purple-haired girl, currently wrapped in Max's arms and very obviously pregnant herself, be a father to Dureena's child? He reminded himself that sticking to one's own species had its merits.

But where were the other sisters? Neither Deborah nor Angel had come down to meet the shuttle and his anxiety grew. He could understand why Angel wouldn't want to see them, but why wasn't

Deborah here? Maybe he'd been right; maybe she just wasn't interested any more. He wondered whether he should go back up to the ship with Trace and forget the whole thing. He was half turned to go back into the shuttle when Ilas called out to him. He turned back to look down at her, smiling to see her looking so happy, with Max and Dureena holding her on either side.

"Captain! Demon's waiting for you in her rooms. She wants to see you in private. She's like that you know, she doesn't like people seeing her feelings." Ilas smiled up at him. "Please go to her, Captain, she really wants to see you, even if she doesn't say so."

Gideon took a deep breath and walked down the ramp, deciding to stay at least for the moment. If it didn't work out he could always ask Galen to take him back to Excalibur. The Technomage would be arriving in his own ship at any time. He smiled down at Ilas as he reached the ground.

"Thanks for the message, Ilas. I'll just go on up and see her then."

Galen descended the ramp from his ship, pulling his hood over his head. He paused at the foot of the ramp, looking around him, sniffing at the air. He hated this place. It stank of the enemy. Everything about the place was unnatural. He hated the planet, the castle, the village, the inhabitants, everything ... almost. There was one thing in this planet he didn't hate. The thing that had made him come back against his better judgment.

He strode out towards the castle, his coat flapping behind him in the wind. As he approached he could see no sign of his friends from the Excalibur. No doubt they were fully occupied. He hoped that Gideon had the sense to stay out of sight within Demon's rooms. Much as he hated the thought of his friend with the chief witch, it was better than if he wandered into Angel.

Galen still flinched when he remembered what he'd seen in the library. He'd come to terms with the fact that Angel would never return his feelings. It helped him sympathize with her and her love for Gideon/Lucas that would also never be returned. But when he saw Matthew ... well if it hadn't been so obvious that Angel was willing, he could only have called it rape. Then to watch as he'd left her, crying in pain and despair. It had taken all Galen's control not to rush to her then to offer her comfort and solace, but he knew that she would have been humiliated if she knew what he'd seen. He'd watched from the shadows as she'd pulled herself off the library table and picked up the remnants of her dress from the floor. He'd wanted to wrap her in his coat again, carrying her to her room and ... no, that would make him just like Matthew and Lucas, men who'd abused her.

So he'd left, without a word, without seeing her, and spent the months since worrying about her and what she might do. He'd only ever felt like this about one other woman in his life, and while he wouldn't want to draw comparisons between his Isabel and Angel, the strength of his feelings for both were similar.

He entered the castle courtyard and stopped, deciding which to do first. The Box, yes, that was most important. He needed to check that the Box was still secure. He descended into the cellars, lighting his way with a globe taken from his pocket, following the route he'd taken with Demon when they'd brought the Box down. Following from room to room, moving deeper into the ground until he came to the locked door behind which the Box was kept. Demon had given him the only key to the door as a gesture of her good faith. She had no intention of anyone on the planet ever entering that room.

First he checked the binding spell that he'd used to secure the door. It was still in place, although ... he

decided he was imagining things. The spell was intact. He took the key from his coat and pushed it into the door. It was an effort to turn in the lock; that reassured him. Perhaps no one had been down here since he left. Leaning into it, he managed to turn the key and the door swung open. He moved across the cell to the shelf where the Box sat in its simple wooden covering. He gently touched the tip of one finger to the outer shell and closed his eyes, sensing the spirit held within. A bolt of electricity ran straight up his left arm, headed directly for his heart. He snatched his hand away before it could hit his implants.

"Temper, temper. That wasn't very nice was it, Lucas? You've quite hurt my feelings." He smiled down at the Box then turned and left the room, locking the door behind him and resetting the spell. He felt much better knowing that the Box still held its prisoner. Now he could go and find Angel.

Angel sat in her rooms crying. She knew that by now Gideon would be with her sister. She hadn't realised how frightened Demon was until they'd stood watching the shuttle land. Surely he wouldn't reject her? Angel tried not to think about Gideon leaving Demon and coming to her. NO! She would never take him from her sister. She didn't want Gideon anyway; she wanted Lucas.

The gentle knocking at the door roused her. She wondered who it could be. Her sisters would be fully occupied and rarely knocked anyway. Servants only came to her room at her request. Could it be ... oh gods, please let it be. She leapt up from her sofa and rushed to open the door, her face alight with joy. She flung the door open ready to throw herself ... and saw Galen standing in the hall, his coat buttoned to the neck and hood up around his face.

Her face fell and her eyes flooded with tears. She tried to pull herself together and smiled weakly at him. "Hello, Galen, how are you?" She stepped back and gestured him to join her. She watched him as he looked around her room, becoming slightly uncomfortable that it was in its usual chaotic state. He walked to the table without speaking and picked up the book she'd been reading. He turned holding it and spoke.

"Romeo and Juliet? 'A pair of star-crossed lovers take their life'. Perhaps not the most cheerful reading, Angel. 'For never was a story of more woe Than this of Juliet and her Romeo'. You should try his comedies, much more fun, 'I'll put a girdle round the earth In forty minutes'. Puck was always a favorite of mine." He smiled at her, trying to pretend that he didn't see her tears.

"But even the comedies are about Love's Labours Lost." She smiled bravely at him, determined not to let him see how his presence had disappointed her. It wasn't his fault that he wasn't...

He smiled back. "Yes, Angel, but do remember that All's Well That Ends Well." He was delighted when she laughed softly.

"Can I do something for you, Galen?" She wanted him to leave, but couldn't think of a nice way to get him to go.

"No, I just wanted to see if you were all right. It's been a while," he smiled sadly at her.

"I'm fine. My sisters and the villagers keep me busy." She didn't sound convincing even to herself, but Galen seemed inclined to take her at her word.

"Good. I don't plan on staying long. I just wanted to make sure that you were well. I'll leave you now."

He walked towards the door and turned as he reached it. "And do try something a little less morbid. I recommend 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', much more fun." He left and pulled the door closed behind him.

Angel went back to her sofa and cried again.

Gideon opened the door to Deborah's rooms and saw her standing by the window, her back turned to him. She was wearing a sleeveless long black robe that reached to the floor. He dropped his bag by the door and walked across towards her, longing to hold her again after the months that had passed since they'd last been together. Before he could reach her, she turned.

"Hello, Matthew." That deep sultry voice he remembered so well, with the English accent that made him laugh when she wanted him to. He looked into her face and decided that she was more beautiful than he'd remembered. Her hair was tied back loosely, golden curls falling around her shoulders; it had grown since he last saw her. Her skin seemed to glow with an inner light, her hazel eyes large and luminous. Her lips were red and moist and all he wanted to do was kiss them.

As his eyes traveled down her body he paused as he thought that her breasts looked larger than he remembered. His eyes traveled further down and stopped. Either she'd gained weight in a very uneven way, or ... well, he wasn't absolutely sure, it could just be the cut of the robe she was wearing but it definitely looked like ... He looked back up at her face and realised that she was biting her lip, waiting to see his reaction.

"Are you ...?" He didn't know quite what words to use.

"Come and meet your son." He couldn't stop staring at her belly and he hardly noticed that she was approaching him.

"Well, this time I know I've grown something, even if it isn't horns, so I suppose you're entitled to stare." Her words sunk in and he looked abruptly up to her face. She was smiling but he could see that she was nervous. For Deborah to allow him to see her anxiety showed how much she trusted him. He opened his mouth to ask questions and closed it again. What could he ask? When? Well that was obvious. How? Hell, he'd known how it happened for a while now! Why? That was a good one but he doubted that she knew the answer any better than he did. All he could do was echo her words.

"My son?"

She smiled at him anxiously, not quite touching him. "Yes; it's definitely a boy, and it's definitely yours." He could hear a tremble in her voice and realised that for some reason she was frightened. Of his reaction to the news she'd just given him?

"My son." [Oh, that was original. She'll think I'm brain damaged if I can't string together more than two words at a time.] But he couldn't think of another word to say. He thought of something better. He pulled her into his arms, feeling the pressure of her belly against his, [This is going to take some getting used to,] and kissed her. Gently at first, then gradually deepening as he parted her lips. She responded immediately, touching her tongue gently to his lips, then seeking his tongue. After a long moment he pulled his head back and looked into her eyes, seeing that they were full of unshed tears. He pulled her head to his shoulder and stood holding her while she cried against his neck. He could just hear her voice muffled in his shoulder.

"I'm sorry, Matthew." He leaned back from her and put his hand under her chin forcing her to look at him.

"Sorry? What are you apologizing for? If memory serves me right it took two of us to do this." He kissed her again gently, and then brushed away her tears with his fingers.

"I wanted to tell you while there was still time ... I couldn't find a way to contact you, so I had to decide for myself and I couldn't ... I realised that I wanted him Matthew, I really wanted your son." He pulled her back close to his chest as she started to cry again.

Kissing her forehead he spoke softly. "Did you honestly think that I wouldn't?" He pulled her head up again so she had to look him in the eyes. "You are the most beautiful, desirable woman I've ever met and I used to think you were smart too. Just goes to show how wrong I can be." He smiled as he spoke and kissed her again. She buried her head in his shoulder.

When he felt her stop crying he pulled her head back a little and looked at her. "Is this going to happen a lot? Is it hormones?"

Deborah stuck her tongue out at him. "You bastard! I was absolutely terrified that you were going to turn straight around and walk out as soon as you saw me, and you ask whether I have a reason to cry when you stay? Hormones? I'll show you hormones!"

She pushed him, hard. He'd always known that she was strong, and although he'd gained some weight since his last visit and had been working out, she caught him off balance and he went over backwards, landing on the sofa. Before he could move she'd straddled his legs, sitting on his knees and pushing his shoulders back with her hands. She was grinning down at him and he laughed with her, reaching up to caress her face as he spoke.

"Hey, go easy, I'd like to use those legs again some day, and if I'm not mistaken, you've gained a little weight since I last saw you." His hand slipped down to her stomach, gently stroking the small bulge showing through her clothes. He spoke softly. "You know I've been thinking about what I wanted to do with you for days. Oh well. So much for fantasies."

She moved her hands from his shoulders and sat back. "What's the problem? Don't you want me any more? I know that I don't have the figure I used to, but ..." She ran out of words and he looked up to see that the tears had come back into her eyes.

He pulled her towards him, sliding her down his legs until she was pressed against him and could feel his erection. "Does that answer you? You are still the sexiest thing I have ever seen. I'd think you're more beautiful now than when I was here before, but that's just not possible. I must be some kind of pervert to get this turned on by a pregnant woman. But I won't risk hurting you or the baby. I'll grit my teeth and get by." She lifted her hands either side of his face and kissed him gently.

"That is very sweet, Matthew, but entirely unnecessary. If you'd arrived a couple of months ago, when I was still throwing up morning, noon and night you'd have got very short rations. But now ..." She pushed her hands under his red t-shirt and started stroking his chest, playing with his nipples, feeling the hair that had grown back since they'd last been together.

He closed his eyes and enjoyed the sensation for a moment, then said, "But what about the baby? I don't want to do anything to hurt him or you."

Before he could carry on she leaned forward and stopped his words with a kiss. "It's fine, Matthew. At this point anything we want to do is fine. And I do want you. Now." She pulled his jacket off then pushed his t-shirt up as he raised his arms, so she could pull it over his head.

Before she could do anything else he stopped her. "Wait, I want to see." He reached up and grasped the zipper of her robe and slowly brought it down. As it passed her breasts the material was forced apart, showing that he'd been right, they were bigger. More rounded and heavier. He held back from touching them, and continued to pull the zipper down until her slightly swollen belly was revealed. He was fascinated, never having been intimate with a pregnant woman before. He remembered the flat lines of her stomach when he'd been with her before and much as he'd loved her body then, he found her new curves even more sensual. He leant forward and gently kissed her stomach where the swelling was greatest. She slid back off his knees and stood, letting the robe fall to the floor, standing naked before him.

He looked up at her and felt himself grow harder as he took in the new shape of her body. "Are you sure about this?" He was anxious about the idea of making love to her. This was a whole new experience for him.

"Very." She knelt between his legs and removed his boots and socks, then reached for his belt. He sat back and watched as she undid it and unzipped his pants, then lifted his hips to allow her to take them off. She slipped his pants and briefs off, and then sat back to look at him. Gideon could see her excitement, her nipples were erect and she was running her tongue across her lips to keep them moist. He could hear her breathing accelerate. He decided to let her take the lead, he really wasn't sure what was OK in these circumstances and thought he'd let her decide what her own body would take.

She leaned forward, her deliciously heavy breasts touching his thighs, and kissed the tip of his penis. He lay back into the sofa and closed his eyes as he felt her take him into her mouth and begin to lick and suck the length of his shaft. She moved up and down, sometimes sucking hard, sometimes biting gently, sometimes barely touching him with the tip of her tongue. He'd spent nights in his bunk dreaming of this and he'd forgotten just how good she was, bringing him to the brink of orgasm, then cooling him, making sure he didn't come too soon. He felt her release his cock from her mouth and move her body back between his legs. She pushed herself to her feet and stood in front of him.

Before she could move again, he stood and pulled her close to him, then bent and putting his arm under her knees, lifted her. He let out a small grunt of effort and she giggled.

He gasped, "Shut up, will you? You've gained weight!"

She nodded and smiled at the strain showing on his face. "Put me down, silly. I can walk."

He shook his head. "This is the last time I'll get to do this for a while. In another few days I'd break my back!" He carried her through to the bedroom and gently laid her on the bed, then stood looking down at her as she lay, arms spread wide, legs a little apart, her nipples erect and her mouth slightly opened, just waiting to be kissed. Everything about her was an invitation.

He lay down on the bed next to her and started to caress her, touching every part of her body, feeling her hair and all the different textures of her skin in different parts of her. He kissed the hard nipple of one breast while gently massaging the other. Her nipples were darker than they had been and larger, but they were still beautiful. He wondered what it would be like when they were heavy with milk; would she let him taste? The thought aroused him further. He moved his hand between her legs and

found that she was open and wet beneath his touch. He gently slid a finger inside her, watching her carefully for any signs of discomfort. Her breathing caught and she moaned but he could tell it was with pleasure, not pain, so gently moved another finger inside her and found her clitoris with his thumb. She was writhing with pleasure, pushing herself down onto his hand, pulling his fingers deeper inside her with the muscles of her vagina.

She brought her mouth to his ear and whispered in a voice rough with desire. "Please, Matthew, please, now."

He held her close to him and rolled onto his back, bringing her over on top of him. He didn't want to lie on top of her and put any pressure on her stomach. She lifted her legs either side of him and straddled his hips, sitting upright as she did so. She shifted herself so she was poised above his erection, then slowly lowered herself onto him, pushing down gently then withdrawing, but with each thrust taking him a little further into her. Once she had him totally enclosed she started to rock back and forth, moving him inside her as she did so. Then she lifted and thrust back down in time to her rocking movements. He let her move as she wanted and tried not to push back, not wanting to go into her too hard. But that wasn't what she wanted.

She opened her eyes and looked at him longingly. "Harder, please, harder."

He started to move his hips in synch with hers, meeting each downward thrust with a push upwards. She was rotating her hips now, driving him close to the edge of orgasm. He knew that she was close to release herself so sat up and moved his mouth to her breasts and licked each nipple in turn, then sucked hard. This was the final stimulus she needed and she soared into climax, taking him with her. He felt her come again and again, each time her muscles clamped down on his cock, squeezing exquisitely and draining him of every last drop of liquid. It was only then that he realised that he hadn't felt her orgasm, only his own. She'd stopped sending.

Gideon lay on his back with Deborah wrapped in his arms, her head on his shoulder. He had one arm around her holding her close, while with his other hand he did what he liked to do best, played with her breasts. He smiled at the thought that there was even more to play with now. He was like an addict returning to a drug, he just couldn't leave them alone. He could just feel her stomach pressing his side, a constant reminder of what had happened. He was still trying to sort out his feelings about it all and was glad that Deborah didn't seem able to read him.

He was happy yes. He'd always liked the idea of being a father, but had assumed it wouldn't happen. His career had always got in the way of relationships. But he was also aware that by the time the baby was born he'd be heading towards 43, which was starting fatherhood late. By the time his son went to college he'd be over 60. Which wasn't *that* old these days, but wasn't ideal.

He suddenly wondered how old Deborah was. It had never occurred to him to ask. Hell he didn't even know when her birthday was. If he missed that now he would be in such deep shit...

And how much time would he be able to spend with Deborah and their son? His career hadn't just gone away and his current mission meant he couldn't even think about leaving. Much as he might dream about retiring to join Deborah here on the planet, he knew himself well enough to know that it wasn't an option until they'd found a cure.

So all in all, happy yes, but troubled by the many problems he could see ahead. He wouldn't want

Deborah to pick up on those feelings. He looked down at the top of her head and tried to work out if she was asleep. He kissed her hair and she stirred, her full breasts rubbing against him as she moved, pulling away from him slightly, to look up at him and smile. He kissed her softly and spoke. "We need to talk about a few things don't you think?"

She nodded. "I know, but I've been enjoying myself too much. I didn't want to spoil it"

"Nothing can spoil this. I just don't know where we go from here. I want to stay with you both..." Before he could continue, she placed her finger against his lips and stopped him.

"Matthew, you have a job that's more important than anything else I can think of. I know that. I won't do anything to make that job more difficult." He kissed her again.

"OK, next question. Has something happened to you? I mean you didn't seem able to read me earlier and you didn't ... er ... project, in the way you used to. Is there a problem?" He looked concerned as he said it, stroking her hair with one hand while his other continued to gently play with her nipple.

"I think it's to do with the pregnancy. As it's progressed my empathic abilities have decreased. I can't read anything other than *very* strong emotions and I can't send anything any more. I'm hoping it's some sort of protection for the baby, and when he's born I'll get back to normal. It's really strange not knowing what people are feeling." She looked at him seriously, her expression sad. "And I can't tell if people lie to me now."

Gideon came close to blushing, remembering how close he'd come to lying to her about Angel on his last visit. He hadn't had to lie in the end, other than by omission. He was going to make damn sure he steered clear of her little sister on this trip.

"How's it been so far? Have you been ill?" He looked down at her anxiously.

"It's been fine. As I said, a few weeks of throwing up a lot, but otherwise no problems."

"Will you let Raven have a look at you? I'd be a lot happier hearing that you're fine from a doctor."

"I wanted to ask him anyway. My sisters and I have the only medical skills on this planet, and that's more at the level of rough nursing. It'll be a relief to get his confirmation that we're both OK." Her hand shifted to rest on her stomach and she looked tenderly down at her swelling. "I want him to be perfect."

He shifted down the bed until his head was level with her belly, and leaned over to kiss it.

"He's going to be the most perfect baby ever; with parents like us how could he not be?" He grinned up at her then bent back to kissing her stomach, speaking between kisses. "He'll be tall, and blond like his mother, with hazel eyes. And ruggedly handsome like his father." He looked up again, as she stroked the back of his head. He turned his head back to her stomach and spoke directly into it. "Hear that, son? You've got a beautiful, smart mother so you're off to a good start." He turned to look at Deborah again. "There's just one thing he's going to have to know from the start." He pulled himself up the bed a little way.

"What's that?" Deborah was smiling as she caressed his hair.

"That these are all *mine*." He bent his head to her breast and sucked at one nipple while massaging the

other with his hand. Deborah was laughing as he continued to lick and play with her.

"Oh, come on, Matthew. Let him have one at least!" He lifted his head and looked up at her with a broad smile on his face

"Well, it's not easy but OK ... have you ever thought of having a tattoo?"

"Now why on earth would I do that?" He could feel her laughing at him as she spoke.

"Because right here ..." he stroked the skin just under her left nipple "... in tiny little letters, I want a message which says 'property of Matthew Gideon' and over here ..." he moved his hand to her other breast "... there'll be another one which says 'property of baby Gideon'."

She was rocking with laughter now and could barely gasp out, "And of course your son is going to be so smart he'll be reading within moments of birth!"

"Smart? This is my son we're talking about. He's gonna come out with a book in his hand!"

"Oh God, I hope not, that would *really* hurt!"

He moved back to her breasts slowly kissing and licking at her nipples until they became hard beneath his touch. He moved his hand down her stomach, moving across her bump in slow circles before finding her curls and slipping his hand between her legs. He could feel her becoming aroused again as he touched her and moved back down her body, moving her legs so he could lie between them. He slipped his fingers inside her then bent to find her clitoris with his mouth. As he licked slowly around her vagina he realised that she tasted different. He was constantly amazed at the changes her body was going through.

He concentrated on giving her pleasure with his hands and mouth, could feel her growing more excited as her hips started to move in rhythm with him. When he felt she was getting close to coming, he moved his mouth away and pulled himself to his knees between her legs. With his legs spread wide he lifted hers apart and pulled her body towards him. Lifting her hips slightly he positioned her so he could enter her while still kneeling between her legs.

He moved slowly, constantly checking to see that she was comfortable with what he was doing. Her head was thrown back on the pillows, her mouth open and panting, her nipples stood erect on her breasts and her throat was flushed. He pushed deeper into her, feeling her walls gripping and releasing his cock as her pleasure mounted. When he was as far inside her as he could get from his kneeling position, he leant forward and pushed his hands under her shoulders, then pulled her up into a sitting position so her legs encircled his hips. As her body shifted, her vagina clamped down on his swollen cock, bringing him nearer to release, but he held on. When he had her settled across his thighs he started to move his hips, thrusting up into her. She placed her hands on his shoulders and matched her movements to his.

He was sure that he was deeper inside her than he'd ever been before; he could feel every pulse of her walls pressing in on his cock as he drove himself into her. He kissed her neck and throat as they both came closer to release, then pulled her head down to his so he could take her mouth and push every part of himself he could deep inside her. He felt her lift as she came, then push herself back down onto him and came again. Every thrust sent her into another wave of climax and this time he came with her, emptying himself into her in a gush of heat.

The rest of the night was spent between sleep and lovemaking; Demon thought she'd never been happier. Gideon had told her that he could stay for two weeks and wanted to spend every moment of that time with her. She'd cried again when he told her that, [maybe he has a point about the hormones,] and he comforted her in the way she liked best.

Lily opened her eyes to find herself lying in her lounging pit. She felt her lovers' hands on her swollen belly, and almost started crying from the feeling of complete, utter happiness that flowed through her. She'd slept a while, but now she was wide awake, listening to the calm breathing of the two men sleeping beside her.

After a while she got up, carefully taking their hands off her belly and laying them on the hides, and silently stepped towards the tapestry. Her movements were still graceful, despite the added weight of the two babies she was carrying, only a tad slower and more careful. A smile spread on her face when she gently rubbed her belly. [You two will be wonderful!] Her mind returned to her task; she slightly spread her arms, palms toward the tapestry, concentrating and whispering a few words in the old language, then stepped forward and moved through the tapestry and the wall, into her workshop. Her hands found the candle and matches and lit the wick without her having to think about it.

She carried the match to the desk that stood by the left wall of the small room and lit another candle standing there, then blew the match out. The room was windowless, and full of strange things, magical things, personal things, rare things, things that belonged to darkness not light: potions, herbs, magical ingredients of all kinds, on shelves, in bottles, boxes, satchels. The wall opposite the secret door was covered floor to ceiling by one big bookcase, filled with countless books about Gods and Goddesses, esoteria, mystics, religions, cults, species, cultures - and magic. Many were filled with her notes, her own books of spells. A couch stood to the right of the room, with a low, round table of dark carved wood in front of it, an incense burner standing in its center. But none of these things had drawn her to the room.

She sat down at the desk, staring at the open book that was lying on it. After the Excalibur had left and they'd put the Apocalypse Box, with Lucas inside it, into the deepest, farthest room in the castle's cellar, she'd been studying books. Very old books. She'd found the spell Angel had used, which made it possible for Lucas to be transferred into Gideon's body, while Gideon had taken his place in the Box. But she hadn't dared to stop searching, worried that there might be another way that Lucas could get out of his dark prison. She took a deep breath and started to read.

She'd been in her workshop for a while, but found nothing new, and decided to finish reading the page and go back to her lovers. She had already stood up when she read the last sentence - and suddenly froze. [Oh dear Goddess ... hold your blessing hand over us!] Her hand on the page was shaking, she realized, as was the rest of her body. She sank down again, leaning her head heavily on her hands. After a minute of calm breathing, she stopped trembling. [Something tells me that this is important ... but I can't do anything about it now.] She sighed and leaned back, looking down at her belly and laying her hand over it protectively. [Better get back, before they notice I'm gone...] She blew out the candle on the desk as she stood, feeling calmer now. As she left the room she extinguished the candle by door, passing through from the total darkness of her workshop into the moonlit dusk of her room.

She didn't go directly to her lounging pit but detoured to her window. She stood there naked and gazed out at the moonlit landscape. She could see a flock of bats flying past in the distance, making her

smile. [I should show Luke and John my favorite places outside the castle...]

She thought about all the things they could do in those places ... which brought back the memory of what they had done the previous afternoon and evening. She closed her eyes, remembering...

John was insecure. "But ... I mean ... is it...?"

They had ended up lying tangled in her lounging pit, and in between kisses had started talking about sex during pregnancy, since Lily had read in a book that many women found it even more enjoyable than usual.

Lily laughed her soft rippling laughter. "It is safe for our children, Sweet Face, don't be afraid!"

Lily covered his face with kisses, soon locking her mouth to his in a raw, passionate kiss, then drew Luke near and touched his lips with hers, softly at first, teasing, until he gripped the back of her head and pressed his mouth to hers, parting her lips and entering with his tongue. All the while she could feel John trace kisses along her spine where her dress was cut low in the back. She had chosen a sleeveless, emerald green, velvet dress to wear for them, matching her eyes, with an empire waistline due to her pregnancy, and a dark red velvet insert at the front. Her cleavage showed even more prominently now that her breasts were growing bigger. When she'd put it on she had thought, [Good thing I left enough leave in the fabric and laced the bodice! This way I can wear it right up until the day of birth.]

She felt John's hands open the clasps on her back and slip the dress off her shoulders when she lowered her arms. He covered her back with kisses, making her shiver, while his hands pushed the fabric further down; Lily lifted her hips and then her legs to allow him to slide it past. Luke's mouth wandered down to her breast, his lips closed around her nipple, his tongue flicking in and out, playing with it, making her breath go faster. John carefully turned her onto her back. She was lying on the soft hides, moaning with pleasure as both men were suckling her hardened nipples, their hands roaming her body, caressing her swollen belly, moving in and out of her wet core. Her long fingernails raked their skin. All of her was burning with desire.

"Please..."

Luke shifted and rolled her onto her side so she faced Matheson, then carefully inserted a finger, wet with her own juices, into her ass. Moments later, Matheson pushed into her front opening, slowly, carefully, still afraid to hurt her or their children. While his mouth devoured hers, Luke trailed kisses along her neck, her throat. He replaced his finger with his cock, joining in John's slow rhythm, shoving into her at the same time, driving her wild. Soon their rhythm increased, making her cry out with every shove, pushing her ever closer to the edge, until she came with a loud cry, feeling their hot come filling her.

They lay there panting, holding each other tightly, for what seemed to be an eternity.

"Well," Lily was finally able to say, "I can say that sex during pregnancy definitely isn't less good than normally."

They still chuckled when they were tucked in and snuggled together under the hides. But before long a kiss, or a touch, or a look had them going again...

Lily opened her eyes as she heard someone stir in the lounging pit, and soon soft steps came towards her. Hands softly touched her upper arms, and a kiss was planted on her left shoulder.

"Sleepless?" John asked in a murmur.

Lily smiled. "I'm too happy to sleep."

Then she turned around and put her hands on his smooth chest, looking up into his eyes. "Are you happy, John? I know this was a shock for you..."

John looked at her adoringly and caressed her cheek. "It was ... and I'm still not entirely used to the thought of becoming a father ... but if there ever was a woman I wanted to have my child, it's you." He kneeled down and placed a soft kiss on her belly, hearing Lily's sharp intake of air, and when he stood again he could see tears in her eyes. "I love you, Lilith."

The use of her full name and the solemn way he said them made his words a vow, and they sealed it with a long, deep kiss.

{Chapter 1} {[Chapter 2](#)} {[Chapter 3](#)}

The Witches of Eriadne: Toil and Trouble

{[Part 1: Anticipation](#)} {[Part 2: Reunion](#)} {Part 3: Out and About} {Part 4: Life and Death} {Part 5: Breaking Away}