

# Kit Morgan's Detective Agency

By Alex Kelly

Prologue

“The Jackal”

The Jackal appreciates solitude. A teal knit blue sweater was grabbed up by a hand, rushing around the room. Some papers from a cabinet, just the important ones. No time for taking pictures out of frames or holiday ornaments. You can replace things, not time, and that's what was running out.

The other bags were already in the car, just the purse and an overstuffed satchel bag, and that was all that was left to bring. One last glance around the house, it did what it needed to do.

At the door, just leave the coats on the rack. Shoes for fancy occasions, not needed. Reaching to the door knob and someone knocks.

-Someone knocks?

Opening the door...“It's you? I told you to stay away”.

A woman's scream echoed through the rooftops.

Birds burst from the treetops and flew into the night.

Chapter I

“Kit's Bar is Having a Night”

“Come on, just pound another back, I want to see the color drain through your ribcage again!” The Minotaur's sweet bark hair sloppily fell in front of his face. He kept puffing out bursts of air in between talking to get it to move, to no avail. His name was Ceddark and he was a puppy who had turned into a seven and a half tall, muscle brick of abs and horns. So, maybe several puppies. At the bar, he could put away ale like he could break a wagon in two, which is to say, decently well but with a bit of grunting and mess. However, this ale was a special batch, infused with some fae dust that, to make a long story short, makes it much stronger than usual. But it was a special night! Well, it was a Saturday, and that was enough for most of the patrons.

The rib cage in question belonged to one Norrel Statcher, a Draugr by specification, a man about 72 years old who's flame was pinched out when managing a nearby sawmill, an accident occurred many years ago that dropped a very solid, sturdy log of an oak perpendicularly down through most of his very not solid nor sturdy, abdomen, killing him almost instantly. Being a Draugr does run in the family, as they say, and therefore he was not surprised to be back.

Kit sat in between the two men, holding her glass with one hand and shaking her head in a whiskey-fueled laugh. She reckoned she could listen to these two go at it forever and still be entertained.

“Cedd, an old man like me shouldn’ have too many more shots at my age!” Statcher drunkenly explained back, but not without adding in the glint of mischief in the corner of his mouth. “-Sides, I’ve gotta sober up before goin’ home now, don’ I. I’s have work in the morning and ol’ Murdoch will ‘ave my spine!”

Ceddark swung his head to look at Kit now, extending a gasp to amp up his dramatic shock and disbelief, “But I missed it last time, it’s so cool when he takes a shot and we can see it fall right out of his ribcage, like a leaky faucet, but with bones and brandy. Tell him I missed it!”

Kit swung her head to face Statcher, imitating the drunk minotaur in an attempt to make herself and the old man laugh. It worked easily, their tolerance for high brow comedy was softened. “Statch, he missed it!”

Norrell put out his open arm to the rest of the bar as if he were about to break into a monologue, something Kit wasn’t sure if she wanted to see, necessarily, but knew she wouldn’t be able to take her eyes off of. “Fine! Twist my arm.” And with only a simple thrust of his shoulder and a loud crack of bone, he threw his arm behind himself so that it flew backwards, rotating in a truly non-human way, and landed haphazardly against his forehead like a broken zombie, enlisting in war. “I shall have, yet another! Winston, my dear, give us a 5th please!”

Winston, taller than most so he often craned his neck down in a poor attempt to hide, turned from the end of the bar, refilling some bottles, and gave a big grin, “Coming right up Mr. Norrell, sir!” Winston locked eyes with Kit and she bobbed her head in a nod, confirming that this round was also on her. Good customers, good treatment.

Statcher continued, “And another thing,” Although Kit was sure he hadn’t been mid-story, “Consuming rather dark shots of liquor from Kit’s establishment is about the toughest thing this bag of bones can do - Ceddark, didn’t you stop a train with your head?”

The handful of bar attendees around them erupted into cheers of *That’s right! Could’ve sworn that was Ced...and some No way, that’s impossible...and finally, if anyone could do it.* All surmising in the consensus that the bar wanted to hear him talk about it, again; “it” being a far fetched tale that the Minotaur once stopped a train by ramming his head square into the brunt of a full-speed train, horns barring into the grills of the cow catcher and his hooved feet grinding into the gravel and breaking tracks as he was pushed back, eventually bringing an entire passenger train, *5 star, expensive wine served, you know the type*, to a crashing halt. The story was exciting, everyone on the edge of their stools despite definitely hearing this story in this exact bar numerous times. It was sweet to see the familiar faces relive the moment, they’d be happy to hear it a hundred more times. Even if there was a better chance of Statcher keeping liquids inside his stomach than it being real.

“How ‘bout you, Morgan?” The story telling had died down and now Mr. Norrell turned to Kit, “E’er stopped a train with your head?” He sloshed his words along with his head and smiled. Kit was several drinks more than toasted and she should be feeling warm and happy, but in that instant, all the color drained from her face.

*Ever stopped a train?*

Kit no longer saw her neighborhood friends or the rough and well loved copper bar. In front of her bleary eyes were clusters of rushing people. Back and forth, people on their way to work with serious briefcases to match their serious coats. Families excited to go on a trip, families relieved to just get back. The early morning light cast soft, golden rays on everyone and everything at the train station.

Regular on boarding whistles were heard back and forth, clocks chiming, an expected ambience of busy people. The cobblestone street sparkled, a clear indication of a recently rainy night. It would likely rain again tonight. Kit remembered feeling pleasantly content at this moment - no where else to be or to do, just wait. She didn't know what she was waiting for, per say, but she knew who, and that was all that mattered. Her heart glowed at the thought. It made the biting breeze feel like a cozy night by the fire pit, nothing else existing but the swirling flame and those around it.

Kit checked her watch again. *8:53. A bit late. Not to worry, she has her reasons.* More people walked by, still not her.

*9:45. She's fine. She's okay. She's smart and knows how to handle herself.*

Day broke through the Morning clouds and fog. It got busier and louder.

*10:36. She got caught up at work.*

It wasn't until the clock struck twelve times that Kit decided to get up from her bench and walk around. Another train arrived, another train left.

"Morgan?" She scanned through the crowds, trying to pinpoint the source of the voice.

"Morgan! Look alive!"

The bar was back. Scuffed and wooden and stained. No morning fog or train whistles. No glowing fire. No curly black hair. The voice was Statcher, squinting at Kit, closer than before, looking around her face as if it were a book with all the words jumbled up and written backwards.

"Alright, Statcher, the liquor you drank may have left this bar but their ghosts live in your breath!" Kit shook her head and Statcher smiled, scooting back to his chair. He held up a pointer finger and opened his mouth, about to bound head first into another story.

"KIT!"

At first, Statcher opened his eyes, confused, as if he thought the shout had somehow exited his own mouth without his permission. Kit looked to Ceddark, also dumbfounded, then around the bar, not sure who was talking.

"KIT, YOU'RE NEEDED!" Holly, in all her chiseled, blonde, tall stature hovered by the front door. It took Kit an extra moment or two to focus on her transparent form, when she was farther away, there was less light to refract through her bluish skin. Kit found her focus, Holly's eyes bore straight into her soul and she felt some of her ghostly projection, pulling in her chest. *Fire. FIRE.*

Kit wordlessly jumped up and swam through the bar, nobody was trying to stop her but they weren't sure what was happening. She was next to Holly at the door entrance, Holly was holding open the door, and Kit was outside, her back to the dark painted glass of the bar. Her bar.

Six men stood in a semi circle in front of Kit. Three were picking on a couple of witches, arm in arm, who were trying to leave the bar; not allowing them to walk past. The one on the far left held a torch. Most of them looked like they worked out more than they cleaned up after themselves and all of them were entirely human.

Kit stood there for possibly half a second long, maybe two, before flinging herself into the larger of the two that were picking on her customers. We'll call him Brickhead.

Brickhead wasn't expecting a 5'4" red headed woman to hurl herself onto his front in an odd sort of aggressive hug, so she had the slightest advantage of surprise. The other one, Brickhead Two, looked surprised for a moment but the second the Witches tried to use this opportunity to get by, he was back at it.

Kit thrust her knee into the center of his hips, right between his legs, triggering a loud yelp that did not seem to improve his mood in the slightest. Kit used the moment of his pain to snake behind him and slam her foot into the back of his knee. He fell forward and just barely managed to catch himself with his hands, saving his face from a very intimate greeting with the coarse cobblestone ground. She turned to Brickhead Two, he had his arms around one of the Witches now and the other was manically searching for her wand in her bag while crying. The man laughed. In two wide steps she reached them and yelled.

“Duck!” The Witch that was being forcibly held instinctively listened and threw her head as far down as she could whilst his arms kept her to his chest.

Kit jammed two of her fingers into the man’s eyes. This was enough to make him stumble back.

Four left.

Kit took a step or two back and remembered *just* how not sober she was. She wasn’t sure if she took a third step backwards or if Esher Street was suddenly tilting up towards her. Either way, she was immediately sucker punched in the left side of her face. She stumbled all the way to the right until making contact with the blackish-green wood of the bar. She grabbed onto the wood for support and turned to her attacker.

It was the nearest guy, the other two cackling, ready for a fight they didn’t know they were going to have, but had clearly hoped for. This guy was possibly the tallest and biggest of the group, stomach stretching his buttons but by no mean without muscles. He stalked over, Kit’s left ear ringing profusely. She was certain Holly was yelling at her or the men, at something, but had no clue what that could be.

She threw a right hook towards him but he wasn’t nearly close enough yet and Kit hit the ground. The three remaining men laughed hysterically. The closest one had reached her and grabbed the scruff of her collared shirt, hoisting her up into the air. She coughed at his face, toes striving to find footing with no luck. Let’s call this one Sally.

Sally maintained a grip on Kit, holding her in front of him while the other two walked closer to her. Sally still had one free hand and used it how he knew best, smashing it into a smaller person’s face. He pounded his fist into Kit’s face repeatedly, more blood appearing on his knuckles with each blow. Kit was distantly aware that it was her blood and that she would be in a lot of paint tomorrow. Kit tossed her head back and then forward in an effective, if equally agonizing, head-butt to Sally. Rather than quiet, this seemed to alight his joyful rage, his eyes burning and a wicked grin across his face. He was now also bleeding, which Kit counted as a point. He punched her harder this time and now there were three Sallys, all laughing in unison, so she pulled back for another head-butt. Before she could make contact, her hair was gripped by a different man’s arm and yanked backwards. Eyes rolling to the left and finding a slightly shorter man with a greasy mess of blonde hair and a matching greasy, sick smile.

Kit coughed a bit of blood into his face as she spoke, “Hi there mates, afraid I’m going to have to ask you to leave my bar.”

He smeared the blood away and punched her square in the nose. Shooting pain from that to the back of her head struck like lightning and she squeezed her eyes shut, taking this moment to assess and push aside the haze of her mind.

Kit kicked her legs, this only seemed to make them all laugh more, but she was able to kick and throw her right leg over Sally’s “holding arm”. Bringing her other leg up to meet it too, they wrapped around his arm and kicked the ever loving shit out of his face. Sally, poor Sally, went toppling backwards, bringing Kit with him, landing unceremoniously on top of his stomach. Shaking her limbs free as she

climbed up, wiping some blood away from her dripping nose, and all of a sudden her face met the knee of the greasy blonde one. It knocked her back but she grabbed onto his calf and pulled it with her, intentionally landing back-first on the ground and rolling out of the way, this momentum carried him down atop his taller friend.

The last one held the torch, wore a dark brown cap, and by now he was no longer laughing. His small horde of oily henchmen were all horizontal and he wasn't happy about it. We'll call him...Torchy? Sure. So, Torchy scoffed, "Little miss freak-of-the-freaks thinks she's all that. Roughin' it up with some of my boys and what, we're gonna roll over?"

Kit was carefully pulling herself upright again. Whether it was the spins already settling in or getting her head smashed in so many times by brutish hands, she had to breath in and out deeply three times to steady herself. Kit glared his way. Hands resting on knees for support, aware that wiping the blood did not stop the dam from leaking from her face. Her body ached all over but she laser focused on Torchy. They went after her bar. Her people. He wanted to burn it down. He needs to pay.

He was closer now, within smelling distance, which was unfortunate for Kit. He placed the torch carefully on the ground, propped slightly upright. "Not gonna happen, ratbag. Your kind doesn't belong 'ere. Unsafe. Unkind. We're doin' a civic service, helpin' clean up the streets." He looked at the bar again, "Ghosts? Werewolves? I see some of ya have horns? How can you live like that thinkin' yer normal. Ya deserve what's comin'."

He was about a foot away from Kit's face now. Snarling. Kit swung a punch to his face. He caught her fist in his meaty hand. Kit remained quiet. Strength conserved for action.

"Ya missed, ratbag."

Kit swung her left fist at his face. Caught again. Her brow was furelled. He held both of her fists, out at either side of their heads as if paused in a dance.

Patrons, Winston, and Holly were at the door and window, pressed up to the glass. Witches safely gone. All worried and frozen in fear.

"Just sit down, girl. Not tryin' to kill ya today." He genuinely offered this reprieve. Just sit down and let him set the bar on fire. Possibly kill or injure everyone inside. That's all. She still pushed her body weight into both of her held fists. He maintained a grip. He spat in her face, "Are ya even listenin'? God yer daft." He smiled.

Perfect.

Everything happened all at once. Kit stopped pushing into his fists, instead, she pulled back, his hands coming with, and at the same time, she catapulted her head into Torchy's face, regard for self never having left the bar with her, and all of her body mass was flung at his face, intent to injure or at least stun. He was pushed backwards, caught off guard, stumbling. He steadied himself, however; and ran at Kit. Oh shit. His arms were wide and wrapped around her in a terrible embrace. He tackled her to the ground, thighs keeping her down, and pummeled her face into the cobblestone with both fists.

Kit accepted this rebuttal while considering her options. Go to sleep? Not a very helpful path. Use her legs? Currently held down with about 200-300 pounds of bigotry. Use her hands? Those were free, currently failing at a sorry attempt to block her face, but she reached out and couldn't find purchase on any part of him.

*Time for the dragon?* No. Kit didn't want to kill anyone. *But I could help.* And hurt. He's just a simple human, stupid, waddling around leaving a trail of havoc in its wake.

Kit's vision went blurry. Holly's screams were louder now but everything else was strangely dim. She knew she was going to pass out soon if she didn't make up her damn mind. Dragon was the only course of action her fading mind could see the end of. As soon as she made up her mind, all the colors she could still see seemed to brighten and distort.

*I'm back. We're not going to be on the floor anymore.*

It was as if many voices were speaking almost at the same time, overlay and vibration coursing through her veins. Kit felt alive all over again. Reflecting back in Torchy's eyes were a bright red light from her own.

This must have been obvious because his face fell, and although he kept punching, there was finally a glint of hesitation in his eyes. One could almost call that fear.

Kit's arms were no longer flailing, but steadied at her sides. Nails were now sharp and, well, they were claws. Her form was mostly the same, still the same red skin, but light from the street lamps and the nearby torch would catch on scales scattered around her body. Horns protruded from around her bangs, hair parting to reveal the sharp, thick bone.

Her claws clamped onto both arms and his punches ceased. The nails weren't visible as they were deep inside both biceps.

He gritted his teeth in agony but kept his eye contact with Kit, a death stare. He squirmed and managed to rip one arm out of her clasp and draw a small knife from somewhere concealed. "Why you little bitch," he spat again in her face, "Provin' my point, you lot are a menace to society," he stabbed her in the stomach and, like the second hand of a clock ticking by, Kit stabbed him back with her free hand, claws ripping through his chest. He spat out blood, "I'm helping the community and--"

Unfortunately, he was cut off from what was a likely very practiced speech of hatred and disgust, the mirror at his home didn't deserve such mistreatment, as Kit began to sit up. Yes, he was still on top of her but she now out-strengthened him about fifty to one. He slid down as she rose up, bat-like wings extruding from her back and stretching out, far to either side. A dark shadow cast over him as he was now below her, cowering on the cobblestone. His body was in a defense position but his face was still posed in anger.

"You bunch o' freaks. I swear--"

Kit let out a roar.

No one from the bar screamed, they were just watching, silently aware of the gravity of it all. The power and air of it blew Torchy's hat off and he had to squint to keep looking in her direction. He scooted away on his hands and feet. A slight trail of blood marking his path. He found the torch and grabbed it, waving it back and forth in front of him, fanning the horror away from him.

Kit rolled back her shoulders, feeling the strength in her back through her arms. Her tail licked the ground and the sharp point flicked a loose stone out.

Kit spoke, her voice was made of multiples, a dissonance of the many from her head and her own, "*You should stop coming by here.*"

Torchy kept backing up and waving his stick of fire, Dragon-Kit stalked her prey. He yelled, “Your kind is wrong! Inhuman!”

*“We weren’t the ones attacking.”*

“Lies! You creatures kill by nature, look at you!” He was now backed up completely against the glass window of the bar, bleeding all over it. All of the people inside still pressed up against the glass, watching the ordeal. Kit’s crimson eyes darted around to various people, finally landing on Holly, her face a mix of alarm and trepidation.

*“Leave. Now.”* Kit didn’t want to hurt anyone. She was born from a half-Dragonborn man and a Tiefling; unsurprisingly born with characteristics of both. Her skin was reddish normally, something she could somewhat cover in coats and gloves and a hat if she were venturing into a high-society part of town and she knew she was privileged enough to be able to hide the dragon wings, scales, claws, and tail on command. Not every supernatural folk had it as lucky when facing humans, non supernatural.

The man was drenched in sweat, stuck in place back up against the glass. “And what if I don’t? Huh?”

Kit leaned down over him, face inches from his, *“Just leave!”* Kit punched into the ground next to his leg. He flinched. He started to crawl to the side, away from the bar and Kit, one hand clutching his wound. He didn’t take his eyes off of her until he was next to the pile of two of his friends. Helping them up. The other two rose up next and Kit stared at them all for a minute, taking in their sorry sight of blood and bruises and misplaced hatred. She felt bad for them. But not that bad.

Everything from her dragon side was gone again and she walked inside, wordlessly moving past Holly and the rest of the people there.

The men outside started yelling after her but their voices got farther and farther away.

Winston tried to catch her gaze but she was resigned to walking to the end of the bar and climbing the stairs up. Off to bed.

Kit lay in bed, unsure of how she was supposed to get any sleep now. Staring at the ceiling. Wishing the world didn’t want them all to disappear for their comfort.

It wasn’t long until she gave up on the whole “sleep” idea and she was back at her desk, looking over the case files for next week’s appointments.