



## The Demon's Librarian

*Lilith Saintcrow*

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## **The Demon's Librarian** Lilith Saintcrow

Demons are preying on schoolchildren in her city, so Francesca Barnes does what any red-blooded librarian would do-she does some research and goes hunting. But the books she finds in a secret cache don't tell her the whole story. Chess has no idea what she's just stepped into or just how special she is.

Orion is Drakul, part demon, and a loyal servant of the Order. He doesn't expect a motorcycle-riding librarian to be messing around with demonic forces, and he doesn't expect her to smell so damn good. But Ryan's got bigger problems. His partner has disappeared, and the forces of Darkness are rising.

Now Chess is Ryan's only hope of finding his partner, and Ryan is Chess's only hope of survival because the demons now know Chess exists and that she is the heir to a long-lost power that could push back their dark tide. If Ryan can keep her alive long enough, she just might be the key to destroying the demons completely.

But Ryan doesn't know he's been betrayed by the very Order he serves. And if Chess does, by some miracle survive, he won't ever be able to touch her again. . .

## **The Demon's Librarian Details**

Date : Published February 28th 2009 by Imajinn Books (first published February 1st 2009)

ISBN : 9781933417448

Author : Lilith Saintcrow

Format : Paperback 218 pages

Genre : Fantasy, Urban Fantasy, Paranormal, Romance, Paranormal Romance, Demons

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# From Reader Review The Demon's Librarian for online ebook

## Angie says

Once again this is another great book by Lilith Saintcrow. This was a fun read. Let me start by pointing out the things I liked about this story.

The concept was a great one. I mean really, a demon hunting librarian how badass is that? I could picture the library in my head and thought it would be a pretty cool place, especially with Chess' hidden library in the basement where her collection of books containing magic and demon hunting tips were hidden. There was also some fast paced action, so you can't go wrong there either.

Now, let's talk about the characters a bit. Chess or Francesca is the librarian that hunts demons. While I liked her, I didn't love her and here's why. In my opinion, she contradicted herself a lot of the time. In the beginning, she made a magic knife that alerted her when demons were near and she used it to slay a demon on her own in the sewers of the city. Then a few scenes later she rushed out in her pajamas to defend Ryan whom she didn't know yet from a demon. I was thinking at that time that she was a heroine that was pretty tough and brave. However, she disappointed me from time to time in later scenes where demons were involved. She fainted, cried and just plain went into hysterics when she should have been showing the courage she had initially. It was also annoying when she seemed to take Ryan at his word then suddenly she didn't. I was also left with questions about why she was a "potential". I wanted to know where she inherited that from. Was it from her mother who perhaps didn't know that she herself was more than human or did she inherit from her father? I think I would have liked that explained a bit more. But, I was happy to see that she finally grew a pair and stood up to the head of the Order where Ryan was concerned. I just wish she would have reached her potential a bit sooner in the story.

This brings me to Ryan. For the most part, I really liked him a lot. I thought he was a great male protagonist. Although, he seemed slightly contradictory as well. His protective instincts were kind of questionable at times. I wasn't sure how having thoughts of throwing Chess on her bed and taking what he wanted was protective. But, that is my only complaint regarding him. Thankfully, he only mentioned that once or twice and never voiced it out loud, so his other qualities made it easier to overlook that bit, especially since he never acted on it.

All in all, I thought it was a fast fun read and I enjoyed it a lot. I would have liked to read more but unfortunately, this was a stand alone novel. It would make a good series and one that I would definitely read. I am giving this book four stars, though, because the contradictions in Chess annoyed enough that I can't really give it five.

This review can be found on Word Gurgle at [www.wordgurgle.blogspot.com](http://www.wordgurgle.blogspot.com)

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## Marianne says

As a librarian I felt compelled to read this one, and I was not disappointed.

The heroine, Chess, is a kickass self taught demon slayer, but also a vulnerable woman on the verge of becoming the first Golden in 500 years. Wanted by the demons for a ritual that will open a portal to the

demon dimension, it is up to another demon slayer to help her. The drawback: He is a half demon himself, seen as a beast, forbidden to form relationships with women because of his demonic instincts.

This is a fairly typical Saintcrow novel. Readers of her Dante Valentine series will immediately discover similarities between Ryan-Japhrimel and Dante-Chess. Both men are powerfully drawn to their heroines, willing to protect them at all costs. I liked Ryan's inner struggle to tame his demon's mating fantasies and attraction, his stubbornness. Chess' willingness to treat him as an equal for the first time in his life and the way she defies old prejudices, is heartwarming.

As usual, Saintcrow's book is full of action, supernatural creatures and betrayal and danger. Despite Chess and Ryan's attraction, all they share is one kiss, though. And I agree with other reviewers, this could easily have been turned into a series. Chess wants to change the order, their leader is less than pleased... What will happens to the order and the status of the Draculein next, isn't fully addressed. But nevertheless, the ending is satisfactory, though less than perfect...

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## **Lillian ? Cloud 9 Books ? says**

\*\*\*\*\* **3.5 Almost Stars** \*\*\*\*\*

I absolutely loved the plot. The main character? Not so much.

There were moments when I wanted to strangle Chess because she wouldn't listen. She also tended to over think things. My favorite character was Ryan. He is your over protective sexy guardian. He will lay down his life for Chess.

I just want more of him. He is a hard core half-demon. Unfortunately, in his world, he is treated like a 2nd class citizen. But Chess will change it all. She tells it like it is and fights for him in her own way. He is a person. He is loyal. And he deserves to be treated fairly.

The romance between them is there... but it's mostly one way throughout the book. Ryan is yearning to be close to her, but he fights his urges. I wish it was a bit more steamy, but oh well.

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## **Schnaue says**

I read about a quarter of the book (52 pages, through chapter 4) but decided that I have too many other books I want to read and there are 7 holds on it at the library so it's time to release it back to someone who might appreciate it more.

I had trouble getting into the book from the very beginning. The lines that were supposed to be witty just felt flat and cliché.

I was annoyed that there were a lot of terms and a whole social order that's not explained. I'm quite sure they would eventually be explained, probably in an infodump.

It's fine if those things are explained to a newcomer early in the book, but it doesn't work if you have POV written from a character who already knows everything so nothing is explained (until presumably later in the book).

Minor pet peeve, if you're going to do something about library censorship, pick a book where a good percentage of Americans haven't read it in jr. high or high school and don't already know the history of censorship for that particular volume. (It was the use of the N word in Huckleberry Fin.

The thing that really killed it for me was the relationship with the Drakul, Ryan. After following her around for a few days he's already imprinted on her (at least there's a reason for the fierce protectiveness, I guess). I'm not a fan of "overprotective love at first sight." He spends a bunch of time being amazed by how strong she is "for a human" then treats her like she's utterly incapable of taking care of herself. As soon as he put a hand on her throat (even though he didn't choke her) I was done. Jeph, from Saintcrow's Dante series, got a one book pass on that kind of crap because I already knew a lot about him so although he was also way over the line, he was slightly less way over the line and I'm giving her one book to stop doing that kind of thing. She'd met Ryan less than an hour before and his behavior was inexcusable. There's a line between being protective and being controlling and he was definitely way over the controlling line. That's not even remotely sexy to me.

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## Tracey says

Okay, so I chose *The Demon's Librarian* on Netgalley expecting a quick, hopefully light and fun read, and probably filled with sex and violence, probably with a Mary Sue heroine. Honestly, my expectations for the sex and violence were stronger than those for the light and fun – and honestly, I couldn't have been more wrong. It was *so* much fun, and such a quick and enjoyable read – and while yes, it was violent ("He'd broken the floor, he'd hit it so hard"), I was surprised that while there was a huge amount of chemistry and sexual tension, of actual sex scenes there were none.

The book is far from perfect. There are mistakes, in formatting and whatnot, which will hopefully be/hopefully was dealt with before final publication. But where in a lot of cases that can overwhelm the writing, here the writing more than held its own and made reading more than worthwhile. "The shipwrecked, rollicking oaken monstrosity of the bar itself" – nice.

And Chess (short for Francesca, and I love that) is no Mary Sue. Is she special, smart and lovely and physically intimidating and the whole package? Yep. But she reacts to the things that happen to her in a realistic manner. She's a librarian, and a good one, loving her books and occasionally loathing her patrons: "She could feel her cheeks freezing into what Charlie called the Dealing-With-Idiots-Smile. It almost hurt." And terrible things happen around her and to her, things that most of us reading (and writing) this will never, ever, *ever* remotely experience, and Lilith Saintcrow managed to make her someone who would both respond heroically and then melt down. As one does, when suddenly confronted with almost unstoppable demons taking the forms of people one knows.

I loved her constant self-reassurance: "I am doing really well with this. Don't get cocky." "I am dealing with this really well, she thought for the fiftieth time, and felt like it might actually be true." She's confident, but

not so certain of herself or the new and wildly bizarre and dangerous circumstances she's plunged into. I found it a nice touch that this rather amazing woman uses a technique I've been known to try ("it's ok – you're ok – you can do this") and is occasionally overwhelmed by tears.

And I kind of love that one of the first things our hero, Ryan, falls for in her is that he saw her weeping.

He's a very interesting character. I've seen criticism of how he behaves and how he treats Chess, but I had no problem with it. He's not just some guy; he's not human, quite. There are reasons for his behavior, reasons in keeping with the unique and skillful worldbuilding that's gone on for this book. I look forward to more from this author, hopefully with these characters. My thanks to the publisher and Netgalley for introducing me to a new author to follow.

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## **Sandra says**

This is a great short novel (218 pages) about demons and a demon hunting librarian. And just what does constitute humanity.

The underbelly of our world is populated by demons, lots of different kinds and *Maliks*, humans who defend us, the *skins*. To do that they have the muscle, *Drakul*, humans with part demon blood. Maliks use the Drakul to do the dirty work and treat them like animals, even though they are just like you and me only faster and deadlier.

Francesca Barnes (Chess) is the Head Librarian of Jericho City and stumbles upon a secret cache of ancient books in the basement of the library. She starts reading and practising magic. She is becoming a *Golden*, even though she has no idea what that is.

Ryan, a drakul, and Paul his malik are searching for the cache of books and come across Chess and realise pretty quickly that all hell is about to be let loose. For the high demons love a potential Golden so they can sacrifice her.

All in all I enjoyed this book, there was only one major TSTL moment, and then all was redeemed.

Not sure if this is meant to be a YA book, but the closest this one gets to sex is a kiss.

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## **Beth says**

I wish she'd write a sequel! I want to know if her sister develops 'potential, and how bringing the Malik into the current century goes. You know that won't be pretty.

Still love the set-up of the universe, as there isn't a sequel -- I usually move onto her Watcher series. Similar demon touched heroes but instead of golden -- there are witches "lightbringers" that by their nature are generally pacifists types (teacher/healers/etc). That did tweak my inner 12 year old -- but it does make sense as to how the magic is set-up & Elise (third book) does satisfy my need for a kick but heroine --even if she is too stubborn for her own good. :P

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## **Kristen says**

I loved this!!

This is great parnormal fiction. Lots of action, lots of monsters [good and bad!] and a kick-ass main female character . . . who's a LIBRARIAN!! This is pretty much THE PERFECT BOOK for me!!

I absolutely adored Chess! She is pretty much perfect as the protagonist in this story. I love that she appreciated the lunacy of what was happening to, and around her, and that she dealt with that via a combination of graveyard humour and profanity - definitely a woman after my own heart!

This is a great action story, and there is plenty of action, some of it fairly bloody, so if that's not your thing, this may not be for you. But if you don't mind that, this is a great paranormal action story.

The romance is a minor thing here, and although there is absolutely chemistry between Chess and Ryan, there's no sex in this book. They come to care for one another, but we don't get to see that turn into anything physical in this book. Still their relationship is fun to watch as they figure out how to deal with one another.

This was just a super-fun, entertaining paranormal story. I loved every minute of it, and would highly recommend this to others who enjoy seeing unexpected kick-ass female characters take on the monsters.

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## **Laura (Kyahgirl) says**

One of those books that could have been good but the main characters were super duper stunted and incapable of having a conversation. I skimmed most of it and figured this was not a good example of the author's ability.

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## **Melanti says**

Since it isn't clear from the blurb...

The interesting bit about the schoolchildren being eaten, finding the stash of books and reading them, gathering/creating weapons, and actually fighting the monster that is eating the schoolchildren all happens before the story even begins. The first scene is her coming home from killing the monster.

It reads more like the 2nd book in a trilogy than it does a stand-alone novel. I actually put the book down and went to check online to make sure it wasn't the sequel to some other book.

Also, being a possessive caveman does NOT equal romance. Nor is it fun to have a heroine that faints all the time. (Ok, I'm exaggerating. It was only 3 times.) I was sorely tempted to go round up some feminists and camp out on Saintcrow's lawn.

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## Glennis says

This standalone reads as part of a series but it isn't. The local librarian is hunting down demons that are chowing down on some kids. With no training other than kickboxing and the magic from books she found in a secret room in the basement of her local library she is doing a decent job of hunting them down that it attracts the attention of the Order. The duo from the Order come looking for the magic user and find out what is going on in town. Lots of personality clashes and fights with the demons trying to take over her town. Lots of chemistry between the leads and also lots of culture clashing since Orion is part demon and he is fighting part of his natural responses to her. A fun quick light read and I wish there was more to the universe.

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## Chibineko says

I have to admit, the main reason I picked this book up was that it was about a librarian. Nine times out of ten, most books aren't about librarians & when they are, they're usually not the type of books I like to read. This is one of the few urban fiction books you'll see where the main character is a librarian.

The plotline follows a librarian (Chess) as she discovers a hidden room in the back of her library filled with occult books. Curious, she experiments with many of the spells & discovers that she has a bit of a talent for it. Meanwhile Orion (Ryan), a supernatural hybrid, is bent on discovering who is killing the city's monsters... only to discover that Chess is the unlikely fighter. Swearing to protect her, Ryan soon finds that protecting Chess is easier said than done- especially when she's showing signs of having a power thought gone forever.

I really enjoyed this book. It sort of makes me think of those pulp fictions or penny dreadfuls from the past. This book isn't the slickest & most sophisticated thing out there, but it is pretty darn good. Fans of Kim Harrison & Armstrong will enjoy this book, especially since the main character is a pretty strong person considering the situation. She's not as kick butt as Elena (Armstrong) or Rachel Morgan (Harrison), but you've got to remember that the character in this book is just starting out in her demon hunting career. I'd really like to see a short story or a sequel to this book- the universe is pretty promising.

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## So, I Read This Book Today says

Great book, but the new cover from 2015 Reeks! The original cover, from the edition published February 1, 2009, (the one you see here) is a much more appropriate cover based on the story. The silly paranormal romance style cover of the new edition, published July 31, 2015 is completely inappropriate to the strength of the storyline. So, ignore the new cover, ignore the Paranormal-Romance style blurb, and read the review instead. Then read the book - it's really good! Also, if you have this title in your library, see if it updates. This is the same book!“Keep it secret. Keep it safe.” – Gandalf, Lord of The Rings: The Hobbit  
“The books always make this stuff sound so goddamn easy. They don't mention the smell. Or the way getting hit in the face with a tentacle as big around as your thigh hurts.” – Francesca “Chess” Barnes, The Demon's LibrarianIt is hard enough being a librarian when “the ‘good citizens’ of Jericho City would pay thousands yearly for plastic surgery and to pad the pockets of the mayor's friends, they simply would not vote a couple of measly bucks onto their property taxes to take care of her library.” Nope. That is minor compared to having to track down a skornac in the sewers and kill it with a knife. Bloody tentacled demon



was eating kids – what else was she supposed to do?! But killing a skornac demon draws attention – attention that could very well make her a bloody librarian smudge on the ground. I read Lilith Saintcrow's Jill Kismet series several years ago. (Wow. Hard to believe 2008 was 'several years ago'!), back before I started writing reviews, but I rated them four and five stars. Then? I just wandered away. So many books, so little time! So, when I had the opportunity to read *The Demon's Librarian*, I was well pleased. It is nice to greet an old friend. This book didn't disappoint. Chess is one tough librarian. Since finding (or being found by) a sorcerous library hidden behind a magical wall in the basement of the Jericho City library, life has been, well, interesting. Interesting in the Chinese, "May you live in interesting times" sort of interesting. Interesting enough that she spends a lot of the time in the fight gym learning how to protect herself, and a lot of time in the basement learning sorcery. Then, things get truly, well, 'interesting' in a very bloody, very painful way. When a tall, handsome, tweed-jacketed fellow comes into the library one day, walks straight to Chess, and asks for Delmonico's "Demons and Hellspawn" – and when the Phoenixis Fang at her hip, the magical knife she created herself, goes hot and vibrates – she knows she has problems. What sort of creature is this? Certainly not human – he smells too much like demon for that. But what is he? Then, a demon tries to break into her apartment through her wards – and another creature attacks the demon, taking it out in a smelly, messy manner – all Hades breaks loose. Because it isn't just demons she has to worry about. The Order of Dragons has their own knife to grind. And Chess is not only a newly-minted demon hunter. She could very well be more. And everyone suddenly has way too much interest in using Chess for their own purposes. "I'm lost in a fairy tale. Why do they call them fairy tales, when there aren't any fairies in them? Troll tales. Giant tales. Witches and gingerbread tales." I like Chess a lot. Her character is strong and tough – but not too tough. She is genuine. She holds her own against some really nasty creatures, but she also has the occasional "break down into a crying, quivering mess" moments that make her real. Yep, sometimes I wanted to shake her, but in her place? Uh. I wouldn't be as brave as she is! If you like Urban Fantasy with lots of blood, a creative storyline, interesting characters, and a solid storyline, this is one to pick up and enjoy. I received this book from the publisher in exchange for a realistic review. All thoughts are my own. If you enjoy my reviews, please let me know by "Liking" my reviews on GoodReads and Amazon. Thank you so much! Oh. The new cover. Well, see what I mean? Pft. The book is about the Librarian! Yeah, yeah. There is 'romance' in a way – but the story is much stronger than a PR. No sex included in this one, just a couple kisses. Goodie – Great UF! Not putting them down, just saying that this is More than that . . . the poor reviews seem to be from people who expected hot sex and PR instead of UF. *The Demon's Librarian* Published Jul 31, 2015

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## ? BookAddict La Crimson Femme says

How is it that there is no follow up book to this book? From page one, I'm spellbound. Francesca Barnes is a mousy looking librarian who loves her books. Her library may not be the most modern, but it contains something special. There is a hidden chamber with magic spells. It's a laboratory which Francesca stumbles over. This helps her greatly as she notices the things that go bump in the night are becoming more deadly. With each spell she performs, she sees more of the paranormal world. More of the monsters in the stories come alive for her to confront. She needs hazard pay for these demon slayings. Oh wait, she doesn't get paid.

Those who loved Buffy the Vampire slayer will enjoy this book. Instead of a cheerleader, think of a female Giles kicking demon butt and picking up the slack for the Order. The characters in this story are fun. Francesca is cute and spunky. Orion is like Angel. He's part demon and kind of has a soul. The world building includes a secret order run by men. There exists a class system where half breeds are second class citizens. Let's not even discuss the lack of standing women experience in this demon fighting world. I like Francesca because she's smart and she breaks all the rules. When the "authority" want to force her into their

predetermined mold, she smashes it to pieces. She is the underdog with powers. She uses it responsibly and genuinely cares for others.

This book pulls the reader in and moves at a good pace. As it picks up and more secrets are revealed, the climax hits hard and fast. At the end of this book, I'm left shaking from the adrenaline rush. Then I look around wondering, where is the rest of the story? This seems to be a standalone book which is so frustrating. It comes across similar to the Watcher Series. One can only hope there is another book to this world. Recommended to paranormal romance readers who like their librarians sexy and smart.

*\*provided by NetGalley*

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## **So, I Read This Book Today says**

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“Keep it secret. Keep it safe.” – Gandalf, Lord of The Rings: The Hobbit

“The books always make this stuff sound so goddamn easy. They don’t mention the smell. Or the way getting hit in the face with a tentacle as big around as your thigh hurts.” – Francesca “Chess” Barnes, The Demon’s Librarian

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It is hard enough being a librarian when “the ‘good citizens’ of Jericho City would pay thousands yearly for plastic surgery and to pad the pockets of the mayor’s friends, they simply would not vote a couple of measly bucks onto their property taxes to take care of her library.” Nope. That is minor compared to having to track down a skornac in the sewers and kill it with a knife. Bloody tentacled demon was eating kids – what else was she supposed to do?!

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If you like Urban Fantasy with lots of blood, a creative storyline, interesting characters, and a solid storyline, this is one to pick up and enjoy.

I received this book from the publisher in exchange for a realistic review. All thoughts are my own. If you enjoy my reviews, please let me know by "Liking" my reviews on GoodReads and Amazon. Thank you so much!

Oh. The new cover: (Photo)

See what I mean? Pft. The book is about the Librarian! Yeah, yeah. There is 'romance' in a way - but the story is much stronger than a PR. Not putting them down, just saying that this is More than that . . .

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