

LADY MIDNIGHT: THE DARK ARTIFICES BOOK 1



Book Summary:

In a dystopian world, the murder of several magical beings, including a young woman's parents, brings partners closer together and drives others apart.

Summary of Concerns:

This book contains sexual activities; violence; alternate sexualities; mild/infrequent profanity; and alcohol use.

Young Adult

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3 /5

Minor Restricted
BookLooks Review Rating

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70	Over the years she'd added several useful runes to the Gray Book—one for breathing underwater, another for running long distances, and a rather controversial one for birth control that had nevertheless quickly become the most often used rune in the lexicon.
100	"Why don't you have a boyfriend?" "I'm straight," Malcolm said, looking surprised.
165	"Yes, all of them, though Helen is not here—she is married and lives with her wife."
288	Kieran was leaning against him, pinning him to the tree, and they were kissing. Cristina hesitated a moment, blood rising into her face, but it was clear Mark wasn't being touched against his will. Mark's hands were tangled in Kieran's hair, and he was kissing him as fiercely as if he were starving. Their bodies were pressed together tightly; nevertheless, Kieran clutched at Mark's waist, his hands moving restlessly, desperately, as if he could pull Mark closer still. They slid up, pushing Mark's jacket off his shoulders, stroking the skin at the edge of his collar. He made a low keening sound, like a cry of grief, deep in his throat, and broke away.
295	He leaned in to kiss Mark and Mark, after a moment of surprise, turned his face up and met Kieran's lips with his. It was the first time he had ever been kissed, and he had never thought it would be by a boy, but he was glad it was Kieran. He had never expected a kiss to be so agonizing and pleasurable at the same time. He had wanted to touch Kieran's hair for months, and now he did, burying his fingers in the strands, which were turning from black to blue edged with gold.
310	"I think it's too tight," she said. "I think it's supposed to be that tight," said Emma. "It makes your boobs look great." ..."Yes, you do. I was serious about your boobs. They look amazing. I don't even think I've ever seen that much of your boobs before. If I had boobs like that, you better believe I'd show them off."
339	She felt a wave of desperate wanting, lost in the way his eyes looked, in the curves of his cheekbones and jaw, the unexpected softness of his mouth. ...They had stopped dancing. They were standing still, Emma barely breathing, Julian's hands moving over her. Julian had touched her a thousand times: while they trained, while they fought or tended each other's wounds. He had never touched her like this. He seemed like someone under a spell. Someone who knew he was under a spell, and was fighting against the pull of it with every nerve and fiber, the percussion of a terrible internal struggle pounding through his veins. She could feel his pulse through his hands, against the bare skin of her back. She moved toward him, just a little, barely an inch. He gasped. His chest expanded against hers, brushing the swell of her breasts through the thin material of her dress. The sensation whipped through her like electricity. She couldn't think.
343	He saw the storm in those eyes, but behind the storm he saw two boys as small as stars in a distant sky, locked together under a blanket. They were the same height; he had only to reach across slightly and press his mouth to Kieran's. The faerie prince stiffened against him. He didn't move, hesitant rather than unresponsive. Mark's hands came up to cradle Kieran's face, and then Kieran did move, pressing forward to kiss Mark with an intensity that sent Mark's head flying back against the wall.
345	Instead he tucked his hands into the waistband of Kieran's breeches and pulled the other boy toward him to take another kiss, and with it memories of the Hunt like sweet wine. Their kisses were hot, tangled. Two boys under a blanket, trying not to make noise, not to

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	<p>wake the others. Kissing to blot out the memories, kissing away the blood and dirt, kissing away the tears. Mark's hands made their way under Kieran's shirt, tracing the lines of scars on his back.</p> <p>...Kieran's hands slipped ineffectually on Mark's pearl buttons. "These mundane clothes," he said between his teeth. "I hate them."</p> <p>"Then take them off me," Mark murmured, forgetful and dazed and lost in the Hunt. His hands were on Kieran but in his mind he was spinning through the northern lights, the sky painted blue and green like the heart of the ocean.</p>
418	<p>Jace grabbed her ankle and she laughed and tumbled over on top of him, and then they were kissing and Emma froze, because what had been a casual moment, one she could have interrupted with a friendly hello, had suddenly become something else.</p> <p>Jace rolled over on top of Clary in the grass. She had her arms wrapped around him, her hands in his hair. His jacket had fallen off her shoulders and the straps of her nightgown were sliding down her pale arms.</p> <p>Clary was laughing and saying his name, saying maybe they should go back inside, and Jace kissed her neck.</p> <p>...She couldn't imagine Julian lying on top of her, kissing her like that.</p>
422	<p>They crashed together like stars colliding, and then he was kissing her.</p> <p>Jules. Julian. Kissing her.</p> <p>His mouth moved against hers, hot and restless, turning her body to liquid fire. She clawed at his back, pulling him closer. His clothes were wet, but his skin under them was hot wherever she could touch it. When she placed her hands at his waist, he gasped into her mouth, a gasp that was half incredulity and half desire.</p> <p>"Emma," he said, a word halfway between a prayer and a groan. His mouth was wild on hers; they were kissing as if they were trying to tear down the bars that held them inside a prison. As if they were both drowning and they could breathe only through each other.</p> <p>Her bones felt as if they had turned to glass. They seemed to be shattering all through her body; she crumpled backward, pulling Julian with her, letting the weight of his body push them both down into the sand. She clutched at his shoulders, thought of the disoriented moment when he'd pulled her out of the water, the moment she hadn't quite known who he was. He was stronger, bigger than she remembered. More grown-up than she had let herself know, though every kiss was burning away her memories of the boy he had been.</p> <p>When he leaned closer into her, she jumped in surprise at the wet coldness of his shirt. He reached down and grasped the collar, tearing it over his head. When he leaned back down over her, the expanse of his bare skin stunned her, and her hands slid up his sides, over the wings of his shoulder blades, as if she were articulating the shape of him, creating him with the touch of her palms and fingers. The light scars of his old Marks; the heat of his skin, filmed with salty ocean water; the feel of his smooth sea-glass bracelet—he took her breath away with the Julian-ness of him. There was no one else he could be. She knew him by touch, by the way he breathed, by the beat of his heart against hers.</p> <p>The touch of her hands was undoing him. She could see him unraveling, piece by piece. Her knees came up to clasp his hips; her hand cupped the bare skin above the waistband of his jeans, gently as the ocean at low tide, and he shuddered against her as if he were dying. She had never seen him like this, not even when he was painting.</p> <p>Gasping, he tore his mouth away from hers, forcing himself still, forcing his body to stop moving. She could see what it cost him in his eyes, black with hunger and impatience. In the</p>

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	<p>way that when he drew his hands away, they dug into the sand on either side of her, fingers clawing into the ground. “Emma,” he whispered. “You’re sure?”</p> <p>She nodded and reached for him. He made a sound of desperate relief and gratitude and caught her against him, and this time there was no hesitation. Her arms were open; he went into them and gathered her up against him, shivering down to his bones as she locked her ankles behind his calves, pinning him against her. As she opened herself, making her body a cradle for him to lie against.</p> <p>He found her mouth with his again, and as if her lips were connected to every nerve ending in her body, her whole self seemed to spark and dance. So this was what it was supposed to be like, what kissing was supposed to be like, what all of it was supposed to be like. This.</p> <p>He leaned in to outline her mouth, her cheek, the sandy curve of her jaw with kisses. He kissed his way down her throat, his breath warm on her skin. Tangling her hands in his wet curls, she stared up in wonder at the sky above them, wheeling with stars, shimmering and cold, and thought that this couldn’t be happening, people didn’t get things they wanted like this.</p> <p>“Jules,” she whispered. “My Julian.”</p> <p>“Always,” he whispered, returning to her mouth, “always,” and they fell into each other with the inevitability of a wave crashing against the beach. Fire raced up and down Emma’s veins as the barriers between them vanished; she tried to press each moment, each gesture into her memory—the feel of his hands closing on her shoulders, the drowning gasp he made, the way he dissolved into her as he lost himself. To the last moment of her life, she thought, she would recall the way he buried his face against her neck and said her name over and over as if every other word had been forgotten forever in the depths of the ocean.</p>
426	<p>“Why are you sorry?” she asked.</p> <p>“I didn’t think.” He was pacing, his feet kicking up sand. “About—being safe. Protection. I didn’t think about it.”</p> <p>“I’m protected,” she said.</p> <p>He whirled to face her. “What?”</p> <p>“I have the rune,” she said. “And I don’t have any diseases, and neither do you, do you?”</p> <p>“I—no.” The relief on his face was palpable and for some reason made her stomach ache.</p> <p>“That was my first time, Emma.”</p>
427	<p>“We shouldn’t have slept together,” he said. “I know it meant something to me, I’d be lying if I said it didn’t, but the Law doesn’t forbid sex, it forbids love. Being in love.”</p>
443	<p>There was a glass on the bar in front of him, half-full of golden liquid; he grabbed it up and tossed back the drink. When he slammed the glass back down on the bar, his eyes were gleaming.</p> <p>...He staggered to his feet.</p> <p>“Whoa,” Emma said. “You are drunk.”</p>
509	<p>His tension crested and fell; something in him seemed to collapse, water breaking against rocks. “I can’t,” he said, his voice low and broken, “God, I can’t,” and he half-closed his eyes, bringing up his other hand to cradle her face. His hands slid into her hair, and he drew her toward him. She inhaled a breath of cold air and then his mouth was on hers and her senses exploded.</p> <p>...Her hands fisted in the material of Julian’s jacket, dragging him toward her, closer, closer. There was sugar and caffeine on his lips. He tasted like energy. Her hands slid up under his shirt, touching the bare skin of his back, and he broke away from her to suck in his breath. His eyes were closed, his lips parted.</p>

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	<p>“Emma,” he breathed, and the desire in his voice tore a scorching path through her. When he reached for her, she almost fell against him. He swiveled her body around, pushing her back against a pillar, his body a strong, hot line against hers—</p>
541	<p>A moment later she was in his arms and kissing him. She couldn’t have said how it happened exactly, just that it seemed inevitable. And that for all that Julian’s voice had been quiet when he’d spoken, his mouth on hers was eager and his body was wanting and desperate. He clutched her to him, his lips tracing the outline of her mouth. Her hands were fierce in his hair—she’d always loved his hair, and now that she could touch it freely, she buried her hands in the thick waves, winding them around her fingers.</p> <p>His hands slid to the backs of her thighs and he lifted her up as if she weighed nothing. She locked her hands around his neck, clinging on as he held her against him with one arm. She was aware of him grabbing at the papers covering the counter, knocking them to the floor along with tubes of paint, until he’d cleared a space where he could set her down.</p> <p>She pulled him in, keeping her legs wrapped around his waist. There was nothing closed about him now, nothing diffident or remote or reticent as their kisses grew deeper, wilder, hotter.</p> <p>...Emma slid her hands down to his shoulders, broad and strong under her grip. She felt drunk on kissing. This was what people fought wars over, she thought, and killed each other over, and destroyed their lives for: this nerve-shredding mixture of longing and pleasure.</p> <p>...She slid her fingers under the hem of his shirt.</p> <p>...His eyes slipped half-closed. His fingers raked down through her hair; his hands caressed her back lightly, then found her waist, pulling her harder into him. Her head fell back, almost banging into one of the cabinets; his lips burned on her collarbone. His skin was hot under her touch. She could understand suddenly why people talked about passion as fire: She felt as if they had caught aflame and were burning like the dry Malibu hills, about to become ashes that would mix together forever.</p> <p>“Tell me you love me, Emma,” he said against her throat. “Even if you don’t mean it.”</p>
544	<p>“Oh,” she said. “You’re bisexual?”</p> <p>“Last time I checked, that’s what you call it,” he said with a brief look of amusement.</p>
638	<p>Emma was in the middle of a very confusing dream about Magnus Bane and a troupe of clowns when she was awoken by a hand on her shoulder. She muttered and dug herself deeper into the bedclothes, but the hand was insistent. It stroked down her arm, which was actually very pleasant. A warm mouth brushed the edge of her lips.</p>
639	<p>Their legs tangled in the blankets as they came together, mouths seeking. He still wasn’t an expert kisser, but she liked that. She liked being reminded that he hadn’t been with anyone but her. That she was his first. She liked that something as simple as a kiss was still a source of amazement for him. She used her tongue to trace the corners of his mouth, the seam of his lips, until he sank back on the bed, pulling her on top of him. His body shuddered, arching up toward hers, his hands sliding down to grip her hips.</p>
645	<p>His free hand found her hair, her cheek. His fingertips brushed her skin lightly. He leaned toward her, giving her ample time to back away. She didn’t. When his mouth found hers, she tipped her head up for the kiss, her heart expanding with the strange feeling that she was moving toward both her future and her past at the same time.</p>
648	<p>She was sitting up on her bed, propped against the pillows, and Diego, kneeling in front of her, was kissing her. He was holding her head in his hands as if it was something precious, and her black hair was spilling out between his fingers.</p>

Profanity	Count
Ass	2
Bitch	5
Goddamn	2
Piss	3