Onyxia Lo’Gosh would regularly supervise her daughter’s tutoring sessions. It was a dull, frustrating affair but, the older Liadrin got, the more it made sense to have less people involved with her training. As a High Priestess, it would be expected for her to personally train her daughter in the Way of Lolth. It was also common for the Great Houses of Xaeru to keep their younglings hidden until they were ready for Court. You certainly can’t trust children to keep their babbling mouths shut and it was important to keep the family secrets close to their hearts.

Today Liadrin was being trained in arcana. Ashirza would drill her on measured and precise movements of the hand necessary to cast a spell. Make her name the material components for another. Force her to identify which objects were magically charged or not. Every mistake was met with a piercing bite of one of the many spiders crawling Liadrin’s arms, commanded by Onyxia herself. At least this way she managed to keep herself entertained.

Magical abilities were expected to manifest themselves as a drow grew up, her powers being instinctively used from as young as 10. It was common to find a baby playing with dancing lights, cast by herself, maybe in a foolish attempt to find some comfort in her dark environment. But although it was possible to manifest magical ability that young, it was more common for a child to awaken her magic a bit later. Liadrin would be 17 soon tho, and still showed no signs of magical prowess, no matter how hard she was… stimulated.

Although she’d never admit it, Onyxia was starting to worry. A magicless daughter could be seen as a sign that House Lo’Gosh had earned the disfavor of Lolth, essentially giving all other houses blanket permission and encouragement to openly turn against it. Her high station would do nothing to protect her from the other matrons’ viciousness.

Power was everything. A drow divides everyone—drow or otherwise—into only three categories: someone with more power, who must be appeased and placated (at least until she can be replaced); someone who is a useful tool to one’s own advancement, who must be exploited in all possible ways; and the weak, who are worthless except as labor or disposable troops. And Onyxia will not be seen as weak.

Bored of the lesson, Onyxia stands up and walks barefoot to her “window”—actually a crystalline mirror, enchanted to provide her a clear view of Xaeru’s market without allowing prying eyes to spy upon her in return. Her lip curls in disdain as she gazes upon the bustle of the darkened streets below, the echoing sounds of shopkeepers and slave traders both cheating and being cheated by their clients. It is a scene of controlled chaos, and it disgusts her even as it calls her to rule it with blooded teeth and an iron fist. *They are flies*, she muses, not for the first time. *They are flies, when they should be spiders.*

With this thought, she looks back at Liadrin and realises she can’t swallow her bile and hatred for the child anymore. She has waited long enough. She does not ask for Lolth’s blessing, or the goddess’s aid; she knows better. She must take care of this herself, quietly and effectively.