

Hades' Cursed Luna Chapter 14 - Ghosts

Chapter 14: Ghosts

Eve~

The twins threw me into the cell, both of them sneering.

"Welcome back to your new room," one of them jeered.

I had not stopped shaking since they had taken me out of the surveillance room. I could still see them—the people of my pack—on a screen in an enemy pack. It had been so close that I could taste the blood and hear the screams. Mothers searching for their children in the explosive disaster, bodies torn apart from the impact, hopelessness and sorrow. It had all been right in my hands—one press, and everything would have been obliterated, all because of something they had no part in.

I don't even know where the words had stumbled out from—the lie about having another man, one I truly wanted to marry. But had they been words... or something else?

I had underestimated him. His cruelty ran deeper than I'd imagined, beyond what any rumor or story could have prepared me for. He didn't just break people—he twisted them, shattered them from the inside out, leaving them with nothing but scattered and irreparable pieces of themselves.

I pressed my palms against my eyes, trying to block out the images, the sounds, the weight of it all. But the cell seemed to pulse with my shame, my helplessness.

I thought I knew pain before I entered his kingdom. I thought I understood what it meant to lose everything. But now I knew. I knew what it was to truly stand at the edge of hopelessness, to feel the ground give way beneath your feet and plummet into a darkness you couldn't escape. And the worst part was that I knew, beyond a doubt, that he wasn't done with me—not by a long shot. I remembered that look in his eyes. Unadulterated evil and amusement at the lives hanging by a thread. He enjoyed it. He fed off it. And now he had sunk his teeth into me.

I had to survive this. I had to hang on for as long as it took. I lay down on the floor, exhaustion falling over me like a cloak. Even the throbbing in my thigh could not hold it back.

At least this cell wasn't damp and didn't smell like feces. It wasn't all bad in here, I thought, as I drifted into a sleep I knew would be tainted by nightmares...

Hades~

"She is unpredictable," Kael commented as we analyzed the evidence on the screen. Incriminating, damning evidence that proved beyond a doubt that Ellen Valmont was not the woman she pretended to be. The emphatic kind who would give to the impoverished or sacrifice herself for strangers? On a screen? Who was she trying to fool? What was her endgame?

"Indeed she is," I mused. I was aware there had been a man in her life before this. James Brekker, the new Beta of Silverpine and the ex-fiancé of her twin sister, the late Eve Valmont.

Eve had been one of the few werewolves to shift into a Lycan. The other twin—the one the prophecy had foretold—but had been publicly executed a week after her eighteenth birthday.

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So it was true that Ellen had a man, and her reason for attacking was selfish enough for someone of her excellent character. She wanted to kill me because she couldn't be with the man she wanted. Take a toy away from a Silverpine royal, and they lash out like spoiled brats.

"She is not what meets the eye," Cerberus murmured.

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It had been her reaction to the decision of whether or not she should push that button and kill those on the screen for her own safety. But her reaction had not been what I expected at all. I had never seen a person go pale so fast. As though it was the hardest thing she would ever do, despite being a tyrant's spoiled child and having a direct hand in her own people's suffering. It didn't make sense. What held her back?

"The children..."

I recalled her shattered whisper. Something wasn't adding up.

"Get the white room prepared," I told Kael.

"Of course, Your Majesty," he replied, his voice suddenly tight.

He knew what the white room meant.

"You are dismissed."

He nodded and left.

I got up and stood in front of the large, ornate mirror. Its edges were made of real obsidian that shone like black diamond. It had been my father's.

I traced my fingers along the sharp, cold surface. The chill seeped into my skin, anchoring me to the present, though I could feel the past creeping in, clawing at the edges of my mind.

The reflection was clear—too clear. For a moment, I swore I saw something behind me—no, someone. My muscles tightened involuntarily as the air grew heavy, thick with an oppressive weight that only I seemed to notice.

"Only the strong survive."

The whisper was faint, barely audible, yet it slithered into my ear as if it had been spoken right beside me. My father's voice.

I didn't flinch. I'd heard it before. I'd always hear it, wouldn't I?

My lips tightened into a thin line as I stared deeper into the mirror. The reflection rippled slightly, like a disturbance in water, as if the air between me and the glass was shifting. For a fleeting second, the eyes looking back at me weren't mine. They were his. The same cold, judging stare.

You must be stronger. Never hesitate.

My grip on the edge of the mirror tightened, and I looked away, forcing my breath to slow. Kael was still gone. The room was silent, yet the whisper lingered like an echo that refused to fade.

And then it hit me—*her* eyes.

Turquoise. Glistening and cold, like shards of glacial ice cutting through the fog of my thoughts. It was so vivid, so tangible. I could almost feel the air shift as if she were right beside me, those eyes searing into my very core.

A strange sensation stirred in the pit of my stomach, rising like bile—unfamiliar and unwelcome. My pulse quickened, but not with rage—something else. Something unsettling.

Cerberus stirred at the edge of my consciousness, his red eyes glowing and reflecting in the mirror.

What was that about?