

145 Intervention

Eve 1

The knocks on the door startled me. It was noon; no one ever came at noon. I got up to answer it, trying to swallow my trepidation. No one knew about the memory card, I was sure. I would receive a phone soon and find out what I needed to see before promptly destroying it.

The door swung open to reveal familiar hazel eyes and a signature warm smile. "Hello, princess," Lia greeted. 3

For a moment, I could only stare, my mouth agape. I threw my arms around Lia without thinking. Her body tensed beneath my touch, and I felt the hesitation in her stillness.

Just as I started to pull away, afraid I'd crossed a line, Lia's arms wrapped around me, firm but gentle.

"It's good to see you too," she whispered.

I held on for a moment longer before stepping back. Lia's smile hadn't faded, but there was something unreadable in her eyes.

"Come inside," I said softly, stepping aside to let

her in.

We took the positions we used to take back when she was here every day. It felt familiar and nostalgic in a sense. There was no awkwardness as she jumped straight into a conversation.

"I heard you have been doing well," she all but gushed. "You've even picked up self-defense."

I couldn't help but smile sheepishly. "Yeah, it's been a rollercoaster."

She nodded. "You even made a friend."

My stomach tried not to turn at the mention of Jules. I kept my smile in place. "I have come a long way." 1

"You have," she whispered. "You really have. I am so proud of you." 1

Heat flooded my face. "Thank you," I murmured. "I could not have done it without you."

"Don't downplay it," Lia interrupted gently. "You did this, princess. I just nudged you in the right direction."

Her gaze softened, and for a brief moment, the weight I hadn't realized I was carrying lifted. I missed her.



I shifted in my seat, fiddling with the corner of my sleeve. "It's been hard," I admitted quietly.

Lia leaned forward, resting her elbows on her knees. "I know," she said. "But you never stopped moving forward."

I glanced at her, wondering if she truly understood how much her words meant.

"Jules..." I hesitated. "She's been a good friend. I didn't expect that."

Lia's expression remained unreadable, but she nodded as if she knew more than she let on. "Sometimes the right people show up when you least expect them."

Silence settled between us, but it wasn't uncomfortable. It was the kind that felt full—like nothing needed to be said for it to make sense.

"Are you staying long?" I asked, trying to keep my voice casual, but the hint of hope betrayed me.

Lia's eyes flickered with something fleeting before she smiled. "For a little while."

I nodded, pretending that answer didn't feel heavier than it should.

"That's good," I said softly, as if saying it aloud would make it true. The question that had

plagued me for a while, before the usual issues in my life had distracted me, came back to the forefront. "Why did you stop coming?"

I watched as her expression fell, and the unease at the base of my stomach grew.

"His Majesty thought you needed space," Lia said softly, her voice careful but firm.

I frowned, the words settling uneasily in my chest. "Space for what?"

Her gaze didn't waver this time. "For real life. For things that mattered beyond me, princess."

I opened my mouth to argue, but Lia continued before I could speak.

"I was only supposed to help stabilize you. That was the plan."

My hands curled into fists in my lap, frustration rising before I could stop it. "Stabilize me?" I repeated, the word leaving a bitter taste. I guess I was a loose cannon back then. A shiver ran down my spine when I recalled that cold blade on my wrist.

I swallowed painfully. "I understand."

She smiled before reaching out and clasping my trembling hand. "Of course, you do," she replied.

"You always do. Princess, may I ask you a question?"

"Of course."

"What happened on Wednesday?" she asked.

"The date?" I asked, the lump in my throat hardening.

"You said you saw your ex-fiancé?" she asked.

"James?"

"I thought I did," I chuckled nervously, trying to sound casual.

But she frowned. "Hades was worried, princess. And His Majesty rarely ever cares, not to mention worrying. Are you sure it was not more than that?" Her voice was soft as it always was, but there was something in her eyes that made me want to reel back.

Suddenly, I felt even more nervous, and my eyes darted from one corner of the room to another. "I guess I was seeing things," I said lamely. I laughed again.

But when my eyes met her gaze, my stomach dropped. Her face had turned ghostly pale, her eyes wide.

"Princess, I know you had a mental breakdown

not too long ago, and now... hallucinations..." Her voice turned grave.

"I am alright. I am improving..."

"You were hollowed," she whispered. "Princess."

My mouth snapped closed, a chill washing over my whole body that I had to fight to suppress.

"You are not wolfless. You used to have a wolf, but it was ripped out of you. I know, and I have known for a long time."

They were not supposed to know. I could explain being wolfless, but hollowed? How could I explain that I had been injected with wolfbane for five years without blowing my cover?

"You are mistaken."

"Wolfbane was found in your bloodstream."

My heart lodged in my throat. Hades had my blood tested for wolfbane—because of course, he had.

She pursed her lips. "You are the blessed twin."

Lia's words sliced through the fragile calm I'd been clinging to.

"You're the blessed twin, princess," she said softly, her gaze steady but heavy with unspoken

things. "Your wolf should never have been suppressed so easily. No ordinary means could have hollowed you out like this."

I froze, every muscle locking in place. "I told you —"

She cut me off, her voice unwavering. "I've spent enough time with you to know the difference between losing a wolf and having it ripped away."

I gripped the armrest, nails digging into the fabric as I tried to steady the rising tremor in my hands.

"I wasn't tortured," I lied, forcing my tone to stay level. "I would remember if I—"

Lia's eyes darkened. "Would you?" she asked quietly. "Prolonged exposure to wolfbane breaks memories. It fractures the mind to protect itself."

My throat tightened, but I said nothing.

"You're not supposed to," she continued. "But now, it's been set in motion."

"What?"

"Your deterioration, princess." 2

The world beneath me tilted. I opened my mouth but nothing came out.

Lia moved closer to me. "That is why I am here, princess. The hollowing is killing you. It will start mentally and then become physical." 1

Hello,

I want to preface this message by saying a big thank you to all of you who have stuck around this long. I am so honored that you deemed Hades and Eve's story worthy of your hard-earned money. Your support and comments have truly changed my life.

I know life can be chaotic, and the fact that you take the time to read and feel alongside these characters humbles me. You've turned something deeply personal into something shared, and for that, I'll always be grateful. To be honest, I never imagined there would be so many of you. I'm fully aware that my writing isn't perfect, nor is it free of typos (there are definitely more than a few).

With that said, I want to wholeheartedly apologize for dragging the story out for so long. I'm truly sorry. I guess I got so caught up in writing a sweeping, emotional romance that I lost sight of the bigger picture. I focused on the



small, intimate moments between Hades and Eve while the plot itself stood still. I raised the stakes and kept you in suspense, but I made you wait too long for the payoff. In my effort to craft a love story that felt deep and real, I overlooked the balance needed for the other tropes and twists. 4

I realize now that this may have wasted not only your time but also the money you generously spent to support me. For that, I'm truly sorry. You deserve better pacing, and I'm working to correct that moving forward. 10

Please know that every word I've written comes from a place of passion and love for this story, but I understand that passion alone isn't enough. Your experience as readers matters deeply to me, and I never want you to feel like I've taken your support for granted. 2

Thank you for your understanding, patience, and for continuing to believe in Hades, Eve, and me. I promise to bring this story to a satisfying close in a way that honors your investment and the time you've spent with these characters.

Moving forward, I'll be focusing on progressing the plot, and I have so much lore, action, and exciting events planned. I'll also aim to publish



two chapters at a time to help speed things along. The chapters may be shorter (around 1000 words instead of 1500), as it's easier for me to consistently write 2000 words per day instead of 3000.

If you have any other concerns with the story—whether it's timing, setting, character nuance, sex scenes, subplots, or anything else—please feel free to let me know in the comments. Your feedback means everything to me, and I want to make sure I do right by you and this story. 4

With gratitude and love,

Lilac ❤️ 1



146 Malleable

Eve 1

The ground beneath me tilted.

The hallowing is killing you. 10

The air felt thicker, heavier, and I couldn't seem to take in enough of it. My fingers trembled against the headrest, and I gripped it harder to steady myself. "You're wrong," I whispered, my voice barely audible. 1

Lia didn't blink, her eyes bore into me. "I wish I was, princess. But this is not something that can be wished away."

A hollow laugh bubbled up from my throat. "I'm fine. I've been fine. I'm not dying. If I were, Hades would have told me. Someone—anyone—would have told me." This was so out of left field. I expected anything but this.

Lia's eyes softened, and that unreadable emotion flickered across her face again. Pity.

I hated pity.

"Hades doesn't know the full extent," she said quietly. "And I suspect he's only now piecing it together."



I stiffened, my pulse thrumming in my ears.

"It starts subtly. The wolfbane weakens your connection to your body and mind. But the damage from prolonged exposure is... irreversible. Your wolf was the tether that kept you grounded. Without it, the strain will consume you."

I swallowed hard, forcing the panic down. "So what?" I said sharply. "If I don't fix this, I just—fade away? That doesn't make any sense."

Lia leaned forward, resting her elbows on her knees. She studied me carefully, as if weighing her next words. "Think of it like this," she began, her voice calm but firm. "Your wolf is more than just a second soul. It's part of your essence, woven into every fiber of your being. Without it, your body is like a ship with no anchor, drifting wherever the current takes it."

Her eyes locked onto mine. "But that drifting has a price. Your senses are dulled, your reflexes slower. And slowly, your body will stop recognizing itself. Your heart, your organs—eventually, even your mind. The disconnect spreads until there's nothing left to hold you together." 1



I pressed my palm to my chest, as if I could physically hold everything inside. "Why... why didn't anyone say anything? Why now?"

Lia hesitated, and that pause made my stomach twist. "Because until now, the process was slow—manageable. But something triggered it to accelerate. And I believe you know what it is."

I stared at her, my mouth agape. "I don't know what you mean."

"Your trauma. The one you can't seem to heal from because you refuse to air it, you let it press you down. You let it suffocate you..."

Lia's words trailed off, but the weight of what she left unsaid pressed down on me like an anvil.

I gripped the headrest tighter, feeling my nails dig into the wood. "I don't let it press anything," I snapped, but even I could hear the crack in my voice.

Her gaze didn't shutter. "You do, princess. I've seen it. You tuck it away, out of sight, but it festers. Pain doesn't disappear just because you refuse to acknowledge it." 3

I shook my head, strands of hair falling into my face. "I've been trying," I muttered, as if saying it



aloud would make it true.

Lia exhaled softly. "Trying isn't the same as healing."

My heart pounded furiously, each beat echoing in my ears. "What do you expect me to do, Lia?" I whispered, barely able to form the words. "Relive it all? I can't. I won't survive it." The words eyes pouring out of me like a torrent.

She leaned closer, her voice softer. "You will. But not alone."

I glanced away, blinking rapidly to push back the sting in my eyes. The lump in my throat thickened. "I thought I was past this. I thought... maybe I could just keep going. If I kept moving, I wouldn't have to feel it." 3

Lia's hand brushed over mine again, attempting to pull me out of the storm of emotions that threatened to drown me. "I know," she said gently. "But you're not past it, princess. It's been lingering, waiting for a moment to pull you under. And now, with your wolf gone, there's nothing shielding you from it anymore."

Her words felt like needles under my skin—painful, and impossible to ignore. "It can't be that bad," I tried to stay delusionally optimistic. "I

have survived many other things." I had. I would survive this too. 3

Lia's eyes turned sorrowful, but her voice remained steady. "The hollowing will take what's left of you. Mentally first, until you forget yourself entirely. Then physically, until your body shuts down. You'll feel like you're drowning in your own skin, princess. I don't want that for you." 3

My breath caught.

Drowning in my own skin.

I pressed a trembling hand to my chest, as if I could already feel the pull beneath my ribs—the invisible force quietly unraveling me.

I closed my eyes, feeling the weight of her words settle in like bricks stacked one by one. Yet, I shook my head, "I train. I am agile. I don't feel weak. I am even getting better everyday."

Lia's shoulders slumped, her gaze soft but weighted with facts that I wasn't ready to accept.

"You may feel strong now, but that strength is borrowed, princess," she said gently. "Your body is resilient, but it can't outrun the truth. This isn't about agility or endurance. It's deeper than



that. The cells in your body—every piece of you that was once connected to your wolf—are beginning to deteriorate.” 1

I stiffened, feeling an icy tendril of dread crawl down my spine.

“Deteriorate?” I echoed, the word foreign and jagged on my tongue.

Lia nodded. “Without the bond to your wolf, those cells are... shrinking. They’re starving. Think of your wolf as the energy that kept them thriving. With it gone, there’s nothing to sustain them. They’ll wither away, leaving only fragments behind.” 1

Her voice was calm, but each word chipped away at the fragile wall I had built around myself. I couldn’t stop picturing it—my own body quietly consuming itself, piece by piece.

I swallowed hard, pressing a trembling hand against my chest, as if I could somehow shield the organs beneath. “But I’ve felt fine,” I whispered, my voice cracking. “How can that be happening if I still feel fine?”

Lia’s eyes softened further, but there was no comfort in them, like there was none to give. “Your mind is protecting you. For now. But it



won't last, princess. You've felt the exhaustion, haven't you? The cold that lingers in your bones no matter how much you rest?"

I opened my mouth to deny it, but the words caught in my throat.

She wasn't wrong.

I had felt it—the strange heaviness in my limbs after training, the way my breaths sometimes came too shallow, as if my lungs forgot how to expand properly. I had blamed it on overexertion, on stress. I thought pushing harder would drown it out. 2

But it hadn't.

And now I knew why.

Lia's voice lowered, her eyes locked on mine. "It's starting to affect your heart. The hollowness spreads there first, shrinking the very muscles that keep you alive. Eventually, your body won't recognize itself. Your mind will slip away, forgetting how to breathe, how to be." 1

I stared at her, unable to look away as panic clawed up my throat.

I could hear my heartbeat—fast, erratic, like it was already struggling.



I forced a shaky breath. "I'm going to die," I whispered, as if saying it aloud would help me grasp it. The words felt too final. Too inevitable. "After everything... I'm going to die."

Lia reached for my hand, but I pulled away, curling into myself. My chest ached—not physically, but in a way I couldn't explain.

"What did I do wrong?" I whispered, more to myself than to her. **3**

A lump formed in my throat, hot, painful and tears I didn't realize were there slipped down my cheek.

I tried. I tried to survive. I fought, I clawed my way through everything they threw at me. **2**

But now, my own body was betraying me.

I felt like I was unraveling, not from Lia's words, but from the crushing weight of helplessness.

Everyone betrays me. And now even my body. **4**

Lia didn't speak, but her silence felt heavier than words.

I swiped at my face hastily, but it didn't stop the shaking. "Why didn't anyone stop it? Why didn't anyone—"



"You survived longer than anyone else would have," Lia interrupted softly. "The wolfbane—your body shouldn't have endured this long. But you did, you are the blessed twin after all."

I barked out a hollow laugh. "Strength doesn't mean much when I'm wasting away." Ellen are you happy now. I am going to die and you won't need to lift a finger.

Her gaze hardened. "That's not true. You're still here. And while you're here, there's still a chance to stop this." 3

I met her eyes, and for a moment, I wanted to believe her. I needed to.

But that fragile hope flickered dangerously, threatening to extinguish under the weight of everything I carried.

I sucked in a trembling breath and straightened, ignoring the way my heart protested. "Tell me what I need to do."

Lia hesitated, as if she was not sure if I had what it took, but she nodded.

"There are ways to slow it down," she said softly. "But they require help. You can't do this alone, princess."



I bit the inside of my cheek to keep the sob from escaping.

I hated this helplessness.

But I hated dying more.

"You have to find your wolf again,"

I stilled, my heart lurching. "Rhea?"

"Her name is Rhea?" She asked, a unsteady smile making its way to her lips. As if she too dared to hope.

I nodded.

"Your reconnection to Rhea is pivotal in stabilizing your cells. It will be her bond with your that will keep you from unravelling." 2

My stomach dropped, hope extinguishing like a flame in the wind.

Rhea was gone.

I hadn't felt her in years—like a shadow that had slipped away the night I was hollowed out.

"I can't find her," I whispered, my voice barely audible. "I've tried. I've called for her in every way I know how. She's not there, Lia." For five years.



"You can't call her out, you draw her out."

I blinked. "Draw out my wolf?"

"You must find your mate." She grabbed my hands. "We will find your mate and when the time comes you must be ready to do what you must do to bring Rhea back." 4

Hades

I knew who it was before I picked up the call. "Is it done, Amelia?" I asked. 3

There was no pause or trepidation. "It is done. She will be very willing. She won't resist." 8