

## 155 Untamed

Hades 1

Chaos saturated the air, every person stumbling for cover as the Lycan lunged at the crowd. The horrified screaming intensified to a crescendo as Eve landed on some spectators in their attempts to escape.

They were immediately crushed under her weight like clay, blood spilling out of them in a viscous flood all over the weathered cobblestones. 4

She let out another horrifying roar that seemed to vibrate every particle in the air. The hairs on my neck rose in response. As she pounced again, the guards fired more full-time rounds of platinum into her hide. Yet again, it had no effect other than to further fuel her growing rage.

The platinum rounds embedded themselves into her midnight-black fur, only to be spat out by her body, the wounds stitching up and closing. My eyes widened, taking it all in.

Her healing was the most spontaneous that I had ever witnessed. Even Lycans did not undergo cell regeneration at such a speed. This was no



ordinary Lycan. 3

People scrambled for safety, the few non-Omegas shifting into their wolves to cover more ground, only to worsen the situation as their shifting sent others flying in different directions and falling back onto the cobblestones, only to be stomped on in an agonizingly horrific manner by others.

Meanwhile, Eve set herself loose on anyone she could pounce on, tearing through flesh and bone with terrifying ease. More rounds were fired. 8

Could they not see that it wasn't working?

Not only did the bullets fail to harm her, but ironically, strays were hitting the citizens instead. Most dropped dead in an instant. They were not saving the people—it was only causing more carnage.

Eve left mangled corpses in her wake. The air was thick with the coppery scent of blood and the deafening cacophony of screams and gunfire.

But my eyes were on Darius, who seemed rather...calm as he watched it all happen from the balcony. He did not take a defensive stance, nor did he retreat into the castle. No, he stood there, his arms crossed, watching it all like a





pleased spectator. 1

I stood still in the pandemonium, as a storm of bodies slammed into me, trying to push me out of the way, but my feet were glued to the ground, letting my strength hold me firm against the torrent of people running for their lives. I watched him as I did so, Eve growling and roaring barely a yard from me, the guards shifting at the same time to subdue her.

Darius watched as Eve dwarfed his guards with her immense size, not giving a single one a chance to touch her before ripping them to bloody ribbons.

Darius glanced at his other daughter, Ellen, and whispered something to her as she also watched. Her expression was not like his. There was no satisfaction in her expression—hers was grave, her lips pursed.

Darius continued to speak with her as he eyed the carnage, as if he could not bear to miss a second of the bloodshed.

Strangely, slowly, a grin touched Ellen Valmont's lips, but her turquoise eyes remained dead, a bottomless pit of nothing. It was an almost mechanical gesture.



Suddenly, Darius's expression changed as he yelled through the microphone, his tone bizarrely desperate.

His voice suddenly cracked through the static-filled speakers, sharp and commanding, laced with an urgency that hadn't been there before.

**"Hold her down!" he bellowed, his tone bizarrely desperate now. "Contain her! Do it now!"**

**His sudden shift in demeanor made my stomach twist.**

**Up until now, he had been a passive observer, watching the carnage unfold with unsettling calm. But now? Now he was panicked. This was part of the performance.**

**Then I saw him.**

**A man emerged from the shadows behind Darius —tall, broad, his uniform marked by gold insignias that gleamed in the dull light. A more decorated figure than the others. He moved with uncanny purpose.**

**James Morrison.**

**Darius's new Beta.**

**Their eyes met briefly. Darius gave him a single,**





sharp nod. Morrison didn't speak. He didn't need to. He turned briskly toward the guards still firing their useless platinum rounds, his expression hard and unyielding.

Lifting a walkie-talkie to his mouth, he spoke.

There was a chilling pause.

The guards, still scrambling and firing blindly, suddenly froze. Without hesitation, they holstered their standard magazines and reached into their belts, pulling out a different set of ammunition—sleek, black-tipped rounds glinting with a faint, unnatural sheen.

My eyes narrowed.

This wasn't standard issue.

One by one, the guards snapped the new magazines into place.

*Click. Click. Click.*

And then they opened fire.

The sound was different this time—sharper, heavier.

The effect was immediate because I also smelled it in the air.

Silver. 1



The first round slammed into Eve's shoulder, and for the first time, she staggered.

Her body recoiled as if struck by something far more than just metal. She let out a guttural snarl, lower, harsher—tinged with something else.

**Pain.**

Her limbs faltered, claws scraping against the cobblestones. Blackened blood oozed from the wound, but this time it didn't close. It sizzled, like acid eating through flesh.

**My breath caught.**

**Those rounds were designed for her. A Lycan. This was planned from the beginning.**

**Eve roared in fury, lunging again, but more shots tore into her—each one slowing her, anchoring her down. The guards moved in unison now, their fear replaced by grim determination as they focused their fire on her joints, her spine.**

**She collapsed to one knee, claws tearing grooves in the stone as she struggled to rise.**

**Darius leaned over the balcony, gripping the railing, his voice booming again.**

**"Hold her down! Do not let her rise!"**

Guards rushed forward, bolting steel-cable restraints into the ground, launching grappling hooks onto her limbs. The cables tightened, groaning under the strain, but they held.

For now.

Darius's gaze cut to Ellen.

"Ellen," he called. His voice was cold and commanding, yet laced with exhilaration that he almost succeeded in hiding. He even spoke through the microphone, even though she was right beside him.

She didn't flinch.

Ellen turned her empty turquoise eyes toward him, her face unreadable. Inscrutable. Statues were more capable of expressions than she seemed to be. 2

"Finish it," Darius ordered.



## 156 Propaganda

### Hades 1

The chaos around them seemed to quiet, if only for a moment. Guards began forcing the panicked crowd back, forming a rigid perimeter as if to ensure that no one could look away. Their movements were too smooth, too deliberate—not for protection, but to make sure everyone watched. They had to watch, or this deadly ploy would have been for nothing.

Their audience was the icing on the cake.

I stiffened, jaw tightening.

This wasn't containment.

It was a show.

A message.

A slow murmur rippled through the crowd as Ellen stepped down, stair by stair, to ground level. She moved forward, her steps eerily calm against the blood-slicked stone. A guard approached, presenting her with a weapon.

A machine gun.

But not an ordinary one.





Its frame was heavier, its barrel inscribed with faint runes that glimmered under the dull light—the kind used in war zones. The PDL 87-X, a specialized weapon designed for one thing.

**Killing Lycans.**

**Killing Eve.** 4

Ellen gripped it without hesitation, her fingers curling around the trigger as if she had done this before. Her slender frame seemed too delicate for such a brutal weapon, but her face remained still, composed.

**Dead.**

**I felt it then—the sharp, biting scent in the air.**

**Silver.**

**It prickled at my skin, a low burn under my flesh, crawling along my veins like fire.**

**Every Lycan knew that sting.**

**I gritted my teeth, forcing my body to stay still, to keep control. The scent gnawed at my instincts, a primal warning screaming to shift, to run, to fight. But I didn't move.**

**Not yet.**

**Ellen leveled the machine gun at Eve, who was**



still restrained, barely able to lift her head. Blood—dark and unnatural—poured from her wounds, but her eyes burned with hatred, with life.

She wasn't dead.

Not yet.

Ellen didn't speak.

She didn't need to.

The gun roared to life.

Silver rounds tore into Eve's body, each shot punching through flesh and bone, each impact sending brutal shockwaves through the air. Blood sprayed in arcs, dark and steaming as it hit the cold stone.

Eve convulsed against the restraints, claws gouging the ground in one final, futile attempt to break free. Her roar was no longer deafening; instead, it choked out into a ragged snarl.

Shot after shot.

Ellen never flinched.

Not once.

Her face was as hollow as before, her eyes as empty as they had been with the first trigger pull.





The gun clicked empty.

Smoke curled from the barrel, and Ellen lowered the weapon with mechanical grace.

Eve didn't move.

Her massive form slumped forward, limbs limp, dark blood pooling beneath her. Flesh shredded by the onslaught.

Silence.

For a long, suffocating moment, no one moved.

Then Darius straightened, adjusting his coat like nothing had happened.

"It is done," he declared, his voice carrying over the blood-soaked courtyard.

The words felt heavier than before, final in a way that made my skin crawl.

The crowd remained frozen, too stunned to cheer, too horrified to speak.

My hands curled into fists.

My eyes burned from the silver smoke that contaminated my senses.

Ellen's footsteps echoed unnervingly against the blood-soaked stone as she ascended back to the



platform, the scent of silver still thick in the air. The machine gun hung heavily at her side, but her grip on it was effortless, as if it were merely an extension of herself. The crowd remained motionless, suffocated by the horror of what they had just witnessed.

She reached the top of the stairs, standing beside Darius once more. For the first time, Ellen moved without the mechanical stiffness that had defined her before. She turned toward the silent, broken masses below and raised her chin, the cold wind tugging at strands of her pale hair.

And then, she spoke.

Her voice was sharp and clear, slicing through the suffocating stillness like a blade.

"This..." Ellen's voice carried effortlessly, commanding yet disturbingly calm, "...is what happens when you do not submit to your sovereigns."

The words hung in the air like a guillotine's drop.

"Death. Gore. Loss."

She swept her eyes over the crowd, their wide, terror-stricken faces reflecting back at her





without resistance.

"Let this be a lesson." Her tone was steady, untouched by emotion. "Defiance breeds ruin. Rebellion births only corpses."

Her turquoise eyes gleamed under the pale light, but they remained hollow, devoid of empathy.

"I am the blessed twin," she declared, her voice rising with cold conviction. "And today, I have ended the cursed one."

Gasps rippled through the crowd, mingling with choked sobs.

"The prophecy was clear. One would bring ruin, and the other would bring light." She gestured toward Eve's mangled body, now nothing more than a shredded mass of blood and bone. "You have witnessed the truth with your own eyes—a werewolf, twisted into a Lycan. A monster among us. One that many of you were too blind, too foolish, to believe existed." 6

Murmurs of fear and confusion stirred like restless ghosts in the crowd.

Ellen tilted her head, her expression sharpening with something that might have been disdain.

"The lies end today. The propaganda ends today."

The Eclipse Rebellion, this pathetic fantasy of resistance, is nothing but a path to your own destruction."

She stepped forward, her voice darkening.

"You were told that the second verse of the prophecy spoke of a Blood Moon. A Blood Moon that would destroy us. But I tell you now—that is a hoax. A fabrication spun by insidious forces who seek nothing but chaos. You have seen the consequence of that chaos here today. The Rebellion works for our true ruin—Lycans."

Gasps echoed through the crowd.

Her gaze swept the masses, locking onto the pale faces trembling beneath her.

"A real threat has been extinguished." She pointed the bloodied barrel of the gun toward Eve's motionless corpse. "Another Lycan has been put down, like the beast it was."

Ellen's eyes narrowed, cold as glaziers.

"But I am not finished."

Her voice sharpened to a lethal point.

"I pledge this to you: I will finish what has begun. The remaining Lycans of the Obsidian Pack will fall. The darkness they spread will be snuffed



out, and in its place, a new era will rise. An era of light, as the prophecy promised. Every Lycan shall be exterminated like insects until their territory is nothing but a ghost town."

Her hand tightened on the weapon, lifting it just slightly—a subtle reminder of the power she still wielded.

"Yes, an heir has been ended..." Ellen's lips curved into a thin, mirthless smile. "But another has risen in her place."

The words echoed, lingering like smoke over the stunned and bloodied crowd.

Darius said nothing. He simply stood beside her, watching the crowd drink in her every word. Watching their fear deepen, their hope crack.

Ellen's expression softened, but only slightly.

"You will kneel," she whispered, though her voice still carried. "Or you will burn."

The silence deepened, heavy and suffocating.

And in that stillness, Ellen turned back to Darius, lowering the weapon to her side.

The show was over.

But the war had only just begun.



## 157 The Girl In The Coffin

### Hades 1

Jules' shoulders slumped after the video cut to black. "Ellen did that. She said those things," she whispered. She seemed hollowed out by what she had seen. It was no surprise, to be honest. Who would have thought that the same Ellen who could forgive her kidnappers was capable of doing and spewing such things? 2

But I knew dissociation when I saw it. It was in the emptiness in her eyes as she smiled. There had been no joy, no triumph, only some sort of undeniable finality. It was like she removed herself from the scene—the place, the time, the event.

Yes, there were some inconsistencies with Ellen and her behavior. A story behind the woman who unloaded bullets into her sister that day. A tale behind the woman she was now, but it was logical that Ellen was the one I had in my possession. There was simply no other explanation as to how only she was immune to the electromagnetic effect of the Bloodmoon or how she possessed the elusive Fenrir's marker. 14





Eve was dead because I saw her die with my own two eyes. I saw the cursed twin shift—a werewolf morph into a Lycan as the prophecy had foretold. It could not be feigned or faked; it was simply impossible. 5

There was no way to make a werewolf shift into a Lycan. If it were possible, Silverpine would have used that to create an immense number of mutated werewolf-turned-Lycan to win this century-long war against us. But no such army existed, and no such method had ever been discovered. Eve was gone, and Ellen was all that remained. I had the blessed twin, and that was all that mattered. 8

"Maybe...maybe...maybe," Jules muttered softly.

My gaze shifted to her to see that she was speaking more to herself than to me. I quirked a curious brow as I watched her.

Her eyes seemed distant, staring somewhere far off. Her mouth was moving.

"She is Ellen...but...she is not," she whispered.

"Maybe...maybe...she is like," she swallowed, her eyes widening like the final piece of the puzzle had just clicked into place. "She's like me." She murmured, her voice almost completely



inaudible. She was babbling to herself. 4

I recalled what Kael had said after she disparaged Eve. "Something is not right with that woman."

My eyes narrowed at her as she continued to make some calculations in her mind, her brows furrowing as if something was just making sense to her.

There were little moments, I recalled, when she seemed to slip. I knew pretense—in any royal court, it was an essential skill. But Jules' slips were not the kind born of deceit or strategy. They were fractures, splinters of something deeper breaking through the surface. Moments where her mask cracked. Sometimes what lay beneath was bright; other times, it was dark.

I recalled her so-called accident when she hurt Ellen's shoulder. When I replayed the feed, one moment her smile reached her eyes, and the next, an insidious shadow crossed her face—so fleeting that I almost did not catch it. I recognized that shadow because I had come face-to-face with something as sinister before.

But what was strange was how she snapped back from the darkness-filled daze she had been in





before. Her shock at what she had done was real; I knew that her regret was not an act. I would know. It seemed she had not healed from the abuse as much as I thought. She would require a re-evaluation.

Removing Jules should have been instant when I saw her slip, but destabilizing Ellen further would have been counterproductive. Ellen would have further seen it as me punishing Jules, even when I promised not to.

Now, I was so close to the missing piece of the puzzle since that fateful night that my father had taken me blindfolded from my room—the night that Ellen and Eve were born. I was so close, and now Jules had to go. Enough time had passed.

"Jules," I called, my voice firm.

She visibly startled at my voice like she had forgotten I was there.

"Your work is done," I told her. "I will no longer require your services."

The distant look in her eyes faded in an instant. She blinked. "What?"

"You cease to be a spy for me from now on," I doubled down. "Your work is done."



For a moment, she was as frozen as a statue, her skin paling like she had just seen a ghost.

Her lips parted, but no words came out. Jules just stared at me, her expression caught between disbelief and rising panic.

"You can't just—" she finally stammered, taking a shaky step forward. "No, wait. You can't do this. Not now."

I tilted my head, watching her unravel. "I can. And I have." My voice was as cold and immovable as stone.

"But I—" Her fists clenched at her sides, trembling. "You need me. You said it yourself. I'm the only one Ellen trusts, the only one who can get close to her!"

"And you've served your purpose." I allowed a slow, deliberate pause. "Ellen will survive without you. Whether she trusts you or not no longer concerns me."

Her breath quickened, chest rising and falling like a cornered animal. "No, no. You don't understand. There's more. I know there's more. You're missing something, and I can help you figure it out!" Her voice cracked, desperate.





I stared at her, silent. Calculating. Watching how quickly desperation stripped her down to something raw and frantic.

"You said it yourself!" she pressed on, her voice bordering on a plea. "There's something wrong with Ellen. She's not who she's supposed to be. You think I haven't noticed that? That I haven't been paying attention? I can help you!"

I didn't move. Let her squirm. I had been lenient for one second, and now this.

She took another step, more cautious now. Her voice dropped to a near-whisper, trembling but deliberate. "If you let me go now, you'll never know. You'll never find out what she is. You saved me," her lips trembled. "You killed that monster for what he did to me. I can't fail you."

I sighed deeply, letting water wash over the flames that were stoking in my chest. "Jules..."

The pain in her eyes was familiar. Hauntingly familiar to that hopelessness in her gaze the day that I had opened the coffin to rescue her. She was almost that girl again, afraid of sound and light. This time she was afraid of disappointing me. One fear to another, it seemed. 1

I watched her carefully, the way her shoulders



trembled beneath the weight of my words.

Her breath was ragged, her eyes glassy with the kind of fear that sinks deep into bone.

And still, she stood.

I let the silence stretch, let it press in on her until she was forced to carry it.

But I didn't look away.

"Jules," I said at last, quieter now, but no less firm.

Her head snapped up, eyes wide, searching for any sliver of mercy.

"I didn't save you because I pitied you. I saved you because you were useful. Because you had the potential to be more than what they made you." I remembered the gallows. The one for slave girls like her. I recalled the countless bodies of children taken as tribute to the quadrant. She was one of the few that dared to live, dared to see their oppressor get executed.

She flinched, but I didn't soften the truth.

"And now, you will need to find a purpose without me. Beyond me."

Her breath caught in her throat, but I pressed



on.

"You cannot cling to me like a crutch. You want to be strong? Then stand on your own."

I let that settle before I spoke again, my voice low but steady.

"I know what it means to have everything stripped away. To be left hollow, wondering why you're still breathing." My jaw tensed briefly.

Her eyes flickered, unsure if she was allowed to ask.

Jules swallowed hard, her fists still clenched at her sides. I could see the words forming behind her lips, the desperate attempt to hold on to something already slipping through her fingers.

"Your Majesty," she began, her voice steadier than before but still thin with desperation, "I can still —"

"It's final."

The words cut through the air, quiet but absolute.

Her mouth snapped shut, and for a moment, silence reigned.

"Go," I commanded, the word heavy with finality.



Then the door slammed open, and in came Kael with a hopeful expression on his face. "The LSI test results are out."

I turned to him, surprise flaring in my chest.

That was fast.

Pleasantly so.

I had expected delays, excuses—science often moved at a crawl when it came to matters of blood and mates. But this... this was efficient.

A rare thing. Was it a good or bad sign?

"Impressive," I murmured, eyeing the sealed envelope in Kael's hands. "I assume the results are conclusive?"

Kael gave a sharp nod. "Yes, Your Majesty. The analysis was prioritized given the anomalies. They insisted it was urgent."

Urgent. That piqued my interest, my pulse thrumming at the word alone.

But before I could reach for the envelope, something caught my eye.

Jules. 1

Her gaze was fixed on the envelope in Kael's grip.