



223 Treason

Eve **1**

My heart leapt out of my mouth as my eyes landed on Hades. His expression was soft and open before his eyes narrowed on me.

"Love?"

His voice was calm. Too calm—deceptively so. The moment stretched between us, thick with something unspoken, something volatile. I could see it in the way his fingers flexed, in the measured rise and fall of his chest.

My pulse thundered, but I forced a smile, adjusting the hem of my sleeves. "I— I wasn't expecting you back so soon."

His gaze drifted down, tracking the way my hands curled into the fabric. A slow blink. Then another. He stepped forward, his presence consuming the room like a rising tide.

"I noticed."

The words sent a shiver down my spine. There



was no heat to them, no anger—just a dangerous kind of patience. The kind that meant he had already figured something out and was waiting for me to confirm it.

I swallowed. "I was just—"

"Covering up."

I flinched.

The smallest movement, but enough. His expression didn't change, yet something about him shifted—his eyes darkening, shoulders drawing back as if to brace himself. He was watching, reading, assessing.

I was losing this battle before I even had the chance to fight.

Hades inhaled deeply, his gaze locked onto mine like a predator sizing up wounded prey. Not with hunger, not with anger—but with that unnerving patience that made my skin prickle.

"Eve," he said again, slower this time. "What are you hiding?"

I held firm, though my grip on the fabric betrayed me, fingers twisting tighter as if the



silk alone could shield me from his scrutiny.

"Nothing," I said, too quickly.

He exhaled, the sound almost amused but far from convinced. "Nothing?"

His fingers flexed at his sides before he took another step forward. I took one back, my heel bumping the edge of the bed. No escape.

His gaze dipped once more, dragging over the robe that now hung looser around my shoulders. And then, before I could react, he moved.

With the kind of fluid grace that made him so dangerously unpredictable, his fingers caught my wrists.

I froze.

Slowly, deliberately, he pried my hands apart. The fabric slipped from my fingers, revealing the delicate, lacy scrap of fabric I had been so desperately trying to hide.

Silence.

Hades stared.

Then his brows lifted, slow and incredulous.



"Eve," he murmured, voice thick with amusement. "Are you... holding a garter belt?" 1

My stomach twisted. Heat crept up my neck like wildfire. I clenched my jaw, summoning whatever dignity I had left. "Yes."

Silence stretched between us.

And then—

A laugh.

Not a chuckle. Not a quiet exhale. But a deep, rich, utterly delighted laugh.

I scowled. "It's not funny."

"Oh, but it is." His laughter tapered into something smug, his eyes glittering with unrestrained amusement. "You were acting like you'd been caught committing treason—over this?"

I sniffed. "I wanted to make an impression."

His lips twitched. "And you thought the best way to do that was by standing in the middle of our bedroom, gripping a garter belt like it's contraband?"

I crossed my arms, only to realize too late that I was still holding the damn thing. The lacy straps dangled between us, betraying me completely.

Hades reached out, plucking the delicate garment from my grasp with almost reverent curiosity. He turned it over in his fingers, dark eyes flicking back to mine, wicked amusement dancing behind them.

"This," he murmured, stepping closer, "is the big secret?"

I squared my shoulders. "It was supposed to be a surprise."

"It is," he agreed, smirking. "Just not the kind you intended."

I glared at him, but it was impossible to hold onto my indignation when his eyes burned with something softer, something too warm, too knowing.

Hades let the garter belt slip through his fingers, letting it dangle between us. Then, with a slow, deliberate smirk, he met my gaze.

"Well," he said, voice a husky purr, "don't keep



me waiting, love. What else are you hiding?"

His fingers flexed around the delicate lace before he let it slip from his grasp entirely, forgotten the moment his attention returned to me. His gaze, once teasing and amused, turned molten as it dragged over my form.

And then—he moved.

With the same ease he always carried, he reached for the lapels of my robe, brushing past my feeble attempt to hold them closed. The silk slid from my shoulders in one smooth motion, whispering against my skin before pooling at my feet.

A sharp inhale. A moment suspended in time.

Hades went still.

His throat bobbed in a slow, deliberate swallow, as if he were physically forcing himself to breathe. His gaze devoured me, not with hunger, but something deeper—something that sent heat curling through my spine and turned my pulse to thunder. He took in every inch, every detail, eyes lingering on the intricate lace, the delicate straps, the sheer panels teasing at what lay



beneath.

His fingers twitched at his sides, restraint warring with something primal. His jaw clenched, a muscle feathering beneath his skin. And then, after what felt like an eternity, his lips parted, voice hoarse.

"Eve."

Just my name. A reverent whisper. A quiet surrender.

His gaze lifted back to mine, something raw and unguarded flickering behind his eyes. As if he had been utterly, thoroughly wrecked by the sight of me.

I exhaled shakily, fingers curling at my sides. "Say something."

Hades blinked once, as if shaking himself free of whatever trance I had pulled him into. But when he spoke, his voice was different—low, reverent, like a man seeing something divine for the first time.

"You're breathtaking."

The words crashed into me with the force of a



tidal wave, stealing the air from my lungs.

A slow, measured step forward. Then another.

His hands lifted, fingers hovering just above my waist, as if he were hesitant to touch. As if the reality of me might slip through his grasp if he wasn't careful.

I had never seen him like this before.

Hades—the god of the underworld, the man who commanded shadows and storms—stood before me, unraveled. Eyes dark with wonder, reverence etched into every line of his face.

"I—" His voice faltered, something rare, something fragile. "I don't think I was ready for this."

A smirk threatened my lips, but the moment was too charged, too electric to break with anything less than honesty.

"I wanted to surprise you," I admitted.

His gaze dropped to my body again, the corner of his mouth twitching. "You succeeded."

He reached for me then—slow, deliberate—his



hands settling at my waist, the heat of his palms searing through the delicate fabric. His touch was light, almost hesitant, like he was still processing the reality of me standing before him like this.

I tilted my head, watching the way his throat moved as he swallowed, the way his lashes lowered as he traced the curve of my hips with his thumbs. A god, completely enthralled.

"You're staring," I teased, voice softer than I intended.

His eyes flicked up, locking onto mine. The smirk he gave me was lazy, knowing—but his voice was a rasp.

"I'll be doing a lot more than that."

His head descended, just as my nose caught something.

Cheese. Meat. Pickles. Onions.

I stopped him, glancing behind him. "Are those burgers?"

He chuckled. "Ye—"



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Then I was running. 4

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