



## 226 Reenactment

Eve **1**

This could be another attempt. The last time something like this happened, three were left dead after the onslaught.

The Beast of the Night. The thought crashed against me, horror's cold tendrils wrapping around my spine. Was this a trap? Were they trying to lure us in by using Elliot?

We didn't know who was responsible for the kidnapping, but all signs pointed toward the Valmonts.

I tried to look up through the window, but the sky was hidden by branches, thick foliage, and the suffocating cover of darkness.

Hades was a bulldozer in motion — unstoppable, feral focus in his every breath.

The vehicle roared as it smashed through the underbrush, responding to his commands like it had a pulse of its own.



Rhea... I called out in my mind, barely holding it together.

I'm here, she answered, steady and strong.  
Whatever happens, we fight.

Suddenly, in the distance, an explosion lit up the night — a violent burst of orange and red that shook the ground beneath us.

The shockwave hit the vehicle a second later, rattling the reinforced frame. Hades cursed under his breath, his grip tightening on the wheel.

I felt Rhea's snarl rise within me. They're setting traps.

Hades slammed his palm against the console.

"Kael, report!"

Static crackled, then Kael's voice came through, strained and breathless.

"Ambush on the east perimeter. They're trying to split us up."

Hades bared his teeth, his voice a low growl.

"Stay on the western flank. Do not engage alone."



Another explosion lit up the sky to our left, and my panic twisted tighter. The acrid scent of gasoline hit me like a punch to the gut, the buzzing in my skull returned with the vengeance of a thousand suns.

My ears perked up, every sound around me sharpening, filtering through the pounding of my pulse. The whirl of tires on broken ground. The distant howls of Gammas in pursuit. The crackling of flames from the explosion we'd just passed.

And then —

A whimper.

A soft, trembling snuffle.

My breath caught in my throat.

Elliot.

I didn't know how — I shouldn't have been able to hear him over the chaos — but I did.

It was faint, but it was him.

I could see him.

Big green eyes filled with tears, brown hair





tousled wildly, face smudged with dirt.

My vision blurred for a second, heat flaring under my skin. My nails lengthened without warning, scraping into the leather of the seat.

"Red?" Hades' voice was tight with alarm.

But I couldn't answer. My bones shivered, my body thrumming with a wild, feral power that didn't feel entirely my own.

Elliot... he's calling me.

Rhea roared in my mind, feral and primal. He needs us.

I gasped as fire tore through my veins, every nerve ending alight. My muscles seized and twisted. My skin pulsed hot and cold in rapid waves. My vision dimmed around the edges, pupils dilating until the car's interior was a wash of detail and shadow. 1

"Eve!" Hades barked, reaching for me, but I was already slipping, my body yielding to something older, deeper, darker.

My spine arched against the seatbelt as the shift took hold — but this wasn't the smooth,

practiced shift I was used to. This was raw.  
Violent.

My jaw cracked, lengthened. My hands curled into claws. Fur burst along my arms, but it wasn't just my usual coat of black. It was threaded with silver streaks and midnight black — power humming through every strand.

The air in the car crackled as my body convulsed once more.

And then I heard it again — that faint, broken whisper, not just sound, but in my blood.

My wolf surged, ripping forward with a snarl that was not entirely my own.

I turned to Hades, my eyes glowing brighter than they ever had.

His own eyes widened. "Eve?"

"No," I growled, my voice layered — mine and something more. "It's both of us." 2

Before the moment could fully settle between us, instinct — raw and primal — exploded inside me.

I didn't wait.



With a feral snarl, I threw my head back and tore through the roof of the war vehicle. My claws sliced through the reinforced alloy like it was paper, metal screeching and curling away from my hands.

Hades shouted my name, but I was already gone — vaulting through the torn opening, paws slamming into the earth before I had fully shifted. My form rippled violently, bones stretching, fur shimmering with streaks of silver and shadow-black, eyes blazing molten gold.

The world around me sharpened, every scent, every sound slamming into my senses like a hurricane.

And there — underneath the smoke, the burning fuel, the damp forest floor — Elliot.

I didn't think.

I ran.

Branches whipped past, roots tangled at my feet, but I was beyond caution. My body became pure instinct, legs pounding the earth in perfect, deadly rhythm.





I heard Hades behind me, cursing, his own beast tearing from him as he tried to catch up – but he wouldn't.

Not this time.

This wasn't his hunt.

It was mine.

The night opened around me, dense foliage parting before I even touched it. The forest seemed to pulse in time with my heart.

I could feel Elliot.

Not just hear him, not just smell him – I could feel him. His fear. His hope. His small, desperate prayers.

Every nerve in my body screamed toward a destination I didn't consciously know, but my blood did. Rhea did.

Go, she urged, her voice a reverent whisper now, no longer feral – but proud. You were made for this. The truth is close.

My muscles burned as I pushed faster, faster than I had ever moved. My paws barely touched

the ground.

The forest broke.

I skidded to a halt on trembling paws, claws sinking into damp earth as I froze.

Before me, the scene unfolded in horrifying clarity.

A black SUV, flipped on its side. Ripped apart. The reinforced metal torn like tissue paper.

Blood everywhere. Spattered across broken glass, dripping down shattered doors. The heavy, choking scent of gasoline burned in the back of my throat, making me gag.

Flames licked up the wreckage, crackling angrily, turning metal to slag.

I couldn't breathe.

My fur bristled. My heart twisted.

I know this.

The world tilted.

Flashes.





A different car.

The same fire.

The same screaming.

"Please, don't hurt my baby!"

A woman's voice — raw, broken, echoing like a phantom.

"How could you do this to me!"

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