



## 229 The Blood On My Hands

Eve <sup>1</sup>

It was obvious that Kael didn't want to leave me alone with Felicia, but I retracted my claws and forced a smile.

"It's fine, Kael. You know I can take care of myself."

I even winked and picked up Elliot, who easily clung to me.

"Her Highness is right," Felicia agreed. "There has been so much animosity. Mostly from me — misplaced hate that I need to show regret for, especially in light of what has happened... what she has done. You understand, don't you?" She gave Kael a pointed look that said he had no choice but to concede.

"I would rather not..." he muttered.

"Kael." I closed the distance between us and placed a hand on his shoulder. I needed to know. Running from the truth would only end with me crashing into a wall. She had called me the Beast



of the Night for a reason. "I can handle one woman."

He glanced between us both, clearly wondering what Hades would do to him if he found out he'd left me alone with Felicia. But finally, he nodded. "Sure... I'll be outside."

He flashed Elliot a smile before walking out. Felicia turned and closed the door behind him. She let out a sigh, then made her way toward me.

"Did you traumatize your child on purpose for the sake of this?" I asked, my tone acidic before she could speak. My hold on Elliot grew even more protective.

She smirked, showing her fangs and tucking her glossy black hair behind her ear. "Whatever do you mean?"

"Cut it out," I gritted my teeth.

"Oh, please. Don't pretend that the foolish insinuation I'd willingly hurt my child is why you're so on edge." She brushed my question aside with a wave of her hand. "You and I both know the real reason you're sweating buckets."



I narrowed my eyes. "Say what you want to say, Felicia. I know you're just bubbling."

She looked at me, her eyes sharp, searching, peeling away my layers.

"You... when you first arrived here — pale as chalk, almost malnourished, feigning defiance though I could see the tremble in your fingers. You were a shadow of yourself. A stray cub thrown into a den of wolves."

She began to circle me slowly, like a predator savoring the moment before the strike.

"And yet," she continued, "you survived. No — you thrived. You stole a king's heart, his beta's loyalty, my son's affection... and you made them yours." Her voice wavered, the mask slipping for a fraction of a second before her gaze grew sharp again. She glanced at the television, where the anchors were still discussing me.

"Even my pack's awe and intrigue, you won — despite everything. Tell me... how did you do it?"

I adjusted Elliot on my hip, the weight of his small body grounding me.



"I didn't take anything that wasn't freely given. Maybe if you hadn't spent so long sharpening your claws on shadows, you would've seen that."

Her nostrils flared, but she laughed bitterly.

"You think you're different from me?" Her fangs flashed again. "You're not. You're just the younger version of me — hungrier, prettier, still drunk on the illusion that loyalty is real."

"I don't need illusions, Felicia." My voice came out colder than I thought possible. "Put a pin in it if you're just going to speak in riddles."

Those sharp green eyes narrowed.

"I should have seen it was all a facade — a well-crafted mask you wore. But the question is: what exactly were you hiding?"

I involuntarily held my breath, waiting for her to give voice to the darkest fears I could no longer deny. 1

"Now we both know," she breathed, her voice cold. "You're not some ditzy little princess, captive of the Hand of Death. You are the beast. The monster. The assassin who ripped his heart



out of his chest. You were the one who carved his wife's baby from her."

Her voice rose, each word a hammer blow.

"You slit her throat with your claws. You killed his love. You killed Danielle."

Her words were nails in my coffin — echoes of a truth I had only begun to suspect, now screaming in full clarity.

"I..."

But she shushed me sharply with a finger, her voice trembling and venomous.

"No. I was there."

And suddenly, her words splintered open the door I had fought so hard to keep locked.

*I saw blood.*

*So much blood.*

*Danielle's wide, terrified eyes filled with tears, her mouth forming pleas I could barely hear over the roaring in my head.*

*Please... not the baby... not my child...*



*I had stood over her. Claws wet. Breath ragged.*

*Rip.*

*The sound of flesh tearing. A scream cut short.*

*Her warm blood soaking into my skin.*

"You tore my husband and father-in-law to shreds," Felicia's voice choked, dragging me deeper.

*I saw them.*

*The King – regal, broken, lifeless eyes.*

*The old Alpha gasping his last breath, reaching for help that would never come.*

*"And then you turned to my sister..."*

*Danielle's scream. Her hands on her belly. The smell of death all around.*

"I watched her beg," Felicia whispered hoarsely, "beg you to spare her. Spare her baby."

*Please... he needs me... let my baby live...*

My claws glistened red.

I remembered the wildness in me. No control.



No mercy.

"And now," Felicia's voice cracked, anger and sorrow strangling her words, "you cling to her husband like a leech. Do you feel good, Eve? Knowing you took the place of the woman whose blood you spilled?" 2

Her words hit like lashes on raw skin.

My knees weakened. Elliot stirred against me, sensing the storm within.

Felicia's eyes burned with grief so potent I could taste it.

"Tell me!" she demanded, her voice breaking completely.

But I couldn't.

Because I was there.

I had done it.

And now I stood in Danielle's place, holding her child's cousin, claiming her husband's heart.

"Will you kill Elliot too?"

I froze. Only then did I realize that I had started



to sob.

"What?"

Her words cracked something open inside me.

"Will you kill Elliot too?" she demanded again.

"He's in your arms, isn't he? That's why you pretended to care for him."

I gasped. The air turned thick, suffocating.

"No..." I whispered, but it came out broken. My arms trembled, barely able to hold Elliot.

But Felicia's words cut deeper than claws ever could.

The dam shattered.

The images rushed in — no longer fragmented echoes but vivid, merciless truths.

The weight of blood on my hands. The coppery scent clogging my throat.

Danielle's scream wasn't distant anymore. It was in my ears, raw and deafening.

Her pleading eyes, wide, desperate — alive.



*Please... not my baby... not my child...*

I had looked down at her, chest heaving. My claws moved on their own, slicing through flesh and silk.

The sound.

Rip.

A spatter of blood across my cheek, hot and fresh.

I fell to my knees.

The floor rushed up to meet me, and I clung to Elliot, but my body shook violently.

"No," I choked, curling into myself, arms around my head as if I could block it out. But it only grew louder, clearer.

*The king's roar of fury.*

*The old Alpha's desperate gasps as I tore him apart.*

*My own feral snarl, animalistic and unstoppable.*

And Danielle... her final whisper.



He needs me... please...

I had torn her open.

Bile burned in my throat. Sobs racked my chest.

"Stop..." I whimpered. "Please, stop..."

But the memories didn't care. They surged in sharper, unrelenting.

Danielle's blood pooling beneath me.

Her hand twitching once... twice... and then stillness.

Her last breath. 2

I screamed.

The sound erupted from me, raw and jagged, making Elliot cry out in fright.

I dropped him — gods, I dropped him — and curled fully into myself on the floor, clutching my head, rocking back and forth.

My claws extended without my will, scratching against the marble.

"I didn't mean to... I didn't mean to..."

The truth crushed me.

I had done it.

I was the monster.

I was the Beast of the Night.

And I could no longer hide.

The memories had come fully for me. 

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