



231 Echoes From The Past

Hades 1

For a moment the world fell away. The ground beneath me gave way, the walls around me dissipated into nothing, and every other person simply ceased to exist as I watched her.

I had to race fast enough to reach her, my mind in shambles as I watched the scene unfold. She had shifted fully, her ashy black wolf curled up in a fetal position, levitating high off the ground. Around her, she created a vortex that drew everything toward her. Furniture and other items were thrown into a wild spiral around her. It was pure chaos. 2

My skin tingled with apprehension, the hairs on my body standing on end as I took her in. I had not a single clue what I was supposed to do.

I had a hunch this had something to do with the nosebleeds and other strange incidents since Rhea returned, but I was nowhere near prepared for this.

I took a step forward, my breath ragged, heart



pounding against my ribs like a war drum. The air around her shimmered, bending and cracking like thin glass under pressure. Power — raw, ancient, untamed — rolled off her in waves, thick enough to taste on my tongue.

"Red..." I whispered, but my voice was swallowed by the oppressive silence.

Her body jerked, her limbs twitching in unnatural spasms, as if something inside her was fighting to tear free. Her wolf form pulsed with streaks of silver and dark energy, veins of light webbing across her fur and into the air like living lightning. For a moment, my heart dropped, horrified that I might have infected her with the corruption in my own body by marking her. 1

I forced my feet to move — one step, then another. The closer I got, the heavier the air became. My knees buckled, and I had to brace myself against the sheer force radiating from her.

Suddenly, her head snapped up, and her eyes — not the crimson of a lycan I had come to know, but burning amber that engulfed her entire eye



socket, not only the iris — locked onto mine. My breath caught.

Those eyes...

My heart lurched.

Her mouth opened in a deafening howl, and the energy around her exploded outward in a pulse that slammed into me, sending me flying back into the debris of what used to be a wall. My vision blurred, pain flaring through my body. But still, I dragged myself up. That howl was not ordinary either.

This wasn't just a shift. This was something else — something bigger, older, something horribly familiar. Something that pulled me back to the clearing, the pungent odor of copper and gasoline punching me in the gut.

I coughed, blood trickling down my lip.

"I don't know if you can hear me," I rasped, struggling to my feet, "but you need to come back." 2

Her body convulsed again, and a crack split the air — not sound, not sight, but something



deeper. Reality frayed at the edges.

I didn't think. I ran. I ran straight into the storm, into her, praying that if I reached her, touched her, I could anchor her back.

My arms wrapped around her trembling body, the energy burning against my skin like fire and ice all at once. I buried my face in her fur and whispered, "I'm here. You're not alone."

For a terrifying moment, nothing happened. Then, slowly, the storm began to recede.

Her body sagged into mine, heavy and trembling.

And when I looked down, her wolf eyes blinked up at me — scared, vulnerable, human.

"I've got you," I whispered hoarsely, holding on for dear life as the world began to piece itself back together.

She was not responding, not even moving a muscle. I had been so foolish that I had not thought of what effect a werewolf shifting into a lycan would have on her, especially with me being infected with the flux. I cradled her to me, pushing away the harrowing images of Danielle



that had suddenly been triggered back to the surface.

Why was that howl so hauntingly familiar? Her eyes were not like anything I had ever seen before. I swallowed, cradling her to me as though she might fall apart at any moment.

"The Deltas are on their way," Kael informed me.

I could not even speak. I just watched her. How many times would she be in this situation, where her body would turn against her this way?

"I don't know what happened, Hades," Felicia's voice sliced through my despair. "I was thanking her for what she... goddess... what's wrong with her?" Her voice quivered as she adjusted Elliot on her hip. 8

The goddess knew that if I stood, I would pour my frustration out on her. "I will be checking the security camera footage to get to the bottom of this," I said simply, getting up and picking Eve up with me. "And I trust your father will be there for your exile once I know exactly what you did to my wife." Danielle's sister or not, I was no longer going to be merciful or lenient. 4



Eve

I felt the gag on my snout — this time, real. A thick, iron muzzle clamped tight around my jaws, suffocating every instinct to cry out. My body buzzed with the same malevolent force that had ripped free moments ago, but now it had nowhere to go. It coiled inside me like a storm trapped in a glass jar, fracturing me from the inside. 2

My bones rattled beneath muscle stretched too tight, my claws scraping helplessly at nothing. My vision blurred, flickering between the wolf and something... else.

My senses overloaded. The metallic tang of blood was thick in the air — not just around me, but inside me. I could taste it, feel it pulsing with every erratic beat of my heart. My vision stuttered and twisted, shadows writhing at the edges.

And beneath it all... bloodlust. Overbearing, suffocating bloodlust.

It wasn't mine. Or maybe it was. It was hard to



tell anymore. The hunger clawed at me, scraping at my insides with barbed fingers, demanding release. My body shook, trapped between the desire to tear into something — anything — and the iron muzzle that kept my jaws clamped shut. The restraint only made it worse. I could feel my pulse in my gums, in my tongue, in my fangs aching to extend.

I growled low and feral, the sound muffled by cold metal biting into tender flesh. The vibrations rattled through my chest like thunder in a broken cage. I thrashed against the metallic bounds.

"It will soon be time," a voice ripped through my frenzied thoughts.

I paused, muscles freezing as a hand brushed through my fur. "You will feast, sister," she whispered.

Ellen. 5