



## 244 The Fateful Reveal

**Hades** 1

The lab inside the greenhouse was almost...  
comical. 1

A sterile glass cube planted in the middle of lush greenery—rows of vibrant flora curling toward the sun, while inside, the scent of antiseptic clung to everything. 1

The absurdity of it wasn't lost on me.

Inside this box of plastic and steel, surrounded by symbols of life and growth, we were searching for the truth about death.

And murder.

And monsters.

The walls of the cube were glass, perfectly transparent—no secrets, no shadows. Except for the one thing I couldn't bear to look at: the stasis capsule.

She floated in it like a ghost caught in amber.  
Danielle.



Unmoving. Untouched. Preserved in the exact condition I had found her in.

I tried not to look. Tried to keep my eyes focused on the people in lab coats bent over vials and glowing monitors. Five of them. Each with a job. Each efficient.

And all around them, tacked to the inner glass: photos.

Photos from that night.

Crime scene stills. Blood-smeared parquet. Scratch marks in the ground. Bite radius analysis reports. A burned velvet ribbon that had once belonged to Danielle's maternity gown.

And then—

The earring.

An emerald teardrop, broken at the clasp. A question mark scrawled next to it.

Where is the second?

I touched my ear without thinking.

It was still there. The matching earring.



Danielle's.

The one Eve had noticed. The one I'd forgotten was even still clipped to me.

Why hadn't I taken it off?

Why hadn't I noticed?

I shifted in my chair, jaw tight.

Kael sat beside me, silent as stone. Across the way, the Montegues looked far too comfortable.

Lucinda glanced around the lab, eyes glistening just enough to appear appropriately strained.

Felicia sat with her hands folded in her lap, demure and patient. Too patient.

Montegue himself was the only one who looked as disturbed as I felt—but he hid it better. Or perhaps he was just tired of the theatre.

We had fifteen minutes left.

An hour. That was how long the deep-layer DNA trace match would take. It was already 45 minutes in.

Forty-five minutes of silence, broken only by the occasional clack of a keyboard, the shift of



someone's breath.

No one spoke.

No one moved.

We were all just waiting for a single vial of blood to confirm whether or not I had spent the last three months loving the same creature that tore my world apart.

I could feel the sweat building at the back of my neck.

Kael leaned in, voice low. "Do you want water?"

I shook my head. I didn't trust myself to drink.

I didn't trust myself to breathe.

My fingers itched with the need to do something—anything—but the only thing I could do now was wait.

The screen in front of the lead scientist pulsed softly. A loading bar. 94%.

I looked at the stasis capsule again.

At Danielle.





At the truth I had sworn to bury her with.

Until now.

And for the first time since she'd died... I prayed.

Please... let me be wrong.

The screen flashed once.

95%.

My breath stilled.

Felicia shifted, her fingers tightening in her lap like she already knew what was coming. Like she'd been waiting her whole life for this moment.

96%.

Kael exhaled beside me. Short. Sharp. Almost a flinch of breath.

I didn't move. Didn't blink.

97%.

Felicia leaned forward now, her body almost vibrating with something between dread and anticipation.



Lucinda dabbed at her eye with a silk handkerchief—tears already forming like she was preparing for the verdict of a courtroom drama she'd rehearsed in her head a hundred times.

98%.

I gripped the arms of the chair so hard the metal groaned beneath my fingers.

99%.

And then—

A soft chime.

Green text spilled across the screen in clinical, cold font:

Subject match: 98.4% probability — Variant DNA matches forensic residue from royal massacre site. 2

Silence detonated in the room like a bomb.

It took me a full heartbeat to understand what I was reading.

Another to realize I wasn't breathing.



And a third to feel the ground beneath me shift.

My chest tightened—too fast, too hard, too sharp. I felt it in my ears, in my throat, in the space behind my eyes.

I had loved her.

I had kissed her, protected her, trusted her.

And she had torn my world apart.

"My Dani..." Montegue's voice cracked. The cool, poised mask he wore daily slipped as tears welled up, falling freely. "You vowed you'd live. You vowed—"

He choked on his words, hands trembling. A freshly grieving father—again.

Lucinda pressed her face into her hands.

Felicia turned her face just slightly, but I saw it.

The flicker of satisfaction. The release.

The quiet smirk she swallowed.

And all I could hear was Danielle's last scream.

Kael whispered something, but I couldn't make



out the words. My pulse thundered in my ears, the room blurring around the edges like a fever dream.

But I didn't collapse.


I didn't break.

Instead, I reached for my phone with the mechanical precision of someone half-dead already.

I unlocked the screen.

Opened the encrypted message app.

Typed two words.

Do it. 

And hit send. 

Eve

And then—

My phone chimed.

So did hers.

The sound, though soft, felt like a gunshot in the quiet.





I blinked. My body stilled. The tension I'd just shaken off returned tenfold, slamming into my chest like a freight train.

I looked down.

You are not safe, little princess. 10

My heart sank. Not just at the message—but at the timing.

The air in the room shifted. Subtle. But wrong.

Heavy.

Staged.

My gaze lifted, slow as molasses.

Amelia still smiled—but something in her stance had... settled. Too smooth. Too careful.

Like a dancer counting beats before a strike.

Rhea stirred.

"Eve," she said, her voice no longer gentle, no longer laced with insight.

"Listen to me very carefully. Move."

I didn't question her.



But it was already too late.

I caught the flick of her wrist, the flash of metal in her hand—a syringe.

My body screamed. I twisted away, but Amelia was fast. Fast in a way I hadn't expected from her.

I tried to shove her, but her grip locked around my arm—surprisingly strong. I felt the sharp nick of the needle against my skin—just the tip.

"No—Amelia—what are you doing?!" I gasped, breath hitching, fury and betrayal colliding in my chest.

I slammed my elbow into her side, and in the scuffle—the syringe spun.

And struck her own thigh.

She gasped.

Staggered. 1