



## 281 No Lies Left To Tell

Hades 1

Felicia didn't notice.

Or maybe she didn't want to.

She kept talking.

"Everything I did—I did because I had to. I didn't want to. I didn't want any of it. But when you're trapped between two monsters..." she shook her head, letting a tear slip artfully down her cheek, "you do what you have to do to survive. To protect the people you love." 1

She smiled again, small and aching. "I know it hurts right now. But I did it for you."

A beat of silence.

Then she laughed—softly, nervously. "Gods, it's almost funny, isn't it? How she fooled all of us again. Using Elliot like that. Manipulating him. Poor thing doesn't even realize he's just another pawn to her."

She turned slightly toward me now, her gaze



softening into something that might have looked like pity.

"I saw her, you know," she said gently. "I saw Eve tear into Danielle. I saw her laughing while Danielle screamed." 7

Lucinda flinched—so small a movement it might have been mistaken for a shiver.

Felicia smiled wider, encouraged.

"I tried to save her. I tried to stop it. But what could I do?" Her voice lowered to a hush, as if sharing a sacred shame. "I'm not strong like you, Father. Not brave like you, Mother. I did what I could."

Montegue closed his eyes for a moment, slow and heavy, like lifting his own eyelids was becoming too great a burden.

Felicia didn't see it.

Or she refused to.

"I'm sorry for what little part I played," she said, pressing her hand against the glass again, as if reaching for them. "I am. But it's not my hand that's soaked in blood. It's Eve's." 1



She gave another tearful, hopeful smile.

"And now that you know, now that you see, we can fix this. We can fix everything. Together."

She tilted her head, a note of almost childlike pleading entering her voice.

"Please. Help me. Bring me home."

No one spoke.

The silence stretched so long that even Felicia, finally, faltered.

She glanced between them, her smile wavering.

To fill the growing crack, she said brightly, "Elliot will miss me, you know. He loves me. I'm the only mother he's ever known. He needs me."

A muscle in Montegue's jaw twitched.

Felicia forged ahead, desperate now to fill the silence with her version of the world.

"And—I know you're worried about the procedures. The marrow transfers. But you have to understand—it was necessary."

Still that reasonable, rational voice. That careful





logic.

"I couldn't leave Elliot motherless. Not after Danielle died. And Hades—" her voice softened again, almost pitying as she looked at me, "—you were grieving. Broken. You were dangerous back then. If I'd left Elliot with you, he wouldn't have survived." 1

Her hand tightened into a small fist against the glass.

"I did what was right," she said, earnest. Sincere. 1

She smiled again.

Soft.

Hopeful.

Triumphant.

"I saved him." 1

The words fell like stones in the dead silence.

For a long moment, no one moved.

Montegue exhaled—once—like it hurt.

Lucinda's hands trembled harder now, but she



kept them hidden at her sides.

I simply stared at her.

At the girl who still thought she could charm her way out of hell.

At the daughter who had built her kingdom of lies atop the bones of her sister, her family, her own soul.

Felicia smiled sweetly through the glass, mistaking our devastation for hesitance.

Mistaking our horror for hope.

Mistaking our silence for love.

Felicia didn't notice the shift.

Or she didn't want to. 1

When Montegue finally moved—reaching into the folds of his coat and pulling out a slim black tablet—she mistook the gesture for hope.

Her smile brightened.

"See?" she said softly, stepping closer to the glass. "We can still fix this. We still have time. Danielle's anniversary is coming up soon, and I



thought—maybe—” she hesitated shyly, almost girlish, “maybe we could plan it together.”

Lucinda's fingers dug into Montegue's sleeve, but Felicia wasn't looking.

She was already imagining it—already painting the picture in her mind.

“I was thinking... orchids and asters,” she said, voice light, dreamy. “Danielle loved those. Remember, Mother? How she used to fill the conservatory with them in spring? It'll be beautiful. Like she would've wanted.”

Her eyes shimmered with tears—but not grief.  
Hope.

Delusion.

Montegue said nothing as he powered on the tablet. His hands were steady. Terribly steady.

Lucinda made a choking sound deep in her throat, one hand pressed over her mouth.

Felicia reached out reflexively, laying her palm against the glass with a soft, soothing smile.

“It's okay,” she murmured. “We'll make it right





again. You'll see. We'll heal."

Lucinda shook her head wildly, tears spilling down her cheeks—but Felicia only thought she was agreeing.

"I'll help," she said. "We'll pick the colors. The music. The flowers. Danielle always said she wanted a peaceful anniversary, not some big parade."

She laughed softly, wistfully.

"I remember," she said. "She used to say she wanted her funeral to smell like a garden."

Her hand curled lightly against the glass, like she was already dreaming of the petals.

Montegue turned the tablet around.

The screen flared to life.

Felicia's smile froze—just slightly.

Confusion flickered across her face when she saw the first frame.

Not music.

Not flower arrangements.



Not schedules.

Blood.

Smoke.

Screams.

The muzzle cam footage—still playing, brutally, mercilessly—flickered across the screen in cold, raw color.

Felicia blinked.

A small, confused frown tugged at her lips.

"What...?"

She stumbled back a step from the glass as the sound kicked in—the shriek of tearing flesh, the wet gasping sobs, the brutal crunch of bone.

Lucinda made a broken noise, turning away, clutching her stomach.

Felicia stared at the footage—at the fawn-colored wolf tearing into her sister's broken body—and her mouth opened and closed once.

Twice.





"No," she said, almost childishly. "No, that's not—"

The footage shifted again.

Felicia's naked, blood-smeared human form appearing out of the smoke, staggering toward the crying infant bundled in Danielle's torn dress.

Her face.

Clear.

Undeniable.

Calculated.

Montegue stepped closer to the glass, silent, unmoving, a mountain about to fall.

Felicia's breath hitched.

"I didn't..." she whispered. "I didn't mean—"

She reached for the glass again—desperate this time. Desperate to claw back the lie.

"You don't understand," she said frantically. "I didn't have a choice! I had to—it wasn't supposed to—Eve—Eve—" 5



Her voice broke into stuttering gasps, but there was no one rushing to soothe her now.

Lucinda had sunk to her knees.

Montegue's hand—the one holding the tablet—tightened so hard around the device that the plastic casing cracked.

Kael said nothing.

I said nothing.

We all just watched her.

Watched her world collapse piece by piece.

And finally—finally—Felicia saw it.

Saw the looks on our faces.

Saw the truth on the tablet.

And knew.

There was no saving her.

No fixing it.

No garden of orchids.

No anniversary.



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+5

Only the grave she had dug with own hands—  
and the family she had buried in it. 1

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