

Hades' Cursed Luna Chapter 3 - Fool Me Once

Chapter 3: Fool Me Once

Eve~

I blinked, sure I had not heard her correctly. "What?"

Ellen's expression changed in a split second, and a smile crept up her face. "I poisoned myself."

I was completely dumbfounded, utterly shocked. It almost didn't fully register that my sister had said she poisoned herself.

Ellen's smile grew wider as she watched the confusion and horror spread across my face. "You heard me right, Eve. I poisoned myself," she said, her voice cold and calculating.

"But... why?" I stammered, struggling to understand. "Why would you do this?"

She knelt down to my level, her eyes gleaming with a twisted satisfaction. "You had to go, Eve. And what better way than to frame you as the villain? You shifting into a Lycan was just a fortunate coincidence."

My blood turned to ice. This was my sister, the person I loved most in the world, the one I would have done anything for. "You... you planned all of this?" I whispered, unable to believe what I was hearing.

She tilted her head, examining me like I was some insignificant creature. "Of course. It was easy, really. One of us would be cursed anyway, it just had to be you. I just need to give them more of an incentive."

"You manipulated everyone," I said, my voice trembling with disbelief. "You even fooled James..."

At that, she laughed in my face.

Tears stung my eyes, but I refused to let them fall. "Why, Ellen? Why are you doing this to me? I loved you. I would have done anything for you."

Her expression softened for a brief moment, but it was quickly replaced by that same cold look. "Would you have given the throne to your younger sister?"

The realization hit me like a punch to the gut. "You... you wanted to be Alpha," I said, the pieces falling into place. "You wanted to rule without any competition."

"Exactly," she said, her eyes narrowing. "You were the only one standing in my way. I couldn't risk you turning into a Lycan and becoming more powerful than me. So, I made sure everyone believed you were a danger to us all."

"You framed me," I murmured unable to stomach the truth, my voice hollow.

"And it worked perfectly, didn't it?" she said, standing up and brushing off her dress as if this was just a casual conversation. "Now, you'll be executed, and I'll be the Alpha's only daughter, the true blessing to this pack."

1

I felt like I was suffocating, the air in the dungeon suddenly too thick to breathe. My own sister had betrayed me, orchestrated my downfall, and turned everyone I loved against me.

"Ellen, please," I begged, my voice breaking. "Don't do this. You're my sister. We can fix this together. We can—"

"Fix this?" She laughed, the sound cold and heartless. "There is nothing to fix, Eve. You were always meant to fall, and I was always meant to rise."

"James will find out. He will know you manipulated him."

She raised a brow. "Manipulated him?"

Just then, I heard approaching footsteps, and James came into view. He walked to Ellen's side and wrapped an arm around her waist.

"James..." I whispered, the sight making my stomach turn. "Stay away from her. She's a liar." I tried to warn him.

"I know," he said curtly. "She's my little liar." And with that, they locked lips.

1

My heart shattered. Then it dawned on me what he was saying. "You knew?"

They pulled away from each other. "Knew?" He scoffed. "We planned it together."

My mind spiraled with the betrayal I was just learning of. My eyes welled with tears again. "How could you do this?" I mumbled, scattered.

"You are truly stupid to ask such a question. Don't you see? I never loved you. It was always Ellen, but you latched onto me like a clingy girl. You were a means to an end."

And now, I get the satisfaction of putting you down like the dog that you are," his voice was so laced with hate that it sounded almost too foreign to be the man I had loved.

"Father has come to a decision about what we will do with you."

I couldn't speak as I finally noticed the small box in James's hand. I began to back away. "No..."

"We have to purge you of the atrocity inside you." They unlocked the cell and entered, trapping me.

James opened the case, and my eyes widened at the sight of the injection inside it. In the syringe was a black liquid, and I knew what it was. Wolfbane. It would rip my wolf out of me if it didn't completely shatter me and kill me. And even if it didn't kill me, it would scramble my mind and body, leaving me nothing but a vegetable. It was death in a syringe.

"Kill them," Rhea ordered. *"Rip them to shreds."* This time, I was ready to let it happen.

But at the sight of my claws, my sister was quick to speak. "No matter how powerful that beast within you is, remember that the guards are waiting at my beck and call." She cradled my face, her touch burning me, and I recoiled. "You can't kill all of them, not before they rip you to shreds."

My heart thundered as her words sank in. There was no escape. I was trapped.

"Eve, take it. They will kill you." It seemed that Rhea, too, now fully grasped our situation. There was resignation in her voice.

"They will take you away from me," I could not bear the thought of her being torn away from me. The wolf bond had taken its place. I didn't want to lose her now, despite everything.

"You will survive, Eve," she sounded almost motherly. My tears fell faster. **I will make sure you do, and we might meet again.**

1

"No, no, no..."

But it was already too late. The needle found its mark in my neck, and the wolfbane was pushed into my body. I felt my hold on reality slacken as the poison wreaked havoc. I clutched my neck as I choked on air.

The world around me spun as the agony spread through every vein in my body. I couldn't breathe, and I fell to the floor. Rhea was fading, and I tried to hold on to her, but she was like smoke.

Then the real pain began. My muscles spasmed, my body shaking as I convulsed. I was being shredded from the inside. My life flashed before my eyes—my childhood, the faces of those I loved, the first kiss I shared with James under the moonlight, the day I took a bullet for Ellen, the day I donated blood to my father and almost died. All of my memories replayed themselves, further twisting the knife of betrayal in my stomach.

1

I screamed, "Please, make it stop. Please!" I begged the goddess to strike me dead.

But I only heard my sister's laughter before everything faded to black.

I finished eating the food I had been offered in a heartbeat. It wasn't the same dry, stale bread and smelly water. This time, I was served a healthy helping of lasagna and hot tea, warming me up from the inside. My eyes nearly rolled back from the explosion of flavor in my mouth.

But I was wary. Why the sudden change? For five years, I had received the same foods—bread and water for breakfast, a single fruit for lunch, and rice and water for dinner. It had never changed.

Soon, my plate was empty, and for the first time, I was actually full. I heard footsteps again, and my pulse jumped. It was time for the daily dose of wolfbane. I was being poisoned every day to ensure that Rhea never returned. I no longer felt pain, but the experience was still unpleasant.

I waited, but when I saw polished boots and regal clothes, I knew something was wrong. I looked up to see James.

My stomach lurched, but I swallowed the lump in my throat and bowed. "Good morning, Beta," I greeted him. I had to be respectful, or I would be punished. I had learned of his status change after he helped imprison me.

I hadn't seen his or my family's faces in all the time I had been imprisoned.

He said nothing, his eyes piercing as he unlocked my cell. He opened the door for me. "Come out. You have been summoned," he told me.

My mind spiraled with questions. Had they suddenly called for my execution? I thought as I walked past James.

I kept my head down as we walked down the hall of cells filled with criminals. We did not speak as my mind raced with a million possibilities about why I was being summoned. Was this it? Was I finally being led to my execution? Or was something even worse awaiting me?

The scent of dampness and the faint stench of decay hung heavy in the air. I kept my head down, avoiding eye contact with the other prisoners as we passed their cells.

James had not said a word since we began walking, and I dared not ask. His presence alone was unsettling enough. I had learned quickly that questioning the few moments of quiet could lead to punishment. I knew better now. I wasn't the same girl who had entered this place.

2

When we reached the end of the hall, James stopped in front of a door—one I hadn't seen in the five years I had been imprisoned. He unlocked it and gestured for me to step through.

I hesitated but complied, stepping into a space that felt worlds apart from the darkness of my cell. It was warm here, the soft scent of lavender and cleanliness filling the air. I blinked in confusion, my eyes adjusting to the unexpected brightness.

There were maids waiting, all neatly dressed and lined up as if they were expecting me.

James spoke, his voice cold and authoritative. "Get her ready. She is to be presented to visitors. Make sure she is cleaned up and looks presentable."

I felt my stomach twist at his words, my heart pounding in my chest.

He began to walk away, but I couldn't help myself. "Beta, what is going on?" I asked.

He stopped and turned back, but there was a chilling smile on his face now. "You'll see."