

33 Mother's Call

Eve~ 1

I picked up my phone, and I stopped breathing when my eyes fell on the caller ID. My mother was calling, and despite waiting for so long, my finger only lingered on the accept button. Without thinking too much, I picked up the call. 1

"Mom?" I spoke.

"Eve," my stomach dropped at her cold tone, and I clasped the phone a bit tighter.

"Mom?" I echoed, my heart threatening to break out of my chest.

"Your calls are becoming incessant. It is a nuisance," she told me.

A bullet hit me in the chest.

I swallowed, summoning some courage. Why were my hands sweating so much? "If you picked up your calls, maybe I would not need to keep calling."

"And what gives you the right to have a conversation with me?" she asked, her voice so dispassionate that it gutted me.

"I just... got married. At least you could see how I am doing."

"And what if I am not interested in knowing?"

I bit back a sob. "I know I am here because of what Dad did."

"So?" she asked dismissively. "You should be grateful that you have some use now."

My throat tightened, and breathing had become harder. "How can you call yourself my mum?"

"Simple," she replied without hesitation. "I don't." 3

Her dismissal was a bulldozer to the chest. I bit my quivering lips hard, trying my absolute best not to let it be discovered that my father deceived the king, yet I was treated like nothing but some criminal. "You know I could tell the truth. Tell him I was not the daughter he wanted. That you people lied to him. I could set all of this on fire." 2

The quiet that greeted me at the other end was nerve-wracking. "Then you will truly live up to your name," she replied. "The cursed twin that will bring ruin to our pack. Just as the prophecy said. I am pretty sure that he will toss bombs on Lunar Heights first and then the rest of Silverpine. All because we allowed the cursed twin to live."

The silence that followed was deafening. I felt my breath hitch as her words settled in. The cursed twin. The words that had been etched

into my soul like a brand. The prophecy had always loomed over me, a dark cloud that cast a shadow over everything I did, and now... even my mother used it against me.

"Is that all I am to you?" I whispered, my voice trembling. "A prophecy? A curse?"

"You've always known your place, Eve," she replied calmly. "Don't pretend this is news to you. You are an inconvenience at best, a disaster waiting to happen at worst." 2

The tears I'd fought so hard to hold back finally broke free, streaking down my face as I stood frozen in place. I had expected coldness, but this... this was cruelty. And what was worse, part of me had been foolish enough to hope for something more, for some shred of maternal love, or at least concern.

"Do you even care what happens to me?" I asked, my voice barely above a whisper, almost afraid of her answer.

"I care about the pack, Eve," she said, her voice sharp and unrelenting. "And if keeping the truth from the king is what saves us, then that's what matters. You should know that by now."

I squeezed my eyes shut, clenching my jaw as I tried to steady my breathing. "I'm your daughter," I choked out. "I'm your blood."

"Blood means nothing if it's poisoned," she spat. 2

I had to bite down hard on my lip to stop myself from sobbing out loud. I had wanted—needed—to believe that there was something left, some shred of humanity or warmth in her, but her words were a knife twisted in my gut.

"Mum," I said quietly, my voice hoarse. "You know your words hurt, right?"

There was another long silence. When she spoke again, her tone was icy. "If by now you have not come to terms with everything, you are more stupid than I thought."

With that, the line went dead.

I stared at the screen, my vision blurring with tears, my hands shaking uncontrollably. My heart felt like it had been torn apart and left bleeding in my chest. The cold, heavy weight of my mother's words settled over me like a suffocating blanket. She didn't care. She never would again. I was nothing to her. Nothing but the cursed twin who would bring ruin. 1

"Princess?"

I snapped my head to the side only to find none other than the Lycan king.

I wiped at my tears quickly, sniffing. "Yes," I said.

"What's wrong?" he asked, his voice

uncharacteristically tender.

Which only made it harder to keep my emotions in check. I evaded his gaze, coughing to clear my throat. "Just missing home. Just got off a call from my mum. They say they miss me." I don't know why I had to lie about that; maybe I was just trying to subconsciously convince myself.

He stood there, arms crossed, his expression serious but softened by a hint of concern. "Get up," he said, his voice steady. "No use sitting around like this."

I blinked, taken aback. "What?"

"Wallowing isn't going to help," he replied, his tone firm yet surprisingly gentle. "You need to focus on something else."

I wiped my face, feeling more confused than anything. "Why do you even care?"

He hesitated for a moment, then met my gaze. "Because you are my wife."

I blinked, flabbergasted. I was about to respond when he took a step closer, almost reaching for my hand before stopping himself. Instead, he gently patted my head, a surprisingly tender but awkward gesture that left me wondering what was going on. "You'll get through this."

I blinked at him, thrown off by the unexpected kindness. "What are you talking about?"

"You need a change of scene," he said, shifting his stance. "You'll be attending the Lunar Gala with me tomorrow night." 1

I gaped at him. "The Lunar Gala? Why would I go with you?"

"Because it'll be good for you, and you are my wife, after all."

My heart skipped a foolish beat. That word was doing something to me.

He replied, a hint of a smile playing at the corners of his lips. "Trust me. Just be ready, and... maybe try not to cry so much. People will talk."

I stood there, stunned and slightly comforted, still trying to process everything he had just said. 1

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