391 Eugenics By A Tyrant

Hades 1

You could've heard a mouse sneeze with the way silence engulfed the space in an instant.
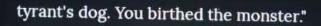
I heard her, but my mind refused to associate her confession with the woman I saw before me. It felt like an impossibility, staring at this utterly scarred woman in faded clothes that hung over her thin frame. Her skin was sallow, obviously deprived of sunlight. And then there was the man she claimed to be mother to.

A Beta in Darius' court. A man whose pride shone in the infuriatingly graceful way he carried himself. The only time I'd seen him, he was clad in a pristine high-rank uniform, always one step behind Darius.

They looked worlds apart. Yet, I had detected the familiarity in the light brown of her eyes, the same ones I'd wanted to gouge out each time he dared so much as glance at Eve.

Cain crossed his arms over his chest, regarding her in a new light. "So, you're related to the

tyrant's dog. You birthed the monster."

Maera winced like she'd been scalded. "Yes," she replied. "He killed his father for not joining, as he put it, the Revolution."

Another silence settled over the room. Heavy and suffocating. Tension coiled like a cobra, and no one spoke for a while.

"My condolences," I muttered, genuinely. The pain bleeding from her could not be feigned. Not when the agony seemed wedged so deep, the commander caved into herself like she'd been punched in the gut.

My hands twitched at my sides.

"I'm sorry for your loss," Cain echoed. "But would you be so kind as to elaborate on the 'Revolution' part?"

Dread flickered in her gaze. She looked ready to double over and vomit.

"According to my so—" Her words caught. "James... he said it's a cleansing. He says the werewolf race has gone weak, especially compared to hal..."

She hesitated.

"Half-bloods. Hybrids. It doesn't matter what they choose to call us," Cain said, brushing off her caution. "Impure, tainted ones. The last thing I give is a fuck. So, you may continue."

Her face hardened, lips pressing into a thin line. "The centuries have made us too soft for his standard. Our wolves are not as strong or adaptive as they once were. There's been a rise in omegas and rut over the past decade. According to him, they are dragging down his great pack." She spoke with barely any feeling. "That's why he made conscription mandatory. I always thought they were cannon fodder for a war that would end in stalemate. But it turned out to be population control. The weak wolves would perish. The strong who survived never went back home."

It wasn't one race against another. It was eugenics.

"They're made to join his Gammas," I supplied. "Only the best for his army. The best for his pack."

But who was I to talk? At least he still wanted

some to survive. I wanted none once I was done.

Maera bowed her head in shame.

"And if they refuse?" Cain asked. His voice was light, almost amused, but the edge beneath was sharp. "Because rejecting tyrants is like breaking up with an obsessive, psychotic ex. Just when you think things couldn't get any worse, they prove you very wrong."

Maera paled like Cain had hit the nail on the head. I was sure he had. She glanced at Sage, who was still alert and listening.

"My queen," she called. Sage turned to her and spread her arms.

Sage allowed Maera to carry her. And suddenly, the 'queen' looked her age.

"I need your help."

"Anything."

"Go check on the Alpha's Beta. He'll need someone there when he wakes up. He might panic and hurt himself. We can't have that, can we?"

She shook her head. Maera placed her back on the ground. We watched the little girl turn and walk off without looking back once. I could clearly see she carried duty and responsibility on her tiny shoulders.

Her childhood wasn't fading away. It was already gone.

I glanced at Cain. Then looked again. His eye had started to water. His lip had a slight quiver. It was uncharacteristic, and that was an understatement.

Even when she was out of earshot, Maera whispered, "My office has more. We can continue there."

She led the way.

Cain and I exchanged a look before we followed. I scanned the seemingly endless underground bunker. They had made very good use of the little resources they must have had.

The walls were reinforced with a wooden base to prevent the ceiling from caving in. Then they had been plastered with clay.

Their will to survive their oppressors was sewn into every structure they had built. They deserved praise for this. But the only reward that mattered in a situation like this was survival.

Guilt blossomed in my chest again. The ache more daunting than ever. I could now see why Eve had lied again and again. She wanted to save people who had no clue about the battles she fought in silence.

She didn't need any of this to fight for them so viciously.

For all her lies and deceptions, they were nothing compared to the lives she tried to preserve.

And I, on the other hand, had built weapons to erase them from existence. It wasn't the Flux. It wasn't Vassir.

It had been me.

I lied to myself for years. I told myself it was the Lycans or the werewolves. That it was us or them. But it was simply petty revenge. A tragedy caused by a Lycan like me.

We stopped at a door. Maera pulled out her keys and unlocked it. We stepped inside.

Her office was small. A tight space divided into quarters. But it was stuffed to the brim with paper. Some were stuck to the walls, some cluttered her desk, others spilling from the drawers beside the chair she now sat in.

She gestured to the seats in front of her. "Have a seat." She pulled out a large, aged scroll. "You need to see this."

We sat as she unfurled the paper.

It was an anatomical diagram. Complex. Detailed. It was not of a Lycan or a werewolf.

My skin prickled. I recognized it. The gangly, elongated limbs. The thin snout. Extended canines. Ugly patches of mottled fur and exposed flesh.

"Aren't these..." Cain's voice trailed off.

"You asked what happened to those who refused to join his Gammas." Her voice turned cold, her face tight with hate. "They're sent home."

I blinked. "What?"

"Then he sends his Gammas to bring them back. Along with their families. They all become prisoners under Faculty Fourteen."

My eyes widened. I could hear Eve's voice again, describing that same facility. The place that experimented on her. The place that turned her into the beast of the night.

"They turn those people, entire families, into monsters. Ferals. And they brand them to control them."

"The Mark of Mairik," I said, pointing to the same 'M' stamped on the chest of the diagram.

Maera's eyes widened. "You know these creatures. You've seen them?"

"I fought them to save my son. They took him. They looked like this. And they had that same mark."

My skin crawled. Guilt surged up my throat like bile.

They had been innocent people. Mothers. Fathers. Children.

I couldn't hold it back any longer.