



400 Who Are You?

By the time I was done talking, my throat felt raw. ¹

It was as though each word had been dredged up from somewhere deep and jagged inside me, scraping its way out. My shoulders sagged, and for the first time in weeks, the tightness in my chest loosened—only slightly, but enough to let me breathe without feeling like I was stealing air from someone else.

Lia—Amelia—hadn't interrupted once. She simply sat there, her pen unmoving now, eyes fixed on me in the way only a trained observer could manage: present but not invasive.

She let a few heartbeats pass before speaking.

"I've heard parts of this before," she said finally, her voice even. "Hades' battle with the Flux wasn't exactly a secret among certain networks. I'd heard rumors he'd been overtaken entirely at one point." She sighed deeply. "I was not surprised. It was bound to happen."

My fingers twitched involuntarily around Elliot,



but I didn't interrupt.

"What I didn't know," she continued, "was that Elliot had inherited the Flux from him. That changes... a great deal. If that's the case, then it's not surprising he's shown resonance with Hades even when Hades was trapped inside his own mind. Bloodlines carry more than just physical traits. I am glad that Elliot could be a tether. Vampires were not only known for their strength or speed. Vampires's abilities are cross a fundamental border, which is what makes them so deadly." She chuckled them, wryly. "I do believe that making them impervious to everything thing but the sun and silver was a fate trying to level the playing field. As their partial desendants as lycans, we took their fangs, eyes of crimson and weakness to silver," she spoke softly for Elliot and slowly so that it would all sink in. "But on the surface that is where the similarities stop, we took Elysias, shifting abilities and here we are now."

I nodded.

"Now that brings us to the flux," she sat up straighter. "The flux is a concentrated essence of a vampire's remains. Then bonded with our



already adapted hybrid cells, recessive cells become dominant. Then suddenly it is beyond fangs, eyes and silver, then we have more strength and ability of rot, as vampires are technically undead."

"Which are what Hades had," I thought, skin crawling that the remembrance of the odour of rot as Hades turned.

"Mind control, memory manipulation,"

Another horrible shiver crawled up my spine. I could still feel his weight on top of me as he tried to crawl into my mind to erase and rearrange, my mind to his will--- to his favour."

I shook off the dread. "I know," No one needed to know that part but it was good have a proper context.

"Compulsion," Lia continued to list out.

"Glamour," she said. "The act of illusions."

She pointed at herself. "We, lycan and werewolves are susceptible to its effects, but Elliot and Hades are impervious, especially when the remains used to start all this, the remains



that powers all these abilities are from the same vampire.

"Vassir," I murmured. "They all gave the key, they can intercept, because they act on the same resonance, a single frequency."

Her gaze dipped briefly to Elliot before meeting mine again.

"And that tether can override circumstances most would call impossible. It's why he could reach Hades when no one else could. Not consciously—but instinctively. It's a resonance he was born with."

I frowned faintly. "But you make it sound like it's... more than coincidence."

"It is," she said simply. "There's tentative research into this—very tentative, because vampiric ability and its psychological applications are still taboo subjects in most formal institutions. But the data we do have suggests that resonance bonds aren't just emotional. They're... functional. They can influence perception, communication, even mental control under the right—or wrong—conditions."

I thought back to every strange moment with Elliot.

His uncanny timing. The way he'd sometimes know what I was thinking without a word. The illusions he'd broken without being taught how.

"It's rare," Amelia went on, "but hybrids like him can disrupt psychic manipulation because they straddle two worlds---our emotional cognition and vampiric sensory influence. In Elliot's case, his instincts are sharpened by the trauma he's lived through. And while that makes him resourceful, it also makes him... volatile."

Her pen tapped once against the file, deliberate.

"Which is why we need to be careful. His abilities are tied to his emotional state. The more he's forced to use them in fear or desperation, the more those neural pathways will fuse survival with power. That's a dangerous pairing for anyone—let alone a child."

I swallowed hard, the earlier lightness in my chest dissolving into something heavier again.

But this time... it was a weight I understood.

"He must not—" she corrected herself, "I mean, he has to stop equating danger with purpose. If every moment of safety feels empty to him, he'll chase conflict without meaning to. That's how children grow into warriors who don't know what to do with peace. And that... is a tragedy in slow motion." 1

Her words dug in deep, rooting themselves alongside my guilt.

Lia leaned forward, lowering her voice as though the walls themselves might overhear.

"You can't take away what's already happened to him, Eve. But you can shape what comes next. His wolf is here to stay, but the instincts it was born under—those can be retrained. If we don't, he'll grow up thinking the only way to protect the people he loves is to put himself between them and a blade every single time. And one day..." Her gaze flickered to the boy sleeping in my arms, then back to me, the unspoken warning hanging in the air.

"I understand," I said quietly, my throat tight. "I don't want him to lose whatever's left of his childhood to this."



"Good." Her voice softened. "Then we start now. The resonance he shares with Hades—use it for stability, not just survival. Structure. Trust. Positive reinforcement. And above all, show him that you are still stronger than him, even on your worst day. He needs to believe that as deeply as he believes in you."

I nodded, my fingers unconsciously brushing through Elliot's hair.

A slow exhale left me, shaky but steady enough to speak. "I can do that."

"You will," she said with quiet conviction. "Because right now, you're not just fighting for yourself anymore. You're rewiring what survival means for him."

"What is the worst-case scenario?" I asked, though part of me already knew I wouldn't want the answer.

Lia's eyes didn't soften. "The worst case is that Elliot is already too far along."

The words landed like a stone in my gut.

"It's obvious," she continued, her voice low but



sharp. "He has far more power than children his age—and more than most adults I've seen. The fact that a room full of trained Gammas couldn't hold Felicia down but he could... with nothing more than a growl in her direction? That isn't potential, Eve. That's reality."

I felt my pulse spike, but she didn't let up.

"He sees things no one else can. Not you. Not even Montegue. That kind of perception is dangerous because it removes the natural boundaries children should have between themselves and the world's ugliness. He's already where Hades was at eighteen when the Flux first entered his system. But Elliot..." she shook her head, "...Elliot is younger. Much younger."

I didn't realize I'd tightened my hold on him until his little hand twitched against mine.

"There will come a time," Lia said, every syllable deliberate, "when his body won't be able to contain the energy he's carrying. The older victims barely survived it, and their systems were fully matured. In him? That same surge could burn him out entirely. Best-case in that



scenario, he's left a husk—like the others before him. Worst-case..."

Her pause was heavier than the words that followed.

"...he doesn't survive it at all."

The room was suddenly too still, too cold. My throat felt dry, my chest tight, but I forced the words out. "So what do we do?"

Her gaze didn't waver. "We train him to master it now—before it masters him."

I laughed wryly. "He is so proactive, I don't know what do with him. He literally wrapped a bomb around his own neck to save me."

Lia's mouth pressed into a thin line, the colour in her cheeks draining as she held my gaze.

"Then the adults in his life have to step up. All of them. But especially the one he trusts the most."

I blinked at her. "Me?"

"Yes, you," she said without hesitation. "You are the constant in his life right now. And if you crumble—if you start believing you're only here



to react to the chaos—you're going to teach him that same fragility. That is the one thing he cannot afford to inherit from you."

Her voice gentled, but the edge in her words didn't fade.

"I'm saying this as a therapist and as someone who's seen what this kind of burden does over time: you're forgetting who you are. You're letting all of this—Hades, the Flux, the war, the guilt—strip away the core of you until all that's left is survival instinct. And that may keep you breathing, Eve, but it won't keep you whole."

She leaned forward, her eyes sharp as glass.

"So I'm going to ask you, right here, right now—who are you?"

The question lodged in my throat, sudden and raw. I opened my mouth, but nothing came out.

Her gaze didn't waver. "You are not just his protector. You are not just someone who happened to survive Darius. You are the Cursed Twin. You carry untapped power, power that you've been too afraid to claim because you're afraid of what it might cost you. But understand

< 400 Who Are You?

this—if you don't step into it, if you keep seeing yourself as someone barely hanging on, you will fail him. And if you fail him, he will burn out before he ever has a chance to live." 1

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