

57 So Much To Say

Eve~ 1

My stomach lurched when I read the caller ID.

Mother.

I reached out for it but stopped myself and pulled my hand away. Each buzz of the phone was a spear to my heart. But I knew if I wanted to keep my sanity, it would be better to stay clear. Only the goddess knew what horrible words she would say to me, what thing she would utter that would make me crumble.

I was far from over her last call. The coldness in her tone had been devastating. Had she somehow found out about the explosion and wanted to rub it in, or scold me for being careless? I did not want to know. The phone finally stopped buzzing, and I closed my eyes. I took a deep breath to steady my wildly beating heart.

Only for more buzzing to tear through the silence of the room. When I sat up again, I was shaking more than before. The caller ID made my heart stop.

Mother.

I stared at the screen, the name flashing like a beacon of dread. My hand hovered over the phone again. Part of me wanted to throw it across the room, anything to stop the relentless buzzing. But the other part, still desperate for something familiar, urged me to answer.

I inhaled sharply, pressed my trembling thumb to the screen, and answered.

I didn't even get to speak.

"Eve, my baby," she whispered, her voice filled with panic and urgency.

For a moment, I couldn't speak. My mouth hung open as she continued.

"Eve?" she whispered again.

Why was she whispering? Why did she sound like my mother again and not the cold queen that had haunted my nightmares?

"Eve?" The panic and desperation in her voice grew. "Please speak to me. I am... begging you." Her voice cracked. She was on the verge of crying.

This wasn't a cruel dream or an act. This was real.

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This wasn't a cruel dream or an act. This was real.
"Mum?" I murmured, a bit numb. "Is that you?"

I heard her take a shaky breath. "It's me, darling. I heard about the incident. Please, please, tell me you're alright?"

"I am..."

"I know after all these years..." Her voice cracked.
"I could do nothing but... watch. Mum is sorry."
She was sobbing. "I am on your side. I have always been. I love you so much. There is so much that I have to say..."

"Lyra?"

My breath caught when I heard my father's voice. I gripped the phone harder, my pulse skipping.

There was a brief pause, and I could hear her trying to steady her breathing. For a split second, I believed her—believed that maybe this time, she meant it. That maybe she did care.

But then, her voice changed—sharp, brittle, and full of venom.

"Lyra?" My father's voice came through the background, faint but clear enough to send a chill down my spine.

My mother's tone snapped. "Yes, Robert, I'm

My mother's tone snapped. "Yes, Robert, I'm talking to her. Hold on," she muttered, her words clipped and impatient. I heard her cover the phone, but not enough to block out what she said next. "You know how she is. Always needing attention, causing problems. I can't deal with her right now."

I froze, the warmth of her earlier words draining out of me, leaving behind a hollow ache. My grip tightened on the phone as I tried to process what I was hearing.

Then she uncovered the phone, her tone so different now that I barely recognized it. "You always cause such a mess, Eve," she hissed, her voice full of disgust. "Do you ever stop to think before you throw yourself into trouble? Or is this another pathetic cry for attention?"

The words hit like a slap, and I couldn't even bring myself to speak. What had happened to the woman who had just been sobbing, telling me she loved me?

"You're always so useless, so needy," she continued, the contempt in her voice growing sharper with every word. "I don't even know why I called. You should know by now that you're alone." 2



"Mum," I whispered, my throat tight, heart pounding. "Why are you saying this?"

Her laughter was cold, cruel, a mockery of the tenderness she'd shown just minutes before.

"Why? Because it's the truth, Eve. You're nothing but a burden. Always have been. You think I have time to deal with your messes, your failures? You think I enjoy cleaning up after you? You're pathetic."

I blinked, the sting of her words cutting deep. It was like a switch had flipped. The mother who had been crying, begging for me to speak, was gone. In her place stood the one I had always feared—the one who only ever saw me as a disappointment. 2

"What do you want from me?" I managed to choke out, my voice small, desperate.

"What do I want?" she spat. "I want you to stop being such a disgrace. Every time I hear your name, it's tied to some disaster. Do you know how embarrassing it is to have a daughter like you? Do you know how much I've had to sacrifice because of your failures?"

I couldn't speak. The tears I'd been holding back spilled over, hot and fast, blurring my vision.



"I should have known you'd mess this up too," she continued, her voice dripping with venom. "You ruin everything you touch." 1

I felt the world spin, her words tearing through me like knives. My heart shattered into pieces, each word sinking deeper into my chest. I had heard this tone before, but never like this. Never so raw, so full of hatred.

"You—" My voice cracked, barely a whisper. "You don't mean that."

"Oh, but I do," she snarled. "You are the cursed one, after all. I just wanted you to know that if you die before doing something useful for this pack, you die in vain. So use your fucking eyes."

The air left my lungs in one painful breath. Her words hung in the air, venomous, searing. The silence that followed was deafening, crushing.

"Mum..." I whispered, broken.

"Don't call me that," she hissed, her voice now devoid of any warmth, any affection. "Don't ever call me that." 1

With that, the line went dead.

The silence was suffocating, the phone slipping from my hand and crashing to the floor. I sat

The door opened, and I wiped my tears as fast as I could. Hades walked in, a cigarette in hand, grey eyes piercing as usual. Our eyes met, and for a moment, I could have sworn an emotion akin to sympathy crossed his features. In a blink, it was gone.

I looked away. Hades was another person who had shown a sliver of the kindness I craved so much it hurt. Only to withdraw it, like my mother.

"Look at me, Ellen," he ordered.

I didn't answer and tried to lay back in bed. But at the speed of lightning, he was looming over me, his hand pinching my chin.

He forced me to look up, and he had my sketch pad in his hand, holding it up for me to see. On the page was the strange woman that I had drawn. The one I could not recall.

"Who is this, Red?" he drawled.

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