

62 In The Darkness They Remain

Eve~ 1

I stared at him like he had grown a second head. First, I find out he has dimples, and now he's doing this?

"What..." I started, but he cut me off.

"Thank you, Red." He cringed—not like it hurt to say, more like he wasn't used to saying it. "For saving my nephew."

My eyes widened, and my tongue was paralyzed.

"You are not a liability, Red," he murmured, the softness of his tone disarming me. "You are my wife."

My heart sputtered in my chest.

Wife.

That damn word.

I swallowed thickly. "Hades, we talked about this." Memories of that time hit me, making my face hot.

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"I won't be impulsive as I was then. I won't do anything you don't want to do," his voice took on a salacious note at the last part, but I refused to dwell on it.

"Remember what I said at the gala?"

"You said a lot of things," I dismissed, though I knew I remembered every single word.

"I am a bloody bastard, I know."

"That's old news," I blurted before I could catch myself. I slapped my hand over my mouth.

He simply flashed another genuine smile, his dimples dipping. How could such a man have such a mesmerizing smile? Why did the goddess like to play games?

"Red..."

"Let's not talk about those things," I mumbled. I wasn't sure if I wanted to run or stay. He was such a convoluted man, and it would be best not to speak of feelings, promises, or harsh words spoken in the heat of the moment. Exploring those places was like opening a wound that had barely started to heal. Safer to leave it untouched.

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"Let's not talk about those things," I mumbled again, looking away, focusing on the warmth of his hand still hovering near mine rather than the emotions I refused to untangle. "There's... there's something else we should discuss."

He arched a brow, catching my deflection, but for once, he let it slide. "Go on."

"The explosions," I said, keeping my tone steady, as if speaking of the danger would ground me.

"They weren't accidents, were they?" His expression shifted, the softness hardening, replaced by the familiar calculating edge he wore so well.

"No. They weren't." He sighed, tension tightening his features. "The initial investigation pointed to a breach in security—someone inside the estate with knowledge of the layout and our routines."

The thought made my blood run cold.

"Someone... on the inside?" I repeated, swallowing. "Do you have any idea who?"

He hesitated, a dark look in his eyes. "We have a few leads, but nothing solid. Whoever's behind this, they've been careful, covering their tracks well." His gaze met mine, intense and unyielding. "But I'll find them." The softness in his gaze gave way to an expression I imagined a murderer



Hades was still there, and that was something I had to remember.

"I have a question for you too," he murmured, his gaze hardening. "Do you suspect anyone who might be after your life?"

The question brought me back, and my sister's words echoed in my head.

Time's up, sister.

My heart lodged in my throat. That was something I could not tell him. The realization washed over me like cold water in winter. The first bomb, the second bomb in my phone—it had been Ellen. She was the one who wanted me dead. They wanted me dead. I was of no use to them anymore, it seemed. I had become a liability they had to rid themselves of. I recalled my last phone call with my mum, her frantic behavior, her apologizing. A foolish part of me had wanted to believe she was being forced to act cold, especially with how she'd switched so fast when my father entered. But if that were true, she would have warned me of my father or sister plotting to get rid of me.

But I couldn't tell Hades even a sliver of what was going on in my mind.



I braced myself to lie, smiling faintly. "I am not what you would call the people's princess. I am sure I have made a lot of enemies. Anyone could be the culprit. I have a long list." 3

His expression was unreadable as he looked at me, as if trying to figure me out.

"And thank you for saving me. You have not known and come to..." My words trailed off, a frown forming on my face. "How did you know there was an explosive in the phone?" I found myself asking.

He played off the question, casually—almost too casually. He shrugged. "A tip."

My eyes narrowed, suspicion creeping in. "A tip?" I repeated, tilting my head.

"Yes," he said smoothly, that guarded expression falling back into place. But it was a little too smooth. I watched as he shifted his weight, his fingers twitching slightly—a small tell I'd learned to read after so many encounters. My pulse quickened, and I crossed my arms, keeping my voice casual but my gaze sharp.

"Hades," I began, my tone low, "if you're going to lie to me, you could at least make it believable. Who exactly would tip you off about a bomb in



"Hades," I began, my tone low, "if you're going to lie to me, you could at least make it believable. Who exactly would tip you off about a bomb in my phone?"

He didn't flinch, but there was a subtle flicker in his gaze, like he'd been caught off guard. His lips quirked, the barest hint of a smirk betraying him. "You're as perceptive as ever, Red."

"So it wasn't a tip." I took a moved closer, holding his gaze. "You bugged my phone, didn't you?"

He paused, taking a deep breath, his smirk fading. "It was for your protection."

"For my protection?" I echoed, disbelief coating my voice. "Did you think you'd protect me better by spying on me than by just asking me what's going on?"

"You weren't telling me everything," he said, his voice calm but firm, and for a second, the vulnerability flickered again. "And I needed to know that you were safe."

I couldn't deny the way my stomach twisted, both at his words and the admission that he'd taken matters into his own hands. Anger, confusion, and a strange, unwelcome warmth all wrestled within me. "So, rather than trust me to tell you



His jaw clenched, a shadow darkening his eyes, but it dissipated like a lion disappearing into tall grass. "I didn't trust you," he finally conceded. "But I know better now."

I had been betrayed enough in my life to know this was a front. Hades might have a killer, dimpled smile, but this was pretense. And I would no longer be a fool.

"So did you recover anything?" I asked. "From my phone calls?"

He raised a brow. "Is there something worth recovering?" He threw the question back.

I shrugged. "You never know."

His lips twitched up again, and I had to look away. Relief flooded my veins. He wouldn't be smiling if he knew. His bugging seemed to have backfired. I had been granted some grace. My secret remained safe.