

213 Impenetrable

Hades 1

The world splintered, and the sky fell as the words out of her mouth crashed into me, ripping my heart out of my chest.

"I am going back to Silverpine," she said. "At least for the meantime." 4

I clutched my chest, praying my thundering heart was what was making me mishear her.

"Red..."

She didn't even meet my eyes. Her expression was cold and distant. "We need space."

A dagger slid between my ribs, ripping the air out of my lungs. "Love, please... I am trying to understand," I rasped, the words burning like ash in my throat. "But space? From me?"

She finally lifted her gaze, but her eyes held none of the warmth I had once drowned in. They were distant, unreadable, like the moon on a stormy night—so close, yet untouchable. 1

"My parents were right," she said, as if she were convincing herself more than me. "There's too

much stacked against us, but we tried to live in a fantasy that could never last."

I stepped closer, but she turned away, the distance between us becoming more than just space—it was a chasm, an abyss swallowing me whole.

"Red," I whispered, desperate, broken. "We can fix this. Whatever it is, whatever you're feeling—tell me, and I'll fix it."

Her breath hitched, and for a moment—just a sliver of a moment—I saw hesitation crack through her resolve. But then, like a door slamming shut, it was gone.

"I've made up my mind, Hades."

A growl rumbled in my chest, low and dangerous despite the despair and desperation threatening to consume me. "You belong here. With me." They had won. Convinced her.

"That's not what she said," the obnoxious beta sneered, stepping forward, toward her. "You heard her loud and clear."

"In the end, it took less than an hour for her to realize that you two were a farce," Darius taunted, his eyes boring into me, gleaming with



sick satisfaction.

"Hades!" Kael yelled my name, tearing through the horribly timed daydream.

My eyes snapped to his, his expression betraying how distraught he was. "The door won't fucking open."

It all hit me at once as I snapped out of it. The flux churned my chest, my blood boiling—literally—as I lunged for the door that had suddenly become impenetrable. 2

I threw myself against it, the flux projecting me, my body morphing as I hit the steel. The impact shook the entire tower, the metal hinges groaning under the force. The flux surged through me, twisting, morphing, barely under my control. My breath came in ragged gasps as I slammed my palm against the unyielding door again, my fingers curling into fists, nails biting into my palms.

Kael backed away, his eyes darting between me and the door. "Hades, what the hell is going on?" His voice was sharp, urgent as the security personnel continued their futile attempts to override the lock.



I barely heard him. My mind was still reeling from the phantom pain of Eve's words, from the way she had looked at me—like I was a ghost of a past she wanted to leave behind. My pulse hammered against my skull.

She would leave. She would fucking leave.

Everything had been going as well as it possibly could for twenty-five out of thirty minutes—until James tried to play the contrite ex-fiancé. Less than a minute after that, the audio in the room was suddenly deactivated.

Just like how the footage hadn't recorded audio from Eve's phone call.

The flux inside me cracked like a live wire, threatening to lash out uncontrollably. The apartment lights flickered, the air thick with the scent of ozone.

Darius's voice still rang in my head, cruel and taunting. A farce. An illusion. A love that was never meant to last.

I gritted my teeth and shoved against the door again. It didn't budge.

Kael swore under his breath, pulling out his phone. "The system's locked down. The smart

lock's dead—hell, the whole power grid in this building is flickering." His fingers flew over the screen, trying to override the security. "They planned this shit."

I snapped my head toward him, my eyes burning. "They are fucking dead."

Kael's gaze dropped to my body, to where my horrible shifting had begun. "Hades, we will get her out..."

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"I am in control," I growled, but the lie tasted like ash. The walls seemed to close in, the space warping under the weight of the flux.

Fuck. I promised that I would protect her...

The thought only served to stoke the flames of my ire and desperation.

My hand began to morph, bones breaking, muscles tearing and shifting in a split second as the flux rushed out to meld with the now open wounds on my hands. Long obsidian claws burst from my fingertips, glossy and razor-sharp. The pain was nothing compared to the storm raging inside me. I could feel the flux writhing beneath my skin, wild and barely contained, like a caged beast clawing to be let free.



Kael took a cautious step back, but his voice remained steady. "Hades, you need to breathe. If you lose control now—"

"I am not losing control!" I snarled, slamming my fist into the door again. This time, the impact sent a shockwave rippling through the steel, deep fissures spiderwebbing across its surface.

The scent of burning metal filled the air, acrid and sharp. My claws dug into the cracks, prying at the twisted frame. The flux roared through me, my vision pulsing red.

Kael's phone buzzed violently, the screen glitching before cutting to static. His expression darkened. "They're blocking every single override. This isn't just a security breach—this is a fucking siege."

Of course, it was. They had planned everything down to the second.

And now Eve was in that room, alone, with them.

The walls trembled as another surge of power coursed through me, and for a brief moment, I swore I could hear her heartbeat—frantic, racing. I latched onto it, my focus sharpening like a blade.



Eve.

Something had happened in that room.

Why else were they pulling this shit?

A deep, guttural growl tore from my throat, the sound more beast than man. "I don't care what it takes," I bit out. "I am getting her out of there."

Kael cursed under his breath, his fingers flying across his phone again, desperate for any backdoor access. "If you bring the whole damn building down, we're going to have a bigger problem."

"Then move," I ground out, my voice rough with barely restrained fury.

With a final heave, I let the flux pour through me, no longer holding back. My body twisted, morphing, muscles and bones reforming with brutal efficiency. My claws elongated further, obsidian talons gleaming in the flickering light.

The door creaked, groaned—then exploded off its hinges, the sheer force sending a shockwave down the corridor.

Kael swore, ducking as debris flew past him. The security team flinched but held their ground,



their weapons trained on the opening.

I didn't wait.

I stormed through the ruined doorway, stepping over the smoldering wreckage.

And then I saw her.

Eve stood near the center of the room, her face pale, her hands clenched into fists. James was beside her, his expression unreadable. And Darius—fucking Darius—stood too close, his lips curved in a smirk that sent fire licking up my spine.

Eve's eyes snapped to me, wide, startled—then something in her gaze cracked.

She took a step forward, her breath hitching.

I barely registered the movement before my vision tunneled. My rage locked onto the man standing too close, his smug expression like a match to gasoline.

"You," I growled, the sound reverberating through the air.

Darius turned, his smirk deepening. "Ah, there he is," he drawled. "The Hand of Death." 1

