



## 455 Sophie

Eve 1

He pulled my panties back into position, while I layed still aching from him and still utterly from the orgasm that still left my walls pulsing. 1

Above me, her offered a hand which I took with a shaky, sweat slick grip. pulled me into so I could seat. He patted a towel over my damp forehead, tucking my hair deliately behind my ear. 1

His gentle actions robbed me of breath, unable to reconsile the ravenous man who had laid me bear and claimed me until I was undone, quaking in the aftermath of his merciless hunger. 1

I tried to hope that the divider had been sound proof and that the driver had not heard us. I shook away the embarasment.

I raised my head to meet his eyes, more blue than I ever thought would be possible, still with rare flecks of grey at some angles.

He dressed up, cleaninf himself up as I watched, unable to help but wonder just how much Silverpine pack had changed him.



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He had changed to the point that a man who wanted all werewolves wiped out risked his life to rescue a sister and brother. I could hardly recognise him; I had never been happier to look into the eyes of a stranger. 2

The car lurched to a stop, and I felt my stomach drop with it. My hands were still shaking from him, from what we'd just done, from the way he'd looked at me after. Like he wanted to devour me all over again but also protect me from the world.

His eyes raked lazily over my body.

I was still trying to piece myself back together, still feeling the ghost of his touch everywhere, when reality crashed back in.

"So," I breathed, finally finding my voice. "Are you going to tell me what we're really doing here?"

Hades ran a hand through his hair, messing it up in a way that made my chest tight. The same hands that had just been worshipping my body now looked tense, dangerous. "We're picking up family. Someone who needs protecting when everything goes to hell."

I pressed my face to the window, my breath fogging the glass. Nothing. Just trees and more



trees stretching forever, their shadows growing longer as the sun died. My skin prickled with that familiar sensation—the one that told me we were being watched.

"This is the middle of freaking nowhere, Hades."

The sound of engines made me freeze. Black cars—SUVs the kind that screamed money and violence—rolled out from between the trees like they'd been waiting. Like they'd been there all along. My heart hammered against my ribs as they boxed us in, a perfect trap.

But Hades just got out. Calm as anything. Like this was exactly what he'd expected.

Men in suits stepped out too, sunglasses despite the dying light. Every instinct I had screamed run. These weren't just Cain's men. They were something else entirely. 1

"Alpha." One of them nodded, but I heard the doubt underneath. The way he said it—like he wasn't sure Hades deserved the title anymore. "What brings you to our territory?"

"I need into Cain's estate." Hades' voice carried that edge I'd heard him use in council meetings. The one that made grown men step back.



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The man pulled off his glasses, revealing eyes like winter storms. Old eyes. Ancient ones. "With all due respect, where's the Don?"

"Indisposed." Hades didn't even blink. Didn't flinch under that stare that could probably make lesser beings wet themselves. "I'm here for Sophie." 1

My blood turned to ice.

Everything changed. The tension bled out of the air like someone had opened a valve. The men relaxed, shoulders dropping, and the winter-eyed one actually smiled—the first genuine expression I'd seen from any of them.

"Of course, Alpha. The path's just ahead. We'll escort you."

When Hades slid back in beside me, I was staring at him like he'd grown another head. The scent of him—pine and something darker—filled the car again, but I could barely process it through my shock.

"Eve? What—"

"Did you beat it out of him?" My voice cracked, and I hated how small I sounded. "Or did your brother actually trust you enough to tell you

about his daughter?" 1

Hades went white. Actually white, like I'd slapped him. "How do you know about—"

"Because that was our deal." The words tumbled out as we started moving, following the convoy deeper into the wilderness. "Cain helped me get my council seat because I promised him something. With the prophecy's power, I'd make a world safe for kids like Sophie. Kids like her." 1

"He never said..." Hades looked lost, and it broke something inside me. "I only know her name. He gave it willingly, but—"

"But he didn't tell you the rest." My throat felt raw. "God, Hades. Sophie's mother was a werewolf. Sophie's both—Lycan and werewolf. A hybrid." 3

I watched the color drain from his face completely. Watched him process what that meant. What it had always meant.

"He's been hiding her from everyone," I continued, unable to stop now that I'd started. "From the world. From you. Because after Danielle died, after you declared war on every werewolf that drew breath..." I couldn't finish. Couldn't say what we both knew—that Hades



had wanted to wipe them all out. Every last one.

Including, apparently, his own niece the one he did not know existed but Cain had told me he could not take any chances; none at all.

"Jesus Christ," he whispered, and his voice sounded broken. "He thought I'd—he thought I'd hurt her.

His hurt broke me but Cain had a right to be fearful of old Hades, I feared him too. But it was obvious he has seen the same change I saw now and that was why he finally revealed it.

Cain trusted Hades now. 1

The silence that followed felt like drowning. Like standing at the edge of a cliff and realizing there was nowhere left to go but down.

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The convoy wound through dense forest for what felt like hours, headlights cutting through shadows that seemed to reach for us with gnarled fingers. I kept expecting to emerge into some sprawling compound—high walls, security gates, the kind of fortress a man like Cain would need to hide his most precious secret.

Instead, the trees parted to reveal something



that made my brain stutter.

A neighborhood. An actual, honest-to-God suburban neighborhood with tree-lined streets and mailboxes shaped like tiny houses. Street lamps flickered on as twilight deepened, casting warm pools of light on sidewalks where kids' bikes lay forgotten in driveways.

"What the hell?" I breathed against the window.

Hades leaned forward, his brow furrowed in confusion. "This can't be right."

But our escorts didn't slow down. They led us deeper into this pocket of normalcy, past houses with flower gardens and Halloween decorations still clinging to porches. A dog barked somewhere in the distance. Someone's television flickered blue through curtained windows.

We finally stopped in front of a house that looked like it belonged on a greeting card. White picket fence, just like I'd expected, but not in the way I'd expected. This wasn't some architectural statement or status symbol—it was genuinely charming. The kind of fence a little girl might paint pictures of, complete with climbing roses and a gate that probably squeaked when you opened it.

The house beyond was modest, two stories of pale yellow siding with white trim and a wraparound porch. Jack-o'-lanterns grinned from the steps, and a tire swing hung from an old oak tree in the yard.

Hades and I exchanged a look that said everything neither of us could put into words.

**\*This is where Cain hid his daughter?\*** 1

Not in some fortress. Not behind layers of security and armed guards. In suburbia. In the most normal place imaginable, where a hybrid child could ride bikes and carve pumpkins and maybe, for a few stolen years, just be a kid.

Something that Elliot should have enjoyed. In a place like this, he never would have shifted so young.

They led us inside, Hades on high alert with the way his body braced for impact.