

465 Confirmation

Eve 1

The lab still glowed with ghostly white light, residual energy from the reaction lingering in the air like static before a storm. I watched the crystal pulse on the containment table, steady, rhythmic, alive. Beautiful and terrifying in equal measure. This small thing, no bigger than my fist, was going to save two hundred thousand lives.

If it worked.

Dr. Maya's team moved in the background, their voices hushed as they finished up. The men had already filed out, leaving only the essential personnel. Kael stepped forward, holding Hades's comm console, his expression grave.

"Patch me through to Obsidian Dynamics," Hades said.

My chest tightened. This was it. The moment theory became action.

A few heartbeats later, the holo-screen flickered to life above the table, casting blue light across our faces. The image resolved into a man I'd only



read about in briefings files, Archon Vale, Grand Architect of Obsidian Dynamics. His silver insignia gleamed against his dark uniform, and behind him, I could make out the blurred shapes of massive machinery, the air alive with the hum of engines and the crackle of magnetic fields.

He inclined his head respectfully. "Alpha. Luna." His gaze found mine for a brief moment, acknowledging me before returning to Hades. "We received the transmission. The composite has been confirmed, then?"

"Confirmed," Hades said, his voice carrying that edge of command that made people listen. "It's stable and ready for integration. Proceed with production, Archon. Every minute counts now."

Vale exhaled slowly, and I saw his fingers steeple before him—a gesture of control masking tension. "Understood. We'll begin immediate infusion into the Magno-Steel reserves. The Arrays will need to run continuously." He paused, and something flickered across his composed face. Hesitation. "But... we're cutting it close. The energy draw to keep all five Magneto-Thermic Arrays active will be... considerable."

Static crackled through the line as schematics appeared beside his image. I leaned forward,

studying them. Five enormous rings suspended in mid-air over iron domes, lightning arcing between them like captured thunder. The scale was staggering.

"Each activation pulse requires twelve hundred terawatts," Vale continued, his tone measured, yet still heavy with some dread he could not hide. "That's enough to blackout half the Obsidian grid for hours. We'll be siphoning power from secondary districts. Some sectors will go dark—civilian ones, most likely."

My stomach dropped. Darkness meant fear. Panic. People would think the worst.

But Hades didn't hesitate. "We anticipated that. The solar reserves we've been storing for months—transfer them to civilian grids once the Arrays engage." His voice was steady, absolute. "The people can manage a few hours of dim light. They can't survive lunar radiation. We compromise."

Vale nodded, and I saw relief soften the tension in his shoulders. "I expected as much, Alpha." He allowed himself a faint smile—equal parts pride and apprehension. "Still... I won't lie. The scale unnerves even me. Five domes, each larger than a stadium, forged mid-air under



magneto-thermic load, all to be done within the window of a month." He gulped, the question in his gaze was obvious.

"Do you have something on your mind, Archon?" Hades asked, his tone beginning to threaten.

The man dragged a gloved hand through his hair, unsure. Still, he cleared his throat and asked. "Is it true, Alpha? The deadline has been moved up, we are meeting the bloodmoon in six weeks?"

I understood; it was still some horrible dream even to us. He had right to question how a year was compressed to less than two months even if the information had been delivered through verified sources from the Obsidian tower.

Before Hades could speak, he continued, his voice measured but every syllable seemed to tremble. "I had to find out if the other

"I had to find out if the other sectors received the same directive." His jaw tightened.

"Ammunition production, agricultural sustainability, medical stockpiles—are they all scrambling too? Or is it just us standing between two hundred thousand civilians and annihilation with a month to forge the impossible?"

He met Hades's gaze directly, and I saw the



exhaustion there—the weight of knowing lives depended on his calculations.

"And what did you find, Archon?" Hades' asked.

"We all received the same directive. Which means it's really true—not some elaborate prank."

"It's no prank, Archon. We've had these contingencies in the works for a decade since before I carried the Alpha title, when I was still Beta to Leon." His voice was firm, absolute.

"Every sector is working to the same timeline. Every hand is on deck. Our preparations will hold."

Vale was quiet for a moment, processing. Then something shifted in his expression, the weight lifting just slightly. His shoulders squared. "Then we'll make sure we're ready."

His smile flickered, some relief born from reassurance filtering into his features, fragile as candlelight. "It will hold. I'll make sure of it."

Hades's voice dropped lower, and I heard the fatigue beneath his control. How long had he been carrying this weight? "We'll be there by tomorrow evening. Eve and I both. I want to see the Arrays myself before they go live."

Tomorrow. The word settled over me like snow.

"I'll have the Iron Quarter cleared for your arrival," Vale said. "You'll want protective gear, the magnetic fields are volatile during calibration."

I trust you, Archon," Hades said quietly.

There was a measured pause, and Vale's expression turned solemn. His spine straightened. "By the time the moon turns red, Alpha, Obsidian will be sealed beneath unbreakable sky. We will not fall."

The transmission flickered once, twice, then dissolved into darkness.

Silence filled the lab again. The crystal's pulse was the only sound—steady, persistent, hopeful. I looked at Hades and found him already watching me, the fading holo-light still caught in his eyes. He looked tired. Determined. Human.

"Tomorrow," I murmured.

"Tomorrow," he agreed, and something passed between us in that moment. Not just words, but understanding. Fear and hope twisted together like the lightning in those Arrays. "We see what hope looks like in iron."



I wanted to believe him. God, I wanted to believe we could do this, that science and stubbornness and sheer will could stand against an ancient curse written in blood and moonlight.

But tomorrow would tell us if faith was enough.

I reached for his hand, and he took it without hesitation. His grip was warm, solid, real.

"We'll make it work," I said. Not a question. A vow.

Hades squeezed my hand once. "We will."

Behind us, Dr. Maya's team continued their work, cataloging data, running final checks on the crystal. Kael stood at the console, already pulling up logistics for tomorrow's trip. The war machine was moving now, unstoppable.

Thea pulled free from the army of lab worker, limping, her hands in the pockets of her coat. "Thank you for your patience," I noticed the dark shadows around her eyes had deepened, yet she looked anything but tired. "Luna Eve we still have some reserves of your blood but will need more by tomorrow."

I gave a wary smile. "Of course, I will hear by tomorrow evening ready to donate. Thank



you."

She bowed her head, still unable to look at me for too long as getting back to the working team.

A arm wrapped around my shoulders, pulling me into a warm body. I melted against it.

Hades.

"We will be alright," he whispered.

I looked up at him, searching his eyes for the doubt that knee we shared, mostly because I could detect it through the Fenrir's chain. I smiled. "Of course, we will."

And somewhere beyond these walls, six weeks away, the Blood Moon was coming.

But tonight, in this lab, we had hope.

It pulsed like a heartbeat.