



519 Come Back

Frostfang 1

Silas's smile died on his lips, his entire body stiffening like he had just been shot.

Hades raised a brow, perplexed, still groaning against the pressure that sat on his skull. He let out a hiss as the tent flap opened, revealing someone who, by their uniform, he could infer was a Delta.

The Delta instantly turned an alarming shade of white as he stuttered. "Alpha, you should not be awake now. It is too early."

"I am fine," he lied and failed. His grimace revealed all they needed to know. "I have a headache though," he admitted.

"It is far worse than that," Silas muttered, still stiff where he stood, looking at Hades through widened eyes. "You would never forget Eve."

The Delta's head snapped toward Silas. "He forgot his wife?"

Hades's perplexity twisted quickly into horror and agitation. "What type of jokes are you playing with me? It is not—" He groaned again as



another Delta whipped open the tent flap. "It is not the least bit funny." He growled against the surge of agony that ripped through his skull.

The three of them glanced at each other—the Deltas and Silas. "Can you fix this?" Silas asked.

But Hades was far from finished. He rose to his full height, towering over all of them, looking about ready to rip someone to ribbons. "I don't know what world you live in, but I will never have anyone else after Danielle." He snarled down at the men. **1**

Silas sighed deeply. "You did. And she is pregnant with your pups."

The world beneath Hades's feet fell away, the flame in his chest stoked by the total absurdity of the councilmember's words. "I do hope you still respect your position and stop spewing nonsense." He drawled, his eyes darkened with promise as he glowered down at the older man.

Silas only blinked and turned to the Deltas. "You have to do something." His voice was urgent. "He has to remember."

The Deltas shook their heads. "We have rebuilt his brain the best we can. The rest is ultimately up to his body."

"You do remember that I am here?" His voice was low and menacing. Silas spun to look at him, staring apprehensively like he was a stranger armed with a knife. "You have regressed." 1

Hades recoiled, his lip peeling back in a snarl. "What the hell is that supposed to mean?"

But all Silas did was nod as if his reaction had proved him correct. "You don't act that way anymore. But the memories of Eve that you have lost have turned back the clock on your development. Your personality has regressed as a result. This is bad."

Hades was overcome with the overwhelming urge to wring the man's neck. "There will never be anyone else except for Danielle." Somehow, he held himself back from the instinct. Hades looked down at himself, confused.

Silas noticed it too. "You never hold back—at least in the past. Your mind might have forgotten, but your body hasn't."

The Delta moved carefully near him. "What else are you feeling except for the headache?" He eyed Hades's elongating fangs warily.

"I am thirsty," he admitted. "Very thirsty."



The Delta's eyes narrowed. "For blood."

"Is it that obvious?" Hades asked, somewhat taken aback.

"Your eyes have been darting toward pulses—the neck, the wrists, the chest. Whenever my heart rate speeds up, your eyes snag instinctively at my chest, where my heart is. Your vampiric impulses are sharpened because of the energy you have depleted to fight and keep yourself alive. You need blood to continue, and I have a good feeling the blood will do your memory some good. Your mate needs you."

The Deltas shared a wordless conversation before retrieving needles and syringes.

"We'll need volunteers," one said quietly. "Enough blood to finish the healing properly."

Silas didn't hesitate. "I'll go first."

"No." The Delta stopped him. "You're too old. The strain—"

"Then get the gammas," Silas said firmly. He keyed his comm. "All available gammas to the medical tent. The Alpha needs blood. Willing donors only."

The response was immediate.



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"On our way."

"Be right there."

"For the Alpha."

Within minutes, they arrived.

Dozens of them. Strong. Loyal. Ready.

One gamma—a young woman with dark braids—stepped forward first. "How much do you need?"

The Delta assessed her, then nodded. "A pint. No more."

She rolled up her sleeve without hesitation.

The Delta inserted the needle, drew the blood, handed the bag to his colleague.

Another gamma stepped forward. Then another.

They lined up.

No orders. No commands.

Just-willing.

Hades watched, still disoriented, still struggling against the hunger gnawing at him.

"Why?" he asked hoarsely.

The gamma with the braids met his eyes.



"Because you're our Alpha. And because Luna Eve needs you whole."

Hades's remaining eye burned.

He didn't know who Eve was.

But his pack did.

And they loved her enough to bleed for him. 2

05:32:56

Aegis

A shot had been enough to make the entire pack tremble. This made the entire world shake on its axis.

Cain did not need to be informed that it was not gunfire. This was a bomb. Silverpine was bringing out the big guns.

He snapped into action, the sound of the explosion still echoing through the territory. He tried not to look at Ellen and the glowing form of orange and red that she had become.

Ellen Valmont was no longer responsive.

He suppressed the urge to try and shake her again, even if she had seared his skin the last



time. He knew there was no hope there. Before, she would react to shots fired. Now she did not stir at the sound of a bomb.

He spoke into the comm. "Freddie, report."

Static. Then Freddie's voice crackled through—tight, breathless, urgent.

"Commander, they're coming in hot . This isn't a battle anymore—they're targeting civilian residences directly. Bombs. Big ones. They're trying to kill everyone in their homes.

Cain's blood ran cold. "Casualties?"

"Twelve dead so far. Thirty-plus wounded. We're evacuating, but they keep coming . We need reinforcements. We need—" An explosion roared in the background. Freddie cursed. "We need you , Commander."

Cain looked at Ellen.

Her eyes were closed. Her body glowed—bright, searing, almost too painful to look at.

She wasn't moving.

Wasn't responding.

She was dying .

And there was nothing he could do.



"I'm coming," Cain said into the comm. "Hold the line. Five minutes."

"Copy."

Cain grabbed his rifle, checked his ammunition, strapped on his vest.

His hands moved on autopilot.

But his eyes kept drifting back to Ellen.

I can't leave her.

But I can't stay.

He forced himself to turn away. Took a step toward the tent flap.

Then—

"Cain."

He froze.

Her voice was so faint he almost missed it.

He spun around.

Ellen's eyes were open—barely. Glowing faintly. Her lips moved.

"Come back soon," she whispered. "So you can finish your story." 1

Cain's throat closed.



He crossed back to her in three strides, dropped to one knee beside her.

"I will," he said, his voice raw. "I'll be back before you know it. I promise."

Ellen's lips curved into the faintest smile. "Liar."

"I'm not—"

"It's okay." Her hand twitched. He caught it—ignored the heat that seared his palm. "I'll wait."

Cain squeezed her hand. "You better."

She didn't respond.

Her eyes drifted closed again.

And the glow intensified.

Cain stood, his chest tight, his hands shaking.

Then he turned.

And ran.

Two more bombs detonated as he sprinted toward the front lines.

The ground shook.

Fire bloomed in the distance.



Screams echoed.

Cain's jaw set.

Hold on, Ellen.

Just hold on.

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