



53 HALLUCINATIONS OR TRUTH

I am so sorry for the delay. I had surgery, and I am currently recovering. Thank you for being patient with me. I love you. 1

JASMINE'S POV

The woman had a crown on her head and was probably around fifty.

She had brown hair and beautiful blue eyes, and from her facial features, you could tell she was as lovely as she had been in her youth.

She had about ten men in armor standing around her, and then a girl was beside her.

The girl had fire-red hair, just like mine.

The men with armor pointed their spears at me.

"Kneel in front of the Queen!" Came with the order.

I gasped, and it dawned on me.

This was the queen.



I quickly went down on my knees.

"Please forgive me, your majesty," I begged her.

But the woman didn't even notice what was happening around her.

She was fixated on me, and her face was pale and shocked.

Like she had seen a ghost.

"Scarlet?" The Queen said.

Scarlet? Who was Scarlet? I was confused.

"How dare you hit the Queen?!" The girl with red hair who was probably around the same age as I demanded.

I looked at her. "Please forgive me. I had no idea. I didn't mean it."

"You will pay with your life, you slave!" She hissed.

I felt my heart stop.

Then, it seemed that they were going to attack me.



But the Queen just walked away from them and towards me, completely oblivious to what was happening around us.

"Grandma." The girl said,

But the queen wasn't looking at her.

She came right to me, cupping my cheeks and lifting me to see her.

"Scarlet, is this you?" She asked, and the tears were brimming in her eyes.

I was lost for words.

Did the Queen think I was someone she knew?

She had mistaken me for someone else.

Then, at that moment, another woman came in.

She had black hair, just like the Queen, and I saw that all three resembled her.

The woman was probably in her early thirties.

"Mother, what's going on?" The woman asked as she turned to see me, and she froze, too.

Why were they all pointing at me like that?



"Coral?" The queen said her voice was breaking.
"Doesn't she look like your sister?"

I gasped!

The woman named Coral's face tightened. "No, mother. You're mistaken again. Scarlet was dead a long time ago."

Coral turned to me. "I suggest you leave this place immediately if you want to leave." 11

I bowed down, hurried up to my feet, and ran out.

~~~~~

#### THE QUEEN'S POV

The queen turned to Coral.

"Why did you send her away?" The queen asked.  
"Maybe she is Scarlet."

Cora shook her head. "No, Mother, Scarlet died when we were children. That girl is still a young girl. Probably nineteen or so."

The Queen places her jeweled fingers against her temples.



"Maybe it's just my imagination." The queen said to give in.

After she had lost her daughter, she had seen her everywhere.

I looked for everyone with red hair or even looked like her from far and wide to find her.

She had seen her everywhere, but she had never been her. 1

It had been so long.

It had been almost thirty years since she had lost her little daughter. 1

"I would like to retire to my quarters now." She said.

Coral offered, "Would you like me to get you some medicine? You are tired."

"I just want to rest, Coral." She said it softly and then let herself be led to her bedroom.

It was the Halo festival; she hadn't witnessed one in years. The last one she had seen was very young.

It has happened again and has been ordained to



reflect in this pack.

She had been excited.

Maybe the powers of the Halo festival would help her find her daughter.

She sighed as she walked to the bedside.

The room was grand, almost as beautiful and spacious as the one in their castle.

Her husband, the King, would love it when he came.

She had wanted to retire after the long journey, while he had wanted to see the other.

Packs

Some servants came into the room with her things.

"Hand me my box, Hildegard." She said it softly.

Hildegard was her oldest and most trusted maid.

She has known her since she was just a girl, and they have grown up like sisters.





Hildegard brought the box to her.

"I heard you saw her again," Hildegard said sympathetically.

"It's a servant girl." The queen said. "She looked just like her. That's what my mind wanted me to see."

She opened the box and brought out the other half of the broken necklace they had found belonging to her daughter.

After they had searched for her in the river, half of the Ruby necklace resurfaced.

The other half was still missing.

The Queen closed her eyes, kissed them, and felt the tears roll down her eyes.

The doors opened, and her other daughter, Coral, entered.

"Mother," Coral said. "I brought in some medicine. It would help you wipe those hallucinations."

"She is still grieving her daughter." Hildegard gave Coral a warning.



"It's been almost thirty years. How long will she grieve?!" Coral demanded sharply, then she turned to Hildegard. "You're not a member of my family! It's only a leech, so I implore you not to get on my nerves."

Hildegard and Coral maintained a staring match.

"This isn't something to bring up in an argument." The kind queen spoke softly. "I'm fine, Coral. I wish to sleep."

Coral pressed her lips, annoyed, and then she eventually gave in. "Of course, mother."

And with that, she stormed out of the bedroom.

The Queen lay on the bed and held onto the necklace, praying that her little girl would return home one day.

It was all her fault! She should have never let them go in that boat.

She should have known better. She hadn't trusted her intuition when it warned, and here she was, almost thirty years later, still being punished.

She managed to close her eyes and fall asleep.