



110 110- Trouble, Burden

Phoenix: 1

Sebastian was still on my mind when I marched towards my room. I needed to get my phone and visit Jal.

I didn't give a flying fu*ck about Beta Brian. But he was also Jal's brother, and I needed to be there with my friend.

When I got near my room, I frowned.

A big duffel bag was sitting right outside my door like somebody had dumped it there on purpose. I felt my stomach knotting.

A werewolf guard stood beside it, his eyes dropped for a second before meeting mine.

"That's your stuff. Alpha Blake ordered me not to let you in because you're now moving to the Royal Palace."

For a second, I just stared at him, my throat tight.

Hurt.

That was what I felt.

Every day, a new surprise was thrown at me. It seemed like Alpha Blake had been waiting for the right moment to shove me out of here.



I crouched and touched the bag. Its zip was half open, and one of my shirts was poking out. My voice came out lower than I wanted, "At least let me take my phone. Or just... let me check my room once..."

The guard shook his head hard before I could finish, "I'm sorry, Phoenix," This time, his voice turned a little polite, "Alpha's orders. I need to follow them. We already checked the room. Everything's in the bag."

Leaving my bag on the floor, I got up and crossed my arms against my chest, "This is ridiculous," I glared at him, "You can't just dump me in the hall like I'm garbage."

The guard's jaw flexed a bit, but then, before he could answer, I heard the heels clicking against the floor.

Ah. I already knew. Luna Raya.

I tilted my head to watch her face. Her smile was too soft to be real.

"Phoenix," she said, her voice overly sweet, "I think it's time to go, love. You were an asset to our pack. And look at you," she pointed towards me, "You're a royal warrior now. You don't need to live here."

Bitch!



She was sending me away to keep herself safe.
She wanted me out before I opened my mouth.
Odd, though... she didn't try to kill me.

Well!

She was mistaken if she thought she was safe.

I lifted my chin to meet her gaze, "I'm not interested in your scraps, Luna. But this..." I pointed towards the bag, "This is disrespectful."

Her smile twitched, the kind that said she thought she already won. She tilted her head with all that fake pity in her eyes.

"Oh, sweetie," she purred, "Don't play with words for getting more attention. You should be thanking me. Not everyone gets kicked out in style."

She smirked like she had just dropped the most genius line of the century. I tried to control the smile, but damn... it slipped.

Not because she was funny, but because her words were so stupid.

She was beaming when she flipped her hair and then turned on her heels to leave.

I bit the inside of my cheek and looked at the guard who was trying to act nonchalant.



I picked up my duffel bag and squeezed it to my chest.

"Right," I muttered to myself, "Enjoy your little kingdom while it lasts, my Luna."

The poor thing thought she had broken me.
Poor. Little. Innocent, Luna Raya.

Sigh!

While crossing the training ground, I could feel stares prickling my skin. Warriors I had trained with, laughed with... looked away as soon as my eyes brushed theirs.

No jokes. No nods.

Even Jack, who never missed a chance to tease me, was avoiding an eye contact.

I sucked in a breath, forcing myself to keep moving. This was expected, I reminded myself.

Don't act surprised. Don't act hurt.

Just walk.

The hospital had that familiar scent of antiseptic. Inside, it was no different. The nurses who knew me passed by me like I was invisible to them.

Finally, a newly appointed nurse gave me a quick glance, "Dr. Jai is at the end of the corridor... in that room."



She pointed and then hurried away as if I was carrying some kind of plague.

I dragged myself to the door where another guard was planted right outside.

"I need to go in," I tried to walk past him, but his sharp voice stopped me.

"Mr. Jai doesn't want to meet you. I've got a direct order from him not to let you pass this line."

My chest tightened as I shook my head fast, almost desperate, "That's not possible. Go. Tell him Phoenix is here."

"I told you. I've got a direct order from him. He doesn't want to see you."

I tried to laugh. Did he really think I would believe that?

Luna Raya really thought she could snatch away the only thing I had?

"Order?" I clenched my fists, "My friend needs me, and none of you can stop me from meeting him. Not even Alpha Blake or Luna Raya."

We stared at each other. I stepped closer, refusing to back down. His hand hovered near the hilt of his sword.

"Even if you kill me, I'm not going away without



meeting him," I hissed.

His jaw tightened, but his eyes were not as cold as before.

I opened my mouth to warn him when the door suddenly swung open. Jai stood there with a red face.

His eyes were bloodshot when he looked at me, "Can't you hear what he is saying? Get lost!"

The roar echoed through the corridor, making me stunned, "Jai?"

He never raised his voice at me. This was not the same man who was my friend.

He was someone else. Someone closer to Luna Raya and Tina.

Tears were sliding down his face. I tried to hold his hand, but he stepped back and raised his hand.

When he spoke, his voice was shaking, "Leave. Just leave Phoenix. I can't take any more damage because of you." 2

His words were enough to cut deeper than any blade. My best friend was pushing me away... he was saying I was nothing but trouble.

A burden.