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Phoenix 1

"We won!" My wolf was excitedly jumping in my head.

"Not yet, sweetheart," I smiled while walking to the grand hall where the ceremony took place.

I had changed into my comfy pajamas and came out of my room. Sebastian wanted me to go to sleep because tomorrow was going to be a long day, but I needed to take a round of my pack house and say my goodbyes.

The grounds, the borders, where I gave hectic duties. The kitchen where I boiled noodles for myself.

Most of my friends had gone to sleep, but the ones who were on duty at the border, I met them to say my final goodbye.

Luckily, Jack was also on duty. He cried a little bit, but then I teased him about his mate, whom he found at the ceremony. At least a few of us had a happy ending.

I was genuinely happy for him.

Nah. I wasn't crying. These were tears of happiness. The joy I was feeling right now. Standing outside the grand hall where the



ceremony had come to an end, and now there was nothing but darkness.

A few minutes back, the laborers had moved out the last piece of heavy furniture, and now the last truck was leaving the premises.

I looked up at the dark sky, where the only thing shining was the full moon. No stars. Just a moon.

Alone.

Still shining, giving light to others.

"Thank you, Moon Goddess," I said silently, "Tonight I've completed half of my mission. The rest is still left."

My guts twisted at the thought of going back to the palace. I wasn't aware whether the palace had changed or was still the same.

We were supposed to leave the next morning, and this was my last night with this pack.

Here, I made some amazing memories. Had the best time of my life too. Made some amazing friends.

Well. Still not sure about Jai.

The pack stayed good to me unless they decided to mess with me. And now?

I was about to chuckle, but caught myself in time. Now the pack had no Luna, no Beta, and no



Head warrior.

The pack Alpha was good for nothing. The poor man was heartbroken and needed time to mend his heart.

I sincerely hoped that they wouldn't be attacked by the rogues with this kind of weak leadership.

They thought I was weak. I realized late that they were good to me because they took me as a submissive, obedient woman, who couldn't have a mind of her own. Just because she was ugly.

"Now look at me!" I whispered to myself and turned around, only to find someone familiar standing there at some distance.

"Jai?" What was he doing here?

"Happy about new beginnings?" he made his way over to me.

I nodded, giving him an over-brightened smile, "Yes. Very much."

"Good," his lips pressed into a thin line as he placed his hands into his pockets.

"Y...you rejected Kiara..." My voice trailed off when he started shaking his head.

"Don't go there, Phoenix... It's useless," he clicked his tongue inside his cheek. I bobbed my head and turned back to look at the dark hall.



We stayed quiet for a few minutes until I looked over my shoulder and asked him a random question just to end this awkward silence, "Why are you here?"

He shrugged and walked up to me to stand beside me, "To say goodbye."

"Hmm," I rubbed my hand and felt his eyes on me, "Are you feeling cold?"

He was about to take off his jacket, but I raised my hand to stop him, "No need, Jai. I'm fine."

He didn't insist.

He cleared his throat, "That's... that's quite dangerous."

I looked at him, puzzled, "Sorry?"

"The game you are playing," he muttered, rubbing his nose tip with his thumb, "It's dangerous. You... you are playing with fire."

"Fire?" This time, I laughed loudly and pointed to my face, "I got this because I did play with fire ... indeed, Jai. And now..." I straightened and got serious, "Now I've nothing to lose."

Thank Goddess, he didn't argue.

"When you go to a witch to treat your face... don't hate me, Phoenix," I didn't take this outrageous remark too seriously.



Lately, he had been saying some weird stuff. I didn't want to get confused anymore.

"I won't. Don't worry," I stated plainly.

There was again this uncomfortable silence between us. I wanted him to go away. Our last goodbye was already done, why was he even here?

He seemed to have heard my thoughts, "I'll take my leave now..."

I nodded without looking at him.

"You killed your pack witch?" I blurted it out before I could bite it back.

"Wh...who told you that?"

"This isn't the answer to my question!" I retorted and moved before him, "Or you don't want me to go there either."

I waited, hoping that he would deny it or at least meet my gaze. But he didn't.

His gaze stayed fixed somewhere past my shoulder, and I caught his Adam's apple bobbing as he swallowed hard.

Avoiding me. Avoiding the question.

The silence stretched until he gave up, "You're already friends with Amora..." he said, "Why don't you ask her? Why ask me... You don't even



trust me now."

I smirked at his answer and placed my finger on his cheek, "Tomorrow I'll be out of this pack forever, Jai. Just tell me one thing. What do you know about me?" his eyes dipped down to meet mine, and there was something he was trying to hide there. 1

Pain.

He remained silent, and that, for some reason, frustrated me.

He at last sighed and closed his eyes, "Whatever you find about me. Please don't hate me, Phoenix."

I threw my hands helplessly in the air and started stepping back, "Fine. I won't hate you!" I finished sarcastically and turned on my heels to walk away.

"Bye, Jai Charis!" I waved my hand, without looking back. It was his answer that stopped me cold.

"Bye, Aurora Stone." 3