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Phoenix: 1

The car jolted to a halt as tires screeched against the stone path, and I jerked upright in my seat.

My eyes flew open, and only then did I realize I had drifted into deep sleep, my head resting against Sebastian's shoulder.

He hadn't moved away and sat there, as if he didn't mind if I kept on sleeping like this.

Rubbing my eyes, I tried to bring myself fully awake and turned to the window. Outside, I could hear the doors swing open one after the other, as people started stepping out.

I turned my head to look ahead, and that was when I saw it.

The palace.

The same palace I left two years back after applying that invisible liquid to my body. I jerked back to reality when I felt Sebastian squeezing my hand.

"You alright? Your heartbeat is faster," he had concern in his eyes, and he was watching me very closely.

"I'm... I'm good," I tried to smile and checked my



mask. This was the same palace that gave me this mask.

Now, I'm back, and I need to return this mask to this palace. I told it silently and got out of the car.

"Sebastian... If... if you allow me, can I take a round of..." I stopped when I felt his eyes on me.

"Yeah. Why not?" he tried to hold my hand, but this time I freed it gently from his grip.

Seeing the confusion on his face, I shrugged and gestured with my hands around us, "I'm a head warrior...and I need to get acquainted with other warriors."

"But we just arrived,"

"I know..." I mumbled and found Tina walking up to us.

"It was tiring," she stretched herself like a Cheshire cat, "Goddess. I need my bed..." she was trying to suppress her yawn, "Sebi," she gave him an over-brightened smile, "How about we take a bath? Together?" she suggested meaningfully and reached out to touch his collar button.

I wanted to roll my eyes. Anybody could have guessed that this performance was to make me jealous.



Before Sebastian could hurl an insult at her, I spoke, "She is right, *Sebi!*" I mimicked the word Sebi, intentionally, "Go and take a hot bath. Tina can't wait to share it with you."

An amused grin crossed his lips when he heard that, "Right now I'm too tired," he then looked at her, "Sorry, Tina," he declined her offer politely, and then turned to me, "How about you bring a file to my room, and we discuss something about our kingdom's security."

I rolled my lips between my teeth.

"Sure," I laughed and then walked past him, following a royal butler who wanted to show me my room.

It was disrespectful to leave the spot before your king, but Sebastian didn't seem to mind it. However, Tina must have taken it to heart.

And I knew, Luna Tamia must have turned into a firecracker while fuming. How dare a lady walk out before her precious grandson?

*Well, dear, Grandma. There is so much to watch.
Just stay tuned.*

The butler before me pushed the door open and motioned me to follow him.

"Holy cow!" the word slipped out of my mouth

before I could stop it. The butler bowed and placed my bag on a table before leaving the room without a word.

This was not a plain room that one assigns to a warrior. It was a full set of quarters that had a wide sitting area with polished oak chairs, a low table stacked with fruits and wine, a bathroom door carved with golden trim, a wardrobe taller than me with a mirror on both sides, and even a private study in the corner.

I scurried to another door and opened it, only to find that it was a bedroom. My eyes darted to the massive bed that was inviting me unapologetically.

Without a second thought, I sprinted across the room and dove onto it. The mattress swallowed me whole; it was softer than anything I had ever known.

I waved my arms and legs like a butterfly, giggling to myself, "Yohoo... I'm flying..." I told myself in disbelief.

Turning on my back, I looked at the ceiling and sighed to myself, "This is huge. I never got a space this big, even when I was a queen."

This was the kind of luxury meant for Kiara. *Poor fellow!*

Here I was, stretched out on it, grinning like a

fool. I raised my hand in a playful salute, looking at the ceiling, "Thank you, Moon Goddess."

It must have been evening by the time I stirred awake to the faint sounds and blinked.

"Shit!" I bolted up in bed and remembered that I was now in the royal palace. Not in the Blood Stone pack.

There was a knock at the door, and a maid came inside, carrying a silver tray.

Grapes, apples, slices of cheese, and even a jug of chilled juice were placed on it. She placed it down on the bed.

Waking up to all this felt almost unreal. I felt more like a princess than a head warrior.

"Ma'am," she bowed slightly, "if you want, I can prepare you a bath and give you something comfortable to wear."

I rubbed the sleep from my eyes, half laughing under my breath, "A bath? Prepared for me? Am I dreaming?"

The girl let out a confused laugh before signaling towards the bathroom, "If you want, you can take a hot shower. We have strict instructions to take care of everything for you. Please let me know if you need anything..." She reached into her

pocket and took out a folded piece of paper,
"Here. This is my phone number. You can call me
whenever you want. I'm responsible for your
food, bed, and every comfort you need."

I stared at the paper in my hand, still trying to
believe whether this was all a dream or real. It
had been years since I'd felt anything close to
this, being cared for, being spoiled.

I wanted to enjoy the feeling, but there was
something unsettling about all this. Did all these
perks really belong to me?

To a head warrior? I never got a space this big
when I was his wife.

Or was Sebastian treating me like a soon-to-be
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