

139 139- Your Nightmare

Phoenix: 1

My plan was to look into some paperwork after I was done with my lunch. But something unexpected happened.

When lunch wrapped up, the warriors didn't leave right away. Instead, they started pushing the tables back, clearing out the middle of the cafeteria.

I sat there for a second, watching them, trying to figure out what was going on.

Before I could ask them, one of them handed me a spear with a grin, "Show us how you'd attack with this."

It clicked fast...

They were curious. I was their new head warrior, and more than that, a wolfless woman leading them. None of them tried to bully me.

Maybe they had clear instructions from the king, or they might face consequences.

The cafeteria manager, who was short and bald, dragged over a wooden target board they used for practice and set it against the wall.

I twirled the spear in my hand, trying to weigh it

expertly, and planted my feet. I aimed and, with a sharp throw, sent the spear slicing through the air.

It hit dead in the center, and the wood cracked under the force.

The room went quiet for a breath, then a few murmurs broke out. I glanced back at them with a shrug, "Satisfied?"

"Too close," one warrior called out with a grin, "Bet you wouldn't have nailed it if the board was set out in the ground."

What? Were they crazy?

"Yeah," another chimed in, laughing, "From a real distance, let's see that aim."

Uh-huh. They wanted an argument. A verbal judo.

I rolled my eyes, letting out a short laugh, "Oh, of course. You're probably right," my voice was dripping with sarcasm, but I played along, "Clearly I only look good when the target is practically breathing on me."

A few of them broke into wide smiles. They weren't expecting me to take it good-naturedly. I had seen such teasing competitions in the Blood Stone pack, and Kiara always took them to her ego. I was never included in those competitions,

but today?

I was getting a feeling. Like they had accepted me. They were slowly taking me in as one of them.

I showed them my friendlier side just to let them know that I didn't come here to rule over their heads. I was here to guide them through our strategies. To tell them that I was one of them, but that didn't give them the right to disrespect me. 1

One of them, whose name was Gavin, stepped into the clearing space, a grin spreading across his face, "Head warrior... I mean. Phoenix, how about a friendly round? Just you and me?"

All the spectators sitting in the cafeteria whooped. I could see their eyes gleaming with interest. I could hear their playful exchange of bets under their breath, like they already knew this was going to be a show.

I crossed my arms, tilting my head, "Are you sure? I'm in," Before they could start cheering, I raised my hands to stop them, "But let's make it interesting."

That made a few whistles ring out, "Oh?" one who was sitting on the flipped bench raised a brow.

"If I win," I said, pacing into the circle, "You're all

feeding me for a week," before they could start making noise, I continued, "Pizza, cheeseburgers, fries... the good stuff. Not those watery soups and broths."

The warriors burst out in grins and mutters.

"And if I win?" Gavin asked, flashing a smug smile.

I shrugged, "Go on."

"You give the whole team a day off training."

The cheer that followed his statement nearly shook the room.

I smirked, enjoying it, "Fine. But remember... You asked for this." The moment I said it, I felt my wolf stirring in my head.

An alien sensation ran through me. Like... like my senses had just exploded awake.

For a moment, my head seemed to be on fire. But it was so quick that I thought I imagined it.

None of them knew what was going on inside me.

Gavin was positioning himself, and the group was chanting the numbers.

"One. Two. Three. Go!"

The moment Gavin lunged, my wolf stirred again

in the back of my mind, making me sharp... yet restless.

Left side open. Faster. Her voice was more like a whisper, giving me quick instructions. It made my muscles twitch with extra speed.

I ducked, spun, and hooked his legs clean out from under him, and pushed him slightly. Even with the slightest push, the force that surged through me sent him crashing harder than I meant to. The poor Lycan hit the ground with a thud.

The crowd broke into shouts. Some groaning, others grinning, some already chanting "Pizza! Pizza!" 1

Gavin sat up with a sheepish look, rubbing the back of his neck. Internally, I was shaken, I had expected this fight to continue for at least ten minutes. However, it ended with just a single push of my hands.

I so wanted to raise my hands and see what was going on. But I chose not to. Not at least in front of them, or they might get the impression that I was using magic.

Gulping my saliva, I walked to him and offered him my hand for a friendly handshake, trying to hide the way my pulse still hummed by the presence of my wolf.

"Good effort," I remarked, "Just remember I like extra cheese on my pizza."

Before the laughter could die down, the noise in the room suddenly faded into silence.

Gavin, who was smirking a second ago, suddenly dropped to his knees. All the other warriors followed him.

I frowned, turning, half expecting to see Sebastian.

And there she was. Luna Tamia.

Standing at the edge of the cleared space. Her eyes were locked on me like I'd crossed a line.

"Didn't I ask you to come to my office?" Her cold voice cut through the silence.

I hated how she was trying to make me feel like I was a child and she was my mommy who wanted to discipline me.

Well. I'm not your child, ma'am. I'm your nightmare.