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Phoenix: 1

Tina was stunned in horror. Her eyes were darting between my face and that dirty pink furniture, which was so loud that even a Barbie lover would never go for it.

I had already asked the contractor to deliver it before noon so that everything could be arranged.

The only ones who were aware of this were my Lycan guards, but I came to know just this morning that they were sworn to keep my secrets with them.

As my guards, they were answerable to only me and no one else.

Not even to Sebastian.

I didn't know why Sebastian thought I needed guards at all. I was the head warrior, and I didn't even need a protocol.

Sebastian gave one look at the room and another at Tina and marched out without a word.

Luna Tamia followed him outside the quarters, calling him back, "Sebi. Listen to me..."

And Tina?



Her face had turned blotchy due to the insult she faced. Her eyes were throwing daggers at me, but I stood there with confidence, still looking into her eyes fearlessly.

Suddenly, the mask of false bravado on her face seemed to crumble a little as her lips started trembling. The next second, she burst into tears.

"Why?" the big messy tears were smudging her make up as she covered her face with her hands, "Why did you do that, Phoenix?" her muffled voice came behind her hands, "Why did you humiliate me in front of Luna Tamia and the King? What did I ever do to you? Or you hate every beautiful woman?" she sobbed.

"Beautiful?" I repeated and burst out laughing, spraying spit.

That ignited her anger. She came closer and grabbed my arm, shaking me a little. Maybe to pull an apology out of me.

But I stood there calmly, not even feeling bad for her, still laughing.

Honestly, I didn't care.

"I'm asking you something," she raised her voice and clenched her teeth, "Answer me!"



I let out a slow breath and pulled her into a quick hug, patting her back, "Aww. My baby," I said, laughing again.

If she could be a drama queen, then why couldn't I? "It's not the end of the world," I casually raised a shoulder and kissed her cheek.

She pushed against me, as if my touch was burning her, "Stay away from me," she wiped her face, and looked scarier. All that kohl was now near the corner of her lips, "What you did... I'll return it tenfold, Phoenix. I promise."

I tilted my head, watching her smeared face and shivering hands. My smile faded, and my voice dropped into a cold hiss.

"Return it?" I stepped closer, making her stumble back, "You'll return me tenfold? No, Barbie girl!" I gently wiped her face with my fingers, "You already got your chance. Now it's my turn."

I took my face closer, locking my eyes head-on. Raising my hand, I gripped the nape of her neck and gave it a little shake, "Don't say something that you can't live with, Tina," I said icily, almost whispering, "Because the day you try, I'll make sure you're begging me to stop," I fluttered my lashes dramatically.



The color drained from her face as she heard me. She looked at me like I'd turned into something she couldn't recognize.

With fear in her eyes, she whispered, "Who are you?"

I took off my mask and let her see my face in horror, "Your death, Tina! I'm your death, honey!"

I couldn't stop myself from laughing. Every time I pictured Tina's terrified face, I would crack up again. I stretched out on my study table, swinging my legs.

Goddess, Jai. I miss you so much. I muttered to myself.

I didn't want to remember a man who knew too much about me. In my head, he was still the Jai whom I had met two years back. The doctor, who used to treat my face.

My wolf, Aria, equally missed him. She showed herself in the mirror that day but never tried coming out.

There is still time. That was what she had told me.

The door clicked open after a knock, and I hurriedly straightened and jumped down from the table, wiping the laughter off my face.



Sebastian stepped inside, and I mentally prepared myself for the upcoming interrogation about the Barble room.

He didn't say anything at first, just leaned against the frame with an unreadable look on his face. But there was that certain glint in his eyes.

I cleared my throat and looked away, pretending to adjust my sleeve.

He finally pushed off the frame and walked in, "Any problems in the palace?"

My head jerked up at the unexpected query, "Problems? No, not really... I mean... I try my best to fulfill my duties... your highness..." I gave a little shrug and forced a smile,

Why did I feel that he knew what I did to Tina?

Like he already had this idea that Tina was innocent.

He kept watching me, with faint amusement dancing in his eyes. That knowing smirk...

"Honestly... the palace is fine. Everyone loves me here... The warriors..." I pointed to the window, "They obey me...though Luna kept me busy with all the interior...But... I'm not complaining... everything is good," I went on, almost blabbering now.

Inside, I was screaming. Why wasn't he asking



me about the Barbie room? His silence was making me even more restless.

Before I could come up with another word, he suddenly closed the distance. I wasn't ready when he suddenly wrapped his arms around me, pulling me into his chest.

"You know what's crazy?" My body was still stiff in his arms when he murmured with a tinge of amusement, "I think... I'm falling for you..."

I went still.

My arms were still by my sides, hanging.

Falling for me? Was he joking?

Without knowing how I looked?

My heart was pounding, but I forced out a laugh, "Really? Just like you loved your wife?"

I expected him to falter, but he didn't.

"Yes. Maybe more than her," his voice was rougher this time, "But I do know one thing," his next words made my jaw slacken a bit, "I loved kissing her lips." 4

Using all my strength, I tried to push him. He must be drunk because King Sebastian never kissed his wife.

He was talking about kissing when he'd never even touched me