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Phoenix: 1

"Alright," I started tracing my finger across the map of the southern border that was lying on the table, "If the rogues decide to move through this side," I placed my stick on the empty territory, "We'll need an extra watchtower here."

William leaned forward and regarded it with a nod, "Makes sense. But instead of adding another tower, why not increase the patrol shifts?" his blue eyes flicked at me, "It will cover more area and is more cost-effective."

I chewed my inner cheek and nodded at him, "That's fair. But in the future we do need a watchtower," I pointed out, "Our enemy is already using technology and we will need it to fight them."

With a nod, William noted something in his tablet, and Marcus raised his hand, "Phoenix, I want to talk to you about this area," he tapped near the palace wall, "Why don't we station recruits here? It'll be easy for them to handle guard duty while the senior warriors take the border."

"No, no, Marcus," I started shaking my head, and Gavin also wiggled his finger at him, "We can't

do that..."

Before Marcus could speak, Gavin came to my aid, "The palace wall isn't a playground for training. If something goes wrong, recruits won't hold long enough. Don't send seniors away."

"He is right," I added, "Our enemy isn't a fool. He is watching out our every move, so no new recruiting for the walls."

That earned a few nods around the table.

Yes. This was my first official meeting with my five best warriors. After I befriended them, the next step was to discuss important security issues around the palace and near every border.

"The west side," The head of security stated, "If we set up traps along the narrow pass, it'll slow down the intruders before they even hit the first person."

I smiled faintly and rubbed my chin, "Clever. Here we can use technology. Do we have a technology department, Gavin?" I asked him, running my gaze over the map. He gave a confused look to his colleagues, who had started shaking their heads.

"Phoenix," Richard cleared his throat, "You can ask his Highness. If he likes the suggestion, he can give a go-ahead to make one."

"Wow," I curved down my lips, "You are throwing me in front of the lion. If he tries to eat me, I'll offer him your ass to save mine."

The men sitting there chuckled. My phone pinged, and something deep inside warned me that it might be Sebastian.

"Think of the devil," Aria giggled in excitement when she saw Sebastian's name flashing on screen.

Ignoring her excitement, I went to my seat and sat down.

"Hey, Phoenix," William leaned ahead and placed his finger near the gates, "Can we move half the night patrol here? Closer to the palace gates? That way, we double protect where it matters most."

I leaned back and crossed my arms, "That might get backfired at us, William. You don't win a fight by hiding behind your front door."

"True," Marcus muttered, earning a glare from William. I had to stifle a laugh.

"Anything else, gentlemen?" I decided to wrap up the meeting, "We can gather again after two or three days and discuss this further. If you come up with a new idea, feel free to share it," I revolved my seat a bit.

"We don't need to go to Café for lunch," William got up and started picking up the files from my desk, "The conference has ended, and today the guests are going back to their packs."

I straightened at that,

Going back to their packs? That means...

I needed to say goodbye to Alpha Blake and Jai.

Gavin gave me a puzzled look while rolling the map, "What is it?"

"Nothing," I threw the drawer keys at him that he caught expertly, "Need to see off my pack's Alpha and Beta."

"Where is Jai?" I asked Alpha Blake while I was seeing him off, "Isn't he going with you?"

He gave a gentle shake to his head, "He wants to stay a little longer for some official work," he tilted his head to study me, and then his question took me by surprise.

"Are you happy here, Phoenix?"

"Happy?" I chuckled, not sure how to answer that, "Why? Yes, I think I am."

"Good," he nodded at me awkwardly, and turned his head to look at the car that was supposed to take him to his pack.



I gulped my saliva and stared at him, "Do you want to say something, Alpha?"

"Hmm?" he gave an absent-minded look and then shook his head, "No. I don't think so..." he shrugged, "It's just... Don't hate Jai, Phoenix," he said softly, and the odd request took me by surprise.

"W...What..."

"He is a good guy. It's just," he started chewing his upper lip, "He suffered a lot... they suffered a lot."

They?

Alpha Blake understood, "He and Brian. Brian wasn't a bad man. But he... they both loved Giana a lot."

Giana?

Now who the fu*ck was this Giana?

Was she the mate before Luna Raya? Was she mated to Brian and Jai both?

So many questions were racing through my head, and I didn't know how to react.

"So, this Giana. She ditched the brothers and chose a third man and left the pack?" The question brought a smile to his face.

"No," he shook his head, "Giana was Jai and



Brian's elder sister."

I blinked, taken aback.

Sister? What?

"Alpha Blake?" I gave him a confused look, "Is this some kind of a joke?"

"We didn't tell you because Jai..." he halted mid-sentence when he saw me shaking my head.

"I know the drill, Alpha," I placed my hand on my forehead, grinning faintly, "Jai wanted to hide it from me. Right? That's why he asked you not to tell me the secret..." I gave him an over brightened smile.

He stayed quiet and then turned his head when he saw Jack coming towards us, "Hey, Head Warrior. We're leaving."

I nodded at Jack and gave him a quick hug, "Do visit me again, Jackie."

He saluted me and walked to the car.

Alpha Blake also strode off, leaving me behind with so many question marks. Blood Stone pack would always be a mystery to me.

And Jai would always be an enigmatic yet complicated man. 3

