



## 221 221- Rise From The West

Tina: 1

Different witches were coming daily to see my face condition, and none of them could decide what to do.

They all used to leave my room in confusion, telling my father that it was irreversible.

My poor father couldn't accept it. He sat beside me for hours, holding my hand.

"Let's leave the palace and go back home," Dad suggested to me, squeezing my hand. Now I had to wrap a cloth in his presence because he flinched whenever he saw my face.

"I can't..." I started shaking my head while crying, "Going back means that I've given up."

Dad jerked forward as if he wanted to grab and shake me hard, "You are being stupid. He doesn't want you in his life. He married her. You made him do it. Now stop regretting your past mistakes and leave this cursed place."

How could I? I spent more than half of my life in this palace. Tamia was more like a friend to me. Sebastian loved me once.

How could I hand over all of it so easily to the woman who was parading around as Sebastian's



wife?

Phoenix didn't have a beautiful face, and Aurora died a long time ago.

Just this morning, I realized that the hole near my jaw had widened and more worms had started coming out of the pus.

The smell was unbearable, and I couldn't see the horror in my father's eyes every time he looked at me.

"Dad. There has to be someone who can fix this," I whispered, trembling.

"Enough, Tina!" Dad snapped, and I could feel his voice breaking, "No one can undo such curse. Every witch has been telling you this. What more do you want to hear? The sooner you accept it, the better it'll be better for both of us."

I shook my head violently, as the tears spilled down my cheeks, "There is someone... A witch from the middle of the forest... she doesn't meet anyone easily. She has the knowledge of ancient healing... I hired her once..." I stopped myself in time, but Dad had already heard it.

"You hired her? When?" I swallowed hard, trying to decide if I should tell him or not.

"I'm asking you something, lady. When did you meet her? What was the purpose?" His facial



features had hardened.

"I... I hired her two years back... for ..." How to tell him that I hired her so that I could destroy Aurora's beauty.

My father was getting impatient now when he saw me crying, instead of answering his question. He never got angry at me, but now it seemed like his control was slipping away.

I wiped my cheeks violently, after blowing my nose, "I took her help when Sebastian married that girl... Yes, I know I made a mistake," I raised my hands in desperation when I saw him trying to speak, "I know, Dad. I made him marry the girl, thinking that she was just a slave and he would divorce her. Everything changed when he didn't. This was my only way to get rid of her. A powder that would make her the ugliest woman. No one would get closer to her even if he or she wanted to. Sebastian would run away and give her a divorce. But then... the fire erupted and she died. After that, I never tried to contact a witch, Dad. I swear."

Dad's eyes were wide in disbelief, "Tina, have you lost your mind? You played with fire. Do you know, the woman you are talking about ... she deals in dark spirits. No one dares to step near her. You think she'll just walk in and heal you?" 1

"Yes. She will!" I shouted, trying to control my



trembling voice, "All she will do is ask for money. We'll pay her. Last time she met me, she wanted diamonds, and I gave her. Everything can be bought with money, Dad. Don't you know?"

I cried harder this time, throwing punches on the bed, "These worms... they don't let me sleep, Dad. They are eating my face, and if you won't do something, then they... they might eat up my body... Don't you love me, Dad?"

He had closed his eyes, trying to control the anger simmering inside him. He was my father who always spoiled me since childhood. Then why was he being so hesitant? What was he waiting for?

"I ... I do love you, child," My Dad held my hand for a little while and then moved to the far corner of the room, "This witch... She sounds very powerful. Not every time these witches demand diamonds."

At this point, I wasn't ready to listen. There was still hope in my heart. If that witch knew how to destroy someone's face, then she would definitely know how to bring it back.

"I'm not giving up, Dad," I whispered shakily, "She is my only chance and I'm not ready to let it go."

He started rubbing his temples in defeat, "Alright," he lowered his head, "I hope this is not



the next step towards your destruction. But if that's what you want... I'll try to reach her."

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My Dad's words kept echoing in my head, but I didn't want to give up. That witch needed to be found or ...

Or I might die.

I had changed the cloth on my face and had washed the old one in the basin. Strange thing was, Sebastian didn't even realize that I was missing.

I didn't know what Phoenix was doing to his head because Tamia was still in the dungeons. I was repeatedly trying to send her a mindlink, but every time the connection failed.

"Tamia!" I tried for another mindlink, "You there?"

There was the same whizzing sound in the background, but suddenly it caught signals.

"T... Tina?"

"Oh, Tamia. How are you? Why aren't you receiving mindlinks?"

There was again silence on her end. After a few seconds had passed, I thought the link was again broken, but then I heard a sob.



221 221- Rise From The West



"Tamia? Are... are you crying?" I asked her with a frown and sat straight in bed.

"Tina..." she cried, "Please help me. Take me out of here, Tina... I beg you..."

Tamia? Begging? Did the sun just rise from the west?

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