

37 37- Everything Went Black

Aurora: 1

(Trigger warning: Some graphic details might be disturbing for the readers)

Everyone was busy making arrangements to welcome the Royals. Alpha Blake wanted me to stay at the packhouse and share duties with Kiara, but this time I said a straight no.

His mate wasn't happy with me. Kiara already hated me.

His head warrior had already accused me of stealing her limelight.

I requested him to give me the duty at the border. Facing the Royals was not that easy for me. I had already asked Jai to order blue lenses.

They didn't know the face behind the mask, but my eyes always gave me away. According to Mateo, my eye color was quite rare.

"Hey, Phoenix," one of the warriors called out, "Ready for patrolling?" I waved at him and placed my phone in my pants.

Royals were reported to leave for the visits, and they were planning to stay at every pack house for two days.

Our pack was the last, and I was keeping my fingers crossed that royal women wouldn't recognize me.

The point Jai made about my healing power made sense, but now I was scared of trying it. I had gotten used to this face and the worms feeding on it.

Yes, I know it sounded gross.

However, I was sure it wasn't too easy.

I joined the lines of warriors who were heading towards the eastern border.

"Hey, Phoenix," Garrick, who was before me, nudged me with his elbow, "Weren't you supposed to prepare the hall for the Royals' party? Bet you regret not staying back with Kiara."

"Yeah," I gave him a dry look, "I'd rather wrestle a rogue than share duties with her."

He gave me a thumbs up, "Fair point."

We were moving at a steady pace, and a younger guard was scanning the tree line with his flashlight.

"Anything suspicious?" I called out.

"Just a fox, Phoenix,"

Garrick glanced at him and then looked back at

me, "He is too young and hasn't gotten his wolf yet. I told Kiara to let them practice during the daytime. With an absent wolf, they need to use flashlights."

I didn't remark on that. Even though I didn't have a wolf, she still sent me on this night patrolling, maybe expecting me to argue.

I took out my phone when it pinged. Who else could message me at this hour besides Jai?

The text message read, "Where are you?"

I quickly typed the response and asked him to go to sleep. As expected, there was another message from him, "Did you try healing on your face?"

Urgh! Why couldn't he leave me alone?

"NO!" I typed back and also added an angry emoji with it.

There were more messages from him, but I didn't bother to check my phone. Lately, he had been fighting a lot because of me, and I didn't want him to do that.

I had learned the hard way to take a stand for myself, but I couldn't throw Jai under the bus.

After my patrolling shift, I decided to come back to my room and get some sleep. I had to drag my feet to reach my room. Though my body was

used to doing hard work, without a wolf, my night shifts sucked.

After stripping off my patrol gear, I stepped into the shower, letting the water run over me for longer than usual.

I changed into my silk shirt and matching pair of silk shorts and stood in front of the mirror to brush my damp hair out.

And that was when I froze.

My face.

The rotted, half-melted face was staring back at me. Ha-ha.

I watched casually as a worm slithered out from under the edge of my eye socket. Another moved across my cheek.

They were more like my pets now. I didn't have any idea how Jai used to treat me, and took them out every week.

My skin was cratered and swollen in places. The pus-filled blisters had begun to rise like sickening bubbles, reminding me that my appointment with Jai was due tomorrow.

One of them had popped, and a yellow liquid was oozing out. I placed my hands on the wall on either side of the mirror. Should I try healing?

I raised my hand to my eye level and saw the faint, familiar glow around my palms.

What if Jai was right?

What if the Goddess wanted me to heal my face?

Swallowing hard, I reached up and touched my cheek.

Ah! I sighed at the feeling.

The effect couldn't be described in words. It was soothing, gentle, and cool. I chuckled and closed my eyes like a silly child with my palms placed on my cheeks.

But within seconds, it started to transform.

The pain started slowly, then came crashing into waves. A fiery burn spread across my face as if someone had poured acid over it.

I gasped and tried to stand on my trembling legs. The glow around my hands intensified, and the heat that was emitting was burning me.

More pimples that looked like boils erupted everywhere on my face. I clenched my jaw to bear the pain as more pus ran down my neck.

More worms came out, this time more violently, almost as if they were trying to escape the heat.

"Shit!" I croaked in pain, reaching for my phone, "Jai... please be awake..."

My fingers were trembling as I barely managed to press the call button.

Thank Goddess, he picked up the call. His voice was groggy on the other end, "Hello? Phoenix?"

"Jai..." I tried to speak, but this pain wasn't letting me. It was knocking the air out of my lungs.

"Phoenix! You alright?" Jai's worried voice came out of the phone, but I wasn't able to utter a single word.

This agony was too much to handle.

Not really knowing what to do, I squeezed my eyes in pain and collapsed with a thud. The phone slipped from my hand.

My body slammed against the cold floor, and my vision blurred. Just before everything went black, I faintly heard Jai screaming at the other end of the phone in a panicked voice. And after that, everything went quiet.