



53 53- Hatred

Aurora. ¹

While dancing with him, I could feel people's eyes on us.

On *me*.

It must be beyond their expectations that a king chose an ugly girl like me to have his first dance at an official event.

He was such an easy-going man that for a moment I had almost forgotten that he was not only the king of Velmora Kingdom but also my ex-mate.

My ex-husband.

Two years back, that evening, if Beta Hunter hadn't stopped me, I might have reached him. After that, maybe I could have stayed safe from Tina and Luna Tamia.

Deep in my heart, I was enjoying the fact that right now, my enemies' hearts must be on fire.

Tina, Tamia, Luna Raya, Kiara.

I didn't dare to turn my head and look at them. Even behind this mask, I could feel King Sebastian's eyes on my face.

I had to break the ice, "So, your name is



Sebastian King."

"Yeah. It is," he responded lazily, keeping his focus on me.

"And you're a king!" I again remarked, and he nodded.

"So, your name has something to do with your designation?"

He frowned a little in confusion, and I swore by Moon Goddess that he looked more handsome with those tiny lines on his forehead.

The lines I wanted to remove by rubbing my finger there, or maybe by licking the area. I tried to suppress the giggle that erupted in my throat at the weird thought.

You are a creep, Phoenix. Ha-ha.

"Where is this conversation leading to?" he asked me, shaking his head.

"It's just that..." I murmured, toying with the button on his collar, keeping my gaze on it, "If names really decided fate, then maybe my parents should have named me Luna... or better yet, Your Majesty," I finished with a shrug, then looked up at him, "Tell me, Your Highness. What do you like more? King Sebastian? Or Sebastian King?"

A small smile curled the corner of his lips as he



understood my stupid humor, but the words that followed it were unexpected for me, "You're not only a good warrior and exceptionally good healer but also a very intelligent woman, Phoenix."

The compliment made my ears turn red.

I looked around and was horrified to realize that the music had stopped long ago, and we were swaying in each other's arms for no reason.

Without warning, I hurriedly stepped back, "Th... they are not playing the music."

"Oh, yeah," he appeared as if he didn't give a damn about music, "I was enjoying the dance, ma chérie." 1

In some weird way, the endearment made me squeeze my thighs together.

His hand raised a little, and he tucked my hair strand behind my ear. Feeling like a stupid schoolgirl, I tried to smile, not knowing what to do or say.

Beta Brian was giving me that look from a distance that was loud and clear: *Spare him, Phoenix!*

I got what my pack Beta was trying to tell me and saluted the king, followed by a bow, "It was an honor to dance with you, Your Highness," I



needed to take my leave, "See you around."

I took one or two steps backwards and then turned to leave. He didn't even move but just stood there looking at me.

"Phoenix," I was on the last stair when his voice made me halt in my steps and turn around, "I've heard a lot about your healing power."

There was something on his face that made me swallow my saliva, "Do you need healing, Your Highness?"

He didn't say anything and just nodded at me.

"Okay. I'll give it to you after this party is over?"

"Perfect!" he showed me a thumbs-up sign, and I walked away with a big smile on my face. I could still feel giddiness in the pit of my stomach when I bumped into Jai. 1

"Hey, Jai," I chuckled when I saw him and then hugged him in excitement, "Did you see their faces?" I giggled, not realizing that he was still quiet.

I looked behind and found King Sebastian coming down off the stage. He wasn't alone but was accompanied by Luna Tamia and Beta Brian.

Tamia was speaking hurriedly in a hushed tone while King Sebastian's liquid amber orbs were on me.



My heart started racing, and I felt like it could come out of my chest any minute. I shifted my focus to Jai, and that was when I realized that he wasn't smiling. He didn't seem happy at all.

"Jai?" I whispered, not sure what happened.

"I was waiting, Phoenix," he told me softly.

"Waiting for what?" The words were out before I could stop them.

He kept looking into my eyes before he snapped at me, "You, Phoenix. Who else would I wait for?"

"Jai!" I called him, but he had started walking away from me.

I scurried after him, "Jai! Stop!"

But he didn't.

"Jai. Come on. At least tell me what I have done."

He suddenly stopped at that and turned to me. He never showed me this aggressive side of him. I was never used to it.

He showed that side to others when he stood up for me. But it had never been directed at me. It had never shaken me like this.

"What has gotten into you?" I asked him and could feel my own hurt reflected in my voice. He must have also heard it because he closed his eyes as if trying to control his beast.

"Nothing. Forget it," he kissed my forehead and walked away without another word. Standing there, I noticed his sagged shoulders but couldn't find the reason.

"Are you happy now?" I spun around when I heard Luna Raya behind me.

I mumbled, "Luna?"

"Phoenix. I must say you deserve to live with those worms. Do you know why? Because you're one of them. You never deserved Jal. You only deserve those worms and the foul scent they emit." 1

She was panting now.

"Luna Raya," I observed her face silently, "Why do you hate me so much?"

My unexpected question caught her off guard, "Excuse me?"

"Please do tell me when you have time, Luna Raya. I need to know why you have so much hatred in your heart against me?"

With a heavy heart, I stormed away.

