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Phoenix: 1

"Phoenix. You should go and train with other warriors," This time, Kiara didn't command me. I was sitting on the side of the ground, chilling and scrolling through my phone.

"Not today, Kiara," My gaze stayed on my smartphone screen.

The good thing was that she didn't argue any further and left. But I knew something was cooking in her head.

People like her didn't like it when their so-called authority was challenged by anyone. Raya was also one of them.

"Hey, Phoenix," Jack waved me from a distance, "Getting bolder day by day. Huh!"

I gave him a flying kiss before getting to my feet. I needed to go to that part of the forest that was forbidden for everyone.

"Where are you going?" he started jogging next to me, panting.

"You're getting old, Jack," I slapped the back of my hand on his chest, dodging his question.

"Yeah," he said with a groan and halted. He bent

and placed his palms on his knees.

"What happened?" I asked him in concern.

"Nothing. Just getting old," he said with a wink, making me laugh.

I needed to practice my moves if I wanted to defeat Kiara in her game on the selection day of the Royal Warriors.

The badge meant she would be famous, and in some cases, a royal warrior was considered more than a pack Alpha.

He or she was supposed to stay with the King more than anyone.

Keep dreaming, Kiara. I'll tell you how it feels when the dreams get shattered and ugly.

I was sitting with my back against a rough old tree, my knees pulled against my chest. I was thinking hard about whether I should go ahead and reach that lake where I could find Kiki.

She was the only witch I could trust.

Not everyone was allowed to come here, but I was already a pack alien, so I guess I could get exempted from it. Nobody would even notice if I got eaten by some wild beast.

Suddenly, I heard a soft rustling behind me.

Without looking back, I knew it must be Jai.

"Are you here because Kiara told you that last night King Sebastian..." Before I could finish, he yanked me up and crushed me into a hug.

"I'm not thinking any such thing," he assured me in a whisper. We stayed in each other's embrace for a few moments until he decided to pull back. "But you're playing with fire," he remarked.

I cocked up a brow before placing my hands on my hips, "Oh. So you call King Sebastian's dick, fire?" I cracked up at my own joke, but he stayed serious.

If he was annoyed by mentioning another man's dick, he didn't let it show on his face.

"I'm here because I care for you," He dropped to the ground, brushing away a few leaves. I also sat down across from him on the damp surface.

"Ahan," I picked up a wilted leaf and started examining it, bringing it closer to my eyes.

"Ever since you're back, you aren't the same anymore. What's wrong, Phoenix?"

I was getting tired of his twenty-four-seven nagging that I wasn't same.

Lately, his every conversation either ended up

with my changed personality, or if I was spending my nights with the king.

"Can we talk about something else?" I snapped at him, "Can we give each other the same space that we used to give when we were friends?"

"We are still friends, Phoe!"

"Then maybe start acting like one," I flicked my head to one side, annoyed, and closed my eyes, "Friends don't interrogate friends. They support them, Jai."

He was acting more like my father, as if I were still a fifteen-year-old girl with raging hormones.

What was he expecting me to do? Stay a virgin and die like a virgin.

I had accepted a long time back that marriage and mating weren't for me. Though I was never a one-night stand kind of girl but that didn't mean I couldn't like anyone and go to bed with him.

Like, come on. I'm a normal person who has needs. Sebastian wasn't married. Tina might call him her fiancé, but I never saw a ring on his finger while she flashed that diamond ring along with that fake smile.

"Do you know some witch I can talk to?" The

question just came out of my mouth before I could stop myself.

Jai let out a sharp breath but didn't say anything. I opened my eyes and looked at his puzzled face.

"A witch might make it worse, Phoe," he said, avoiding eye contact, "You never know, these worms might multiply."

"But Kiki didn't..." I trailed off. Shit! Why did I blurt out her name? 1

His brows knitted together, "Who?"

"No one," I got up and brushed off my clothes.

If he wasn't willing to help me, then I might ask Sebastian.

Andddd think of the devil!

I peeked out of the tree trunk when I heard the sound of the vehicles speeding to the main gate of the pack.

Our pack warriors were ready in front of the gate, with Kiara leading them in front. They were there for the Royal protocol.

The first two cars were Mercedes-Maybach S680 that screeched to a stop right before Kiara. I peeked from behind the tree trunk as the doors to the cars opened.

From the first car, King Sebastian stepped out, with Beta Hunter trailing behind him. From the second Tina came out, followed by Luna Tamia.

All the warriors were kneeling to them, but Sebastian's eyes were busy scanning the area...

His golden eyes were searching for someone.

I tried to control my hammering heart and then stepped out, brushing a few strands of hair off my face.

His eyes found me instantly.

And when they did, his lips curved into a warm smile.

I didn't smile back but just nodded at him. His eyes never left me, and for a second, I felt like the world had faded.

And then my glance shifted sideways and boom...

There she was.

Tina.

She was staring at me, and even at this distance, I could see hatred on her face.

So, naturally, I did the only thing that felt right.

I winked!

Her eyes widened, but she controlled her facial expressions and went inside after Sebastian.

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"Soon, Tina. Soon," I mumbled to myself, momentarily forgetting that Jai was right behind me.

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