

The Broken Ones

When I wake up I smell something foul, every time I breathe the smell seems to worsen. I immediately sit up and put the seam of my dress over my mouth and nose. As I open my eyes and look up immediately I see a small woman standing in front of me. She looks beautiful but her paper colored skin and pure black eyes makes her appear inhuman. Her eyes look as if her pupil took over her whole eyes. But what gave her most of her beauty was her ash blonde hair that fell in her face, almost fully over her eyes. And her hair fell to the waist of her blood ripped blue dress.

“Welcome to the place of the broken ones. I've waited a long time for you Asha.” Her voice sent a shiver down my spine and at the same time soothed me. I heard a hint of joy and sadness in her voice. And when I was almost finished admiring her beauty I notice her blood red lips. Instead of the evil grin I thought I'd see there is a frown pulling down the sides of her perfectly symmetrical lips.

“Why? What do you want with me? What are you?” I question as I back away from her. But that's when that horribly foul smell comes back. I try to place what it is as I force myself not to vomit, when I finally look around the room I see everything is covered with red. Blood? I see small bloody handprints on the walls. And it's at that moment panic engulfs me. Fear tries to paralyze me but adrenalin takes over and I immediately search for anything that will help me get out of here. As I look around I see no way in or out. But that makes no sense how did I get into this place. The last thing I remember was walking in the corridor of the emperor's palace trying to finish my chores before the commandant's tea time. I remember that right before I came here I ran into a soldier with dark hair and brown eyes. For punishment he took out his knife and let it

slide across the palm of my hand.I started to walk away but my hand started to burn and when I looked down I had a blue flame on my hand.I started screaming and rubbing my hand on my dress.But the flame would not burn out instead I saw my skin stitch back together by itself. When I look at her again,I see she moved her hair back from her eyes,or what are suppose to be her eyes.Both her eyes are pitch black,like her pupil spread until it took over her whole eye.I look at the rest of her face and see blood and cuts all over her.She has black and blue bruises on her arms and wrist.The blue dress she is wear has been torn in multiple places,and blood stains most of the dress. I try not to but it's like some invisible hand forces me to meet the creature's eyes. I stare deep into its black eyes.What I see in its eyes is all of my worst memories.Some how this thing knows every bad memory I have.In its eyes I see my father being killed by the Alkadama.I see her dark hair and blood red eyes looking at my father,craving my father. Black smoke covers her body like a dress and she wears her victims blood across her face as one would wear a gold metal. I watch as she grabs my father by the throat and throws him against the brick wall of our home. I hear my father whisper one last sentence before the Alkadama takes him.

“Asha I love you,run!”And then he was gone.My eyes start filling with tears and I reluctantly pull away from the things gaze.

“Why did you show me that?What are you?”Against my will my voice cracked and tears started streaming down my face. “ How do you know what happened that day nobody-”I realized I was screaming and I lowered my voice so it wouldn't have the satisfaction of knowing it got to me. “Answer my questions.”

“It won't help you in any way but I guess you should know,”she said with a but the grin didn't reach her eyes. In her deep black eyes I still see that same sadness that I saw before.“I showed you that to help you see who you really are.You are not like everyone else Asha,you are

mine,you are special.You are one of the Broken ones.You are the Amaris.Although you try to hide and mask that part of you but knowing this won't help you Asha. You have to figure out your own fate my hope was to show you who you are and who you are suppose to be but-"

"Who are you and what do you know about my fate?"I saw anger flash across her features when I interrupted her,but she masked it so quickly I wasn't sure I really saw it.She has no right to tell me who I am,no one does.I've lost everything my father,my freedom,my childhood,and I never even met my mother.No one is going to take away my choices,it's all I have left.

"I am Bedisa and I know of every person's fate.But yours my dear girl,"she says as her burning hand caresses my cheek, "stands out brighter than any others that I've seen before.The stars have a plan for you,girl. You have just noticed the difference before I brought you here.I brought you here to help you see who you are.You saw the flame and watched the skin on your palm stitch back together.I know you wonder why and I shall explain.Your mother had the power of knowledge but you possess something way better.You can heal and help those who need it.There is something bad coming to the empire and it is your destiny to stop it.But it is your choice but not only your fate on the line,Asha.Many will die but your sacrifice will save many more."Bedisa looked at me and I saw in her eyes that she had faith in me.She needs me to succeed. But,I'm nothing special.I'm just like everyone else in my tribeI look like most tribal girls do.I have the same black hair that goes down to my waist, same golden brown skin,and hourglass figure I've always had.The only thing that makes me stand out is my forest green eyes.

She must have seen my doubt because she put her hand over my chest and I felt her burning hot heat press into my skin. But the heat didn't hurt,if anything it feels soothing.It's as if all the memories that seem to haunt me at night are slowly fading.As she removes her hand I still

feel the heat on my chest for a while after. Suddenly I see many gens and tribes people, my people crowded together. Most of the gens have blood on their uniforms and blade wounds. The tribes people are covered in soot and have ashes all over their clothes. All of the people were whispering while others were shouting over each other. Bedisa turned around and with one look filled with anger and kindness silenced them all.

“What do they mean? What are they all talking about? What’s coming?”

“Goodbye, Asha”

Suddenly I wake, I am in the slave quarters in my room. I look up and see a golden brown face looking down at me. I peer into his dark blue eyes that are mostly covered by his sandy blonde hair. He is the most attractive boy I have ever seen. He looks around my age but with the way he stares at me so seriously it makes him look way older, and takes away some of his charm. I look down towards his full lips and for just a minute I wonder what it would be like to kiss him. The thought immediately makes me blush and I look away from him. When I turn my head back I see that he’s smiling, and that smile made him look way younger and I see that he is really cute. I feel my face heat up and I smile back at him.

“I’m glad you’re awake, you blacked out but luckily I was walking around the corner and one of the servants said you fell to the ground unconscious.” He has a lovely baritone voice that makes my heart skip. Father always said to lead with my head not my heart. So I started to find out why I recognized this young man.

“Well thank you for helping me. But who you are?” I didn’t mean for it to sound harsh but I knew I came off as rude. “I’m sorry I didn’t mean for it to sound so rude. I recognized you from somewhere, I just can’t place it.”

“Well miss,I could ask you the same question.”He smiled as he said this and I saw a flash of amusement in his eyes.

“But I asked you first.”I knew I was coming off as childish but,I know nothing of this man and if I don’t give the right name to the right people it could result in serious punishment.For people of high classes I am servant or slave,but to those of the same class as me I am mostly malleable because I have to serve the royals and get what they need.There is very few people in the empire that know of my true given name.

“Fine,you made a decent point.I guess I shall tell you my name for something in exchange.”He flashed me a smile meant to make me blush,and to my irritation it worked.

“What?No,if you want something in exchange for you to tell me your name you are insane,sir.”Who does he think he is,trying to make an exchange for his name.I don’t care who he is if he’s too arrogant to give his name out freely he isn’t worth my time.I tried to get out of my bed and feel a horrible ache in my head.He put his warm hand on my shoulder and gently pushes me back on the cot.At the feel of his touch my whole body goes weak and reluctantly I melt into his touch.

“Look I think you have my intentions wrong.So to make up for it I will tell you my name freely.I am Marcus of gens Amara,now if you will,delight me by telling me your name.”As he said this he had that beautiful grin that makes my heart melt.I stare into his eyes like he truly was scared for me,like he cares.But nobody has cared for me except my father. He doesn’t understand that I can’t be feeling this,I can’t fall for someone now. Then it registered that I’m talking to a man in a very high genus.Most would have already sent me to be punished for talking to them as I spoke to him.

“Sir,I am so sorry for the way I was speaking to you.I am a mallen servant,sir.”I try to avoid his eyes but then I hear the most beautiful noise.As I look up I see that he is laughing,as he looks down at me I see amusement flash in his eyes.

“You don’t have to call me sure I am human the same way you are.I am no better than you and you no better than me.Here.”He pulled paper and a feathered pen out of his pocket and wrote something on it.He folded it and stuck it in my hand.Without another word he left me lying on the cot in the slave quarters.

No gen has ever treated me so kindly.All of the gens I’ve met have not even given me a second glance,much less asked for my name.Why would he want my name?Was he going to turn me in for passing out or speaking to him improperly?I sit up and remember the note he gave me.I grabbed the note and started reading.

“I know you don’t trust me yet,I see it when I look into your eyes.If you are willing to take a chance I will have someone come to bring you to me.I really hope you come,MA.”

I have no more time to think of Marcus of gens Amara.The commandant’s bell rings and I rush to get her her afternoon whiskey.As I am putting the whiskey and cup on the tray the bell rings again.The bell rings for the fourth time and I dash up the steps.As I go in the door she is looking out the window.I put the tray down and turn to walk out,before she notices me.

“Go to the wall.”She says this calmly,but I know that when her voice goes calm the more dangerous she is.She has killed 12 of her former slaves for just looking in her eyes.She cares nothing about tribes people we are just slaves to her.In her book we aren’t even good slaves.All of her slaves have been deprived of their names.I should have known she’d notice me. She was trained to notice if a feather fell on the floor.

She turns and finally looks at me and I put my head down immediately. I show no emotion on my face. If there's anything the commandant hates most, it's tears. Her voice is cold and deprived of any emotion.

"You were late. I don't tardiness. Now I have to punish you." She says the word slave like it's rattlesnake venom.

"Turn." As I do I hear a crack, then I feel the pain kick in. I fought to keep my tears at bay but as soon as she excused me I felt warm salty tears roll down my cheeks.

I return to my duties. Later when I go to my quarter. I look into the mirror and see that the golden brown skin on my face has been stained with tears. I look at my midnight hair and see that the brainsuckingly tight bun seems to be disheveled. I struggle to tear the rest of the back of my dark blue slave dress open. I feel large hands gracefully rip the back of my dress open. I clutch the dress over my chest and whip around to see who ripped my dress. As I do I have to tilt my head back to meet his eyes. He is at least a full foot taller than me. I see his perfectly tanned skin, bright blue eyes and sandy hair in a disheveled mess. I slowly take in all of his features and see a smile dancing across his lips.

"Why are you here? How did you get in here? Why did you rip my dress?" I stop talking fearing that I am rambling. As I look up I see that his face has reddened. I wonder if I angered him but as he meets my eyes he is smiling.

"Well I did tell you I would have someone see if you wanted to join me, did I not. I got in here the same way as you my dear the door." The way he said it made me feel as if he was making a joke of me. I was about to demand he get out when he continued talking. "I um ripped your dress because it looked like you were having a hard time and needed the help. It's soaked with blood and already half ripped."

“Oh well thank you for trying to help but I could have got it. You-”

“I can help you more, if you want. I have had a lot of those same beatings. I’ve got pretty good at cleaning them.” I know it would be rude to say no especially because he is from one of the highest gens. But he should not be cleaning up a slave like me.

“Please, I want to help you. It would be my honor.”

“As you wish.” I feel every time his warm finger brush up my back. He opened the back of the dress and gingerly applied the cleaning herbs to the cuts. It felt as if I was being stabbed by a million little thorns.

“There is love and pain, the cuts will refrain, but scars shall permanently remain, I would give up my life so another can see the light of a better day.” He whispers this under his breath as he cleans my back. I look in the mirror and see pain and remembrance and passion as he says this written on his face.

“What does that mean?” As I asked this his brow furrowed and he stopped whispering the phrase.

“Why aren't there any cuts on your back?”

“What do you mean?”

“I know what happened in the commandant's quarters but why aren't there any cuts?” So many thoughts were going through my mind but then I remembered what Bedisa said. “You are one of the Broken ones, the Amara. You saw the flame and watched your skin knit back together.”

“Why did you want to see me anyways?” I say this as he turns around so I can put a black dress with long cuffed sleeves on.

“I wanted to talk to you away from everyone else.” He has that mischievous grin that makes me question all of his motives.

“And what if I don’t want to?” I was just kidding but at the same time genuinely wondering what he would do.

“Well I could order you to come with me but I’d much rather you go willingly.” Everytime we talk he seems to be intentionally trying to annoy me. And every time he succeeds.

“Well we should be going now.”

“Fine but can we at least go somewhere other than the garden, sir?” As I said sir I got the reaction I wanted. I saw anger flash in his eyes then he started smiling that stupidly cute smile. He started walking out of the room and like any gen would, didn’t hold the door for me, but seeing that I’m a slave, I have gotten use to it. He lead me out of the palace gates and any guard we passed bowed their head in respect. It was really surprising because no gen is bowed to no matter how wealthy, or so I thought. As we walked neither of us said much.

“Where may I ask, are you taking me?” I keep looking around us. All I see are trees and the empire walls. I try to see where the path we are on leads but I have never been this far out of the palace walls.

“You shall see when we get there.” I looked up hoping to see that grin that makes my pulse stutter but it wasn’t there. Instead he looked nervous. His eyes refuse to meet my gaze.

“We are here.” As I look around I see a beautiful pasture covered in all different flowers. It is so much better than the palace garden, more wild. I can only make out the colors on most of the flowers, but all of them are more beautiful than the ones in the palace garden.

“I thought you’d like this place. It seems like your style.” I watch as the moonlight makes his once bright blue eyes turn to a heart stopping shade of navy blue. The way the light darkens

his feature while making him look more childish melts my heart.He looks at me as if I have gone deep into a coma.I realize I haven't talked in a while.

"It is beautiful,"I sigh as I take in the view once more.

"Much like you,"As I look over I see his midnight eyes peering down into mine.I see so many emotions cross his impeccable features.

"Marcus,I don't know what to say,"I feel my face heat up and hope that the lack of light covers it up.

"Well I have a confession. I haven't seen you around the palace much but the first time I did I knew I was falling for you when every fiber of my being told me not to.It was a few weeks ago when you were going to the slave quarters.You went at the same time everyday.I asked the slaves around about you but they seem to fear me.I don't understand why I'm just like them enslaved to the empire.I learned your chores and schedule and would watch as you rushed to the kitchen to get the filthy commandant her drink.I was about to introduce myself but I saw you faint but I caught you before you hit the floor.You were twitching and I thought you was going to lose you before I even had you,"he chuckled out of nervousness mostly I think.As he talks I've noticed when he gets nervous he puts his hand on the back of his neck and his face turns red.
"Sorry I must sound really creepy."

"Not at all,I actually find it charming."I can see the relief in his eyes as I say this.

"Good I thought I was losing my charm."And there it is the dumb remark that make him him.

He sits in the grass to lay down and look at the star.I see the shimmering reflection of the stars inside his eyes.I gently lay down beside him.We laugh and look at the stars for quite some time.He tells me small pieces of his past and I tell him of mine.It feels nice to get everything off

my chest.He consoles me about my lack of a mother and I finally allow myself to cry.He makes me feel better about everything.I turn to sneak a look at him and I see his turn towards me too.We stare at each other for some time but I stand and tell him we should make our way back.I know I shouldn't have shut myself off but I could not allow anything to happen between me and a gen.Even if Marcus is different.

Marcus walked me to the slave quarters like a gentleman but threw a back hooded cape over his face that I didn't see earlier.It hurts that he would be ashamed of me but I understand he doesn't want to get me in trouble.We continue to meet in the wildflower forest for 2 months.

I hear a silent knock at my door and Marcus walks in.I look into his deep blue eyes and see his excitement radiating off of his whole body reflected in his eyes.I watch as he takes in my appearance for the first time tonight.I am wearing my midnight colored hair in waves down my back.I wanted to impress him so I wore the dress I have been sewing for years.The dress is a floor length midnight blue,that fits my curved hips, with a silver lace corset and sleeve that drape down my arms.I was saving it for my wedding but I wanted to wear it tonight to surprise him and I see I did.When he meets my eyes I see yearning,passion,and desire in his eyes and that brings a smile to my light pink lips.

"You look extraordinary,"he says this with a special softness in his voice he always uses when he speaks to me,as if he speaks too loud he would make me disappear.

"As do you."I throw my hooded cape on that Marcus had given me months ago and walk out of the room making sure nobody spots us.After we are out of the palace walls I put my hand in his and he practically pulls me after him to reach the wildflower forest.As we get there he grabs me by the waist and spins me around in the air.I laugh as I wrap my arms around his

neck.He looks at me with the biggest smile but I feel a pit in my stomach I have been lying to him for months.I sees the seriousness in my expression and sits me down.

“What’s wrong?”I see it in his face,he’s looking for what he did wrong.

“Nothing,I just have to tell you something I’ve been keeping from you since we met.”

“Asha,what do you mean?Are you engaged with another guy?Do you have kids?”He joked but there was a sudden seriousness to him that wasn’t there before.

“Do you remember when you were cleaning my back the first night we met?”As he shakes his head yes I keep going. “Well you asked why there were no wounds.Well that’s when I lied I just didn’t know if I could trust you.But I am the Amaris,the Promised.When I fainted a creature named Bedisa called me to her to tell me who I am.I can heal people I can heal myself.That why there were no wounds when the commandant whipped me.I understand if you think I’m a freak and don’t want to be with me,just please don’t tell anyone.”I looked into his eyes and all I saw there was wonder and joy.And something I have never seen before love.He loved me.

“Asha,”I love the way he says my name,as if I am an angel sent to save him. “I don’t care what kind of power you have I don’t even care that you are a slave.Keep as many secrets you want I will never stop loving you.You make me better and these past few months with you have been extraordinary.I would never leave you,love,never hurt you,you are the best thing that has ever happened to me.I don’t want to lose you.”I saw every emotion pass in his feature.

“And you won’t lose me because I love you,Marcus Amara.And nothing can take me away from you.”I walked closer to him and he closed the rest of the distance.He placed his hands on my waist and pulled me to him.I put one of my hands at the nape of his neck and let the others tangle in his blonde hair.We are so close that I can feel his breath on my lips.As he notices our

proximity I feel his breath hitch and his heart beat faster. He slowly leans in and kisses me I didn't expect such passion to be in his kiss. I feel the fiery heat coming from his body. As we reluctantly pull away he looks directly in my eyes and I see something that wasn't there before sorrow.

"Asha I have to be honest with you," His body tenses but he doesn't step back from me. My hands fall to his chest as I take in his expression. "I'm not only a gen I'm one of the broken ones like you, love. I can inflict physical pain with my mind instead of heal. I met with Bedisa but I am also the P-"

"Prince Marcus!" A husky female voice shouts. "What are you doing out here?" As Marcus or should I say Prince Marcus turns he addresses the voice. That I now recognize as the commandant, fear and anger course through my veins. Fear of the commandant and anger at Marcus for lying to me.

"Commandant shouldn't you be at the palace." He has no hint of fear or any emotion in his voice, just deep aggravation.

"No I came to find you but you weren't at the palace. I follow you and see you committing treason to the empire. It is treason to the empire to have a relationship with a slave so because of you the emperor could be overthrown. But don't worry while the people kill you I shall keep your father company. The gens shall show no mercy with your case of treason but the emperor and you will lose many subjects because of this, sir. And this act with a slave will have you ended." The way she says it I know she hates Marcus the commandant always wanted him out of the way so she could get to the king. Now she finally will. She pulls out a kiffia sword and Marcus does the same. How did he hide the blade the whole time?

“Asha,I love you,run!”He shouts the same thing that my father did but I run as he fights the commandant.I can’t stand to watch what happens to him.I run as far as I can only to drop behind a tree as another vision comes to me.Bedisa calls me back to the place of the broken ones.