

## **My Sister 115**

Chapter 115 REGRETS AND WHAT-IFS

KIERAN'S POV

I stood, frozen, watching Sera's retreating figure until the sway of her hair and the measured lift of her shoulders disappeared behind the arch of the park entrance.

The ache in my chest wasn't a sharp stab—it was the slow, gnawing kind that crept in and hollowed everything out.

It was pain, yes, but pain I couldn't quite qualify.

The cruelest part was that it shouldn't have hurt—not when she had made it clear again and again that there was no room for me in her world.

And after that phone call the night I let myself have a little too much to drink, after Lucian's curt voice came down the line, practically telling me to fuck off and stop disrupting their time together, I realized: there was no going back for us.

If there had even been a 'back' in the first place.

Perhaps that was what haunted me the most—the realization that Sera and I had never truly had a past together. Not one worth holding onto, at least.

From the very beginning of our so-called marriage, I had never really seen her. I had looked through her, past her, around her, as though she were nothing more than an inconvenient shadow. The ghost of my mistakes.

My hatred—born of my own blindness, my own misplaced affections—had been the lens through which I saw everything she did.

And through that warped lens, she had always come out small. Invisible. I let myself believe that lie because it was easier than admitting how much of me was bound up in someone I refused to acknowledge.

If not for the attack at the funeral—the blood, the screaming, the bone-deep terror of almost losing her—I would have gone on this way indefinitely.

Ignoring her. Overlooking her. Pretending she was nothing more than the silent, unremarkable mother of my child, tethered to my life by duty alone.

And so I asked myself, staring at the empty space where she had stood moments before: what exactly was I losing now? What was I mourning?

Could I even call the cause of this ache in my chest love? Did I have the right to use such a word after all the ways I'd fucked up?

The echo of Daniel's laughter floated faintly in my mind, and I felt myself drawn back to the bench.

This was his spot, the one he always claimed when we came here, and as I lowered myself onto it, gripping the wooden slats, a memory bloomed vividly in my mind.

He must have been about seven years old, too young to ask introspective questions. Yet, he'd scrambled up beside me and fixed his wide innocent eyes on me as he asked: 'Daddy, what is love?'

At the time, my thoughts had gone straight to Celeste.

Surely our relationship was proof enough. After all, wasn't that what everyone said? That Celeste and I were love's perfect example?

But even in that moment, something in me held back. Something in me knew better.

So I had told him instead about my parents—two fated wolves who had overcome all odds and chosen each other and stayed by each other's side until the end.

Their steadiness, their loyalty, the awe with which my father looked at my mother, even after decades together. The way he worshiped the ground she walked on and would burn the world down for her.

That, I'd told Daniel, was love.

It was what I thought I was missing, what I thought Sera had taken from me.

But now, with Celeste back in my life, I found myself questioning everything.

The love I thought I had with her—it wasn't what I had imagined.

Yes, once upon a time, we had been the golden couple: the Alpha heir and the Lockwood princess.

Together we had been envied, admired, praised. Dating Celeste had satisfied every ounce of ego in me.

She was grace and beauty, and she sparked a fire in me. We'd been young and wild once—stolen nights, burning kisses that promised more but never crossed the final line.

Edward Lockwood had made it very clear he wouldn't tolerate his daughter ending up pregnant before marriage, especially not as a minor.

I had respected that, or at least abided by it, believing that our fairy-tale ending was only a matter of time. The golden couple's coronation.

I had thought Celeste and I were destined. That nothing could sever what we had.

But then that night—that fateful night—came, and everything veered off course.

In hindsight, I'm surprised Edward didn't sink his claws into my heart afterward. After all, it might have been with the wrong daughter, but I'd broken his rules, nonetheless.

Anyways, when Celeste returned to me, I expected we would fall back into each other with desperate hunger, feverishly making up for the years we'd lost.

I thought the first chance we got, I would pull her into my arms and never let her go again.

Yet, the truth was damning. I found myself avoiding it. Avoiding her.

Every time we got close, my body reacted with instinctive hesitation, and I didn't understand why until I saw Lucian and Sera together.

The way he looked at her, the way her laughter softened in his presence—it enraged me. And that rage cracked something open inside me.

I realized then that I did care for Celeste, but not in the way I had convinced myself.

The fierce possessiveness that clawed through me at the sight of Sera with another man was something I had never once felt with Celeste. It was primal, raw, uncontrollable.

Everyone around me had told me I loved Celeste, and I had echoed the words back so many times I had nearly believed them.

But now? Now my heart recoiled from the script I had been reading my entire life. Resistance, sharp and undeniable, pressed in with every thought of returning to what I once thought I wanted.

With a heavy sigh, I rose from the bench. The weight of the memories crowding in was too heavy. Suffocating.

But it seemed I wasn't through walking down memory lane.

My steps led me toward the library by the park almost by instinct.

It was here, only days ago, that I had spoken with the old scholar who lived here—a man whose mind was a treasure chest of lore, half-forgotten traditions, and truths buried beneath centuries of repetition.

I had asked him a question I never thought I would: Was there a way, beyond scent and wolf recognition, to truly identify one's mate? A way to cut through doubt, to pierce the fog of uncertainty that plagued me?

The scholar's eyes had twinkled knowingly, as if he saw deeper into me than I intended him to.

He told me there was. The most direct and effective way was through the mating mark itself.

"If the person is truly your fated mate," he had said, "then marking them—whether or not you possess wolves, whether or not your senses confirmed it—would awaken the bond, would bind your souls together with undeniable clarity. Even if all else is muted, the mark will not lie."

It should have been Celeste I thought of in that moment. By all logic, by every expectation laid on my shoulders, it should have been her.

But the instant the words left his lips, my mind betrayed me. I thought of Sera. I thought of her neck beneath my lips, of the delicate curve where her pulse thundered.

And the question tore through me like a blade: what would have happened if I had marked her back then at the blood hunt? Or the night I kissed her on her front porch? Or on the yacht? Or in the villa?

Would the truth have awakened between us?

Would I have seen her differently, known her differently? Would all this pain, this tangled mess, have been avoided?

I remembered standing there, bracing my hands against the scholar's desk, feeling the weight of that possibility pressing down on me.

My entire life, reframed by a single choice I had never made.

Before I could follow that dangerous train of thought further, and get consumed by regrets and what-ifs, Gavin's voice ripped through my mind, urgent and sharp. 'Alpha. We've caught him. The mastermind behind Seraphina's kidnapping. He's in custody.'

My heart lurched, thundering in my chest.

For a moment, the shadows of the library receded from my mind, and all I could hear was the echo of those words.

The mastermind. The one who had dared to touch her. The one who had tried to take her from me.

The hollow ache of loss twisted into something else—something hotter, sharper, alive with purpose. For the first time that evening, I felt clarity burning through the haze.

And with it came relief—because if I didn't find something else to focus on, I would lose my fucking mind.