

## **My Sister 117**

Chapter 117 MY HERO

SERAPHINA'S POV

Two days had passed since my last conversation with Kieran.

Two days since my preternatural encounter in the forest.

Two days since the storm inside me had ebbed, leaving me raw and hollow—adrift between the crushing silence where my wolf should have been and hope, that one day, that hollow would fill.

At first, I wanted nothing more than to shut the world out. To curl up in my room and let the ache swallow me whole.

To drown in my sorrow, convincing myself I had been a fool to believe—even for a heartbeat—that I could belong in a world that had spent so long pretending I didn't exist.

But that spiral, that weakness pulling me toward despair, wasn't why I had come here.

I remembered the old woman's words—how pain blinded more than darkness, how patience would draw strength where doubt only smothered it.

I had made a vow when I joined the OTS. I wasn't here for Kieran. Not even for Lucian.

I came for Daniel.

And for myself.

That memory—like a spark fanned to flame—burned through the fog of dejection, reminding me that strength was never born in a single moment.

It was in choosing, again and again, not to give up.

Strength wasn't a straight line. It was bruises, failures, moments of humiliation, and standing up again anyway.

That night, as I sat cross-legged on my bed with my phone balanced on my knees and the screen illuminated Daniel's bright, eager face, my resolve strengthened.

His grin stretched wide, his cheeks flushed with excitement.

"Mom!" His voice was bubbling with energy, the way it always did when he couldn't wait to share something with me. "You won't believe what Grandpa started teaching me today!"

I laughed softly at his enthusiasm, adjusting the angle of the camera so he could see me better. “Oh? What’s got you so worked up?”

He leaned closer to the screen, his eyes glowing with the kind of joy that only sparkled in the innocent eyes of children. “Werewolf history! Grandpa said I’m old enough now to start learning about the legends. And, Mom—”

His voice dropped into a conspiratorial whisper, though his excitement still shone through. “He told me the story of the Lone Wolf. Alcanor.”

I blinked, sitting up straighter. “Alcanor?”

I had heard scraps of Alcanor’s story before—half-whispered fragments that never formed the whole.

When we were children—when Celeste was still very little and I still had a voice in my family—Ethan and I used to bicker endlessly over whether Alcanor was a man or a woman.

Our mother had overheard once and, in her usual clipped way, told us not to waste time on “just a legend.”

But I remember the way her eyes lingered on me afterward, the faintest curve of her mouth when I held my ground.

And then she added: “But only a woman could have withstood such trials and still prevailed.”

And that quiet acknowledgment, subtle as it was, had been rare enough to burn itself into memory.

And maybe that’s why the name Alcanor always stayed with me, long after the argument ended.

Daniel nodded vigorously, his curly hair bouncing. “Yeah! He was incredible, Mom. Stronger than whole packs put together. He fought not just with claws, but with... with this kind of righteousness. Grandpa said nobody even knows if he was really a man or a woman. Some people think he wasn’t either, just that he wandered alone, without a pack, but wherever he went, he brought peace. He protected both wolves and humans when they were at risk. And guess what?”

His voice trembled with awe. “Grandpa said I could be like him someday.”

The screen blurred as tears pricked my eyes, unbidden. Daniel’s little face, so earnest, so certain—it was everything I had ever dreamed of for him. A future unchained from the shadows of my weakness, filled instead with light and purpose.

I swallowed hard, forcing my voice steady. “Did your Grandpa really say that?”

“Yes!” Daniel’s chest puffed with pride. “He said if I keep learning and if I work hard, by the time I’m ten, I might even start training with the pack. Isn’t that amazing?”

I smiled, though my fingers tightened on the edge of my phone. "That is amazing. I'm so proud of you, my love."

A pang went through me. Pride and fear tangled in equal measure. My boy was growing so quickly, stepping into a destiny that carried weight beyond his years.

And I'd known it since he was very little. Daniel was clever, strong, he held an innate power that even I could sense.

I knew without a doubt that fate had great plans for my son.

And I...

Insecurity clawed its way up my throat before I could stop it.

"Daniel..." My voice softened. "Would you be...disappointed in me if I never got my wolf?"

His grin faltered. His little brows furrowed the way Kieran's did when he was deep in thought. "Disappointed? Why would I be?"

I dropped my gaze, ashamed of my own weakness. “Because I’m not like other wolves. Because no matter how hard I train, I’ll always be missing a piece of myself. And if I’m missing it, maybe...maybe you’ll be missing something too.”

The silence stretched, heavy, until Daniel’s voice cut through—firm, steady, far older than his years.

“Mom, no.”

I looked back at the screen, startled. His eyes burned with conviction.

“I mean, yeah, I admire Alcanor. He’s like—wow, a real hero, right? But do you know what made him special? What made him special was that he didn’t give up. Even when he didn’t have a pack, even when everyone thought he was nothing, he proved them wrong.”

His little hand came up, pressing to his chest. “You always tell me that heroes aren’t the strongest ones—they’re the ones who refuse to quit. And, Mom...” His voice cracked with emotion. “That’s you. You’re already my hero.”

My breath caught.

The screen shimmered as tears spilled freely down my cheeks, but I didn’t bother wiping them away. My son, my Daniel—he was so much stronger, wiser, than I had ever been at his age.

I forced a smile through the sob lodged in my throat. "Oh, my sweet boy..."

"Don't cry, Mom!" He scrambled, panicked by my tears. "I didn't mean to make you sad—"

"I'm not sad," I interrupted gently, shaking my head. "These are happy tears. You just...you don't know how much your words mean to me."

Daniel relaxed, giving me a sheepish grin. "Well, good. Because it's true. You're the one teaching me what it means to never give up. You're already stronger than most wolves, even if they don't see it."

I touched the screen, as though I could reach through and hold his face. "I love you, Daniel. More than anything in this world."

"I love you too, Mom," he said without hesitation.

When the call ended, I sat for a long moment in silence, the tears drying on my cheeks.

Daniel's words lingered, wrapping around me like armor. 'You're already my hero.'

I realized then that I had let one man's rejection, one pack's scorn, define me for far too long.

I wasn't worthless.

I wasn't weak.

And I would not let anyone—rogues, packs, or even my own self-doubt—steal from me the truth that my son had already seen.

By the next morning, the fire in me had reignited.

When I stepped back onto the sparring mats with Maya, I wasn't the same Sera who had hesitated, who had pulled her punches for fear of being inadequate.

Maya circled me, her smirk sharp, eyes glittering with challenge. "Come on, Sera. You're still moving like you're afraid to break something. You want to survive the trial? You want to stand up to Jessica? You'll need more than careful footwork."

Her words stung, but I knew she wasn't wrong. My stance was tight, cautious, as though every shift in balance might send me crashing down.

Sweat dampened my hairline, trickling into my eyes. We were in the Arena today, and the cold walls echoed with the scuff of our boots and the dull thud of bodies sparring in the nearby mats.

“Loosen up,” Maya barked, darting in with a quick feint toward my ribs. I flinched, raising my guard too high, and she chuckled under her breath. “Predictable.”

Heat flared in my cheeks—gods, she was annoying as my trainer.

I pivoted on my heel, trying to anticipate her next strike, but she was faster—always faster.

She ducked low, sweeping at my legs. I stumbled back, barely catching my balance before she pressed forward again, jabbing lightly at my shoulder. Not enough to hurt, but enough to humiliate.

Gods, I wished we were training in private.

“What did I say about silencing that voice, Sera? You’re thinking too much,” she taunted, her movements light, predatory. “Every step, every swing—you hesitate. You gonna hesitate when someone’s trying to tear your throat out?”

My chest heaved as I adjusted my footing, anger pushing at the edges of my restraint. She wanted me to snap, I realized. She wanted me to stop holding back.

Maya lunged again, this time aiming for my midsection.

Instinct overrode doubt—I twisted sideways, her strike grazing past me, and brought my arm up in a block that jarred my entire shoulder.

My breath caught, but for the first time, I hadn't flinched.

"Better," she muttered, circling again. Her grin widened, feral and approving. "But not enough."

Something in me shifted. I stopped hearing the shuffle of others training, stopped caring about whether I looked clumsy or too slow.

All that existed was Maya, the rhythm of her feet, the fire in her eyes daring me to rise higher.

I gritted my teeth, stepped in hard, and for once, I didn't second-guess the motion. My fist drove forward, cutting through the space between us and connecting squarely with her jaw. A solid thud reverberated through my knuckles, sharp and satisfying, like striking through stone that had long blocked my path.

Maya staggered back, eyes wide with shock.

For a heartbeat, I froze, horrified. "Shit. Maya, I—I didn't mean—"

But then she laughed. A full, throaty laugh that I'm sure everyone in the Arena heard.

“Well, well!” she said, rubbing her jaw with a grin. “That’s what I’m fucking talking about!”

Heat flared in my cheeks, but pride curled in my chest.

She hopped giddily and pulled me into a hug, instantly switching to best friend mode. “Yes, babe, yes!”

She pulled away, holding me at arm’s length. “If you keep this up, Sera, you’re going to crush the trial—and Jessica’s stupid face. What have I been telling you? You’ve got more in you than you realize.”

Her words struck a chord, not unlike Daniel’s.

And the more I heard them, the more I believed them.