

My Sister 119

Chapter 119 SERA OF OTS

SERAPHINA'S POV

Resolve was a strange thing. It didn't always arrive like a thunderclap or a war cry.

Sometimes, it slipped in quietly, like a tide I hadn't noticed until it carried me farther than I expected.

After my dinner with Lucian, that tide hadn't receded. It stayed with me, washing away the last clinging doubts I had about my place here.

His words—'You are exactly the kind of wolf the Moon Goddess meant to bless'—still echoed in my head.

I wasn't naïve enough to let praise turn me reckless, but it had steadied me.

I wasn't here just to grow stronger for myself anymore.

I was here for all of us—every wolf who had ever been told they were half-formed, unworthy, invisible. Wolves like me. Wolves who had forgotten what it felt like to hold their heads high.

And there wasn't much time left. Barely two weeks stood between us and the LST.

It had been ten years since OTS first opened its gates, and according to Maya, this anniversary's LST had drawn more wolves than in the history of OTS.

Volunteering along with many other students to help with preparations was a no-brainer.

That was how I got partnered with Judy Barnes, a pretty redhead Omega who had apparently baked the cake for my surprise birthday party.

We ended up at the reception desk of the Grand Crest Hotel, arms full of ledgers, guest lists, and room keys, trying to corral the chaos that descended with every new arrival.

The lobby buzzed with sound—laughter, barking orders, the shuffle of boots on polished marble.

Wolves poured in from every direction, representing packs from the south—which was Judy's and my jurisdiction.

Some radiated sharp dominance, others carried the mellow air of travelers come to observe rather than compete.

"Okay," Judy muttered beside me, flipping through a ledger while her auburn braid slid over her shoulder. "Next up: Cypress Vale Pack, twelve members."

I glanced toward the doors. Sure enough, a group strode in, led by a tall man with raven hair streaked with silver. His smile was easy, his eyes bright with the kind of warmth that made me think of fall.

“Welcome to the Grand Crest Hotel,” I said, inclining my head with a warm smile. “I’m Sera, and this is Judy. We’ll be assisting with your stay.”

“Alpha Thomas, Cypress Vale,” he introduced smoothly, his voice carrying the timbre of someone who was used to being listened to but not obsessed with being obeyed. “Thank you for hosting us.”

Behind him, his wolves—obviously strong, but refreshingly unpretentious—bowed their heads politely. They smelled faintly of pine resin and fresh earth.

They were followed by the Seabreeze Pack, who arrived in a flurry of chatter and bright clothing, the kind of people who wore smiles like jewelry.

Their Luna, a petite woman with hair dyed sea-green, winked at me as if we were old friends.

Then came the Granite Fang Pack, whose Alpha barely spoke at all. He was broad, stone-faced, and his wolves carried themselves with a military precision that made my back straighten automatically.

Each pack had its flavor, its weight, and Judy and I worked like cogs in a machine—assigning rooms, fielding questions, smoothing over little disputes.

The hours blurred, the stack of check-in forms dwindling and replenishing like a tide.

It was exhausting. But it was also invigorating. Every time I lifted my gaze, I caught sight of faces—faces that didn't know me, didn't know my past—and yet, here I was, standing as their first point of contact.

Not as the ostracized Lockwood daughter, or the invisible Blackthorne wife.

Here, I was just...Sera of OTS.

That peace and exhilaration carried me until the doors slammed open with a force that rattled the crystal chandeliers.

The Shadow Claw wolves swept in like a stormfront.

At their head was Brynjar. I didn't need the whispered comments behind me or the guest profile document to know his name; his presence announced it loud enough.

Thick shoulders, blond hair cropped close to his scalp, and eyes the color of burnt copper. He walked with the swagger of someone who had never heard the word 'no' in his life.

“Reception,” he barked before even reaching the desk. “We need our rooms. Now.”

Judy and I exchanged a quick glance. She squared her shoulders, but I could see the flicker of unease in her eyes.

Shadow Claw’s reputation preceded them—they were infamous for their aggression and for looking down on anyone they considered weak.

I pulled the ledger closer, flipping to their entry. “Shadow Claw Pack, Beta Brynjar leading. Five competitors, six attendants.”

“Yes, yes,” he interrupted, drumming his fingers on the marble counter. “Give us the Alpha wing.”

I looked up. “That won’t be possible,” I answered evenly. “The Alpha wing is strictly reserved—for Alphas,” I emphasized, since his big head came with a lacking sense of self.

“Your assigned rooms are here.” I slid the keys toward him.

He didn’t take them. Instead, his lips curled in a mocking smile. “Those rooms reek.”

My brow furrowed. “Reek?”

“Like an Omega’s den,” he sneered. His voice carried easily, drawing the attention of other guests in the lobby. “Do you expect Shadow Claw to debase ourselves in a place like that? We deserve the Alpha wing.”

Judy stiffened at the insult, and heat licked at the back of my neck, but I kept my expression even. “All packs are bound by the same rules, Brynjar. The Alpha wing is for Alphas, Lunas, and their direct mates. No exceptions.”

He leaned closer, his breath sharp with the tang of meat. “Funny. A place that trains pathetic outcasts without wolves now presumes to lecture us on rules. Tell me, do you truly think weaklings like you can dictate terms to Shadow Claw?”

The words hit their mark. I felt the eyes on me, felt the old sting of dismissal rise like a phantom bruise.

For a heartbeat, the urge to shrink back warred with the vow I’d made to myself.

But then I remembered what I said to Lucian. ‘I’ve built my own armor.’

I picked up the keys from the counter, shoved them squarely at Brynjar’s chest, and met his eyes without flinching.

“If Shadow Claw warriors lack the basic discipline to stay in the rooms assigned to them,” I said, my voice clear enough to carry through the lobby, “then that’s your shame. Because strength that crumbles at the smell of an Omega isn’t strength at all. It’s insecurity. Tell me, Brynjar, are you insecure?”

A ripple went through the watching crowd. Brynjar's jaw clenched, his fingers tightening around the keys. For a moment, I thought he might throw them back at me.

But the silence stretching around him was worse than any weapon. Every gaze pinned him, waiting to see what he would do.

And under that weight, his swagger faltered.

He shoved the keys into his pocket and muttered something under his breath before jerking his head toward his pack. They slunk off toward the elevators, stiff-backed but silent.

As soon as his broad shoulders disappeared, Judy let out a low whistle. She angled her ledger to shield her hand and gave me a covert thumbs-up.

'Nice,' she mouthed.

I allowed myself the faintest smile, then turned to greet the next pack as though nothing had happened.

The line of guests began moving again, chatter resuming like a stream after a boulder had been pulled from its path.

It wasn't until later, during our short break, that someone approached me.

"Hey," a voice said, warm and slightly roughened at the edges.

I turned to find a man leaning casually against one of the pillars. His hair was a shade between brown and ash, and his eyes—sharp, curious—watched me with interest.

His build was lean, more wiry than bulky, but the easy way he carried himself told me he knew how to use every inch of it.

"I saw what you did back there," he continued. "Nice handling. Most people just cave to Shadow Claw to keep the peace."

"Yeah, I have experience caving to bullies," I replied cautiously. "Never again."

His grin widened. "I'm Leo, Moss Stone Pack."

I recognized his Pack. They were based in the neutral land and were active members of OTS.

"And trust me," he continued, "we deal with crap like that all the time. Those guys act like the world revolves around them."

I found myself relaxing. “Sera,” I said, offering my hand.

His grip was firm but not overbearing. “Figured. Word gets around.”

“Does it now?” I arched a brow.

“Sure. New faces, wolves without wolves, stirring things up at OTS? People notice.” He shrugged. “Anyway, if you want some tips for speeding up check-ins, I’ve got a few. No sense letting jerks like Brynjar waste your time.”

He rattled off a handful of suggestions—streamlining paperwork, arranging keys in advance for bigger packs, ways to politely but firmly redirect complaints. Practical, simple things, but delivered with the confidence of someone who’d clearly done this before.

I found myself smiling despite the ache in my feet and the knot forming in my shoulders. “Thanks. That’ll help.”

“No problem. And if you need backup when Shadow Claw comes sniffing again, I’ll be around. I’m assisting with logistics.” He winked, then pushed off the pillar and melted back into the crowd.

By the time the day ended, I was drained to the bone. My feet throbbed, my throat was dry, and my hands smelled faintly of ink and polished wood from handling so many ledgers and keys.

But as Judy and I finally collapsed into chairs at the edge of the lobby, I couldn't stop the swell of satisfaction inside me.

I had faced the storm and not bent. I had stood before the watching eyes of dozens of packs and refused to let someone else's arrogance define me.

For once, I wasn't left hollow after a confrontation. I was full—of purpose, of quiet pride, of the certainty that I was exactly where I was meant to be.

The LST was still ahead, and gods knew what challenges would come with it. But I was ready.

For myself.

For Daniel.

And for every wolf who had ever been told they were less.