

My Sister 133

Chapter 133 MADDENING AND INTOXICATING

KIERAN'S POV

As soon as I stepped foot into the OTS headquarters, I realized what a stupid mistake I'd made.

But then again, wasn't I making a lot of those lately?

When Gavin handed me the phone and told me who was on the line, my first instinct was to laugh it off—maybe even toss the damned thing into my office fire pit.

I had a hard time getting a handle on the kind of man Reed was, but from my experience, he wasn't the type who sought others out—or at least, me—unless there was a calculation behind it.

And I was sure, this meeting request from him wasn't courtesy—it was strategy.

And, of course, there was a chance that it was just plain old provocation.

The LST was already making waves across the entire werewolf world—and my ex-wife was at the center of it all.

Seraphina, once overlooked and hidden, was now shining under the spotlight as Lucian Reed's star trainee.

The image of her at the gala still clawed at me at the most inopportune times—the way she'd stood beside him, luminous in her gown, her chin tilted high enough to tell the world she wasn't afraid anymore.

More than her beauty and fierce confidence, what really gutted me was the way she looked like she belonged there—next to him.

It seemed that she had made her choice and was sticking firmly to it. And she'd chosen him.

I should have hung up. I nearly did—my thumb hovered over the disconnect button, pulse pounding.

But then...I didn't.

Because wouldn't that be declaring that Lucian had some kind of hold over me?

Maybe curiosity, maybe pride—most likely both—forced me to accept.

The meeting location he proposed was the OTS Arena itself.

In the hours before our meeting, I'd struggled to find his angle and come up empty.

As soon as I noticed he was becoming something of a fixture in Sera's life, I'd had Gavin investigate his background—more than once.

But every report came back spotless—no illicit trades, no political missteps, no exploitable weaknesses. It was almost too perfect, as if he curated what people were allowed to see.

And that was enough to make me suspicious.

How had he built his empire so quietly and steadily? What were his plans now that he was stepping into the light?

I had no answers for my countless, gnawing questions. So all I could do was watch patiently, waiting for inevitable cracks in his flawless facade to show.

And what better way to monitor him than on his turf?

The OTS Arena rose before me like some ancient coliseum reborn, its edges gleaming in the morning sun, shadows slicing across its structure.

The closer I came, the more I had to admit—reluctantly—that no secondhand account had done it justice.

This place wasn't just built; it was forged. Every stone screamed permanence, every curve of the stands bent toward spectacle, every shimmer of protective wards along the perimeter promised something both brutal and glorious.

Lucian was already there, of course, waiting for me like he owned not just the Arena, but the very air itself.

His posture was easy and controlled, his hands clasped behind his back. The way his scrutinizing gaze washed over me made me bristle.

"Alpha Blackthorne," he greeted, his low voice calm—to the point that it was unsettling.

"Cut the pleasantries, Reed," I said, stepping onto the sand of the Arena floor.

The grit shifted beneath my boots, and I couldn't help imagining what it would feel like when soaked with blood. "Why did you ask me here?"

His mouth curved slightly in the barest suggestion of a smile as he swept his arm around us. “You don’t find it impressive?”

I swept my gaze across the vastness of the place, the tiered seating that seemed to swallow the horizon, the wards that shimmered faintly like heat mirages.

It was impressive. But I’d be damned before I admitted it aloud.

“You didn’t summon me here just to give me a tour of your playground,” I hissed. “What. Do. You. Want?”

He turned his head, studying the light as it fell over the pillars that jutted from the ground.

His silence stretched long enough to irritate me, until finally he asked, almost idly, “Do you expect to witness her transformation here?”

My chest constricted. I didn’t need him to say her name—I knew exactly who he meant.

Rage and regret battled in me as the memory of the gala returned in vivid detail.

Seraphina’s laughter spilling out, bright and bittersweet, her hand resting on his arm as if it belonged there.

The pride blazing in her eyes—for him. Never me.

Realization hit me like a sucker punch.

Lucian Reed hadn't called me here for business. The fucker called me here to gloat.

"You bastard," I hissed, spinning on my heel. "You dragged me all the way here to what? Rub it in my face?"

I was halfway to leaving when his voice carried after me, sharp as a whip.

"Aren't you the least bit curious?"

I stopped. Against my better judgment, I stopped. Because that was exactly what I was: curious.

Lucian's tone deepened, deliberate. "Don't you wonder what allowed her to step out of the shadows?" He smirked, obviously proud of his wordplay. "To stand tall, confident, unbreakable? To become so...captivating?"

My fists clenched at my sides.

"I didn't do anything extraordinary," he went on smoothly. "All I did was what you never managed. I didn't neglect her. I didn't hurt her."

I whirled, fury burning hot in my veins. "You have no fucking right to lecture me."

His composure cracked, but all it did was reveal the steel beneath. "On the contrary, I find I do. Before I knew your history, I thought you were a great Alpha. A wise man. Someone worthy of respect."

He shook his head, and the disappointment etched into his features made my teeth grind. "But now? All I see is weakness. A flawed man."

The insult exploded inside me, a raw detonation of shame and fury I couldn't contain.

"You think you can judge me?" My voice thundered, echoing through the empty arena. "You've known Seraphina for what—months? I shared a life with her—a marriage. We have a son together, Lucian. A son. That bond outweighs anything you can claim."

He didn't flinch. "And yet, the time I will spend with her from now on will surpass yours. The place I will hold in her life will surpass yours. And perhaps"—his voice dropped, almost taunting—"we will have children together too. What flimsy thread will you then hold on to?"

I snapped.

I closed the distance in a heartbeat and drove my fist into his jaw. The impact reverberated up my arm, sharp and satisfying.

Lucian staggered back, but he didn't fall. In fact, he straightened, wiped the blood from his split lip with the back of his hand, and smiled.

"Finally," he murmured. "I've wanted this for a long, long time."

The fight was instant, feral.

Lucian came at me hard, his strikes clean and merciless, honed by years of training.

I countered with brute force, each blow fueled by the rage boiling in my chest. Sand erupted beneath our boots, the walls of the arena vibrating with the echo of our clash.

We weren't just fighting—we were venting. Every insult, every resentment, every buried frustration exploded into fists and claws and sweat.

I caught his ribs with a savage hook, felt the satisfying crunch beneath my knuckles. He retaliated with a spinning strike that split my cheek open.

Pain lanced through me, bright and hot, but instead of slowing, I roared and threw myself back into the fray.

And gods help me, for a fleeting moment, I felt...exhilaration.

It had been too long since I'd fought someone who matched me blow for blow.

Lucian wasn't just strong—he was disciplined, precise, relentless.

Each strike met resistance, each push found counterforce. The symmetry of it was maddening and intoxicating all at once.

Minutes blurred into eternity. Sweat stung my eyes, blood dripped down my chin, muscles screamed in protest.

Neither of us yielded.

Finally, in one last furious exchange, we both struck at the same time. My fist slammed into his chest just as his elbow cracked against my temple.

The force sent us both stumbling, collapsing into the sand.

We lay there, panting, breath ragged and raw. The sky spun wildly above us.

Pain tore through my limbs, mingling with a fierce surge of pride. I'd edged him out—barely, but undeniably.

Lucian sat up first, blood trailing from his mouth, and looked at me with something strange in his eyes.

Not hatred. Not anger. Something closer to...respect.

And then he said it.

"I want you to be the Gatekeeper Boss."

I blinked, the words almost absurd in the silence after our brawl. "What?"

"You heard me," he said, voice steady despite the fight we'd just had. "The final gate of the tournament. The one no contender can walk through without proving themselves."

I barked a harsh laugh, wincing at the pain in my ribs. "You brought me here, provoked me, fought me into the dirt—all to ask me to play doorman for your games?"

His mouth curved, faint and infuriatingly sure. "Not a doorman. The gate itself. The crucible. The one challenge no wolf can dismiss."

Anger flared again, though this time it tangled with confusion. "And why the hell would I help you?"

Lucian rose smoothly, brushing the dust from his clothes. Then he smiled at me amiably, as if we hadn't just tried to kill each other. "I have a feeling you will."

My eyes narrowed. "Don't be so sure."

He leaned down just slightly, his gaze piercing. "I am. You're the only one strong enough to carry that weight. And I know you want to prove yourself. To her."

Then he straightened, already walking toward the exit. His voice drifted back, calm, final: "I'll see you tomorrow. Noon. You know where."

The arrogance in his certainty scorched hotter than my wounds.

I surged to my feet, fury thrumming in my veins.

With a roar, I slammed my fist into the arena wall. Stone cracked, fragments raining down around me.

“Damn you, Lucian!”

The echo carried, mocking me.

But deep down—too deep to admit aloud—I knew the bastard was right.

I would accept.

I could never walk away from a challenge. Or from her.