

## **My Sister 191**

Chapter 191 BLUE MOON

SERAPHINA'S POV

Sabrina's words lingered long after she led me back toward the heart of the pack.

'...every kindness, every admiration—it's because of you, Sera. If you don't believe that, you might miss out on something beautiful.'

Something shifted inside me when she said that. As if a door I hadn't realized was closed quietly opened.

I had lived so much of my life in quiet survival mode. Watchful. Guarded. Expecting the next collapse before even allowing myself to stand.

But now... I'd left that behind, hadn't I? Somewhere between my father's funeral and this mountain air, I had stepped out into something unfamiliar, fragile. Beautiful.

And I didn't have to fear it.

Alina murmured quietly within me, warm and approving. 'We already survived. Now we learn how to live.'

So, as evening fell, instead of second-guessing each step, I allowed myself to explore Shadowveil with a lighter heart.

Preparations for the Blue Moon festival were underway. And it was going to be big—I could feel it in the air like sparks before a wildfire.

Laughter threaded through the training grounds. Children raced past us carrying strings of dyed cloth that shimmered faintly under the fading sun.

A group of men and women carved moon sigils into wooden discs. They dipped them in a dark blue hue that caught the light like water at midnight. Near a wide open clearing, I spotted older women weaving flower crowns—not with the usual bright colors, but with pale, almost silvery blue blossoms I didn't recognize.

When I asked Sabrina what the Blue Moon festival was about, she was only too happy to oblige with its lore.

“It's the biggest celebration we have. Happens once every three years and starts tonight.” She grinned. “You truly couldn't have visited at a better time.”

She explained as we walked. How, when Shadowveil was still just an idea carved from wild hope, a plague had nearly destroyed them before they'd even built their first home.

How Lucian and Zara had refused to abandon anyone, even when it seemed hopeless.

How they'd led a desperate expedition through forbidden valleys, where they'd found a flower that bloomed once every three years. Its petals formed a dew that had miraculous healing properties.

"The dew saved everyone," Sabrina said, softer now. "So they built everything here—this entire pack—around the valley where the flower grows. Zara named it the Blue Moon, cause it's blue and rare. You know—'once in a blue moon.'"

Sabrina chuckled. "She was very proud of her wit."

And for the first time, at the mention of Zara, I laughed.

But then I looked around at the people laughing, working, existing in an effortless rhythm with one another, and felt an odd pang of sadness. After everything she'd put into this pack, Zara deserved to see what it had become today.

By the time dusk seeped across the sky, the pack house terraces glittered with lanterns shaped like full moons.

People trickled into the central clearing. A towering bonfire stood ready to be lit, the kind of fire meant not just to warm bodies but to call spirits awake.

Sabrina never strayed from my side, and soon, we were standing at the edge of the gathering, hands folded lightly, watching as Lucian approached the unlit pyre, a lit torch in hand.

He'd gotten absorbed in his Alpha duties that I had barely seen him since I arrived.

After experiencing his home—the safe space he had built for his pack—I saw him for what he really was.

Not just the powerful, guarded leader I knew, but a man who had poured his own grief into creating something whole. Someone who led not by command, but by care. Who had turned loss into belonging, fear into unity.

Lucian's expression was calm, but there was something reverent in the way he moved, as if he were standing before history, not flames.

He spoke first: "Tonight, we remember how fear nearly claimed us—but did not. We remember that scars do not mean brokenness. They mean survival." His gaze passed briefly over the crowd—and paused when it met mine. Just for half a heartbeat. Steady. Warm. Heavy with meaning.

Then the torch touched the wood, and the bonfire roared to life.

The first event, Sabrina had told me, was "Stories of Scars."

Anyone could step forward—share a wound, physical or not—and the pack would simply listen.

A man with a burn mark halfway down his arm spoke about losing his mother in the plague but living on to raise his little sister.

A woman revealed a scar along her side from the invasion four winters ago, how she had believed she was too weak until she survived the night she almost didn't.

A teenager, voice shaking, confessed the fear of never being strong enough, and received a quiet hush of acceptance when she finished.

Each storyteller, upon stepping down, received a crown woven from that same silvery-blue flower—the Blue Moon. A symbol of healing. Of survival. Of being seen and accepted.

My hands slowly curled at my sides.

I had told pieces of my past—to Maya, Lucian, Judy, even in front of polished crowds at galas.

But this—tonight felt different. Sacred. Maybe because of the festival, or the reverence the pack offered every story.

So when there was a lull, when the silence stretched in invitation, I realized I needed to honor my own healing—and I stepped forward.

The murmurs quieted as I walked toward the fire. Its light danced over my hands, warmed my face.

I didn't show a physical scar. Instead, I lifted my chin slightly and spoke.

"I don't have a mark you can see," I began, voice steadying as I spoke. "My scars were made from shame. From believing I was unworthy of love, unwanted because of what I lacked. From learning how to walk without a wolf, thinking that meant I was broken beyond repair."

Faces watched without judgment—only with quiet, open stillness.

"But I survived," I continued. "Not because someone saved me, but because I kept putting one foot forward, even when I didn't know where I was going. I found people who stood with me. I found strength in myself, in my own worth. And I'm still healing..." I took a breath. "...but I am no longer living in the shadows of others' disapproval."

I finished softly, the fire crackling behind me like an answering heartbeat.

For a moment, silence fell—not uncomfortable, but full and reverent.

Then someone lifted a cup.

And then another.

And another.

Glasses rose all around the circle in a silent, unified salute.

Sabrina stepped forward with a soft, proud smile and gently placed a Blue Moon flower crown on my head. "Beautiful," she whispered.

When the stories ended, the mood shifted. Music began, wild and rhythmic.

People linked hands, forming a circle around the fire, feet stomping with joy rather than grace as laughter replaced tears.

The fire leaped high and wild, as if determined to burn away everything that had ever tried to shatter us.

"You know," Sabrina said, her skirt twirling around her as she spun, "it's tradition for the Alpha to dance with whoever the flames choose. And share a blessed kiss."

I snorted. "What?"

She arched a brow, her lips quirking. "It's called the Choosing of the Flames."

“You can’t be serious—”

A sudden gust sent the fire bending toward us, sparks scattering through the air like a shower of stars. Heat brushed my skin as the sparks landed on me, and the ring of dancers cheered.

Sabrina giggled. “Guess the flames have chosen.”

I blinked. “Wha—”

She braced gentle hands on my shoulder and spun me around.

Lucian was already watching me. Our eyes locked across the firelight, a silent question in his gaze.

A little dazed, I nodded.

We stepped into the center of the circle together, my heart pounding with a new sense of belonging and a desire to embrace this tradition fully.

There was no elegant waltz here. No stiff formality. Just movement. Freedom. We moved with the rhythm of drums and laughter, spinning under the firelit sky.

It wasn't like the galas and balls. I wasn't dancing to be seen—or to prove anything. I was dancing because I existed. Because I had survived. Because I was allowed to feel joy without justification.

Halfway through, Lucian slowed, standing in front of me. Despite the exertion, his breathing was calm, chest rising and falling with restrained intensity. The flicker of firelight carved gentle lines across his face.

"You're looking at me like that again," I whispered.

The corner of his lips lifted, drawing my gaze to them. "Like what?"

"Like...you want to kiss me."

I don't know what I expected. Maybe laughter, maybe him brushing it off. But then—

"May I?" he asked quietly, voice barely audible under the music—seeking permission, not claiming a right.

I breathed in the smoke, the moonlight, the acceptance of people who had already decided I belonged here without conditions.

And my resistance fell away.

“Yes.”

The surprise that flickered across his face made me smile, but it quickly faded away when his gaze slid to my lips.

His hand came to my cheek, warm and steady. The kiss that followed wasn't urgent or possessive. It was grounding. Gentle. A quiet vow of presence rather than possession.

When we pulled back, my heart wasn't racing. It beat with something softer. A flutter. Hope, maybe. Or just relief.

As the circle around us cheered and continued dancing, I stayed in that moment just a little longer, feeling the Blue Moon crown rest weightless on my head.