

## **My Sister 196**

Chapter 196 FUCKING FANTASTIC

SERAPHINA'S POV

Tears burned my eyes. 'Alina?' I gasped.

I hadn't realized it until there was a difference, but I'd been listening to her as if through a vacuum. Her voice had been muted, and because I'd never heard it any other way, I didn't even know.

But now...

She was bright, vivid, full of untamed energy I never knew I possessed.

I pressed a trembling hand against my chest, heart pounding wildly as raw emotion surged inside, threatening to break me open.

"Are you alright?" Lucian's concern threaded through his low voice.

I blinked rapidly, the edges of the world refocusing around him. The moonlight still glistened on his dark hair, droplets of water sliding down his torso.

“I—” I smiled weakly, tears blurring my vision again. “I’m alright.”

More than alright, I was fucking fantastic.

‘Don’t cry, Sera,’ Alina purred. ‘It ruins your dramatic moment.’

A breathless laugh escaped me, half-disbelief, half-joy.

Lucian tilted his head slightly. “Sera? What’s so funny?”

“Nothing,” I said quickly, biting back another laugh. “She’s just—”

I stopped myself, remembering that Lucian didn’t know the truth about Alina.

“Sorry,” I exhaled. “I’m just a little...overwhelmed.”

‘How do you feel, Alina?’ I asked internally.

Alina spoke again, her tone shifting. ‘It’s strange,’ she murmured. ‘I feel...stronger. Not whole yet—but close. Like I can feel my soul being stitched back together.’

My heart leapt. 'Can you Shift?'

She paused thoughtfully. 'Not yet. But...we can try something.'

I frowned. 'Try what?'

I felt her answer in the form of tiny pinpricks of electricity running up and down my arms.

I glanced down—and froze.

The skin on my fingers tingled, then rippled. My nails elongated, sharpening into curved, pale claws that glinted under the moonlight.

The faint outline of silver hair traced my wrists and the back of my hands. Except...it was fur.

A startled gasp escaped me. "Lucian—look!"

His eyes widened as I lifted my hands, trembling with disbelief.

“Your claws,” he breathed. “That’s—”

“Impossible!” I finished for him, incredulous laughter bubbling out of me.

‘We can do more together now,’ Alina said, her joy rippling through me and merging as my own.

Lucian’s expression softened into pride, the corners of his mouth lifting. “This is amazing, Sera! It’s a sign that your bond with your wolf is healing.”

Hearing it aloud shattered what little composure I had left.

Gratitude flooded through me faster than thought, and before I could stop myself, I threw my arms around his neck.

“Thank you,” I whispered, my lips brushing his shoulder.

He stiffened, just slightly, then relaxed. His arms came around me, slow and careful, steadying me. I felt the strength in him—not overwhelming, but sure. Safe.

And then the blanket around me slipped from my shoulders, falling soundlessly to the grass.

I felt his breath catch at the same time mine did.

My heart stuttered as the warmth of Lucian's body pressed against mine, our torsos aligned, skin to skin. I could feel his heartbeat—strong, erratic—beneath the rise and fall of his bare chest.

His scent hit me all at once, dizzying and too intimate.

Every inch of me felt too aware—of him, of the space we shared, of the impossible closeness that sent a shiver racing down my spine.

And then I felt it: the unmistakable proof of his arousal through his wet pants.

I pulled back so quickly my heels nearly slipped on the damp ground. I caught myself in time and quickly dropped to the ground to pick up the fallen blanket.

I clutched it around myself like a shield. "I'm so sorry," I sputtered, heat flooding my face. "I didn't mean—"

"You don't need to apologize." Lucian's voice was rough around the edges. His gaze fixed politely over my shoulder.

“It’s alright.”

But it wasn’t. The awkwardness that hadn’t slipped in when I first shrugged off the robe now slammed into both of us.

His jaw tightened, restraint flickering through his eyes as he turned away and not-so-subtly adjusted his pants.

Ah fuck.

“I wasn’t—It’s not—”

He turned back then, lips twitching like he was struggling to keep his smile in place. “Sera.”

I shut my mouth.

He exhaled, slow and unsteady. “You’re fine.”

‘You are not fine,’ Alina drawled in my head, tone bubbling with mischief. ‘But he is. Spirits above, that man’s built like a statue. I wouldn’t mind if you got a piece of—’

My eyes widened.

‘Alina!’

‘What? I’m just commenting. Appreciating good craftsmanship. I know I just got here, but I also know it’s been a long time since you’ve had a good, proper fu—’

‘Shut up!’ I hissed internally. My cheeks were so hot you could fry an egg on them.

‘Just saying,’—I could practically feel her smirking—‘it wouldn’t be so bad to not go to bed alone tonight.’

Gods above, I had Maya 2.0 living in my head.

Lucian tilted his head slightly. “Something wrong?”

“Nope,” I said too quickly. “Absolutely nothing.”

He chuckled under his breath, the sound soft but maddeningly amused. It cooled the burning in my chest a little. Dissipated the last bits of awkwardness hanging between us.

“Come on.” He held his hand out. “Let’s get back in before we catch something more than the moon’s blessing.”

I laughed softly, but it died when I stretched my hand out and saw that it was back to normal.

Lucian noticed and covered my hand with his. “You may not be where you want to be,” he said, his voice filled with conviction, “but you’re nowhere near where you started.”

‘Took the words right out of my mouth,’ Alina said.

I smiled and let him lead me out of the valley, the world shifting around us as the weight of the moment lifted, making each step toward the pack house feel new.

By the time we returned, my legs still felt weak—not from exhaustion, but from the sheer gravity of everything that had just happened.

Alina kept humming in the back of my mind, like she couldn’t quite contain her joy. Her energy was overflowing; it cascaded through me, pulsing and alive. I simultaneously felt like I could collapse from the force of it and like I could run the entire perimeter of Shadowveil.

Lucian walked me to the door of the guest room I was occupying in the Alpha wing. “You should rest,” he said. “The ritual took a toll on your body. I’ll send someone up with dinner.”



"I'm fine," I said automatically—but my voice wavered.

He gave me a knowing look that said he saw right through me.

"I already know you're strong, Sera." His voice softened. "I hope you know you can be vulnerable with me."

My lips parted, but the words lodged in my throat.

I stared down at my hands, still unable to believe that they'd sprouted actual fucking claws. It felt unreal, like a dream.

And it never would have been possible without Lucian.

He saved my life and brought me into OTS, where I learned to be strong. And then he'd done this for me—invited me into his pack, his home, let the moon bless me, bringing me closer to my wolf than ever.

Gratitude washed over me. Then, just as quickly, a fierce tide of guilt threatened to swallow it.

I'd been upset that Lucian kept the truth about Zara from me. But there were so many things about myself I'd kept hidden from him.

'It's okay,' Alina said. 'You can do it.'

I held my breath. 'Are you sure?'

'He did this for us,' she replied. 'The least you could do is let him know I exist.'

I exhaled slowly. "Lucian...there's something I need to tell you."

He arched a brow, taking in my sudden somberness. "Is everything okay?"

I shrugged, pulling the blanket tighter around me. "I hope so."

He studied me for a moment, as if he could read the words on my face. Then he nodded.

"Okay. But first, get changed into something warm, and let's sit by the fire. I'll never forgive myself if you visit my pack and leave with a cold."

I smiled softly. "Okay."

Ten minutes later, I was wearing a cozy sweater and curled up on the couch in Lucian's private living room, nursing a mug of the herbal tea as I watched him stoke the fire.

When he was satisfied, he moved back. The couch dipped as he lowered his weight beside me.

The warmth from the hearth was a comforting embrace, and for a moment, we sat in soothing silence.

I knew he was waiting for me to speak, respecting my pace, but my tongue tangled as I tried to figure out how to string the words together.

In the end, I just blurted: "I have my wolf. Her name is Alina. She woke up in the Snowfield Arena."

Lucian stilled, his expression stunned for a moment.

I exhaled, setting the mug down on the side table. "So...yeah."

And then his face broke into a genuine smile. "That's incredible, Sera!"

I blinked. "You're not mad?"

His brows knit. “Why would I be?”

“Because I got mad that you kept something from me, but I did the same.”

He chuckled softly, shaking his head. “I’m too happy for you to feel any other emotion.”

The warmth in his tone felt like sunlight. For a moment, I let myself bask in it—before the gravity of the rest of my truth settled around me.

I swallowed hard. “Hold on to that feeling...because there’s something else.”

Lucian’s expression grew cautious. “I’m listening.”

I drew a breath. “Kieran and I might be...mates.”

Silence.

The words hung in the air like an anvil dangling from a fragile thread.

Lucian’s jaw tensed, but his eyes never left mine. “Your wolf—Alina, told you that?”

I shook my head slowly. “Actually...Kieran did. At least, he thinks so. There’s a...feeling.” Ugh, I hated that word.

“And...do you believe him?” Lucian asked softly.

“Alina isn’t sure. She isn’t strong enough to sense the bond yet.” I dropped my head. “I don’t know what I believe.”

His chin dipped. “Right.”

He didn’t move. Didn’t speak. When I lifted my gaze to him again, his eyes were shadowed—calm, but with something indecipherable beneath.

The quiet stretched until I could hear my own heartbeat pounding in my ears.

“Are...” His throat worked, a tightness stretching around his mouth. “Are you telling me this because you plan to get back together with him?”

The question hit like a stone to the chest.

“What? No.” I shook my head quickly. “No, Lucian. That’s not what this is.”

A deep, vertical line formed between his brows. “Then what is it?”

I took a steadying breath. “It’s me being honest. It wasn’t fair for me to punish you for your secrets when I had my own.”

His expression softened, though the flicker of uncertainty remained. “And how do you feel about him?”

‘Kieran Blackthorne can take a long walk off a short plank,’ Alina mumbled.

My brief spark of amusement was tempered by the seriousness of the conversation.

I was silent for a while, trying to choose my words carefully. Talking about my relationship with Kieran was like trying to untangle a severely knotted chain. Each time I loosened one tangle, another tightened somewhere else.

“I don’t hate him anymore,” I said, only realizing in that moment that I meant it. “But I don’t love him either. Sometimes, I can feel the...pull.” The yacht. The island. The car wreck. I couldn’t bring myself to go into detail.

I sighed. “But until I can fully Shift, I won’t know the truth about me and Kieran.”

Lucian nodded. "Right."

"But even then," I rushed to add, "I have no intention of anything changing between us. Plus, Alina's not too crazy about him."

"And...me?" he pressed gently.

I smiled softly. "Alina likes you."

His eyes widened slightly. "Really?"

I nodded. "She always has."

Hope lit up his eyes, and it pained me to say my next words. "But...until I get full clarity, until everything doesn't feel like a tangled mess, I don't think I'm ready for another bond."

My chest tightened when the light in his eyes dimmed. But he nodded slowly. "I understand."

"I like what we have now," I said, the words trembling but honest. "I want to keep it this way for a while."

Lucian's lips curved into the faintest smile. "I can respect that. Your heart is a treasure, Sera. You shouldn't give it out lightly."

I mirrored his smile. "Thank you."

He hesitated, then shifted closer on the couch. Before I could react, he drew me into a gentle embrace.

"And when you're ready," he murmured near my ear. "Whatever you decide, whoever you choose—even if you don't choose anyone at all—I'll support you."

I swallowed hard, clutching the fabric of his shirt. "Thank you."

"Always."