

My Sister 21

Chapter 21 JEALOUS EX

SERAPHINA'S POV

"Stop—fuck!"

I doubled over, bracing my hands on my knees as I struggled to breathe through the burning in my lungs.

Someone must have connected a Bluetooth speaker to my heart, because it was thundering so loudly that I barely heard when Lucian came to my side and said, "That's enough for today, Sera."

I shook my head, immediately regretting it as the training field tilted. "No, I..." I swallowed against the dryness in my mouth. "I can keep going."

Lucian, the sadistic bastard, was gone, and Lucian, my friend, said in a gentle, patient voice, "You're done, Sera."

I straightened and winced when I felt a stitch in my side. "I haven't completed the course," I panted, resisting the urge to rub at the ache in my chest.

I'd run the obstacle course at OTS three times before I got shot. Each time, I finished drenched in sweat and mud with my palms scraped raw from climbing rocks.

But I finished.

Now? I'd collapsed halfway, feet planted in a muddy ravine as I tried to distinguish the ringing in my ears from the singing of the birds fleeing overhead. As if mocking my weakness.

"I always finish," I whispered, staring longingly at the rest of the obstacles I had to overcome—I would probably die if I attempted to go on any further.

"Yeah," Lucian said, "before you got shot by a silver bullet and had open-heart surgery."

"But I—"

"Healing takes time, Sera." He placed a comforting hand on my back, although it was drenched with sweat. "You're not back to a hundred percent, and that's okay."

I huffed. "Being wolfless sucks."

"Hey," he nudged me gently. "That's what saved you, remember?"

"Right." I exhaled, wiping sweat off my brow and accidentally smearing mud on my forehead in the process. I reminded myself to be grateful that my weakness had saved my life.

"Why don't you hit the showers, and we'll go grab some dinner?" Lucian suggested.

My first instinct was to kindly refuse the offer, being in no mood to be out in public. But then I remembered that I was going home to an empty house and leftover takeout in the fridge.

So I gave Lucian a tired smile. "Sure."

"You're probably the first person I know who could wear a long face while in the Moon Garden."

I blinked and pulled my gaze away from the lily I'd picked and was fiddling with.

The flames cast a warm glow on the side of Lucian's face as he smiled softly. "What's it going to take to cheer you up?" he asked.

I exhaled, shaking my head. "I'm sorry. You've been so sweet taking me out to dinner and then this..." I waved my hands toward our surroundings. The serene beauty here was marvelous, but the stupid thing was... that I couldn't even appreciate it.

"There's still something on your mind," Lucian noted. "Is it Daniel? You miss him?"

My chest tightened. The admission tasted bitter. This was exactly why they'd sent Daniel away—because his mother was too damaged, too wolfless, too weak to protect him.

We'd never been apart this long. Not since the night he was born, when I'd counted each tiny finger through exhausted tears. Now every breath without him felt like drowning.

"Yes." The word tore from my throat. "I miss him, very much."

"The only thing that takes my mind off him is training." My fists clenched. "...If I could just become strong enough, fast enough, we can be together again."

He nodded. "I get that, but you can't rush these things, Sera. You're already doing so well for what you've been through."

He squeezed my hand. "Progress isn't linear; there are highs and lows and twists and turns, but you'll get there, I know it."

I cracked a genuine smile. "Thank you, Lucian. For being by my side and for taking the time out to train me."

"Well, about that..."

"What?"

"I was going to make it a surprise,"—he shrugged—"but I might as well tell you now."

"What?" I pressed.

"I've assigned you a new trainer."

My face fell. "Oh, am I not meeting up to your standards?"

His eyes widened slightly. "Oh, no, no, it's not like that. This trainer is an elite warrior, in many ways more skilled than I am. She'll guide you properly in your next phase of training."

"Oh," I said, intrigue replacing my despondency. "Who is it?"

"Well—"

His gaze shifted to something to the left, and his face tightened. "You have got to be kidding me," he muttered.

I frowned, turning in the direction of his line of sight. "Wha—"

I bit back a groan of frustration when I saw the pair at the entrance to the garden—Celeste and Kieran.

I turned back to Lucian and forced a smile. "We should get out of here."

He nodded, taking my hand. "Yes, let's."

As we stood, Celeste's saccharine voice carried across the flowers: "Oh, sister, we're interrupting something!"

I kept my mouth shut—a lesson I'd learned. Not rising to her bait. Not giving her the satisfaction.

Lucian's hand found the small of my back, warm and steady. "Let's go," he murmured, guiding me past them.

"Excuse us," Lucian said, his tone bright and amicable.

Kieran stood rigid as an oak, his eyes burning holes into the space where Lucian touched me.

'Just move out of the way,' I thought. 'Just move out of the way and save us—'

"Really, Sera?"

Ah fuck.

I took a deep breath, steeling myself for the interaction to come, and looked up. I shot Kieran a sardonic smile that only made the creases between his brows deepen.

"What now, Blackthorne?" I asked.

His nostrils flared like an enraged bull, finger jabbing toward Lucian with enough force to disturb the air between us. "You blocked me, practically shut me out of your life, and now you're parading the city with him?"

I felt Lucian stiffen next to me. No matter how cordial he could be, he was still an Alpha, and I was sure the disdain in Kieran's tone rubbed him the wrong way.

I scoffed at Kieran. "Excuse me if I'm confused. Would you rather I parade the city with you?"

Kieran's eyes widened indignantly, and he spluttered. "That's not what I—"

"Because I don't know why I have to keep reminding you that we're fucking divorced, Kieran Blackthorne."

"I don't know what's been going on with you lately, but this jealous ex routine is getting pathetic and, frankly, tiring."

Celeste's eyes flashed with barely concealed anger, her manicured hand clutched Kieran's arm, and she lashed out. "Oh, please, Sera. If anyone is chasing an ex, it's you."

I scoffed. "Yeah, because I'm the one blowing up his phone and demanding to escort him everywhere, and I'm the one who can't keep my nose out of his business!"

Something shuttered in Celeste's face, and I pressed down that familiar guilt. I'd bowed out; I'd moved out of the way so they could finally be together.

I wasn't going to let anyone make me the villain of their story ever again.

Celeste's lips trembled with theatrical precision. "Kieran," she whimpered, pressing closer to his side. "I want to leave."

I barely suppressed an eye roll. "Don't bother, we were just—"

Kieran wrapped an arm around Celeste's slender waist and tucked her into his side. His voice turned glacial. "Let me make this clear, Seraphina. The only part of your life that concerns me is Daniel. I tolerate your recklessness because my son—"

"Yes!" I snapped. "You've mentioned it quite enough times. You don't want Daniel growing up without a mother, I get it. But if you could—"

"And I won't have you embarrassing him."

I paused. "Excuse me?"

He glanced at Lucian pointedly, his eyes hard with loathing, and said nothing.

An incredulous laugh tore out of me. "Oh, that's fucking rich." I mimed weighing an invisible object. "The hypocrisy is so thick I could sculpt it into a trophy for your next pack meeting."

Kieran clenched his jaw, and I saw his free hand clenched into a fist, his knuckles bleaching white.

I scoffed, grabbing Lucian's hand. "We're leaving. You two have a nice night." I pinned a glare on Kieran. "Stay the fuck away from me."

I shouldered him out of the way and stomped off the roof, pulling Lucian along. To his credit, he let me drag him along as I angrily stomped to the elevator.

I was still vibrating with anger when he turned on the car and merged onto the Hollywood Freeway.

"Sera," he started hesitantly, "are you—"

"The nerve of him!" I snapped. "He parades around with my sister—confusing our son, flaunting their relationship—but I'm the embarrassment?"

Lucian rolled down the windows. "Scream if you need to." A faint smirk. "I wouldn't mind."

I sighed, leaning my head slightly out of the window as the wind whipped tendrils of hair across my face, cooling my heated skin.

"I'm sorry you got in the middle of all that."

He shrugged. "Would you be mad if I said it was slightly entertaining?"

I raised a brow, and he chuckled. His amusement was contagious, and I found myself smiling grudgingly, my anger gradually dissipating.

I closed my eyes, letting the soft smile play on my lips. I didn't want to think about Kieran or Celeste. I hated how much headspace they'd already taken in my mind.

I was determined to focus on the only things that mattered—my son, my career, and my training.

Celeste and Kieran could very well jump off a skyscraper together.