

My Sister 263

Chapter 263 NOT IN KANSAS ANYMORE

SERAPHINA'S POV

I quickly understood something as the fight dragged on: my intervention hadn't turned the tide. Not really.

The balance didn't shift in our favor.

It only stopped getting worse.

My presence had relieved pressure, bought seconds, fractured assumptions.

But the rogues hadn't come unprepared, and now that surprise had burned away, what remained was frightening competence.

They adapted fast. Too fast.

And they proved that they, too, could throw in unforeseen variables.

Something new pressed through the psychic field—thick, invasive, oily. It smothered my senses like rancid heat, slithering into my nose and down my throat before I could even name it.

Pheromones.

Not the subtle, social kind that earned pretty women free drinks. This was chemical warfare—weaponized biology.

“Cover your noses!” I shouted.

But I was too late.

The effect crashed over me in waves. My vision blurred, the world’s edges smearing and doubling.

My muscles lagged a fraction behind my thoughts, as if my brain was instructing in a language my body no longer understood.

Across the field, one rogue stood out.

He was larger than the rest, misshapen in a way that wasn’t quite a Shift—muscles jutting thick in odd places, bones bunching asymmetrically beneath skin that shone slick in the headlights.

Beta, but...altered. Mutant.

He grinned, eyes wide and unfocused, jaw distending unnaturally as he exhaled.

The pheromone cloud thickened.

Wren stumbled mid-stride, catching herself against a boulder. Gear swore, his movements sluggish, shoulders sagging as if gravity had doubled.

Iris reacted instantly.

"Masks on," she barked, snapping a filter from her belt and over her face as she repositioned, blade flashing. "Don't breathe deep. Rotate positions—keep moving!"

Miasma had disappeared—or, hopefully, been dispatched (properly this time).

Iris was everywhere at once, intercepting strikes, dragging Wren clear of a flanking blow, firing a precise shot that took a rogue through the knee without breaking stride.

But even her momentum faltered.

Gear took the worst of it.

It seemed he was finally feeling the injury in his shoulder, and his movements were heavier than before.

When two rogues broke through toward the transport, he planted himself between them and the vehicle without hesitation.

The impact shuddered through the ground as one slammed into him.

Gear dropped to one knee with a grunt, then forced himself upright—just as claws ripped across his side, tearing deep. Blood soaked his jacket, dark and quick.

“Gear!” I shouted.

He waved me off, jaw clenched, and braced himself again.

That was when the mutant Beta shifted tactics.

He stopped targeting the fighters.

And turned toward Codex.

Codex was crouched near the open rear door of the van, hands flying across his tablet as he stabilized the cooling wards on the crates—keeping the medication viable even as the vehicle sat crippled.

His focus left him exposed, defenseless.

The mutant inhaled deeply, chest expanding grotesquely, and released a concentrated burst straight at him.

Codex gasped and crumpled like a marionette with its strings severed.

“No!” I lurched forward despite the world tilting violently around me.

Something inside me snapped into place.

Not panic. Not rage.

Clarity—cold and absolute.

The psychic noise that had been battering me fell away all at once, like a switch flipped. The pheromone haze thinned in my perception—not vanishing yet, but suddenly...translucent.

Heat seared behind my eyes as something vast and precise aligned within me.

Alina stirred—not alarmed, not frightened.

I might not have had a full grasp on what was going on within me, but she seemed to have no reservations.

‘Ready.’

I didn’t think. Didn’t try to understand what I was about to do. Or even how.

I released.

A wave tore from my core in a silent, clean pulse—no sound, no light, only pressure.

It sliced through the pheromone cloud like a blade through smoke, unraveling the chemical influence at its core.

Purifying it.

The air cleared.

Codex gulped air, coughing as color surged back into his cheeks. Wren straightened, blinking hard. Gear drew a ragged breath, shoulders squaring as if a weight had been lifted off him.

The mutant Beta staggered, confusion flashing across his warped features.

I didn't stop.

Instinct guided me faster than reason.

I reached out again—not with force, but with suggestion.

A broad psychic impression swept wide and fast, brushing every rogue mind within reach.

'You are surrounded.'

Not whispered. Not spoken.

Felt.

A sense of encirclement crashed into them—dozens of unseen wolves lurking beyond the treeline, high-ranking auras closing in from every side.

The certainty of numbers. Of dominance. Of imminent overwhelm.

I felt their formation buckle, fear rippling through their ranks.

At the same time, without even realizing I was doing it, I focused inward on Iris.

I layered her awareness with my own expanded perception—feeding her positions, trajectories, intent. Every threat lit up in her mind like a tactical overlay.

Her breath hitched.

But she adjusted and took the new information in stride.

“Now!” Iris roared.

She surged forward with terrifying precision, striking where the rogues were already hesitating, her blade finding throats and tendons with ruthless efficiency.

Codex pushed himself upright and raised both hands, his sleeves rolled back to reveal arcane sigils flaring as he unleashed a wave of destabilizing magic that sent four rogues reeling, disoriented and screaming.

Wren appeared at my side without a word.

She didn’t ask. Didn’t hesitate.

She flowed into the gaps my perception revealed, moving where I looked, striking at every weakness I sensed.

Together, we dismantled their flanks—my mind freezing targets in place for split seconds while her blades finished the work.

The mutant Beta roared, shrugged off the psychic residue, and charged straight at me.

Anyone’s first instinct would’ve been fear. To retreat, defend.

I locked onto him.

The energy field tightened like a vise around his mind, freezing him mid-stride. His snarl died, body seizing, eyes bulging in shock as he struggled—and failed—to move.

Iris was there in a breath.

Her alloy dagger kissed his throat, drawing a thin, deliberate line of tar-dark blood.

“Yield,” she said with deadly softness.

He growled.

All around us, the rogues broke ranks.

The illusion of encirclement shattered into real terror as they scattered, dragging their wounded with them. Howls faded, footsteps thudding away into the scrub and ravines beyond.

Silence reclaimed the road.

For a long moment, no one moved.

My legs trembled as the psychic intensity drained away, leaving bone-deep exhaustion. I forced myself to stay upright, breathing fast but clear.

Iris stepped back from the immobilized Beta, then glanced at me.

Her gaze locked with mine, assessing and recalibrating.

Then she nodded once.

"I retract my previous words," she said, voice steady, solemn. "Welcome to the team, sister."

Something warm and unexpected bloomed in my chest.

Pride. Belonging.

Beneath the cold sprawl of stars, we worked quickly.

Gear grunted through repairs, teeth clenched but uncomplaining as Codex patched him up before working on rerouting the systems.

Wren moved among us, efficient and light, handing tools without being asked.

When we finally rolled back onto the road, engines humming, the night felt different.

I watched the coastline slip past the windows, the steady rhythm of tires on asphalt no longer soothing the way it once had.

I'd grown up in a world that was brutal but simple: claws and ranks, pack law and territory lines.

Violence you could see coming. Enemies you could understand.

Tonight, I'd fought a mutant Beta who breathed poison into the air. Fought alongside another Beta (or low-perception Alpha) who unleashed magic from inked skin.

Faced traps woven from silence and shadow.

Unleashed something within myself that answered not to muscle or instinct, but to thought.

I curled my fingers, remembering the cold clarity of it. The way the world had bent to my will.

I was no longer just far from home.

I was far from the version of the world I'd once understood.

Somewhere between the distant crash of waves and the fading howls, the realization settled—heavy and irreversible.

Toto, I've a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore.

And whatever waited ahead—the coast, Seabreeze, the truth of what I was becoming—I would face it in a world that no longer played by the rules I'd been raised on.