

My Sister 271

Chapter 271 WEAVING

SERPAHINA'S POV

I stared at Corin as his words hovered in the air. His shoulders were rigid, his hands braced against the stone as if he needed the support.

"I...don't understand."

"My Ethereal Sea's unstable right now," he bit out as if he were confessing to murder. "I'm close to a breakthrough. I was training far offshore, pushing limits. I lost control for a moment. You're a psychic. Unanchored. Not of Seabreeze. You lit up like a beacon."

Realization seeped like a chill beneath my ribs.

"I didn't mean to," he finished, jaw tight. "Thankfully, I got back as fast as I could."

For a long moment, I just listened to the sea breathe.

The night had settled into that deep, blue quiet where everything felt suspended—neither asleep nor awake, neither safe nor dangerous.

The moon sagged low, its reflection splintering across the water in trembling lines, like something trying and failing to hold itself together.

"Still," I said finally, my voice sounding steadier than I felt, "thank you."

Corin shook his head. "Don't."

He pushed off the railing and turned slightly toward me, though he still didn't quite meet my eyes. "You're giving me gratitude instead of culpability."

"You didn't intend to hurt me."

"Never," he agreed at once.

The certainty in that single word mattered. It settled somewhere deep, anchoring something that had been rattling loose since the wave.

"Then that's that. Don't beat yourself up, please."

He hesitated. "Still, I'd like to make amends."

I sighed. "Corin—"

"For my peace of mind," he cut in. "Please?"

I studied the tension in his shoulders, the restless flex of his hand at his side, as if he was still fighting invisible tides.

"You're in pain," I said softly.

His lips twitched. "Occupational hazard."

I cocked my head. "How?"

He sighed. "Breakthrough phases are...violent. For psychics like us, they're less about growth and more about surviving the reshaping."

Something in his phrasing made my skin prickle.

"And you're in the middle of one."

“I am,” he confirmed. “Which means I shouldn’t have been anywhere near you.”

“Don’t,” I said before I could think better of it.

He frowned. “Don’t what?”

“Don’t shut this down by retreating,” I said. “By hiding yourself. I’m tired of people thinking that’s the safest solution.”

His gaze sharpened. “This isn’t about hiding. It’s about control.”

“Exactly,” I said. “And I don’t have enough of it.”

That earned his full attention.

“You want control,” he said slowly.

“I need it,” I corrected. “What happened tonight—what almost happened—it can’t happen again. Not because I’m afraid of the ocean, but because I don’t want to be a hazard to myself or anyone else.”

The sea surged below us, as if it agreed.

Corin watched me for a long moment, eyes unreadable. Then he straightened.

“You’re asking me to teach you.”

“You want to make it up to me, right?” I swallowed. “I’m asking you to help me learn how to cultivate and control what I am before it decides for me.”

A flicker of respect crossed his face, quick as a ripple.

“You’re serious,” he said.

“I don’t joke about survival.”

He let out a short laugh. “Good. Because I don’t teach people who do.”

For a heartbeat, neither of us moved.

Then Corin gestured with his chin toward the shore. "Come on."

I stilled. "Where?"

"The beach," he said simply. "If you want to understand control, you don't start in a room. You start with what frightens you."

The ocean loomed ahead of us, dark and vast.

I paused, hesitation catching me for a heartbeat.

Then I nodded.

The sand was cool beneath my feet, still damp from the retreating tide. Every step closer to the water set my nerves humming, old memories stirring like vengeful ghosts beneath my skin.

Corin didn't rush me.

He walked ahead until the waves lapped at his ankles, then stopped and turned back to face me.

“You were very polite not to ask, you know.”

My brows furrowed. “What?”

A hint of a smile tugged at his lips before he stepped back.

The water swallowed him up to the waist—and didn’t stop.

I drew a sharp breath as his outline blurred, flowing with a grace that was both eerie and mesmerizing.

His legs fused and reshaped, scales rippling outward in a cascade of iridescent silver-blue. Moonlight danced on pearlescent edges, refracting into soft rainbows across the water’s surface.

A fishtail.

I hadn’t imagined it.

Corin exhaled, visibly relaxing as the transformation completed. The sea curled around him like a lover reclaiming its own.

"This," he said, voice carrying easily over the waves, "is why I train out here."

I stared, awe stealing my words. "H-how?"

"It's not necessarily a secret," he replied, drifting closer to shore again, tail cutting through the water with effortless grace. "But it's a truth we don't advertise."

He paused, gaze distant.

"My parents were a mistake," he said calmly. "At least, that's what both sides called them."

The pieces slid together with quiet inevitability.

"A werewolf Alpha and a mermaid royal," he went on. "Forbidden doesn't begin to cover it. My mother was too important to marry outside her kind. Exiled for it."

"And your father?"

"Former Alpha of Seabreeze," he said. "Only reason why he didn't receive the same treatment she did."

My chest clenched.

Corin continued, "Selene was lucky. She was born a bridge, with strength from both sides. The perfect balance."

His mouth curved wryly. "Maris leaned towards wolf. I leaned towards"—he flicked his tail, sending a spray of cool water into the air—"this."

"I need the ocean," he added. "It's my anchor. Without it, my Ethereal Sea destabilizes. Pressure builds. Things break."

"Like waves," I whispered.

"Yes," he agreed. "Like waves."

I lingered at the edge, toes grazing the water. My heart hammered, but now it beat with something more than fear—something like anticipation.

"This is Seabreeze territory," Corin added, his voice dropping as he held a hand out to me. "Nothing here will harm you. Not again. I promise."

Despite everything that had happened prior, I believed him.

Tentatively, I reached out.

My fingers brushed his hand—cool, steady, grounded.

“Come on,” he said. “I’ve got you.”

The water closed around my calves.

I waited for my body to seize. To flood my brain with memories and my veins with terror.

Instead, gentle warmth bloomed.

Corin guided my breathing, his voice low and even, syncing my inhale and exhale with the rhythm of the tide.

“Don’t fight it,” he instructed. “Don’t struggle. Just listen.”

To my surprise, I could.

The ocean wasn't a single roar anymore. It was layered—currents overlapping, pulses and pauses like a living heart.

"Those are emotional waves," Corin said. "The sea remembers everything. Storms. Migration. Loss. Joy."

I let myself feel it.

At first, it was overwhelming—voices pressing in, impressions flickering too fast to grasp. My instinct was to push back, to wall myself off.

Corin's grip on me tightened when I thrashed lightly.

"Don't force it," he warned gently. "Guide it. Accommodate. Find stillness inside motion."

I tried again.

This time, I softened my reach. I let the current move through me, molding myself around it the way water shapes stone.

Something...clicked.

The noise faded. Impressions came into focus.

I heard them then—not with my ears, but with something deeper.

Small, bright awarenesses darting beneath the surface. Curious. Playful. Afraid.

Fish, dolphins, whales, seals, jellyfish.

Life.

A breathless laugh escaped me. “I can...hear them.”

Corin smiled. The expression held pride and a glimmer of recognition.

“You’re not just hearing,” he said. “You’re weaving.”

I exhaled. “That’s good, right?

His laughter spilled over me like moonlight. "Yes. Really good. And if you focus a little more, you can do better."

So I did.

I let the energy ripple through me. In, out. In, out. In, out.

Hours slipped by unnoticed.

By the time the horizon began to pale, a pod of dolphins surfaced nearby, agitated and restless.

I felt the echo of distant thunder—an offshore storm sending disruptive pulses through the water.

I closed my eyes and reached.

This time, there was no doubt.

I wove.

A field of quiet reassurance spread from me, gentle and expansive. The dolphins slowed, their movements easing as the storm's edge passed harmlessly beneath them.

When I opened my eyes, Corin was watching me with open astonishment.

"Well," he said softly. "That didn't take long."

That had taken all night.

I swayed, exhaustion crashing into me all at once.

He steadied me easily. "Congratulations," he said. "That was clear, independent weaving."

A laugh bubbled up—tired, giddy, incredulous. "Is it always like this?"

"No," he said. "It's usually much harder."

He met my gaze. "But you...you're something else entirely. Once you find your anchor, Sera..." He shook his head, a disbelieving laugh falling from his lips. "You might reach Dominator before I do."

I almost dismissed his words as empty praise and encouragement, but the sincerity and reverence in his eyes silenced me.

Alina's words brushed inside my mind. '...you're not done waking up.'

Dawn spilled over the sea, painting everything gold.

For the first time, the ocean didn't feel like something that wanted to swallow me whole.

It felt like something waiting to welcome me.