

My Sister 297

Chapter 297 SERAPHINA LOCKWOOD

SERAPHINA'S POV

My fingers trembled as I took the envelope and opened it.

Inside were documents. Heavy parchment edged with sigils I recognized instantly, authority pressed into every line of ink.

Edward Lockwood's signature sat at the bottom of each, above his personal seal.

My gaze skimmed over the legal jargon, catching only on the words that mattered: restoration, recognized status, full rights and standing.

Then I reached the final declaration.

'This document hereby restores all legal, social, and pack-recognized identities to Seraphina Lockwood, of the Lockwood bloodline, and Seraphina of Frostbane, rightful member of the Frostbane Pack by blood, bond, and birth—without reservation, condition, or limitation.'

Tears blurred my vision before I even noticed they had begun to fall.

They splattered the parchment, dark and imperfect, blooming across my father's careful script before slipping down the backs of my hands.

I scrubbed at my cheeks, heat rising with embarrassment, but the ache in my chest only grew heavier.

I didn't know what had stopped Father from making this public.

Fear. Politics. My mother. Timing. A thousand invisible constraints that Alpha Edward Lockwood had lived and ruled by.

But the truth pressed into my palms, undeniable: the same man who cast me out after that night with Kieran had prepared these documents. He had signed, sealed, and tucked them away with purpose.

He hadn't sent them.

Yet he hadn't destroyed them either.

That small distinction made all the world of difference.

At least, in some small way, my father had not completely abandoned me.

The realization eased something hollow and raw inside me, an ache I had carried so long it felt fused to my bones.

Tallulah rested a warm, steady hand over mine, her touch grounding.

“For what it’s worth,” she said softly, “your father was always the most opposed to sealing your powers.”

My breath caught, my grip tightening on the documents.

“What?”

She nodded, expression thoughtful. “He argued with every healer who stepped into this manor. With your mother. With himself, I suspect.”

I sniffed. “Then...why? Why was he so cold to me afterwards? I was still his daughter.”

Tallulah met my gaze again, regret shadowing her eyes. “Honestly? I don’t know. Everyone could see how much the Lockwoods loved you back then. You were their miracle, their joy.”

Her lips pressed together. “I didn’t know the precise conditions of the sealing—those details were kept tightly contained—but I always believed this: a proper sealing should never have caused such a drastic shift in how they treated you.”

A chill slid down my spine.

“A sealing suppresses power,” she continued, voice careful. “It does not suppress love. It does not erase warmth. It does not turn parents cold.”

The walls seemed to close in around me.

Ethan’s jaw tightened. Maya, who had been leaning against the wall, arms folded, stilled completely.

Tallulah squeezed my hand once. “Whatever happened afterward, Sera—it went beyond the seal.”

The words seeped into me, quietly shifting pieces I hadn’t realized were still unmoored.

Insight came not like a lightning strike, but like a quiet click.

Something had gone wrong.

Not just with me.

With them.

With all of us.

“I...I think I need to be alone,” I whispered.

Ethan hesitated. “Sera...”

I gave him a small smile. “I’ll be fine. I just need to...process.”

He searched my face for a long moment, then nodded once.

One by one, they slipped out, leaving me alone on the bed, the documents fanned across the quilt like fragile relics.

My thoughts circled, no longer wild but threaded with new purpose.

But first...

‘Alina?’

The warmth of my wolf’s presence spread through my chest. ‘I’m here, Sera. I’m okay.’

I exhaled, letting go of the fear that by breaking the bond, I had also broken my wolf before she ever had a chance to become whole.

Then I reached for my phone.

If I was going to keep reclaiming my story, I needed to stop circling it from a distance.

I needed answers.

I tapped my mother’s contact.

The call rang twice before connecting.

But it wasn’t my mother who appeared on the screen.

“Seraphina,” Catherine greeted, her face filling the display. Sunlight gleamed off her perfectly arranged hair, her smile wide and practiced. “What a lovely surprise.”

My spine stiffened instinctively.

Catherine. Celeste’s godmother.

She had always been like this—effortlessly warm, generously attentive, the sort of woman who remembered birthdays and favorite flowers. One of the few adults who had always smiled at me when I was small.

Yet when I thought of Catherine, it was always her sneer that surfaced, not her smile.

There was always a chill beneath her warmth, a distance between us that I could never quite bridge, no matter how polite or affectionate she was.

Once, long ago, Catherine had proposed becoming my godmother. I remembered the conversation vaguely—how I’d clung to the idea afterward, hopeful and aching.

But my mother had declined, explaining that I already had a godmother, which I didn’t.

I had assumed that my mother simply hadn't wanted me to have one. That I hadn't been...worthy of being her best friend's goddaughter like Celeste was.

Now, as everything else unraveled, I wondered if that memory hid more than I realized.

"Hello, Catherine," I said evenly. "I was calling my mother."

Her smile didn't falter. If anything, it sharpened.

"Oh, she's here," she said lightly. "Just...occupied."

"Could you put her on?" I asked.

For the briefest flicker of a second, something like mockery flashed through Catherine's eyes.

"Oh, darling," she sighed, turning the camera. "I'm afraid she may not be free for a while."

The screen shifted.

Beach. White sand. A blue so vivid I winced.

And there, laughing, bent low over the shore, was my mother—and sister.

Mother was barefoot, her hair loose, sleeves rolled up as she helped Celeste collect seashells. Celeste's laughter carried faintly through the speaker, light and carefree.

The sight pierced straight through me.

I forced my features into calm, though something jagged twisted inside my chest.

Catherine's face floated back into the frame. "The Maldives has a way of healing people," she said fondly. "Makes one forget worries and burdens. You really should visit sometime, Sera. I think it would do you wonders."

I met her gaze through the screen, my voice steady. "I'll call back another time."

Her brows lifted in feigned regret. "Alright then. I'll let her know you called."

"I'm sure you will," I replied.

Then I ended the call.

The silence afterward was deafening.

I stared at my phone, the image of my mother and sister seared behind my eyes. It hurt—not because they were together, but because of how effortlessly they fit in that moment.

Celeste had never been a problem child. She'd never caused my parents concern or worry. Being with Celeste probably felt like a vacation to my mother, a reprieve from all the heartache I had brought.

My grip on the phone tightened until my knuckles throbbed.

No.

I drew in a slow breath, steadyng myself.

I wouldn't be baited.

Catherine's little performance had been deliberate. Meant to provoke. To isolate.

Now I sensed it clearly, an undercurrent weaving through every memory and conversation.

Someone had been intent on severing my ties. Nudging, redirecting, subtly ensuring I remained on the outside looking in.

But I wasn't a child anymore. I wasn't weak or defenseless.

No matter how much unraveled, no matter what truths surfaced, I vowed: I would not be written out of my own story again.

A knock on the door broke me out of my reverie.

"Come in," I called.

Ethan stepped inside, closing it softly behind him. His gaze went immediately to the documents spread across the bed.

"How are you feeling about them?" he asked gently.

I took a deep breath.

"Clearer," I said honestly. "And more determined."

His shoulders eased slightly. “Good.”

I met his eyes. “Someone’s been playing games. With all of us.”

He nodded once. “I know.”

“I won’t let them win,” I declared. “I won’t let anyone convince me anymore that I don’t belong. Not to this family. Not to myself.”

A small, fierce smile tugged at his mouth. “That sounds like my sister.”

I returned it, feeling steadier than I had in days.

“No one gets to decide my place anymore.”

Ethan stepped forward and rested a warm, grounding hand over mine.

“Damn right,” he said.

I upturned my hand and intertwined our fingers. "I want to make it official."

He sucked in a breath. "Yeah?"

I glanced down at the documents. My father had already signed and sealed where necessary. All that remained was my own signature.

I nodded. "Yes. I want to be Seraphina Lockwood again."