

## My Sister 3

### Chapter 3 ALL I WANT

#### SERAPHINA'S POV

The words shouldn't have hurt—not after a decade of waiting for this moment. Yet they sliced through me like silver, the pain radiating from my shattered heart to every nerve ending.

I'd always known that Kieran would eventually ask for this. Especially now. Celeste. His first crush. His real love. Back.

It didn't matter that I'd loved him since we were children, long before Celeste ever noticed him. It didn't matter that I'd given him a son. The moment she returned, I became invisible—just as I'd always been in his eyes.

Celeste was the dazzling diamond, blinding everyone to the plain pebble at her feet. I knew this. So why did it still feel like my soul was being ripped in two?

"It's because of Celeste, isn't it?" My voice was eerily calm. I already knew the answer, but some masochistic part of me needed to hear him say it. Needed him to twist the knife deeper.

Kieran's eyes flashed—the first real emotion he'd shown me in years. "No," he snapped, jaw clenched. "Of course not."

Liar.

He dragged a hand through his dark hair, exhaling sharply. "Edward's death just... reminded me life's too short to waste on a mistake."

A mistake.

I would have preferred the knife. Would have rather he screamed Celeste's name than reduce our marriage—our son—to a regret.

I couldn't help but laugh out.

The sound was jagged, hysterical, tearing from my throat as Kieran stared at me like I'd lost my mind. Maybe I had.

I laughed because the alternative was screaming.

My gaze traced the lines of this man I knew yet didn't know at all, this stranger I'd loved for eighteen years who had never truly seen me.

Who was more pitiable—him or me?

He loved Celeste, yet honor and a single mistake had chained him to a marriage he never wanted. What had these ten years given us? If not for that night, if we hadn't been forced into this loveless union, would his eyes have held even a flicker of warmth for me?

We were never meant to be like this.

Even though I could never regret Daniel, I'd meant it that night—I'd been ready to vanish. I should have run farther. Should never have stepped into that clinic, never let them know about the pregnancy.

I'd told myself staying, enduring, was for Daniel's sake. But now, I couldn't lie to myself anymore. What kind of life had I given him, with parents whose hearts were oceans apart? While Celeste was gone, Kieran had played the part of a dutiful father. But now she was back, and the fragile facade of our marriage would shatter.

I won't let my son watch his mother become a laughingstock.

"Fine," I said at last, the laughter dying on my lips.

Kieran's brows lifted. Had he expected tears? Begging? Had he wanted to see me break?

Too bad.

My entire life, people had hungered for my surrender. But I refused to give them another ounce of my pain.

When I walked away from this marriage, I would take only two things:

My dignity.

And my son.

"I want full custody of Daniel."

His shock morphed into fury. "The hell you will! He's my son!"

"And mine!" I snarled back.

"You can't take the pack's heir from his Alpha!" Kieran's voice shook with barely leashed rage.

"And you can't take a mother's heart from her chest!" My hands trembled, but my voice didn't waver. "I don't want your money. Your property. Anything. Just my son."

Daniel was my only light in this wretched world. If Kieran took him from me...

I wouldn't survive it.

"And most importantly... You and Celeste will have new children."

The words stole the breath from my lungs. Just the thought of it—of her giving him the pups I never could—made my chest ache like a fresh wound. But for Daniel, I would endure anything. Even this.

I watched Kieran closely, his expression unreadable in the dim kitchen light. Finally, he gave a single stiff nod.

"Fine. You can have full custody."

The catch. He agreed so easily.

Not a single denial. Not one word to contradict what I'd said about him and Celeste. He still preferred a family with her, didn't he?

And the most pathetic part? Some foolish, desperate corner of my heart had still hoped. Still waited for him to say something—anything—to prove our marriage hadn't been just a prison sentence to him.

I pressed my palms to my stinging eyes. Gods, what was wrong with me?

I couldn't afford to hope anymore. Not tonight. If I didn't leave here soon, I'd collapse right here on the cold tiles—

Then Kieran caught my wrist.

He cleared his throat awkwardly, his grip warm against my skin. "We can wait until after the funeral to finalize everything, if you prefer."

For one dangerous moment, I almost believed him. Almost thought this was kindness.

If only he'd shown me this consideration once in ten years.

I wrenched my arm free. "No need to delay. It's not like there's much to dissolve—you never even gave me a mating mark."

The one thing he'd refused when we married. That, and loving me.

"Your wolf never came," he'd said that night we got married, his voice carefully blank. "A mating bond would only cause you pain when..."

When we inevitably divorced.

He hadn't finished the sentence, but we both knew. Just like we both knew the real reason—the mark belonged to Celeste in his mind. Always had.

The bitter truth settled in my chest: he'd planned for this ending from the very beginning.

What difference did it make now? Whether it was pity or premeditation, the result was the same—my neck remained unmarked, my heart remained broken, and Kieran would walk away free.

Kieran's brow furrowed deeper.

"Seraphina, there's no need for bitterness. Our marriage was a mistake—I only hope we can both move on." His voice softened, that hint of pity making my stomach churn. "You deserve—"

"Oh, spare me." I turned away before he could see how his pity cut me deeper than his anger ever could. "Don't worry—I've saved enough to support myself and Daniel. You'll be free by tomorrow."

The shock on his face was almost comical. Had he truly expected me to fight for him? To beg?

Yes, I loved him. I still do.

But ten years of trying to thaw his heart had taught me this: no amount of warmth could melt a glacier that didn't want to be moved.

And now that Celeste was back? Did he think I'd delude myself into believing I ever stood a chance?

Why crush what's left of my pride just to feed an Alpha's ego?

I'd learned my lesson. A decade in this loveless marriage had been enough. I was done fighting for people who never wanted me.

My steps were numb as I climbed the stairs, memories of Kieran flashing like ghosts behind my eyes:

\*The bright smile he'd given me when we first met as children.

\*Me watching from the shadows when he won his first Hunt.

\*The way my heart shattered as he placed the victory garland on Celeste's head, her lips meeting his in a sweet kiss.



\*The blur of liquor glasses when their engagement was announced.

\*That catastrophic night that started it all.

\*Then—Daniel's birth, his first steps, every milestone since...

Halfway up the staircase, Daniel's sleepy voice echoed in my mind:

"You and Dad will always be here, right?"

My heart lurched. Gods. How do we tell him?

I whirled around, my earlier resolve cracking. "How... how do we explain this to Daniel?"

Kieran paused mid-sip of water. "I'll handle it."

Of course. He's already planned for this, too. My fists clenched.

"And you needn't worry about finances," he added stiffly. "Daniel is still my son. I'll cover his expenses—and yours."

I couldn't read his expression. After ten years, the view I knew best was still his poker face. But this time, I refused to waste energy deciphering him.

Tomorrow, once the papers were signed, we'd be strangers. As he wished.

I turned without answering.

The bedroom door clicked shut behind me—then the dam broke.

Silent sobs wracked my body as I slid to the floor, the day's grief finally overwhelming me. Somewhere downstairs, the floorboards creaked.

Kieran was probably already packing. Probably already picturing Celeste in this house, raising my son.

My hand flew to my unmarked throat—where his teeth should have been. Where a mating bond should have sealed us together.

"It's okay, Sera," I whispered into the hollow dark, arms wrapped tight around my shaking ribs. "You'll survive this."

For my son—I'll survive anything.