

My Sister 305

Chapter 305 OUR FEELINGS

SERAPHINA'S POV

Ashar's abrupt withdrawal caught Kieran off guard.

It was obvious in the way his balance faltered, the way his control slipped just enough for instinct to surge unchecked.

His hand shot out, searching for balance—and caught my shoulders. His weight followed before either of us could stop it.

I yelped as I was pushed back into the grass, air rushing from my lungs in a single, stunned gasp.

The impact didn't hurt, but the sudden closeness was jarring, and my heart slammed so hard against my ribs, I was sure Kieran would feel it.

Because he was above me. Pressed against me.

Bare skin to bare skin.

Moonlight traced the sharp edges of his body, each breath he took rising and falling against me, his warmth ghosting over my face.

My palms pressed flat to his chest, fingers spread wide over muscles still thrumming with the wild energy of the Shift.

For half a second that lasted an eternity, neither of us moved.

Then heat flooded me.

It wasn't subtle. It wasn't gentle. It was a fierce, electric awareness that ignited every nerve at once, my pulse stuttering wildly as sensation crashed through me—the roughness of grass beneath, the weight of him above, the visceral alignment of our bodies.

Desire surged through me, sudden and scorching, exploding in my lower belly like a spark catching dry tinder.

I felt Kieran's response—the answering hitch in his breath, the way his body went still in a way that had nothing to do with surprise and everything to do with restraint.

His eyes darkened, something dangerous and raw flickering before he could smother it. The charge between us was a live wire, hot enough to burn.

For one terrifying heartbeat, I thought he might give in. I...hoped he would.

Then he pulled back. He rolled away and sprang upright, as if the earth beneath us had burned him.

The abruptness left me reeling, blinking up at the spinning night sky.

His jaw worked once before he cleared his throat, the sound rough.

"I—" He cleared his throat again, turning away, one hand raking through his hair with enough ferocity to yank out several strands. "I'm sorry. That was...Ashar surprised me. I didn't mean to—"

"It's okay," I said too quickly, sitting up and pulling my knees to my chest, suddenly acutely aware of how exposed I was. "I'm okay."

Kieran didn't look at me. "I'll—uh. I'll get us some clothes. I keep a spare stash in my car."

Then he was gone, retreating toward the trees with a purpose that screamed of someone desperate to escape temptation.

I watched him disappear into the trees, leaving me exposed in the moonlit field with the silent bodies of three dead rogues.

My heart didn't slow.

If anything, it beat harder, wild and chaotic, a traitor in my own chest.

'What was that?' I demanded of myself, wrapping my arms tighter around my knees.

The bond was severed. Gone.

I had made that decision believing it was the best thing for me, the only way I could truly be free on the new path I was treading.

So why did my body still react to Kieran like this? Why did the nearness of him still unravel me so completely?

Why did my chest ache with something that felt dangerously close to longing as I watched his retreating back disappear into the dark?

Maybe I didn't sever it right. Some part of the bond must have still lingered. That had to be it. It had to be.

'It's not.'

Alina's presence brushed against me like a warm blanket, steady and calm in the wake of my spiraling thoughts.

'I think you know, Sera—that wasn't the bond.'

I swallowed hard.

'I...I don't understand.'

'These are our feelings. Free from the bond's influence. Just like you wanted.'

I stiffened. 'Our?'

Alina went quiet.

I closed my eyes, images flickering through my mind—silver and gold fur in moonlight, Ashar and Alina's laughter as he chased us across the field, the easy, familiar way she had moved with him, the joy that had poured through us like sunlight.

In that moment, her emotions had been unguarded, bright, and open in a way I'd rarely felt from her before. She hadn't been afraid. She hadn't been conflicted.

And suddenly, I understood.

'You like him,' I said quietly. 'Ashar.'

Alina didn't deny it.

'I do,' she admitted. 'I always have.'

My chest tightened painfully.

'Since when?'

'Since I saw him at Daniel's ceremony,' she answered.

The confession left me reeling.

Regret bloomed sharp and sudden in my chest as my worst fear was realized.

By rejecting the bond—by choosing myself, my healing, my boundaries—had I hurt my wolf too? Had I taken something from her without even realizing it?

‘No,’ Alina said immediately, her tone firm now. ‘Never think that.’

She drew closer, her presence wrapping around my thoughts like arms.

I pressed my forehead to my knees, shaking.

‘Why didn’t you tell me?’ I asked. ‘Why didn’t you stop me from severing the bond?’

‘Because more than a mate,’ Alina said, ‘I cherish you.’

The words stole my breath.

‘It is true that wolves are different from humans,’ she continued. ‘We feel the pull of fate more deeply. When we meet our fated mate, the world narrows. Others fade. Not because they are lesser, but because the bond is...singular.’

I listened, heart heavy.

'I could have obeyed fate and loved Ashar—and Kieran—fully, forever. But I could not ask you to forget your pain just to satisfy my longing.'

Tears burned behind my closed eyes as her presence tightened around me, protective.

'When you chose to reject the bond, I didn't object. Because I understand your fear, your need to start over and heal. And before a mate, Sera, before anyone and anything else, I will always choose you.'

Shame and gratitude twisted together inside me, leaving me stripped bare and aching.

I folded in on myself, tears streaming down my cheeks and choking my breath.

I barely registered the rustle of grass, the soft curse under Kieran's breath.

"Sera?"

He was in front of me in an instant, crouching low, his hands hovering uncertainly like he was afraid to touch me without permission.

“What’s wrong?” he asked urgently. “Are you hurting? Did the Shift leave anything unstable? I can call a healer—”

“I’m fine,” I sobbed, the words garbled and useless.

His eyes searched my face, wide with concern, panic threading through his voice. “Talk to me, please. I need to know what’s wrong so I can fix it.”

A sob ripped free, raw and sudden, shaking me as everything I’d been holding back broke loose all at once.

Kieran went still for half a second—then he reached for me, instinctive and sure.

He gathered me into his arms, holding my trembling body close, one hand gentle at the back of my head as he murmured soft, steady reassurances that only made me cry harder.

“It’s okay,” he whispered. “I’ve got you. You’re safe. You’re okay.”

I clung to him like a lifeline, my body curling into his as if it had always been where it belonged.

I’d hurt him; I’d broken his heart. And here he was, there for me in the most vulnerable moment of my life, and even without the bond in place, I could sense all of his emotions, practically spilling out of him.

Fear.

Concern.

Care.

Love.

‘This isn’t the bond,’ Alina murmured. ‘This is him.’

The realization shattered what little restraint I had left.

I cried until my chest ached, until the night blurred around the edges, and Kieran held me through all of it, rocking me gently like I was something precious.

For the first time since everything broke, I didn’t doubt what I felt.

And I didn’t doubt what he did either.