

My Sister 32

Chapter 32 MY LUNA

SERAPHINA'S POV

As we walked, my shoulders started to ache—not from the bags I was carrying, but from the weight I thought I'd finally shrugged off.

I tried to hide it. I smiled at Maya, thanked her a thousand times, even made a joke about tripping in one of the ridiculous heels she made me buy.

But the truth? My shopping spirit had flatlined somewhere between Emma's sneer and Celeste's smug little declaration.

Even now, it echoed in my head: 'Kieran's already made his choice.'

I knew that. And it shouldn't have bothered me one bit.

Still, hearing it—spoken with such confidence, like I was nothing but a discarded mistake—burned hotter than any insult ever could.

"Okay, one last stop," Maya announced as we pulled up to our cars. "My car has been acting up lately,"—she tapped on the hood for emphasis—"and if that isn't a sign that I need a new whip, I don't know what is."

She pointed to the dealership across the street from the mall. "Let's drop our bags and—"

"I think I'll head home," I said. "I need to... decompress. Maybe take a nap before dinner. It's been quite a day."

Maya narrowed her eyes slightly. "I thought we could grab dinner together."

I forced a grin. "Rain check?"

She bit her lower lip. "You're not letting those girls get to you, right? They're all fucking juvenile. Not worth the headspace, Sera."

I nodded, my jaw aching with the strained smile. "I know, Maya. And thanks for that earlier; it was pretty badass."

She nodded slowly. "Alright, birthday girl. You promise you're not going home to sulk under a blanket?"

I shook my head. "I'm not." At least I hoped I wasn't.

She watched me a beat longer, then nodded. "Okay then."

She watched me as I unlocked my car and put my shopping bags inside. Before I slid into the driver's seat, I waved at her cheerfully, pretending like I didn't feel as if I'd just been shoved ten steps backward in my healing.

MAYA'S POV

I've walked into ambushes alone and walked out without a scratch. Once took down an Alpha twice my size with plastic chopsticks.

But nothing—and I mean nothing—could've prepared me for the jolt that went through me the moment I stepped into that godforsaken dealership.

I'd been distracted, worrying about my new friend and all the forces of the world that conspired to hurt her.

I'd been wondering what else I could do to help her, to ease the weight she constantly carried like a pain mule, when I felt it—white hot lightning rushing through my body, freezing me in place.

All my senses honed in on the source of that feeling, and I felt my wolf, Nyra, stir.

He was leaning against the hood of a dark green Mercedes G-Wagon, all polished steel and understated arrogance, casually arguing with the service manager like he owned the place.

I wouldn't have noticed him if the bond hadn't punched me in the chest like a battering ram.

'Mate!' Nyra howled. The sound filled my head. Awareness spread through my body. The sheer force of my realization gave me vertigo.

Tall. Broad-shouldered. A clean-shaven jaw I could already see myself punching for fun. And those eyes—like storm clouds gathering in a clear blue sky—locked on me the moment I entered.

He felt it too.

I saw his body tense as he straightened, saw his pupils dilate. Felt the weight of his attention on me, the service manager suddenly an afterthought.

He started toward me, slow and cautious, probably trying to play it cool despite the magnetic pull humming between us like a live wire.

Each step he took toward me reflected in my pounding heart, but I forced it to be still, forced my nerves to ease.

I was Maya fucking Cartridge, and I didn't get fazed. Mate or no.

"Hey—" he began. His voice was warm silk, smooth and rich.

I raised a brow. "If you're about to say you think we know each other, don't. It's cliché."

He blinked. Then laughed. Damn it. It was a nice laugh—it curled into the air between us, oddly intimate.

Nyra purred.

"I wasn't. I was going to say"—he stuck out a hand—"I'd like to know your name."

My lips twitched. "Would you now?"

"Very much."

I almost told him. Almost.

I'd always found the idea of fated mates a little ridiculous. No disrespect to the moon goddess, but if I was going to be with someone for the rest of my life, it would be my decision, not fate's.

I wasn't the kind of girl you stumbled upon and just claimed. I had to be earned.

I took a step closer. Close enough to let the tension sharpen.

His scent hit me—dark leather with a trace of pine.

My senses sharpened. In recognition. In hunger.

Shit.

"Then here's a challenge, mystery man." I forced my voice to steady, to not betray the longing coiling in my belly. "You've got one week. Find out who I am—without using the bond. No sniffing, no asking around the pack, no cheating. And if you manage that..."

His brows lifted, intrigued.

"...then we'll talk."

His eyes darkened, his lips quirking. "A challenge... Interesting."

I tilted my head. "Are you up for it?"

His eyes flit to my lips, and almost instinctively, I bit down on my lower lip, wondering what it would be like to kiss him. Explosive, no doubt.

"Definitely."

I smirked and turned to leave. There was no way in hell I could focus on car shopping when he was in the vicinity, within reach.

"See you in a week, stud. Let's see what you're made of."

CELESTE'S POV

Emma wouldn't stop checking the mirror in her compact. I didn't blame her.

I'd told her to go with soft curls and a peachy-nude lip, something pretty and approachable—not desperate.

She looked perfect. All we needed was for Ethan to show up and notice it.

I'd planned it perfectly.

I'd asked Ethan to pick me up from the mall. Meeting Emma here would be a 'happy coincidence,' followed by a casual movie invite. At that point, I would suddenly feel sick and take an Uber home to get some rest.

Emma had carried a torch for Ethan for years, and it shouldn't have to take much to create a spark between them.

Except he was almost an hour late, and Abby and I were running out of things to say that would keep Emma's nerves from unraveling.

"He's coming," I repeated, more for myself than her. "He probably got caught up at the car dealership. You know how he is when he starts talking about cars."

Emma gave me a tight nod, but her eyes kept darting toward the boutique's glass doors—the same ones Sera and her little bodyguard had walked through earlier.

The entire interaction still left a bad taste in my mouth and simmering anger in my chest. I didn't know what I hated more: Sera pretending she belonged in a place like this, or that smug little curl on her friend's lips as she defended the cunning snake.

I shoved all thoughts of them to the back of my mind, ignoring my cheek stinging with the memory of Sera's slap. Everything concerning my older sister filled me with a bitterness that eclipsed all else, and I couldn't afford a distraction.

Today was about Emma. About putting the right people in the right place—starting with making sure Ethan finally saw what was right in front of him.

I spotted him just as Emma stood to smooth her dress. He came from across the mall, weaving through the late-afternoon crowd. The moment I saw his face, something shifted in my gut.

He looked... off.

His eyes were unfocused. His movements sharp, tense.

Like his whole body was vibrating with something he hadn't figured out how to process yet. There was this strange energy rolling off him—almost like he was holding back a Shift.

"Hey!" I waved lightly. "Over here."

"Ethan," Emma said as he approached, giving him her best sweet smile. "It's good to see you; it's been a while."

For a moment, he didn't respond. His jaw flexed, and he looked past us—like his mind was somewhere else entirely.

Then, finally, he blinked and looked at Emma. Then at me.

He reached out and grabbed my hand, pulling me away from my friends.

"Ethan," I hissed. "You just ignored Emma. You're being rude."

"I found her," he said, a tremor in his voice.

I frowned. "What?"

"My mate," he clarified, a tinge of awe in his voice. "My Luna."

My eyes widened. "What?! Who?"

But he didn't elaborate. He wasn't smiling, wasn't bragging. He looked... stunned. Wrecked. Disoriented. Like the ground had shifted under him, and he hadn't quite caught his balance.

I stepped closer. "Are you sure?"

His eyes finally focused on me, and I saw it. That flicker of knowing. Of instinct.

"As sure as the blood pumping in my veins," he answered, his voice low. "Logan sensed her instantly."

His wolf aura glowed in his eyes as if Logan himself was trying to confirm Ethan's declaration. There was no denying it.

Ethan turned, and I reached out, grabbing his hand. "Wait," I said. "Emma wanted to know if you wanted to watch a movie with her."

He looked at me like I'd suggested he strip and run naked through the mall.

He gently but firmly pulled his arm out of my grasp. "I have no time for that. I need to find out who she is."

His eyes glazed over, and I knew he was thinking about her—his mate.

Fuck.

He was already halfway across the tiled floor by the time I processed what had just happened.

I turned to Emma, and she blinked at me curiously. I didn't know what to say to her.

Not because I was heartbroken for her, but because I was already calculating what this meant.

If Ethan had truly found his mate, then everything I'd been quietly orchestrating—positioning Emma at his side, guiding the narrative—would unravel in a blink. And more importantly?

I'd lose influence.

Emma would have been the perfect Luna—not too ambitious, not too clever. Loyal to me. Malleable.

I could've whispered in her ear and held the reins without anyone noticing. I would've remained important. Visible. The sister who built the Luna.

But now?

Now, Ethan was tethered to someone I didn't know. Someone I hadn't chosen. Someone I couldn't control.

And that? That was the real danger.

Because if his mate had a mind of her own, if she didn't need help, or worse, didn't want mine, then where did that leave me?

Invisible.

I had to find her and somehow steer my brother away from her.

Before it was too late.