

## **My Sister 381**

Chapter 381 THAT BITCH FATE

CELESTE'S POV

Even now, the memory was sharp enough to make my stomach twist.

Catherine's villa in the Maldives had always carried a strange kind of quiet. It wasn't peaceful. It was the sort of quiet that felt deliberate, like the walls themselves were listening.

The air smelled faintly of salt, drifting in from the ocean cliffs below. In the distance, waves crashed rhythmically against the rocks, the sound muffled through the villa's thick glass windows.

Inside, everything was immaculate and controlled—polished marble floors, pale stone walls, and long corridors that echoed faintly with every step.

For the past several days, I had been weighing the same thought over and over in my mind.

Leaving.

Catherine's project had stalled. Weeks of examinations and "energy readings" had produced nothing she seemed satisfied with.

The researchers whispered behind glass partitions, their conversations filled with theories about bloodlines and wolf resonance, but even I could tell the progress she'd promised wasn't materializing.

Hope was beginning to feel like a leash.

And the longer I stayed there, the clearer it became that Catherine had no intention of letting me walk away freely.

So that afternoon, I went looking for Mother, hoping we could leave together.

Her room was near the eastern wing of the villa, facing the ocean. When I reached the door, it was slightly ajar.

I knocked once.

No answer.

Frowning, I pushed the door open.

The room was empty.

Sunlight filtered through the sheer curtains, casting pale lines across the polished floor. A suitcase sat open near the bed, and several folders lay scattered across the small desk near the window.

Just as I was about to leave, I noticed her phone resting on the bedside table.

It began vibrating.

Once. Twice.

The screen lit up.

“Mom...It’s me, Sera.”

My entire body went still.

My fingers curled slowly at my sides as her words filled the room.

“Of course you knew that; you have caller Id. Anyway, um... I just wanted to let you know that I...I’ve had my first full Shift.”

For a moment, I thought I had misheard.

The sentence echoed through the quiet bedroom.

Shift.

Sera had shifted.

My mind refused to accept it.

Because at that exact moment, another memory rose with brutal clarity.

Kharis.

The last fading whisper of her presence.

The way her spirit had burned itself away, sacrificed to protect me in that underground hell.

The silence that followed.

My wolf was gone. Maybe forever.

And Sera had just found hers.

Something cold spread through my chest.

I stared at the phone as if it had personally betrayed me. And then I deleted the message.

Fate had already taken everything from me.

Kieran.

My place in the pack.

My reputation.

My freedom.

Kharis.

But apparently that still wasn't enough.

Now Sera was rising while I had nothing left.

Fate had always favored her.

Somehow, she always came out on top, no matter what I did to keep her down.

Jealousy surged through me so violently it almost made me dizzy.

I couldn't stay there anymore.

Not after hearing that.

If Sera had found her wolf—if she had grown stronger—then my time was running out.

Catherine would never let me leave. Not willingly.

Which meant I would have to leave without permission.

And that was the moment the idea truly formed in my mind.

Because outside the villa, the sky had already begun to darken.

A storm was approaching.

And storms had a way of distracting people.

It arrived that evening.

Rain slammed against the reinforced windows. Wind howled across the cliffs like a living thing. The facility's staff rushed to secure the outer laboratories as the tropical system rolled over the island.

Chaos. Distraction. Opportunity.

I slipped out after midnight.

Even now, I could remember the rain soaking through my clothes as I moved along the compound's perimeter. Every step felt wrong. The world was dull and heavy without Kharis. My senses, weaker. My balance, uncertain.

But desperation pushed me forward.

I bribed a pilot to take me to the nearest coastal town with the last of the money Catherine had allowed me access to.

As the aircraft rose into the violent clouds, I stared down at the dark water and convinced myself everything would work out.

At the time, I truly believed everything would fall back into place once I returned.

When I walked back into their lives, they would see what had happened to me. They would see what I had lost.

Losing my wolf wasn't something that anyone with a shred of conscience could brush aside.

Surely Ethan would feel responsible.

Surely Kieran would remember everything we had once been to each other.

Looking back now, the thought almost made me laugh.

Not because it was funny.

Because it was so painfully naive.

The truth revealed itself the moment I stepped back into that world.

Sera hadn't simply changed.

She hadn't just managed to shift like any other late-blooming wolf.

She was Kieran's mate.

Fate itself had chosen her.

The realization had felt like the ground shifting under my feet.

As if that wasn't enough, Brett appeared and got a front row seat to my humiliation.

Now, sitting across from Sera, I felt the weight of that collapse settle over me again.

There was something different about her now. Not just strength. Something steadier than that, something that made it impossible to dismiss her the way I once had.

Ironically, for the first time in my life, I didn't feel the urge to compete with her.

I just felt tired.

"I didn't lose to you," I said quietly.

Sera frowned slightly, clearly not expecting that.

"I lost to fate."

A faint smile touched my lips, though there was no real humor in it.

"That bitch fate," I murmured, "has always had a soft spot for you."

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SERAPHINA'S POV

Something inside me snapped at Celeste's words.

Before I fully realized what I was doing, I crossed the room and grabbed her by the upper arm.

She jerked in surprise. "What—"

I hauled her to her feet.

The silver cuffs around her wrists clinked sharply as she stumbled forward, her hands still bound together in front of her.

"Let go of me," she snapped, trying to wrench her arm free.

But I didn't release her.

Keeping my grip firm on her arm, I pulled her toward the tall mirror beside the bed.

“What are you doing?” she demanded, digging her heels against the floor.

For a moment, she resisted.

But the difference in our strength now was undeniable.

Within seconds, I had dragged her in front of the mirror.

She caught her balance with an irritated breath. The cuffs shifted faintly as she lifted her bound hands.

“Look,” I said.

Celeste glared at our reflections.

Two women stood in the glass.

Two Lockwood daughters.

Similar faces.

But the differences were impossible to ignore.

Celeste's hair was disheveled. Her wrists were bound in silver. Her proud elegance now looked strained and brittle.

She looked furious. And exhausted.

"You think you've lost everything," I said quietly.

"I have."

"No."

My voice sharpened. "Look again."

She didn't move.

For a moment, we simply stood there staring at the mirror.

“You lost your wolf,” I continued. “That’s true.”

My eyes met hers in the reflection.

“But before you ever had Kharis...”

The memory surfaced clearly in my mind.

Pack gatherings. Training fields.

Crowds that always seemed to drift toward Celeste like sunlight.

“You were the most cherished princess of the Lockwood family.”

Her jaw tightened slightly.

“You were the one everyone admired,” I went on. “The one people followed. And you still are a Lockwood.”

My voice softened. “If anyone in this world understands how dazzling you once were, Celeste... It’s me.”

Because it was true. Growing up in her shadow, her brightness was all I could see.

Celeste had always been the center of any room.

Confident. Brilliant. Impossible to ignore.

“That confidence of yours,” I said quietly, “was something people couldn’t look away from.”

Her expression flickered.

And suddenly I understood something that had been lingering in the back of my mind since hearing her story.

“That’s why Olivia chose you.”

Celeste went completely still.

I met her gaze in the mirror.

“She saw something worth protecting. She believed helping you escape was worth risking her life.”

For a moment, Celeste said nothing.

Her reflection looked almost...shaken.

“You had a brilliant life once,” I continued quietly. “And you can have it again.”

Her voice came out bitter. “Don’t be ridiculous.”

“I’m not.”

I turned her slightly so she had no choice but to look directly at herself.

“You let yourself sink to this point. No one forced you to become this person.”

Her shoulders stiffened.

“But if you want a different life,” I said slowly, “that chance isn’t gone.”

Celeste’s eyes flicked toward me in the mirror.

“The real question is whether you’re willing to open your eyes. To see who actually cares about you. And who’s been manipulating you all along.”