

My Sister 413

Chapter 413 ROGUE ATTITUDE

DANIEL'S POV

It was much easier to breathe when I pushed myself to the edge of exhaustion.

Not because it actually got easier, but because everything else went quiet.

The dreams didn't disappear. They never did. They lingered at the edges of my mind. Fragments, too large to fully understand, pressed in whenever I slowed down enough to feel them.

So I didn't slow down.

"Again."

The boy across from me—Jonas—barely reset his stance before I moved. My foot pivoted, weight shifting as I closed the distance in a step.

He brought his arms up to block.

I adjusted mid-motion, redirected the strike just enough to catch his side rather than his guard, and pulled the impact at the last second so it didn't land with full force.

He still grunted, stumbling back a step.

"Your center's too high," I said, lowering my hands. "You're reacting instead of anticipating."

Jonas rubbed his side, grimacing. "Easy for you to say."

"It should be easy for you, too."

That came out harsher than I meant.

I exhaled, releasing tension from my shoulders. "Again," I said, softer.

We reset.

This time, he adjusted faster. Not perfect, but better.

I watched him closely. Not just his movements, but the pauses between them. The hesitation. The instinct rising, but not quite breaking through.

That was the part that mattered.

Not strength.

Not speed.

Understanding.

Because strength could be broken.

Speed could be matched.

But understanding was what kept you alive when everything else failed.

The thought slid too easily into something else.

Into memory.

Into the dream.

The way the moon had dimmed—not disappeared, but suppressed, like something crushing it from above.

The way the pack had faltered under that weight, movements slower, reactions dulled.

The way the enemies hadn't.

My chest tightened.

“Daniel?”

I blinked.

Jonas was watching me, uncertain.

I hadn't moved.

I stepped back, shaking off the lingering image. "Take five," I said.

Relief flickered across his face as he nodded and retreated.

Around us, the training grounds continued in steady motion, the rhythm of sparring and instruction filling the space with controlled noise.

Normal.

Contained.

Nothing like the chaos from the dream.

I turned away, dragging a hand through my hair as I headed toward the water station.

'You need to get stronger.'

The thought had been repeating since the dream.

Since the feeling of watching something terrible happen that I couldn't stop.

I would be Alpha one day; I refused to feel that kind of helplessness ever again.

I grabbed my bottle and gulped down the cool water.

"You're pushing yourself hard today."

I glanced sideways.

Gavin stood nearby, arms crossed, watching a younger group with an assessing look.

"I need it," I said.

"Your parents have a habit of pushing themselves too hard, too fast. They don't know how to stop."

I shrugged. "That's why they're both so powerful."

He studied me a moment longer, gave a small nod, then turned back to the field muttering, "Stubborn Blackthorne's."

I exhaled. "Jonas, five mi—"

A shout cut through the air.

I stilled.

Another shout followed, louder this time, carrying something different from the usual training noise.

My head turned toward the far side of the grounds.

A crowd was forming.

I moved toward it instantly. The closer I got, the clearer the sounds became.

Impact. Shouts. Jeers.

Sounds that didn't belong in controlled sparring.

By the time I reached the edge of the circle, the fight was already in full motion.

An older boy—Matt—swung.

A smaller figure I didn't recognize ducked under it, fast, sharp, nothing like the controlled movements we were taught.

My eyes narrowed.

That wasn't training.

That was survival.

The smaller one moved again, low and precise, sweeping Matt's legs out from under him with a motion that was more instinct than technique.

Matt rose again and clipped the smaller one on the shoulder, and was rewarded with a ferocious little headbutt that made him stagger.

Just as the little one charged again, I stepped forward.

“Enough.”

The noise cut off abruptly, like someone had pressed pause on the moment.

Both fighters froze.

I moved into the circle, my gaze flicking between them.

Matt was breathing hard, anger flashing across his face.

The smaller one—

I paused.

Green eyes, sharp and burning, fury sitting too close to the surface like it could spill over at any second.

“What is this?” I asked, my voice sharper now.

Neither of them answered.

“Training ground rules are not optional,” I continued, letting the edge in my tone settle over the space.
“We don’t fight like this here.”

“He started it—” Matt began.

“Stop.”

He shut his mouth immediately.

I turned to the smaller one. “And you,” I said, “you don’t belong in this circle if you can’t follow basic rules.”

His chin lifted in defiance, but he didn’t say anything.

“Both of you,” I said, “run the outer perimeter. Ten laps. Then report back for controlled sparring. If I see anything like this again, you’re both off the grounds for a week.”

A murmur ran through the crowd.

Matt scowled but nodded.

The smaller one didn't move.

I frowned. "Did you hear me?"

He crossed his arms.

"I'm not running." The words landed flat and unapologetic.

A few of the others shifted, tension creeping back into the space.

I held his gaze. I'd never seen eyes so green. "That wasn't a suggestion."

"I don't take orders from you."

The crowd reacted immediately, a mix of surprise and anticipation rippling outward.

I took a step forward. "Everyone on these grounds follows the same rules."

"Then maybe your rules are stupid."

A couple of the younger wolves sucked in quiet breaths.

Matt let out a low laugh. "Told you—rogue attitude."

The smaller one's eyes flashed. "Say that again. See if I don't pull out every tooth in that ugly smile."

I stepped in before it could escalate again.

"That's enough," I said, sharper now.

Silence dropped.

I looked at the smaller one again, more carefully this time.

"You're new, so I take it you don't know how things work here," I said, keeping my voice level.

He snorted. "Looked pretty simple to me."

“This isn’t the wild,” I said. “You don’t prove anything by ignoring structure.”

“I proved I can take him down,” he shot back.

Matt bristled.

“Barely,” I said.

His eyes narrowed.

“And you got hit more than you should have,” I added. “Which means if this had been real, you’d be injured or worse.”

Silence.

Not agreement. But not dismissal either.

“You want to be here?” I asked.

A pause.

Then, grudgingly, “I didn’t say that.”

“Then leave.”

He blinked, caught off guard.

“If you don’t want to follow the rules,” I continued, “you don’t stay.”

The tension stretched.

For a second, I thought he might actually turn and walk away.

A surprising ache formed, unexpected and unwelcome, at the thought.

Before either of us could say anything else—

“Ava.”

Mom was crossing the grounds, her pace controlled but purposeful, her gaze moving over the scene in a way that took everything in at once.

“What happened?” she asked as she reached us.

No one answered immediately.

Her gaze shifted to me.

“Daniel?”

“A fight,” I said. “Escalated.”

Her eyes moved to the smaller figure.

“Ava, are you okay?”

My eyebrows rose. “Ava?” I took in the choppy haircut and the baggy clothes with fresh eyes. “You’re a girl?”

She snorted. "You're clever."

Mom stepped closer, her expression softening.

"Ava," she said again, quieter this time. "Hey."

The tension in Ava's posture didn't disappear, but it shifted, just enough to show it wasn't aimed at Mom.

"He called me a rogue," Ava said flatly, pointing to Matt.

Mom's expression changed. Her gaze flicked to Matt, who immediately cowered under it.

"That wasn't appropriate," she said evenly. "Ava is a guest in Nightfang, and she will be treated as such." Her voice carried over the entire training field. "Understood?"

The entire field answered in unison.

Then she looked back at Ava. "And fighting like that here isn't appropriate either."

Ava's jaw tightened.

"But—"

"No," Mom said gently, but firmly. "We don't handle things that way here."

Silence stretched until Ava looked away first.

"Fine," she muttered.

Mom exhaled, the tension easing just a fraction.

"Apologize," she said to both of them.

"Sorry," Matt muttered.

Ava's voice came a second later, sharper. "Yeah. Whatever. Sorry."

Mom straightened with a sigh, her gaze shifting to Dad, who had appeared at some point without me noticing.

He stepped forward, his attention settling on Ava.

“You don’t like rules,” he said.

Ava crossed her arms. “No.”

“Just as well,” he said.

She blinked.

So did I.

“You wouldn’t fit well in training anyway,” he continued.

Ava frowned. “How do you know that?”

He shrugged. “You’re good. Fast. Instinctive.” A beat. “But not good enough. You wouldn’t be able to keep up.”

She scowled. "Anything he can do,"—she stabbed a finger in Matt's direction—"I can do better."

Dad folded his arms casually. "I'll have to take your word for it."

"No," Ava snapped. "I'm going to prove it."

Dad arched a brow. "You'll train?"

She didn't miss a beat. "Yes."

Dad sighed and shrugged like this was an inconvenience he couldn't help. "Okay, if you say so."

His gaze flicked to me. "Daniel."

I straightened. "Yes?"

He winked at me. "Keep an eye on her."

I pursed my lips to hide my smile and nodded.

“Yes, Dad.”

I turned to Ava. “You start with my group tomorrow.”

She made a face. “Lucky me.”

I almost smiled.

Because that was the longest I had gone without thinking about the dream.