

My Sister 418

Chapter 418 STUFF OF LEGENDS

SERAPHINA'S POV

Imani didn't move at first.

"Aaron?" Her voice trembled, barely holding together.

He was still breathing hard, chest rising and falling like he'd been dragged out of something deep and suffocating. His eyes locked on her with a raw, unfiltered clarity that hadn't been there before.

"I—" His voice caught, rough and unsteady. "Imani, my mate."

That was all it took.

Her presence surged, fragile and fierce all at once, as if something that had been held back for far too long had finally been given permission to exist again.

She crossed the distance between them in a heartbeat and dropped to her knees before him, her hand coming up to his face like she needed to confirm he was real.

“Aaron, it’s me,” she whispered, her voice breaking on every word. “It’s me, I’m here.”

“I know,” he said, and there was a certainty in his tone that made my heart clench. “I know you.”

Imani let out a gut-wrenching sob and threw her arms around him.

The bond between them shone so intensely it almost felt like a physical force, a pull that rippled outward through the clearing.

No one spoke.

Even the night seemed to hold still, as if it understood this moment belonged to only them.

I let out a breath I hadn’t realized I’d been holding, the tension in my body loosening all at once.

We did it.

Not completely. Not perfectly.

But enough.

And then—

The world tilted.

It was subtle at first—a slight tremor underfoot, as if the ground shifted out of place.

Then my vision blurred.

The silver that had been threading through everything—sharp, bright, alive—began to recede too quickly, as if something was being stripped away before it had fully settled.

The next thing I knew, Alina was gone, and I was Sera again.

I swayed.

Strong arms caught me before I hit the ground.

“Sera.”

I reached out and gripped Kieran's shirt.

"Easy," he murmured, one hand steady at my back, the other tightening around me.

I blinked, trying to focus, but the world refused to settle.

"I'm fine," I said automatically. The words felt distant, as if they belonged to someone else.

"You're not," he replied, calm but firm.

Before I could muster up the strength to argue, Kieran pulled a blanket out of thin air, wrapping it around me with steady, gentle fingers.

"I've got you," he whispered.

I exhaled slowly, letting myself lean into him for a second longer.

Then I forced myself upright.

"I'm okay," I said again, more steady this time.

Kieran's gaze moved over my face, searching, measuring in that way he had when he was trying to decide whether to push or hold back.

"You're exhausted," he said finally. "Don't even try to deny it."

I huffed out a breath, something between irritation and reluctant amusement, but I didn't argue further.

Because he wasn't wrong.

The fatigue ran deeper than the physical. It settled somewhere beneath everything else, as if something had been drained in a way that rest alone wouldn't immediately restore.

So I let Kieran keep his arms around me, supporting my weight as I used him to regain my balance.

Imani hadn't let go of Aaron.

Her hands remained on him, one cupping his face, the other gripping his arm as if he might vanish if she eased her hold even slightly.

“Aaron,” she whispered again, hope in her voice as she searched his eyes. “Do you—do you remember anything else?”

Aaron stilled.

The clarity in his expression flickered. Uncertainty crept in as he tried to reach for something that wasn't there.

“I...” He frowned. “I remember you.”

Imani's breath hitched.

“And the bond,” he added, his voice quieter now. “I can feel it. It's...strong. You're my mate.”

She let out a half-sob, half-laugh. “Yes. Yes, baby, I am.”

“But everything else—” He hesitated.

Then, more quietly, “It's gone.”

The words settled heavily in the space between them.

Imani shut her eyes briefly, as if bracing herself.

When she opened them again, the tears were still there, but her expression had steadied.

“You’re here,” she said softly. “That’s enough.”

But it wasn’t, not really.

I could see it in the way her fingers trembled, in the way she kept searching his face like she was hoping something else might surface if she looked hard enough.

And Aaron knew it too.

“I’m sorry,” he whispered.

She shook her head. “No. Don’t—don’t say that.”

“I should remember,” he insisted, frustration bleeding into his tone now. “There should be more.”

“There will be,” I said before I could stop myself.

Both of them looked at me.

I stepped forward, tightening the blanket around myself.

“This wasn’t everything,” I continued. “What we restored was one memory. One connection. The strongest one.”

Alois stepped closer, his expression thoughtful, analytical in a way that told me he was already dissecting what had just happened piece by piece.

“You identified linked fragments,” he said, gaze sharp. “Pieces of the same memory and reconnected them.”

“Which means,” I said, “there are more like that.”

More clusters.

More sparks.

More pieces waiting to be put back together.

The thought settled into place, solid and undeniable.

We weren't dealing with something that had been erased.

We were dealing with something that had been...disassembled.

Which meant—

“We can fix this,” I said.

Kieran's hand tightened slightly where it still rested on my back.

“Sera—”

“I know what I'm saying,” I cut in, my voice steady despite the exhaustion pulling at me. “If I can find the fragments, if I can reconnect them—”

"Look what reconnecting just one did to you."

"I know it's not easy," I said. "But it's possible."

When Alois spoke, his voice was calm, but beneath it was something firm.

"What you just did, Sera," he said, "is the stuff of legends."

I exhaled. "I can do it agai—"

"The reason this ability exists as legend," he cut in, "is because of what it demands."

"I'm aware."

"No," he said gently. "You're aware of what it took to restore a single connection. Not what it will take to rebuild an entire mind. You pushed yourself tonight, and even that nearly overwhelmed you."

"I handled it."

“Barely.”

I inhaled slowly, steadying myself.

“We don’t have time to wait,” I said.

“And rushing in without certainty will cost you more than time,” Alois replied.

My jaw tightened.

Because he wasn’t wrong.

But we needed more than a mate connection. We needed something—anything—to help bring Catherine down.

The answer lay deep inside Aaron’s mind, I was sure of it.

If the only way to get it out was to sacrifice myself, then—

My thoughts shifted, something clicking into place with sudden clarity.

The memory hit so sharply I almost swayed again.

Knowledge.

Guidance.

Answers that didn't exist anywhere else.

I straightened. "I know where to go."

Kieran stilled beside me. "Sera—"

"The Origins Archives Room," I said, turning to Alois.

Alois's expression hardened immediately. "No."

I blinked. "What? Why?"

"You've already used it," he said.

"I have two visits left."

"And under normal circumstances," he replied, "those visits are spaced over years, not weeks."

"I don't have years," I said. "I need answers now. It could tell us exactly what we need to do to defeat Catherine and Marcus."

"You don't know what you'll need it for later."

"I know what I need it for now."

I only ever needed the Origin Archives for the truth about myself, and I had uncovered more than enough.

Using one of my visits wasn't a waste.

This mattered.

Not just for Aaron.

For everything.

For what Catherine was doing.

For what we were up against.

If I could understand this and find real answers, it would change everything.

Alois studied me for a long moment.

“What if something more urgent arises?” he asked. “Something you cannot anticipate now?”

“Then I’ll deal with it when it comes.”

“That’s not strategy,” he said.

“That’s reality.”

Silence fell again.

I could feel Kieran watching me, the weight of his attention steady and unyielding.

“You’ve already decided,” he said.

I turned to him and met his gaze so he could see the seriousness in mine. “Yes.”

Another pause.

Then, softer, “You’re not going to wait.”

“No.”

Alois closed his eyes briefly, as if weighing something far beyond what was being said out loud.

When he opened them again, the decision was already there.

“If you do this,” he said, “you do it with full awareness of the risk.”

"I understand."

"No," he replied softly. "You accept it."

I held his gaze.

"I do."