

My Sister 266

Chapter 266 COMPLICATED FRUSTRATING

SERAPHINA'S POV

The Silencer laughed.

The sound was wrong somehow—too light for the room, too careless for a man bound inside layered psychic restraints.

“Well,” he said when he was done, tilting his head as he looked at Corin, “this is spectacularly bad luck.”

Corin didn't respond right away.

He took another step further into the chamber, and the door sealed behind him with a muted hum that reverberated through the curved walls.

His gaze lingered on the Silencer, his smile unfurling slow and razor-sharp.

“You should be thanking whatever gods you pray to,” he said, “that I arrived after you were secured. My twin sister is a lot more merciful than I am.”

The Silencer's smile twitched. "Still sore about last time?"

"I spared your wretched life," Corin replied pleasantly, but an edge crept into his voice. "And here you are pushing your luck with an arguably more formidable foe."

The Silencer stiffened, ever so slightly, and his gaze flicked to me again—measuring, reassessing.

"You really think she's a threat?" he asked Corin, skepticism edging the mocking in his voice. "A half-shifter with a fractured wolf? She's a novelty. At best, she experienced beginner's luck."

The words snagged inside me, tugging at old wounds.

Before I could respond, Corin laughed.

"Oh," he said, shaking his head, "you poor idiot."

The Silencer frowned. "Excuse me?"

"You thought you could hold her," Corin continued, stepping closer now. "Nudge her thoughts. Slip your fingers into the cracks. You thought you were hunting prey."

Corin glanced at me then, mismatched eyes glinting.

“You were courting your own destruction.”

The Silencer’s gaze snapped back to me, disbelief flickering across his features.

I mirrored the disbelief. Was there another she in this room other than Selene and me?

“That’s not possible,” he hissed. “Her field is unstable. Raw and unanchored.”

“You felt what she let leak,” Corin replied with a nonchalant shrug. “You fell for the trap she set for you.”

I swallowed.

I...hadn’t meant to let anything leak.

The Silencer leaned forward despite himself, eyes widening. “No,” he said slowly. “A half-shifter can’t—shouldn’t—exceed novice levels. There are limits.”

Corin’s smile would have been described as pitying if it weren’t as sharp as a knife’s edge.

“Yes,” he agreed. “There are.”

He looked at me again. “And she hasn’t even found them yet.”

The air itself seemed to shift, charged with a new, electric tension.

It was not pressure, but a sudden alignment, as if unseen currents clicked into place all around us.

Selene, who had been watching quietly from the doorway, exhaled softly. “I think,” she said, “that Seraphina is in capable hands.”

Her gaze met mine. “We’ll speak later.”

I nodded, still trying to process the way the room felt—too full, too layered, like I was standing blindfolded at the edge of something vast.

Selene stepped away, the door sealing behind her with a soft hum.

The Silencer watched her go, then scoffed. “Don’t tell me your Luna believes that bullsh—”

Corin moved.

He crossed the remaining distance in a blink, fingers snapping up to seize the Silencer's chin.

The man gasped, words cutting off as Corin forced his head back, eyes locking onto his.

"Quiet," Corin said mildly.

The air folded inward.

I felt the psychic field constricting, not around me, but around the Silencer, layers collapsing one by one like doors slamming shut.

The man's pupils dilated. His breath stuttered.

Corin's voice dropped, resonant, carrying something deeper beneath it. "Show me."

The Silencer shuddered.

Images flickered—not in my mind, but in the space between them, impressions bleeding outward despite the containment.

I tasted salt and rot. Heard distant voices layered over one another. Felt gnawing hunger press in.

Corin sighed after a beat. “That’s disappointing.”

He released the Silencer as abruptly as he’d grasped him. The man sagged forward, coughing, sweat slicking his skin.

“No grand conspiracy,” Corin said, glancing at me, shrugging apologetically. “No shadow council pulling strings. Just opportunists who saw a shiny new toy and wanted to see what makes it glow.”

My stomach twisted. “They targeted me for...curiosity?”

“For potential,” Corin corrected.

A sputtered laugh shook the Silencer’s body. “You should be flattered.”

Corin rolled his eyes. “Ignore him.”

That, as hard as it was, I could do.

What I couldn't ignore was the ease with which Corin had just done what he'd done. It had taken less than a minute to withdraw the information he'd needed from the Silencer.

No strain. No hesitation. No visible effort.

"That was...fast," I said.

Corin tucked his hands into his coat pockets. "Yes."

"You didn't even—" I stopped, searching for words. "You didn't even try. It felt like you were...already there. In his mind."

He smiled. This one was real. Proud. "That's because I barely did. Try, I mean. Going through minds like his is like taking a walk in a park."

The Silencer snarled. "Don't insult me. I'm a fucking Weaver."

Corin inclined his head towards him. "And I'm advanced intermediate. I'll be a Dominator before you know it."

The words meant nothing to me—and everything.

The Silencer spat. “Fuck you.”

Corin rolled his eyes like the Silencer was a child throwing a tantrum.

Then he gestured toward the door, his tone light again. “Come on. Let’s get you some air before your head explodes.”

I didn’t spare the Silencer a glance as we left.

With every step, the chamber’s heaviness faded, replaced by the open hush of Seabreeze’s corridors and the steady, grounding thread of distant waves.

“Okay,” I said finally. “I’m new to all this and that back there”—I pointed towards the chamber—“made me feel like a toddler in a university lecture. You need to explain. Slowly. Eloquently. Preferably starting with...everything.”

Corin laughed. “Fair.”

We stepped out onto a terrace overlooking the sea. Moonlight rippled across the water, silver and endless.

“Psychic ability,” Corin began, leaning against the railing, “isn’t magic. It’s not telekinesis, or spells, or whatever nonsense mundanes like to imagine.”

He tapped his temple lightly. “It’s perception. Connection. The ability to sense and guide the fundamental network of spiritual resonance within the Ethereal Sea.”

I blinked. “The...what?”

“The Ethereal Sea,” he said. “Spirit sea, if you prefer. Everything alive leaves ripples in it. Supernatural and natural. Animals. Plants. Even places.”

“The stronger the being,” he continued, “the clearer the ripple. The higher the psychic rank, the broader and deeper the range of ripples one can perceive—or influence.”

My head was spinning. “There are ranks?”

Like a fucking video game.

Corin smiled, holding up a hand. “Roughly five. Each harder than the last. Exponentially so.”

He counted them off casually. "The Aware. Influencers. Weavers. Dominators. And then—" He paused, eyes flicking briefly to the moon. "Sovereigns."

I swallowed. "That last one sounded...mythical."

"It is," he agreed. "Most never even meet a Dominator. Sovereigns are...rare."

"And, back there, the Silencer called himself a Weaver?"

He nodded. "Intermediate level. They can create complex psychic realms, influence more than one emotion at once, hold clear telepathic conversations, and even implant short-term commands."

I gripped the edge of the terrace. That sounded a little too similar to what I'd done.

"And you?"

"I'm advanced intermediate," Corin said. "Technically a Weaver, but close enough to Dominator that people get nervous."

A weak laugh bubbled out of me. "I'm definitely nervous."

He chuckled. "I'll take that as a compliment."

I hesitated, then asked the question that had been burning a hole through me. "What about me?"

Corin studied me in silence for a long moment.

Finally, he shook his head. "It's...frustrating."

My heart sank. "Bad frustrating?"

"No," he said quickly. "Complicated frustrating."

He straightened. "Your abilities are newly awakened. As he said, they're unstable. On the surface, you read like a novice. Or at least, you should."

I exhaled.

"But," he continued, eyes sharpening as if he'd switched on x-ray vision, "there's too much depth beneath that. Too much potential."

I held my breath.

“Once you learn to control them,” Corin said slowly, “you won’t stop at intermediate. At minimum, you’ll reach advanced level.”

The world tilted.

“At minimum?” I echoed, my voice barely more than a whisper.

He met my gaze. “Selene sensed your potential the moment she met you, you know. That’s why she kept inviting you here.”

“What exactly is here?” I asked. “Back home, there’s barely any mention of psychics or other powers, but it’s like the norm here.”

Corin shrugged. “The more special you are, the better it is to withdraw from the world, not draw too much attention for fear of attracting the wrong one.”

I turned to the sea, waves surging below—restless, alive, echoing the churn of Corin’s words inside me.

My sense of self was splintering, and I knew that when I pieced it back together, the image would be forever changed.

“Welcome to the deep end,” Corin murmured, his words carried on the soft breeze.

I stared out at the sea, moonlight trembling across its surface, and wondered how far down it went.