

My Sister 27

Chapter 27 HER REGRET

SERAPHINA'S POV

It was an enjoyable morning. The sun streamed through my kitchen window, and for the first time in months, I felt light. Hopeful.

Every muscle screamed in protest as I measured flour, but the pain had become an old friend—one whose constant presence meant progress.

I had started training with Maya, and if Lucian was a sadistic bastard, then she was the devil herself.

"You've got more in you, Sera!" she'd snarled yesterday, her boot nudging my trembling thighs during yet another impossible drill. "Dig deeper!"

And somehow, I always made it.

The memory of her rare praise still warmed me. Advanced techniques. Real progress. Each bruise was a stepping stone toward becoming someone who could stand unshaken between Daniel and the world's cruelties.

Today called for celebration. I turned up the radio, letting the upbeat pop song guide my movements as I danced between counter and bowl, flour dusting my arms like battle scars. The sweet scent of vanilla filled the air—

BRRRRZZZZT!

The doorbell screamed through the house, one endless electronic wail.

My good mood wavered as the shrill noise continued. Over and over. Like whoever was pressing it had gone into an electric shock and had their finger locked on the doorbell.

Judging by my track record of visitors and the aggressive way my doorbell was being abused, there were only a couple of guesses who could be on the other side.

I wiped my hands on my apron, already bracing for impact.

The door swung open to reveal Celeste, her designer sunglasses perched atop her perfectly styled golden waves. Of course.

Before I could speak, she shoved past me, her shoulder knocking mine with deliberate force.

I didn't turn around right away. I stared at the empty driveway, my eyes fixed on a sprinkler in the yard of the house across the street.

Give me strength, I silently prayed to every deity in existence.

I finally turned.

Celeste looked gorgeous as always, her golden hair curled around her face like a halo—ironic because she was the furthest thing from an angel.

And right now, she looked like a serpent, poised to strike.

"Stay away from Kieran," she snapped, like some bitter queen issuing a decree.

I dramatically turned, my head swiveling like I was looking for something. "Do you see me with Kieran?" I asked, desperately holding on to the earlier bliss I could already feel slipping away.

"Don't play coy with me," she hissed, taking a threatening step toward me. "I know what you're doing. I see through all your little tricks. What's next? Are you going to plan another attack to catch his attention?"

I closed my eyes and breathed through my nose deeply. One breath. Two. Three.

When I opened my eyes, she was still standing before me and hadn't burned to ashes like I'd desperately hoped.

"I'm not doing this again with you, Celeste," I said, crossing my arms.

She scoffed. "Tough shit, because I'm doing it with you. How are you going to do it this time? Another gunshot is too obvious. Maybe an ambush? Home invaders?"

She stepped even closer, stabbing a manicured finger at my chest. "Share with the class, Sera. What conniving ways are you going to use to make sure no one suspects you this time?"

A sharp, angry burst of laughter escaped me as I swatted her hand away. "Are you serious right now?" I asked. "If anyone should be the suspect in that attack, it's you."

I narrowed my eyes at her. "You had the motive, and I wouldn't put it past you. Anything to secure your precious Kieran."

Celeste sneered. "Like I would waste my time on you. You're not worth the effort."

I spread my arms, gesturing around the foyer. "Yet, you're here—having yet another bitch fit."

I cocked my head to the side. "How bored are you that you've penciled 'Incessantly harass Sera even though she's blissfully minding her own business' into your calendar?"

Celeste's entire body vibrated with rage. "You smug bitch," she hissed. "You think you're clever? It's not enough that you're a fucking obstacle, you had to go and drag Daniel into this?"

The mention of my son immediately set me on edge.

"Excuse me?"

Celeste noticed my change in demeanor and her glossed lips curled like she'd just played her winning card. "You heard me. That brat of yours has been nothing but trouble since I returned." She took a step closer. "One more outburst, one more refusal to accept me, and I'll make sure Kieran ships him off to some remote boarding school in Switzerland."

The world narrowed to the pulse pounding in my ears.

"Let's see you manipulate situations when your precious Daniel is six time zones away," she purred, close enough now that I could see the flecks of gold in her cold blue eyes. "No more video calls. No more parent meetings. Just... silence."

Something inside me snapped.

The slap cracked through the room like a gunshot, my palm connecting with her cheek with enough force to snap her head to the side. Celeste staggered back, her manicured hands flying to her face in shock.

For a heartbeat, there was perfect stillness. Then—

"If you ever," I growled, stepping into her space, "so much as whisper my son's name again, I will end you." My voice shook with barely contained fury. "Not a threat, Celeste. A promise."

Celeste's fingers trembled against her reddening cheek. For the first time since she'd barged into my home, she looked genuinely shaken.

"Now get the fuck out," I hissed, my voice low and venomous, "before I decide to give you matching cheeks."

The hatred in her eyes burned like acid, mirroring the fury I knew shone in mine.

"You'll regret this," she whispered, though the tremor in her voice undermined her threat.

A bitter laugh tore from my throat. "The only thing I regret is ever believing you had a shred of decency."

The door slammed behind her with enough force to make the framed photos on my walls shudder. One of Daniel and me at the beach last summer tilted dangerously before righting itself.

Silence.

The kind that rings louder than any scream.

My pulse roared in my ears, adrenaline still coursing through my veins. The sting in my palm should have felt satisfying—justice for her vile threats—but it only left me feeling... empty.

Each encounter with Celeste since her return had been worse than the last. A disturbing escalation from petty jabs to outright warfare. And now she'd crossed the one line I'd never allowed anyone to cross—threatening to harm my son.

The realization hit me like a physical blow: Kieran chose this. He chose her. Either he was willfully blind to the monster she'd become, or worse—he simply didn't care.

My good mood had dissipated, and I abandoned my baking project, instead grabbing a tub of ice cream and curling up in front of the couch.

I hoped mindless TV and sugar would take my mind off the altercation with Celeste, but half an hour later, my door burst open, and I knew that was a pipe dream.

Kieran stormed into the living room like a thundercloud, and I fought the urge to scream.

Why wouldn't these two just leave me alone?

"You struck her?" His voice was dangerously quiet, the kind of calm that comes before a hurricane.

I set the melting carton aside with deliberate slowness, pausing Chandler's sarcastic quip mid-sentence.

"Going to ask for my side?" I kept my voice level, though my fingers dug into the couch cushions.

His lip curled. "I know exactly what happened. Celeste came to you in good faith, seeking advice about Daniel—"

A bark of laughter escaped me. "Seeking advice? Is that what we're calling threats now?"

"Enough!" His roar shook the windows. "Just admit the truth—you can't stand the thought of her being his stepmother!"

I couldn't believe my ears. The ice cream in my stomach curdled into acid.

"Marry her if you fucking want," I hissed. "But if you or that bitch lay one finger on my son..." My voice dropped to a deadly whisper. "I will burn your entire world down, Kieran."

He scoffed, advancing like a predator cornering prey. "You still don't understand. You have no say. Because you..." His lips twisted. "You never mattered."

My breath hitched, his words landing like a blow.

"You never did. Not when we got married, not when we lived together..." His gaze flicked to my lips, darkening. "Not even when we fucked."

"You were a mistake, Sera." Venom dripped from every syllable. "If you hadn't slithered into my room that night—if you hadn't trapped me—Celeste would be Daniel's mother. As she should have been."

I searched his eyes desperately—for remorse, for the man I'd loved. Found only a void.

"It's always been Celeste. Every time I touched you, I closed my eyes and pretended you were her. You were just... convenient."

My palm cracked across his face before he finished, sending his face to the left. If I owned my wolf, his throat would have been torn out.

"You don't get to rewrite history," I rasped, hands shaking. "Not like this."

Kieran's head snapped back, but his expression hardened into something inhuman.

"Don't I?" A cruel smirk. "You played the whore to get this marriage. Flaunted our sex life in Celeste's face. Did you think there wouldn't be consequences?"

My palm cracked across his other cheek, the impact vibrating up my arm. The sting in my hand was nothing compared to the agony shredding my chest. Hot tears threatened, but I clenched my jaw—I'd be damned if I let him see me break.

"Out." The word tore from my throat like shrapnel. "Now."

Something flickered in his expression—too little, too late. With strength I didn't know I had, I shoved him toward the door.

"Listen well, Kieran Blackthorne." My voice was steel wrapped in shattered glass. "My only regret is ever loving you. That night with you? I'd have rather fucked a stranger."

The door slammed on his stunned face.

When I was finally alone in the room, I unraveled.

I collapsed onto the carpet, banging my left knee on the coffee table on the way down. The pain that exploded was nothing compared to the agony piercing my heart.

Sobs ripped through me like bullets from a machine gun—rapid-fire, loud, ugly. I pressed my hands to my ears, trying to drown out Kieran’s words, but it was like applying a tourniquet to an arm after the poison had already reached the heart.

Why?

Every time I clawed my way forward—every time I tried to move on—they ripped me open again.