

My Sister 348

Chapter 348 THE CONSEQUENCES

SERAPHINA'S POV

The world narrowed to red.

Red like the silk twisted around Celeste's thighs.

Red like the phantom memory of humiliation from eleven years ago.

Red like the part of me that had once been small and unwanted and convinced I would always come second.

Alina surged forward, teeth bared.

'Rip her off him.'

'Rip him off her.'

'Make something bleed.'

But before I could succumb to the savage urge to tear the suite apart, the door slammed open behind me.

Dr. Hale, Nightfang's pack doctor, rushed in, breath uneven, a large black case in his hand.

He stopped short when he saw me, eyes flicking from my bared fangs to the bed.

"Lady Sera," he said carefully, as though I were the volatile element in the room.

Maybe I was.

"Do you have it?" Kieran snapped from behind me, his voice hoarse.

Dr. Hale jolted out of his temporary stupor and rushed past me.

"Secondary inhibitor," he muttered, moving toward the bedside. "This will counteract the compounded dosage—"

Celeste's body convulsed in Kieran's arms, and my fury faltered as I focused on what was happening.

Celeste's pupils were blown wide—not with desire, but panic. Sweat slicked her temples. Her fingers clutched Kieran's shirt with frantic desperation, not seduction.

And Kieran...

He was rigid. Fully dressed except for his jacket. His posture wasn't indulgent. It was braced. Controlled. His hands weren't roaming; they were stabilizing.

This wasn't intimacy.

It was containment.

"What is going on?" I asked, voice softer.

Dr. Hale looked up, relief flickering across his face when he realized I wasn't about to rip Kieran's throat out.

"The secondary inhibitor isn't taking full effect," he said. "She's metabolizing it too quickly."

Celeste whimpered and buried her face in Kieran's chest.

"It hurts," she gasped.

I stepped closer, ignoring the sting of scent. Ignoring the image.

"Move," I commanded Kieran.

He didn't argue. He shifted just enough for me to kneel on the bed beside them.

The scent of the aphrodisiac pressed against my senses again, but I forced my awareness deeper—
inward.

Into Celeste.

The room blurred at the edges as I reached, controlled threads of silver slipping beneath the surface.

Her mind was chaos.

Not structured malice. Not scheming intent.

Pain.

Disorientation.

Every nerve screamed. Every instinct hijacked. Heat and fear braided together until she could no longer tell them apart.

Her thoughts were fragmented, images flashing like broken glass—hotel corridors, a drink pressed into her hand, dizziness, confusion, someone adjusting fabric, darkness.

“She’s not complicit,” I said softly.

Kieran’s jaw flexed. “I know.”

I met his eyes for the first time since entering. Relief battled apprehension in his obsidian depths.

I looked away.

“Celeste,” I murmured.

Celeste's head rolled toward me, unfocused.

"Sera?" she whispered hoarsely.

A small, petty impulse—the part of me shaped by old wounds—tried to awaken, wanting to take satisfaction in Celeste's pain.

Then a cold balm flooded me, quelling the blaze in my veins.

Alina's presence shifted, the wildness ebbing, replaced by an unexpected calm.

Ironic that she could be both the most feral part of me and the most peaceful.

"Don't worry, Celeste," I said, voice soft. "You're safe."

Her mind clawed toward any anchor it could find, and I let her latch onto my presence.

I threaded my psychic field gently around hers, dampening the frantic spikes, smoothing the erratic surges the aphrodisiac had ignited.

I cooled the heat artificially burning through her bloodstream, calm flooding gently into the overstimulated pathways of her nervous system.

Her breathing began to slow, pulse evening out under my touch.

Her body slackened, and her fingers loosened in Kieran's shirt.

"Sleep," I whispered into the storm of her mind.

Her body sagged, muscles going lax as unconsciousness claimed her in something resembling peace.

Dr. Hale checked her pulse again and nodded. "That's...far more effective."

I withdrew slowly, careful not to jolt her psyche.

Her lashes fluttered once. Then stilled.

The room exhaled collectively.

Kieran carefully shifted her weight, easing her down fully onto the mattress now that she wasn't clinging to him.

I turned toward the door.

"Ethan."

My brother stood by the door, staring at Celeste as if she were a ghost. Maya's arm was around his waist, holding him up.

"Babe." She nudged him slightly, and he blinked.

"I—" He swallowed. "I haven't heard from the crew I sent to bring them back, but I thought that was due to the storm. How...how is she—"

I moved toward him, placing a hand on his arm. I recognized that look in his eyes: it was the guilt he looked at me with when we'd been on the road to reconciliation.

"You need to take her away from here," I told him. "Make sure no one outside this room sees her like this."

He swallowed back his confusion and guilt, his Alpha self-possessiveness slipping on as he moved toward the bed. "Right."

He lifted Celeste carefully into his arms. She looked tiny. Breakable.

As Ethan carried her out, Maya on his heels, the air in the room shifted again.

The crisis had passed.

The consequences had not.

Kieran took a step toward me. "Sera—"

I stepped back before he could reach me.

"What happened?" I asked.

Hurt flashed in his eyes, but it was quickly replaced by anger. "Gunnar," he spat. "The Beta of Iron Hollow pack."

The heat in my veins flared again. Good. A perpetrator. Someone to direct all this anger at.

Gunnar was escorted in moments later by the two sentinels at the door, wrists restrained, face pale and damp with sweat.

He looked between Kieran and me like a man who had just realized he'd stepped into a war zone without armor.

"I swear," he began immediately. "I didn't drug her."

"Start talking," I snarled, "before I pull out your tongue and stuff it down your throat."

He swallowed, glancing at Kieran.

Kieran growled. "If you're looking for mercy from me, you're looking in the wrong place."

"I-I didn't know who she was at first," Gunnar began, his words stumbling over themselves. "She showed up at Colombo. She said she was stranded, claimed she had been restricted, and that travel had been made difficult. She begged to join our delegation when she learned we were going to LA. We thought she was just another wolf trying to get back to the mainland."

"When did you learn who she was?" Kieran asked, voice deathly cool.

“After we landed in L.A,” Gunnar answered. “She kept a low profile. But at one of the pre-festival gatherings, she was recognized.”

“By whom?” I asked.

He hesitated. “Vidar Skovgaard.”

Of-fucking-course.

“He spotted her among us,” Gunnar went on, words coming faster now. “Pulled me aside later. Said she was...an opportunity.”

“Opportunity,” Kieran repeated flatly.

Gunnar shifted, his pulse quickening. “He said, you were troubled over your missing fiancé, so reuniting you two would be an excellent opportunity to gain your favor.”

The word ‘fiancé’ slid beneath my ribs like a blade, reminding me that Kieran and Celeste had been loud about their reunion, but had never announced their breakup.

“And this is your idea of a reunion?” Kieran snarled.

Gunnar shook his head frantically. “No. No. I told her of the idea, and she was more than happy with it. She agreed to wait in this room for you. She was dressed appropriately and was completely lucid when I left her.”

“So what happened?” I asked.

“I don’t know,” he spluttered, falling to his knees. “I swear I don’t know. I didn’t do anything to her.”

While he begged for his life, I let my senses brush against him.

No fracture in his intent. No spike of concealed triumph.

Only fear. Embarrassment. A genuine belief that he had miscalculated socially rather than committed a crime.

“You’re not lying,” I grit out.

Gunnar sagged slightly in relief.

Kieran’s expression darkened further. “That doesn’t absolve you.”

His voice shifted into Alpha steel. "You'll remain detained until we trace every movement from the airport to the hotel. Get him out of my sight."

The guards dragged Gunnar out, his protests muted by the closing doors.

Silence settled in the suite again.

I didn't look at Kieran as I declared, "I'm going home."

I walked toward the door without waiting for permission or protest.

I reached the threshold and paused.

The corridor beyond was dimmer than the suite, the light softer, less accusing. For a second, I simply stood there, my hand resting on the doorknob, breath steadying.

Then I turned.

Kieran was still standing in the center of the room, shirt rumpled, jaw tight, the weight of what had happened still clinging to him like a second skin.

“Are you taking me home,” I asked evenly, “or what?”

The only sound in the car throughout the entire drive was the engine humming and the faint rush of air through the vents.

Every time the car stopped at a light, I felt Kieran’s gaze flick toward me and then away again, as if he were measuring the distance between us and deciding whether to cross it.

As soon as he cut the engine in my driveway, I opened the door and stepped out without looking back.

I heard his door open a second later.

Felt him behind me as I walked to the front door.

The click of the lock disengaging sounded unnaturally loud in the quiet of the night.

I stepped inside.

He followed.

The door shut behind us with a soft, definitive sound that sealed the house in stillness.

For a moment, neither of us spoke.

The faint scent of lavender from the living room diffuser drifted through the air, cutting through the lingering tension clinging to my skin.

“Sera, I—”

I turned before he could finish.

I crossed the distance between us in three strides, grabbed the front of his shirt, and shoved him back against the wall.

And then I kissed him.