

My Sister 351

Chapter 351 PLAN B

KIERAN'S POV

I woke to cool sheets and space.

For one disorienting second, I lay still, staring at emptiness, trying to decide whether the night before was a memory or a fever dream.

My body ached in that deep, satisfying way that came from being thoroughly, repeatedly ravished.

Ashar was quiet for once—sated, if not entirely appeased.

But the bed beside me was cold.

Movement caught my attention, and I turned my head.

Sera stood near the dresser, fully dressed.

Sunlight spilled through the half-drawn curtains, gilding her in pale morning light. She wore fitted charcoal slacks and a soft cream blouse that draped elegantly over her frame. Her hair was pulled back in a sleek, low knot, exposing the clean line of her neck.

I sat up slowly, my gaze zeroing in on her neck.

There were no visible marks. No flush. No lingering disarray that suggested she'd spent the better part of last night and early this morning writhing and moaning beneath me.

And then something else hit me.

I inhaled deeply.

Lavender. Clean linen. A faint, unfamiliar floral undertone.

But not me.

Not the unmistakable claim of my pheromones threaded through her skin, the proof of our connection that she'd been so concerned would expose us.

My chest tightened.

Had I imagined it?

Had the fury, the possessiveness, the heat been nothing more than my own desperation heightened by the aphrodisiac we'd been exposed to?

"Gods," Sera said, glancing at me in the mirror. "I can literally hear you thinking—and my barriers are up."

She turned fully, leaning back against her vanity. "Morning, sleepy head."

I narrowed my eyes. "Did we..."

Her lips curved. "Did we what?"

I pushed the sheets aside and stood, crossing the room in slow, deliberate steps. Her teeth sank into her bottom lip, and I saw her struggle not to glance down.

"Last night," I said carefully. "That happened."

She tilted her chin up to meet my eyes, crossing her arms.

“Did it?” she asked, her face the picture of innocence.

I stopped a foot from her and leaned in, lowering my voice.

“Sera.”

She held my gaze, and I saw the mischief flicker there before she relented with a soft laugh.

“Relax,” she said, placing a hand on my bare chest. “It happened. All your marks are covered by concealer and foundation.”

I exhaled, relief loosening the tension in my muscles.

I leaned in further, bracing my hand on the table on opposite sides of her hips.

Her breath hitched, and her pulse fluttered wildly as I gently stroked my nose up and down the expanse of her throat.

“Then why can’t I smell myself on you?” I grumbled.

“Well, last night while you were busy babysitting, Astrid approached me again and offered me a gift.”

I flinched at the word ‘gift’, and shoved down the image of Celeste that rose in my mind.

I gritted my teeth, and I pulled back to look at Sera. “What?”

“Very conveniently, one of the items she sells is a scent-masking perfume. It temporarily conceals pheromones.”

Irritation bristled beneath my skin.

“You used it on yourself?”

She arched a brow. “Only one day of the Hunting festival has passed, and look how much chaos unfolded. Plan A crumpled to shit last night.”

She leaned forward and captured my lips in a slow, drugging kiss that almost made me forget my ire at being denied both the chance to mark her and the primal satisfaction of smelling myself on her.

She pulled back slightly, her lips still brushing mine. “So this is plan B.”

“But why use it now?” I asked.

“I have a meeting this morning,” she answered.

“With who?”

“Astrid.”

The image of them on the dance floor last night flashed through my mind, and Ashar bristled.

“Keep your distance,” I snarled before I could stop myself.

Sera blinked. “Kieran.”

“I don’t care if she’s female,” I forged on. “She circles assets the way vultures circle carcass. And you’re a valuable asset.”

She tilted her head. “And that’s your only reason? Not because of the...rumors?”

I bit back a snarl. "Well, they don't fucking help."

Sera let out a small, soft laugh. "I can handle Astrid."

I shook my head. "You know what? Screw it. I'm coming with you."

"No."

I frowned. "Why not?"

"Because if you're within ten feet of me, the perfume's effect will weaken. Your scent will override it. I already need to reapply as is."

I exhaled sharply. "Good. You don't need to mask yourself."

"I do if I want to control the tone of the meeting."

Her reasoning was infuriatingly sound.

She leaned closer and wrapped her arms around my neck.

"You hovering weakens my position," she said softly, her fingers idly curling through the hair at my nape. "I need Astrid to see me as independent and in control."

The wolf in me didn't like any of this.

But the Alpha in me understood optics.

"Fine," I said finally. "But if she crosses a line—"

"She won't."

"And if she does?"

Sera's eyes flashed silver for half a second.

"She'll regret it."

That mollified me. Barely.

She leaned in and pressed one last kiss to my jaw.

“Besides,” she whispered against my skin. “We don’t need scent to know what happened. I feel it in every step I take.”

A guttural growl rumbled up as I gripped her hip hard, staking my silent claim.

“Good.”

I was halfway down the freeway toward Nightfang territory when my phone rang.

“What?” I answered.

Ethan’s voice was tight. “She’s awake.”

I knew exactly who he meant. My grip on the steering wheel tightened.

“And?”

“She’s unstable.”

“That’s not news.”

He sighed. “Not like last night unstable. Like...Celeste unstable. Gods, I forgot how fucking frustrating her fits were.”

I grit my teeth. “And you’re telling me this, why?”

“She’s demanding to see you.”

I didn’t miss a beat. “No.”

“Kieran—”

“Ethan, you saw what happened last night,” I said. “It’s a miracle I didn’t lose Sera. Whatever drama Celeste brought back, whether she’s complicit or not, I want no part of it.”

“Too late,” he retorted. “Whether you like it or not, you’re already a part of it. Besides, maybe she has clarity on what happened. And I need information about our mother, but the only person she’ll speak with is you.”

I paused for a moment as the logic sank in.

I muttered a curse.

“I’ll be there.”

As soon as I ended the call, I sent Sera a quick message.

Going to Frostbane. Celeste is awake and unstable. Will update.

I waited, but no reply came.

The Frostbane packhouse felt colder than usual. But that could have just been my sense of foreboding.

Ethan met me in the corridor outside the Alpha wing, tension radiating from him in waves.

“She’s been up since dawn,” he said. “Won’t eat. Won’t drink. Just keeps asking for you.”

“Where’s she?” I gritted out.

He nodded towards an ajar door at the end of the hall. “In there.”

This time, I didn’t step inside the room. I positioned myself in the doorway, arms folded loosely across my chest.

Celeste sat upright in bed, her hair a tangled mass of gold, her skin pale against the stark white sheets, even though it should’ve been tanned.

Her eyes snapped to the doorway the second she sensed me.

“Kieran,” she breathed.

I showed no visible emotions. “How are you feeling?”

Her gaze sharpened, eyes flicking to my collarbone.

“What the fuck are those?”

I knew exactly what she meant.

I had not covered the marks Sera left on me.

I ripped the bandage off. “Sera and I were together last night.”

Celeste’s nostrils flared. “You’re fucking with me.”

“What part of my demeanor suggests that I’m in the mood for fucking around?”

Her lips parted and closed. Then a sharp, bitter bark of laughter spilled out of her.

“Unbelievable,” she rasped. “While I was going through hell, you were here shacking it up with my sister? It’s the last ten years all over again.”

“No,” I ground out. “It’s not. Sera is my mate. I love her. It’s always been her, I was just too blind and stupid to see it.”

“You’re blind and stupid right now,” she snapped, her eyes flaring.

I sighed, running my hand through my hair. “What do you want from me, Celeste? Why am I here?”

She was silent for a beat, and then her hands fisted in the sheets.

“I lost my wolf,” she said suddenly.

The entire room froze, air crackling with stunned silence.

Ethan shifted behind me.

“What?” I whispered.

Her eyes went misty, and she blinked furiously.

“Kharis—she’s gone.”

“What the hell happened?” Ethan asked, coming to stand beside me.

“Oh, don’t act as if you care,” Celeste hissed. “You all have been living happy lives with your fucking bitch mates while I—” The words seemed to lodge in her throat.

She shook her head, letting out another brittle laugh. “It’s good I don’t have a wolf, so I don’t have to smell the sickening mixture of my fucking sister’s scent with my fiancé’s.”

“Ex,” I corrected.

“Fuck you,” she spat.

“What right do you have,” she demanded, voice rising, “to be happy when I’ve lost everything?”

I held her gaze unflinchingly.

“Your condition is not related to my relationship with Sera.”

“Isn’t it?” she shot back.

“No.” The finality in my tone silenced her.

“I will do what I can to help for old times’ sake,” I said. “But I will not accept moral blackmail because your life did not unfold the way you wanted.”

Her face twisted into an ugly sneer.

“You chose her.”

“Yes.”

The bluntness of my answer made her flinch, pain surfacing raw and stark.

“You were supposed to choose me.”

I shook my head. “No. It was always her. Choosing you was the mistake.”

Tears glimmered in her eyes, but the rage there was scorching, holding grief at bay.

“I waited for you,” she whispered. “I loved you. And she took—”

“Sera did not take anything from you,” I cut in, tired of hearing the same fucking spiel over and over again. “Not me, and definitely not your wolf.”

Celeste’s laughter came again, hollow and sharp.

“Get the fuck out.”

I didn’t waste a second longer in the doorway.

As I turned away, I glimpsed her—motionless, jaw tight, eyes haunted as though listening for something that no longer spoke.