

My Sister 364

Chapter 364 STUN GRENADE

SERAPHINA'S POV

Corin, Maris, and Brett arrived within the hour.

In that time, I managed to take a shower and force down a cup of coffee and half a bagel.

Afterward, I felt less likely to collapse under my own weight and even managed to send Daniel off to training with a smile and a kiss.

Corin greeted me first. "Chin up," he said gently, his sea-green and blue eyes threaded with quiet concern.

His hand came to my shoulder in a brief, steadying clasp. "We'll get to the bottom of this, and then you need a makeover. Under-eye shadows are not your look."

Despite everything, a faint breath of something almost like a laugh escaped me. Only Corin would greet emotional devastation with jokes.

Maris greeted me next, her expression soft but searching. She pulled me into a warm, reassuring hug.

"Despite the circumstances, it's good to see you again," she murmured.

Brett lingered a step behind her, shoulders drawn tight beneath his jacket, tension etched into the line of his posture.

I offered him a small smile. "Hi, friend."

He returned it, but it was as weak as mine, and dread curled in anticipation of what he had to say.

We all moved into the sitting room together, the quiet closing in around us as the door shut.

No one reached for the tea and snacks served on the center table. No one pretended this was a social call.

Brett didn't waste time.

"I should have told you this sooner," he began, voice rougher than usual. "Remember, I told you I had a fated mate before Maris?"

I nodded slowly.

He sighed, running his hand through his hair. “That was Celeste.”

He might as well have thrown a stun grenade into the middle of the room.

Everyone went utterly still, silence stretching as we processed Brett’s revelation.

The shared shock hung tangibly in the air, expression after expression shifting—some faces paling, others darkening with disbelief.

The only person who looked unaffected was Maris, who probably knew the entire story that was about to unfold.

I remembered what Brett had said back in Seabreeze. ‘My fated mate was...ambitious. She wanted many, many things, and the only thing I could give her was my heart.’

Celeste. We’d been talking about my fucking sister.

When no one spoke, Brett forged on.

“We met ten years ago,” he said, his voice steadier now, as though once the first confession was out, the rest was easier to follow. “She’d fled abroad after some...blow. That’s what she called it. A betrayal. A humiliation. Every time I pressed, she threw up a wall of thorns.”

“But she never struggled,” he continued. “Whatever happened, her financial support was never cut off. She lived in utter luxury: lavish apartments, designer everything. She frequented bars and exclusive lounges daily. Her Lockwood pedigree alone drew attention. She was never lacking for company. That’s how we met—at one of the bars I bartended.”

He gave a humorless huff of breath.

“The mate bond was undeniable. Immediate. Violent. You know what that feels like.” His gaze flickered briefly between Kieran and me, and then Maya and Ethan.

“We fell fast. Hard. The kind of fall that’s like rising on top of the world.”

I could imagine it—the two of them in some glittering coastal city, Celeste radiant and captivating, Brett enamored, awe-struck that he had been chosen.

“For two years,” he said, “we were...happy. Or as close to it as she allowed.”

A faint tension crept into his jaw.

“She never mentioned her family. Not once. Never considered introducing me to anyone from home. At first, I believed her story that she had been betrayed. That she had been wronged. I was furious on her behalf. I told her I’d build her something better. A pack. A home. A family that would never fail her.”

His mouth tightened.

“What changed?” Maya asked softly.

Brett’s laugh was soft and sharp.

“Cracks started showing. I realized she liked me. My devotion. My loyalty. The way I worshipped her. But she never saw me as...permanent.” His voice lowered. “Because back then, I was just an Omega, and an Omega could never be worthy of an Alpha-born princess.”

The word ‘Omega’ hung heavy in the air, raising a hundred more questions. But that was not the point right now.

“I caught her cheating,” Brett went on. “With an Alpha. Public enough that I couldn’t even pretend I was mistaken.”

My stomach twisted. Gods, was there any redeemable part of Celeste?

“I proposed splitting up first,” Brett continued. “I had to salvage something of my pride.”

“And she agreed?” I asked.

“Without hesitation.”

Of course.

“But she regretted it almost immediately,” he said. “Because that Alpha was just toying with her. His mate was waiting at home, and he had no intention of breaking his marriage for Celeste.”

A bitter edge slipped into his voice. “She was humiliated. She sought me out and performed repentance like it was theater.”

That, I could picture too easily. Celeste, with tears in her eyes. Celeste, framing herself as misunderstood, as the victim. Celeste, promising change.

“The next few years became a cycle,” Brett continued. “Reconcile. Cheat. Fight. Split. Then reconcile again. Every time she threatened to sever the mate bond when she was angry. Every time she’d come back when it didn’t serve her.”

“And yet, you stayed,” Ethan said quietly.

“I loved her,” Brett replied with a weak shrug. “She was supposed to be my destiny.”

He rolled back his sleeve to reveal a patch of faintly red, scarred skin. “We even got tattoos. A symbol of forever. I was naïve enough to think that would keep her.”

“I saw hers,” Kieran murmured. “She said she got it to cover the scars of cutting herself, because she’d been suicidal.”

Brett chuckled bitterly. “Fun fact: Celeste is a liar.”

Kieran scoffed in agreement.

“The last time,” Brett continued, “she threatened to sever the bond again. I was exhausted. Something in me had finally burned out. I agreed.”

“Kharis vehemently protested breaking the bond. She and my wolf, Nixon, loved each other unconditionally. But Celeste didn’t care. And when Kharis’ protests got too much to bear, Celeste went to a mage and had her wolf suppressed.”

Another bomb.

“She—” Kieran shook his head, swearing under his breath. “She said that was the effect of the heartbreak she went through.”

Brett scoffed. “She wanted control over her impulses. Over the bond. Over anything that made her feel...vulnerable.”

“What happened after that?” Ethan prompted.

“Not long after, she returned to Los Angeles.”

“Wait—what?” I asked, shifting in my seat. “She didn’t return when our father died?”

Brett shook his head. “No. She was in LA long before that. Her family didn’t sense her because Kharis was suppressed.”

Ethan swore under his breath.

“After I gained Alpha status,” Brett went on, his shoulders straightening at the memory, “I considered reuniting with her. I thought maybe as an Alpha, I’d finally be worthy enough in her eyes.”

He let out a derisive scoff. “And then I went to her hotel, and there she was—in the middle of the lobby, plain as day—kissing another man.”

“Of course,” Maya muttered.

“I was done,” he said, eyes darkening. “It was as I was leaving that I saw Edward Lockwood outside the hotel.”

The room stilled again.

“I recognized him right away, but I was reeling with hurt and shame. I didn’t introduce myself or linger. I just left.”

My skin prickled.

“When was this?” I asked.

“About a week before he died,” Brett replied.

I dropped my head into my hands, trying to sort through the new information and weigh it against what I already knew.

I could feel the weight of that giant question mark pressing down on all sides of me.

Why had my father buried all the truths?

What had he discussed with Celeste?

“Screw this,” Maya said, shooting out of her seat. “I might be biased because I have no emotional connections with Celeste—thank the gods—but I think it’s high time everyone stops coddling the bitch. She keeps scheming and manipulating and hurting everyone dumb enough to care about her.” She swept an arm around the room. “No offense.”

Ethan sighed. “So what do you propose we do? She already lost her wolf.”

“Boo hoo,” Maya snapped. “She practically did that to herself. The least we can do is make her face the truth, force her to see what an ugly, vindictive asshole she is.”

“How?” I whispered. “She’ll die before she ever admits fault, let alone the truth.”

“Actually,” Corin cut in. There was a mischievous glint in his eyes and a smirk on his lips.

“If we want to go that route, I have a fun little game we can play.”