

## **My Sister 369**

Chapter 369 ALMIGHTY BITCH FIT

SERAPHINA'S POV

I felt the exact moment the word 'mate' landed.

Celeste's face had been sharp with contempt, mouth curved in that familiar, cutting smile.

But when Maris said it, stepping forward with unflinching, protective fury, something fractured.

It was subtle: A tightening around the eyes. A hitch in her breath. A shiver that did not belong to arrogance or rage.

Shock.

And beneath it...

Something like grief.

I'd watched her carefully since she'd begun unravelling.

Not just with my eyes, but with the sharpened awareness I'd gained these past months—the ability to feel shifts in a room, to sense when emotion rang true and when it was manufactured for effect.

This wasn't performance.

When Maris claimed Brett, something inside Celeste faltered in a way that did not seem rehearsed.

"You..." Celeste breathed, her gaze on Brett, her voice shaking as if she was still grappling to make sense of the moment. "You said you loved me."

"I did," he answered quietly.

"And you moved on?" she demanded.

Brett reached up and pulled his collar aside, revealing the bond-mark at his throat. "Yes."

I saw the blow hit her harder than Maris' shove, her very balance shifting under the weight of displacement.

In that split second, I understood something about the two branches of Celeste's 'love' life.

Kieran had been status.

Victory.

Crown.

Brett had been certainty.

He had been the one who would wait.

The one who would forgive.

She had never needed to fight for him, had assumed she never would.

She never anticipated in her wildest dreams that she would lose him. Worse, that he would leave her.

She expected him to orbit, even if from a distance. A constant to return to if her schemes failed.

Seeing him anchored to another shattered that illusion.

Her expression twisted—disbelief edged with anguish.

“You think she compares?” Celeste snapped, the old sharpness flaring back, soaked in desperation.

“You think this”—she stabbed a finger at Maris—“this is better?”

Maris did not flinch.

“I don’t compare,” she said calmly. “I surpass.”

That was the final blow.

Celeste surged to her feet, her movement abrupt and unstable. She lunged at Maris, hands outstretched, fingers curved like claws.

But Celeste didn’t move like a wolf.

There was no surge of Alpha-born power. No flash of fangs. No predatory grace.

There was only raw human momentum.

Maris sidestepped effortlessly, and Celeste stumbled past her, off-balance.

Celeste whirled and swung blindly. Maris caught her wrist, twisted gently, and pushed her back.

Not brutal. Not even aggressive or retaliatory.

Still, Celeste collapsed backward, her strength evaporating as quickly as it had flared.

Without her wolf, she had no reserve to draw from. No regenerative force. No instinctive coordination.

Plus, she was probably drained from the almighty bitch fit she had just thrown.

For a split second, I thought she would brace herself.

Instead, her eyes rolled back, and her weight gave way entirely.

Ethan moved on instinct.

He crossed the distance in two strides and caught her before her head struck the stone edge of the hearth.

“Celeste!” he barked, lowering to one knee with her cradled against his chest.

Maya exhaled sharply. “Oh, come on,” she muttered. “Is this the fainting damsel act now?”

Her skepticism was not unreasonable. We had all witnessed Celeste’s theatrical instincts.

But I shook my head slowly.

“No.”

I stepped closer, kneeling opposite Ethan.

Celeste’s skin had the clammy, grey cast of someone deep in shock; her breath came in small, shallow pants, each one weaker than the last.

I did not touch her, but I could feel it.

The exhaustion.

The cumulative collapse.

She had just admitted to orchestrating my assault. Just watched Brett sever the last thread of power she believed she still held. Just been confronted with the reality of her new mortality.

Her body had nothing left.

“She’s not pretending,” I said quietly.

Ethan looked up at me, his eyes starkly vulnerable, a tornado of shame and guilt swirling in them.

“I’m sorry, Sera,” he said hoarsely. “I’m so sorry.”

I didn’t need to ask; I knew what he meant.

He was sorry that our sister had planned for me to be assaulted.

That she had wanted footage of me vulnerable, violated, humiliated, broadcast for the world to consume.

That knowledge existed somewhere inside me.

But it did not burn or sting.

It settled.

Cold. Dense. Too heavy to process.

I felt...nothing.

No screaming grief. No hysterical anger.

Just a vast, silent space where a reaction should have been.

Perhaps the crash would come later.

Perhaps it would fracture me at three in the morning when the house was quiet, and Daniel was asleep, and Kieran's arm was wrapped around me.

But not now.

Now, my mind folded it neatly into a compartment labeled 'Later.'

"She needs rest," I said softly to Ethan. "Take her back to her room."

Maya looked like she wanted to argue, but settled for an eyeroll.

Ethan nodded stiffly and lifted Celeste into his arms.

As they left—Maya on his tail, muttering something about slapping a bitch if this was an act—the room felt abruptly cavernous.

The sound of the fire crackling was deafening.

Brett exhaled slowly behind me as Maris slipped her hand back into his.

I stood, and the room's attention turned to me.

I met Corin's unnervingly casual gaze.

"Other than the events of the Hunt," I said quietly, "did you find anything else in her mind?"

His expression sharpened slightly. "Yes."

My chest tightened.

"About my father?"

A pause.

He inclined his head. "About a week before your father died, he met with her privately."

The confirmation did not surprise me; we already knew that.

But the numbness inside me shifted slightly, like something heavy settling deeper into bone.

Behind me, Kieran moved. His hand came to my waist first, warm and firm, then his other arm wrapped fully around me, drawing me back against his chest.

I leaned into him instinctively.

He did not speak, but I could feel his heart pounding. Too fast. Too hard.

His pain was not quiet the way mine was. It was sharp. Protective. Furious on my behalf.

He buried his face against my hair, and I felt the exhale he tried—and failed—to steady.

“I’m here,” he murmured, low enough that only I could hear.

I curled my fingers around his arm, looking back at Corin.

“What exactly did you see?” I asked.

Kieran’s arms tightened infinitesimally, as if he wanted to shield me from whatever came next.

Corin ran a hand slowly through his hair. For once, the usual faint amusement was gone from his expression.

“It’s...difficult to condense,” he said.

“Try.”

His gaze met mine steadily.

“He reached out to her first,” Corin said. “But their meeting wasn’t pleasant. It was a confrontation.”

My breath hitched. That was news.

A faint crack split through the numbness inside me.

“What was it about?” I asked. “What did he say?”

He shook his head. “I couldn’t get the full picture.”

“Why not?”

“Her emotional state was volatile. When...subjects are unstable, memory threads distort. Fracture. Overlap with defensive constructs.”

He paused.

“I saw enough to confirm the meeting. Enough to confirm his initial intent was confrontation, not conspiracy. But the finer details blurred.”

A contemplative silence settled.

“So what now?” Kieran asked.

Corin kept his gaze on me. “That depends on you.”

I met his eyes steadily as realization dawned on me. “You’re suggesting I enter her memories myself.”

“Yes.”

Kieran's arms tightened. "No."

I turned slightly in his hold so I could look up at him. "I need answers."

"That's not the point," he replied. "She's unstable. You're already carrying—" His voice broke off.

Corin spoke before Kieran could object further.

"You and Celeste—unfortunately—share blood," he said to me. "That creates resonance. Access points others don't have. Even without full technique, you may be able to retrieve clearer threads than I can."

The idea settled in my mind.

There were answers still buried—about that week before my father died, about the decisions he made—and I needed them unfiltered.

No more secondhand interpretations or summaries.

The numbness inside me did not recede.

But beneath it, something else stirred.

Resolve.

My sister had orchestrated my downfall.

My father had chosen concealment over exposure.

Both revelations had irrevocably changed the landscape of my world. Maybe this last thread of truth was what I needed for that world to right itself again.

I drew in a slow breath. "I'll do it."