

My Sister 378

Chapter 378 A SMALL VICTORY

SERAPHINA'S POV

As I withdrew from Celeste's mind, the weight of the physical world returned slowly, like gravity settling back onto my bones.

For a brief second, the room tilted around me.

Not violently. Not the crushing collapse that had followed the last time I'd forced my way into her memories.

Just a slight dizziness, like surfacing from deep water.

Kieran's hand immediately tightened at my waist.

"Sera." His voice was low, sharp with concern.

I steadied myself and drew a quiet breath. The cold stone walls of the Frostbane guest chamber came back into focus.

“I’m okay,” I whispered.

And I was. Maybe Celeste hadn’t resisted as hard as last time. Or maybe I’d grown stronger since the markings appeared on me.

Either way, I was still standing.

That alone felt like a small victory.

“Well?” Ethan asked, his voice heavy. “Did you see anything?”

I exhaled slowly, shaking my head. “Everything concerning Catherine is...sealed.”

I’d felt the barriers clearly—precise psychic seals woven through Celeste’s memoryscape like locked gates—but instead of forcing them open, I had pulled back.

If someone had deliberately constructed those blocks, tearing through them recklessly could have destroyed the memories entirely.

It could have triggered something far more dangerous.

Corin straightened. "Sealed how?"

"Deliberately. Clean work. Precise."

"Like Aaron?" Kieran asked.

I shook my head. "No. All her memories still exist, but these have a lock of some kind on them."

That was what disturbed me most.

It hadn't felt like trauma.

It hadn't felt like natural suppression.

It felt...designed.

Celeste had been watching my face the entire time.

"Well," she drawled, stretching her bound wrists lazily against the cuffs, "that's disappointing."

She tilted her head, studying me like an insect pinned to glass.

“What happened, Sera?” she continued, her lips curling into a mocking smile. “I thought you were the terrifying new psychic prodigy.”

Her smile widened. “Turns out you’re not quite as all-powerful as you think.”

Maya’s voice snapped from behind me. “Oh, shut up!”

I hadn’t even realized she’d entered the room until that moment. She must have arrived while I was inside Celeste’s mind.

She stood next to Ethan, fists clenched so tightly the tendons in her hands stood out sharply beneath her skin, her eyes blazing as she stared at Celeste.

Behind her, Brett and Maris had also stepped into the room. Brett stood slightly to the side of the doorway, his posture rigid, his expression carefully controlled in that distant way it seemed he had reserved for Celeste.

Maris remained close beside him, one hand resting lightly against his arm as her sharp gaze swept across the room before settling on Celeste with unmistakable contempt.

Celeste's smirk deepened.

"Aw," she said sweetly. "If it isn't my favorite audience."

Maya took a step forward. "If you say one more word—"

Celeste laughed softly.

"What? You'll hit me?" She lifted her cuffed wrists mockingly. "That would really prove what noble people you all are."

Her gaze slid lazily across the room again.

"You know," she added with a slow shrug, "if you actually want answers, maybe it's time you all start showing a little good faith."

Ethan's jaw hardened.

Celeste looked back at me.

“After all,” she said with exaggerated innocence, “you’re in desperate need of my cooperation. Come on, brownnose a little. I won’t object if you feel like falling to your knees.”

Maya moved.

I caught her wrist before she reached the bed. Her body vibrated with restrained violence.

“Maya, she’s baiting you,” I said quietly.

“I know,” Maya snapped. “I just don’t care.”

Celeste chuckled under her breath, the sound sharp and dismissive.

For a moment, I watched her—the set of her posture, the tilt of her chin, the brittle arrogance she wore like armor against the entire room.

“Celeste,” I called out, my voice soft.

Her eyes flicked back to mine.

“Do you think the person you’ve become honors the sacrifices Kharis and Olivia made for you?”

CELESTE’S POV

When Sera said Olivia’s name, a chill shot through me, like ice pouring into my veins.

For a second, my chest clenched, and I couldn’t draw a breath, panic closing in like a vise.

My fingers tightened instinctively against the leather cuffs around my wrists, the metal ring behind the bedframe giving a faint clink as the restraints pulled taut.

Olivia.

That name should not exist in this room.

No one here should know it.

My eyes snapped toward Sera.

She stood a few feet from the bed, watching me with the same calm, unreadable expression as after leaving my mind.

There was no triumph on her face. No smugness.

Just quiet certainty.

Which made it worse.

“Don’t,” I said sharply.

My voice sounded wrong to my own ears—tight, brittle, panicked.

Sera didn’t stop.

“Kharis gave up her life for you,” she said quietly. “And Olivia—”

“Shut up!” The words exploded out of me.

My chest rose and fell too quickly now, air scraping through my throat as if it were suddenly too thin.

For the first time since they dragged me into this miserable stone prison, I felt something dangerously close to real fear.

Because if Sera knew about Olivia—

The world seemed to tilt as images surged through my mind, sharp and relentless.

Cold concrete scraping against my knees.

Chains rattling against the metal floor of the truck.

Girls huddled together in the darkness, collars around their throats and fear hollowing out their eyes.

Olivia's face as she pressed the broken shard of metal into my hand.

Her fingers gripping my wrist with desperate urgency.

'When I say run, you don't stop. Don't look back.'

The scream of the alarms.

Gunfire echoing through the corridors.

And Olivia's body jerking as the shot rang out.

"She was yet another person who cared for you and got hurt," Sera went on.

"STOP!"

The scream tore out of me before I could stop it, echoing sharply through the room and snapping every head toward me at once.

Maya looked startled by the sudden outburst, Kieran's brows drew together in confusion, and Ethan's expression darkened with immediate suspicion.

But none of them mattered.

The only person I could see was Brett.

He stood with his new mate near the door, half-shadowed by dim hallway light. The moment my gaze landed on him, my stomach dropped as if the bed had vanished beneath me.

No.

No, no, no.

He wasn't supposed to be here.

Humiliation hit with such force that my vision blurred. If he heard—if he understood what Sera implied, what she saw—

My throat tightened so violently I could barely breathe.

"How much did you see?" I demanded hoarsely.

Sera's smile was soft and pitying. "Enough."

Rage and panic twisted together in my chest.

“You had no right,” I spat. “You had no right to go digging through that.”

Her silence only made it worse.

My hands shook against the cuffs.

“Everyone out,” I commanded.

No one moved.

My temper snapped.

“I said OUT!”

The words echoed off the stone walls.

“I’m not saying another word while half the world is standing here listening!”

Ethan frowned. “You don’t get to make demands—”

“I will say NOTHING if they stay!” I shouted, my voice cracking.

My eyes flicked helplessly toward Brett again.

Gods.

The look on his face made something twist painfully in my chest.

He wasn’t angry. He wasn’t shocked or even particularly interested.

Brett simply stood there watching me with a cool, detached expression, as if observing something that had nothing to do with him.

And somehow, that indifference made the shame ten times worse.

For a moment, the room remained frozen.

Then Sera spoke. "Everyone out."

Maya immediately objected.

"Sera—"

"Please."

There was something in Sera's voice that made the others hesitate.

Reluctantly, Maya turned and walked toward the door.

Corin followed.

Kieran lingered for a second before leaving as well.

Brett was the last to go.

As he stepped through the doorway, our eyes met briefly.

Then the door shut.

Now only three of us remained.

Sera. Ethan. And me.

For several seconds, no one spoke.

I stared at the stone ceiling, trying to slow the frantic pounding of my heart.

Then a broken laugh slipped out of my throat.

“Fuck it,” I muttered bitterly. “You want the truth? Here’s the truth.”