

My Sister 384

Chapter 384 COMPLICATIONS

MARGARET'S POV

The door closed behind Catherine with a dull metallic sound that reverberated through the small stone chamber, leaving the two of us suspended in a silence so complete that I could hear the faint rhythm of my own breathing.

Catherine took a few steps inside the room, and I rose slowly, determined not to cower before her.

The woman before me still carried the same composed grace she always had, her posture perfectly relaxed, her hands loosely folded as though she were visiting an old acquaintance for afternoon tea rather than confronting a prisoner.

The familiarity only made reality more painful.

We had once spoken to each other with warmth, with trust, with the comfortable intimacy that grows between two people who believe they understand one another completely.

Now we faced each other like strangers.

Finally, Catherine broke the silence.

“So,” she began, “have you made a decision? Are you ready to cooperate with us?”

I scoffed in lieu of answering.

She rolled her eyes.

“You shouldn’t waste your energy resisting,” she said softly, as though offering friendly advice rather than issuing a warning. “It’s futile, Margaret.”

I leaned against the narrow metal table, arms folded, studying her face.

The years had refined her features, silver streaks in her hair glimmering beneath the sterile light, giving her an air of calm authority that many people would have mistaken for wisdom.

She began to pace slowly across the room, her footsteps soft on the stone floor, their measured rhythm echoing faintly in the confined space.

Watching her move stirred more familiarity. I’d seen that same restless pacing countless times during our long-ago garden conversations, when she’d walk Frostbane’s grounds while explaining some new theory.

Back then, the movement had been thoughtful, endearing.

Now it felt predatory.

“You’re a practical woman,” she said after a moment, stopping near the foot of the bed. “Which is why I find your current behavior so puzzling. Surely you understand that refusing to cooperate will only prolong your suffering.”

Finally, I spoke. “Is that supposed to frighten me?”

Her lips curved into a smirk. “It isn’t just your suffering that concerns me.”

Catherine tilted her head, observing me the way a scientist might examine an interesting specimen.

“The longer you refuse to cooperate,” she continued calmly, “the worse it will be for your companions.”

A chill sliced through my chest, but I kept my expression neutral.

“My companions?” I asked, as though the concept were mildly amusing.

Her smirk widened. “The ones currently occupying the dungeon beneath this facility.”

My heart seized with terror.

Jonathan and his team.

I’d hoped they made it off the island when they didn’t hear from me.

So they had been captured after all.

The realization stabbed through me, sharp and electric, but I forced my breathing to remain steady.

“You’re bluffing,” I said.

“Am I?”

Catherine watched me carefully, clearly searching for the slightest fracture in my composure.

“You know, Margaret,” she went on, “your loyalty to the people around you has always been admirable. It’s one of the reasons Edward loved you so much.”

Her mention of my late husband clamped painfully around my heart, twisting deep and sharp, but I refused to give her the satisfaction of a reaction.

“And yet,” she continued, “that same loyalty makes you predictable.”

I raised an eyebrow. “Predictable?”

“Yes.”

She stepped closer, her eyes gleaming.

“You care about the people who came here with you,” she said. “Which means their pain will eventually matter to you more than your stubborn pride.”

I held her gaze steadily. “Maybe you don’t know me as well as you think you do.”

A flicker of amusement crossed her expression, and she shrugged.

"Maybe I don't," she replied calmly. "But refusal isn't actually a problem."

"Oh?"

"It simply means I must exercise a little more patience," she said. "I've already waited more than two decades. Waiting a little longer hardly matters."

"What exactly are you waiting for?"

For a brief moment, she didn't answer.

Then she did. "Seraphina."

The sound of my daughter's name made a frigid dread crawl down my spine, and my mask wavered.

Catherine observed the shift in my expression with quiet satisfaction.

"Yes," she murmured. "Eventually, your daughter will come looking for you."

My throat tightened.

“And when she does,” she continued calmly, “everything will fall into place exactly as it should.”

She stepped closer, so close that I could smell her familiar scent of orchid and white tea, but there was something...chemical beneath it. Something cold and unnatural.

“Although I’ll advise you to cooperate before then.” She reached out and gathered a lock of my hair in her hand. I jerked back, scowling.

She chuckled, leaning back. “Because by then you will have outlived your usefulness.”

The words hung between us with chilling finality.

Then she turned toward the door.

The lock disengaged with a quiet click as she stepped into the corridor beyond.

Without another word, she walked out. The door closed behind her.

And the silence returned.

CATHERINE'S POV

The moment the door sealed behind me, the smirk on my lips faded.

The corridor outside Margaret's chamber was quiet, illuminated by narrow strips of recessed lighting embedded in the ceiling.

Two guards stood at attention near the far wall, their posture stiffening slightly when they saw me emerge.

For a while, I remained still, allowing my thoughts to settle.

Margaret's resistance had been expected.

She had always been stubborn in ways she mistook for moral conviction. Her refusal to cooperate now did not particularly concern me.

In fact, it merely confirmed what I had already known: persuasion would never work with her.

But persuasion had never been my primary strategy.

Seraphina was.

And Seraphina would come.

I was sure of it.

Still, as I began walking down the corridor, the satisfaction I had felt during our conversation began to dissolve beneath a darker undercurrent of irritation.

Something was wrong.

My psychic threads picked up on it immediately, and my ability never failed me.

The deeper levels of the facility lay beneath the main resort complex, concealed by layers of reinforced infrastructure that ensured no curious visitor would ever accidentally discover what truly existed here.

The elevator doors opened silently when I approached, and I stepped inside, descending four floors while my mind sifted through the latest reports.

When the doors opened again, a young technician stood waiting in the hallway.

The moment he saw me, his shoulders stiffened.

“L-lady Catherine.”

His voice betrayed just enough tension to confirm my suspicion.

Something had gone wrong.

I stepped out of the elevator slowly. “Yes?”

He swallowed. “The latest experiment encountered...complications.”

Complications.

Such a polite word for failure.

I felt the faint tightening of annoyance beneath my ribs. "Explain."

"The neural stabilization process collapsed before the resonance phase could complete," he said carefully.

A cold silence followed.

"So the subject didn't respond."

"N-no."

I exhaled, pressing my fingers to my temple as I considered the implications.

This latest attempt at revival had always been...ambitious.

Death did not relinquish its claim easily, especially when the subject in question had possessed such a formidable will.

Still, the data gathered from the attempt would prove useful.

Every failure refined the method. Every collapse revealed new limitations to overcome.

“I will review the data myself,” I said, keeping my annoyance and irritation at bay.

The technician let out a breath of relief, nodded, and stepped aside.

I had just begun walking toward the laboratory corridor when a guard approached at a brisk pace.

“Lady Catherine.”

“What now?” I snapped.

He bowed his head. “Apologies for the interruption. But you have a guest waiting in the reception room.”

“Who?”

“Alpha Marcus Draven.”