

## **My Sister 4**

### Chapter 4 WHERE'S THE FIRE?

#### SERAPHINA'S POV

I returned from the lawyer's office feeling like my soul had been put through a shredder.

Walking through the front door gave me a strange kind of anxiety. Maybe it was because I knew this was one of the last times I would be here again.

I let my gaze roam the foyer, taking in every detail—Daniel's baby picture on the mantel, the portrait taken of Kieran when he was ordained Alpha, the picture of Daniel and me on his fifth birthday.

There were no pictures of Kieran and me. Shocker.

I headed straight to Kieran's office. I had left early in the morning, not wanting to run into him and have an awkward conversation about the upcoming divorce. I'd also been avoiding Daniel, I think.

How could I look into those innocent eyes and explain that his family was breaking apart?

"I don't... get it."

Daniel's small, confused voice stopped me outside Kieran's office. The door was slightly ajar, and I saw Daniel sitting in a chair in front of Kieran's desk like a visitor. Kieran sat opposite him, looking at our son with a tenderness he never showed me.

He leaned forward and took Daniel's hands in his. "Mommy and Daddy won't be living together anymore, champ."

"But... why?" Daniel's lower lip trembled. "Don't you love Mom?"

I tensed. How was Kieran going to answer that? Surely he wouldn't tell our son he didn't love his mother. But the only other option was to lie.

Kieran sighed and stood from his seat. He walked over to Daniel's side and took his hands again, crouching to our son's level.

"You know, your mom gave me the greatest gift in the world," he said. He reached up and gently patted Daniel's head. "You. And for that? I'll always love her."

My chest tightened. For ten years, I'd desperately wanted to hear those words from Kieran, and now, there they were—while I held divorce papers in my hands.

But I knew what they truly meant—Kieran only married me because I gave him Daniel. He only tolerated me for a decade because I was the mother of his heir. It was more proof that our marriage was one-sided.

His true, unconditional love was reserved for Celeste.

A choked sound escaped me.

Kieran went rigid. His head snapped up, wolf-quick, those gold-flecked eyes narrowing at the door.

"We don't spy on private conversations," he said coolly, rising to his full height. The Alpha voice. The one that made the pack members bow automatically.

I took a deep breath and pushed the door open.

"Mommy!" Daniel stood and went to me, throwing his arms around my waist.

"Hi, honey." I kissed the top of his head.

"Is it true?" he asked, looking up at me with wide, glassy eyes.

I stroked his head. "I—"

"Danny, give your mom and me some space, okay? Go help Chef with dinner preparations."

Daniel pouted. "But—"

"Now." That single word carried the weight of command.

I squeezed his shoulder reassuringly. "We'll talk more at home, baby. Go on."

Daniel sighed and walked out, his shoulders slightly slumped.

I closed the door behind me.

Kieran's gaze dropped to the papers in my hand. Something unreadable flickered across his face.

"I assume those are the papers?"

I nodded, suddenly feeling nervous.

"My lawyer drafted the agreement, stating the custody terms." I moved forward and placed the document on the desk. "Everything's clearly outlined—visitation schedules, holidays, education decisions..."

Kieran opened the folder and pulled out the documents. His eyebrows furrowed in concentration as his eyes darted over the pages.

"Um, I also met with a realtor she suggested," I continued, clasping my hands before me. "She showed me a lovely house about thirty minutes from here. It's fully furnished—ready to move in—and the mortgage is very reasonable. It's in neutral territory, so you can visit anyt—"

"Where's the fire?"

I paused, frowning at Kieran. "What?"

"I'm the one who asked for a divorce." He dropped the papers on the desk. "Yet here you are with moving plans and legal documents before the ink's even dry. Were you counting down the days?"

The truth burned my tongue—yes, every single one of the 3,652 days we'd been married. But admitting that would only give him more ammunition to use against me in the custody battle I feared was coming.

Kieran scoffed at my silence and sat back in his chair. "Leave the address of your new home," he said. "My son and I will have dinner, then I'll send him your way, along with your signed copy of the papers."

The finality in his voice extinguished my hope of one last family meal. Of course, the great Alpha Kieran wouldn't deign to break bread with his soon-to-be ex-wife.

I left Kieran's office, the hole in my chest yawning further. I hadn't been able to sleep last night after the news, so I'd used that time to pack all my belongings.

I'd never been given a proper chance to make this place my home, so everything I owned fit into two suitcases.

After loading my car with it, instead of driving away, I just sat in the driver's seat.

I stared up at the house before me, recalling all my memories. The ones I'd made with Daniel were bright and colorful, filled with love and laughter. But the memories of Kieran were grey, dull, and empty. Every stilted conversation, every withheld touch, every smile he saved for someone else.

The shrill ringtone shattered my reverie. My mother's name flashing on the screen sent ice through my veins. Two calls in as many days after a decade of silence? The universe clearly had jokes.

"Hi, Mom." I forced cheer into my voice. "How are you holding up?"

She bypassed pleasantries like always. "Is it true?"

My fingers tightened around the phone. "Is what true?"

"That you're finally divorcing Kieran."

The breath left my lungs. Of course she knew. Kieran had probably called Celeste last night.

"Yes," I ground out between clenched teeth.

The sound of my mother's relieved sigh cut deeper than any blade. Actual, gods-damned relief.

"It's for the best," she said. "The marriage was a mistake to begin with. This... this is the correction we've all been waiting for."

My mouth fell open. A single, betrayed tear slipped free. What kind of mother celebrates her daughter's heartbreak? The answer came swiftly and bitterly—the kind who always wanted her other daughter to win.

I hung up without another word and powered off my phone before she could twist the knife further.

Just then, the front door opened, and Daniel walked out. Kieran walked out after him, shouldering a large duffle bag. I frowned. No way that was all Daniel's things. Kieran was making a point—it didn't matter that we moved, Daniel's home was still here.

Daniel saw me in the car, and his eyes lit up. I exited the car as he rushed to me, and I hugged him.

"I said I'd bring him over," Kieran snapped, coming closer.

"I'm sorry, I just wanted—"

"Is this how it's going to be?" he cut me off. "It's bad enough you're moving my son away from me, but you're also cutting into my time with him?"

Daniel's small hand tugged at Kieran's sleeve. "Dad... It's okay." His voice was soft but steady. "We'll see each other tomorrow. At Grandpa's funeral."

Kieran's jaw clenched hard enough to crack stone. For a heartbeat, I thought he might argue—but then he exhaled sharply and ruffled Daniel's hair.

"Yeah. Tomorrow, champ." His gaze flicked to me, cold and dismissive. "Be good for your mother."

He handed the duffle bag to me and went back inside without another word.



I swallowed the lump in my throat and loaded the bag in silence. Daniel climbed into the passenger seat without complaint, his too-wise eyes watching me carefully. As I pulled away, I forced myself not to look back—not at the house, not at the life I'd failed to make work.

Two minutes into the drive, Daniel rummaged through his backpack and produced a slightly squashed sandwich.

"You didn't eat dinner," he said simply, pressing it into my hand.

The tears I'd been trying so hard to hold in spilled out.

"Daniel..." My voice cracked. "Do you hate me? For this? For taking you away from your dad?"

He considered it with a solemnity no nine-year-old should possess. My heart stalled, braced for the blow—

"No." He fiddled with his seatbelt. "I know you were sad a lot. Maybe now you can be happy."

A sob tore free. The road blurred. His small hand slipped into mine, squeezing tight.

"Don't cry, Mom." His whisper was fierce with promise. "You've got me. I'll make you happy."

I brought his knuckles to my lips, tasting salt and hope. So what if Kieran never loved me? This remarkable boy did—wholeheartedly, unconditionally—and in that moment, it was enough.

More than enough.