

## **My Sister 61**

### Chapter 61 SUGARCOATED OPPRESSION

#### SERAPHINA'S POV

I turned just in time to see a tray skittering across the marble floor, glasses shattering into a glittering mess.

A young Omega in a waiter's uniform knelt on the floor, frantically trying to collect the shards with her bare hands, where red welts were already forming.

Gasps and whispers rippled through the ballroom, but no one moved to help.

Instead, the attention of the nearest guests was fixated on a tall Gamma male who stood just a few feet away, looking down at the Omega with a disgusted sneer.

"You idiot, you almost spilled wine on my shoes," he barked. "Do you know how much these cost?"

The Omega ducked her head. "I'm sorry, sir. I tripped, I didn't mean—"

"Didn't mean?" His voice rose high enough to garner whatever attention wasn't already on the spectacle. "You Omegas never mean anything until you ruin something. Maybe you should watch where you're walking instead of trying to flirt while on duty."

Maya's jaw clenched. "Oh, hell no."

She and I were instantly on the move, but then a sharp voice cut through the air like a blade. "What is going on here?"

A woman in a crisp gray uniform stormed toward them. The head maid, Laura, I realized. I recognized her from past events I'd helped organize, like the Spring Moon Festival and the annual Solstice Ball.

Although Leona was the recognized Luna of Nightshade, as Kieran's wife, I'd helped in event planning, mainly sticking behind the scenes with the Omegas, who were much nicer to me than any other pack members.

Except Laura. She seemed to think her position somehow elevated her Omega status and spent her time looking down her nose at anyone unfortunate enough to be under her.

The head maid turned on the Omega. "What have you done, Imani?"

Imani. My heart sank. I remembered her now—a hardworking, soft-spoken woman. She had a son, barely four, and she worked double shifts out of pack duties to make ends meet.

We'd spoken once about childcare struggles during pack events, and I'd once held on to her son while she worked.

Panic and shame battled in her eyes before she lowered them and said quietly, “It was an accident.”

Laura’s voice went cold. “Tonight is a night for perfection, and accidents—especially ones that inconvenience guests—will not be tolerated. How dare you embarrass Lady Celeste with your incompetence?”

“I...I’m sorry.” Imani’s voice trembled, and my hands formed into fists.

“Not to me,” Laura snapped. “You will apologize to our guest, clean this mess up, and then we will discuss appropriate disciplinary action.”

“But he—he cornered me in the hallway, and then now,” Imani whispered, just loud enough for us to hear. “I was just trying to get away.”

Laura didn’t even blink. “Do not embarrass Lady Celeste with excuses. These guests are to be catered to, without question.”

“But—”

“Are you talking back after all this?” Laura raised her hand, and I stepped forward before she could hit Imani.

“That’s enough.”

Laura turned slowly, and her eyes widened when she registered who I was. Then her expression twisted into something tight and unpleasant.

“Well, well, well,” she scoffed. “I must say, it’s strange seeing you among invited guests, not lurking in the background. That suits you better, so maybe mind your business.”

“I didn’t come here to cause a scene,” I said evenly. “But I won’t stand by and let someone be punished for protecting herself.”

“This isn’t your concern anymore,” she sniffed. “You’re not Luna. You’re not even Alpha Kieran’s shadow-wife anymore. You have no say in how staff are disciplined.”

“I’m not claiming any title,” I replied. “And I don’t have to be part of the pack to call out abuse of power when I see it.”

“Listen here,” the Gamma stepped forward. I didn’t recognize him from Nighfang. Was he a member of Frostbane? How ironic that I couldn’t recognize members from the pack I grew up in. “This bitch”—he pointed at Imani, and I heard Maya growl at my side—“doesn’t know how to do her job right, so if—”

“She said you cornered her,” Lucian said, stepping forward, subtly putting himself between me and the Gamma.

The Gamma scoffed. "So? You're going to believe the filthy lies out of a worthless Omega?"

"Okay, I'm snapping necks," Maya snarled, but I held on to her arm before she could charge. We had a full audience now, and the music had been lowered, so I only had to raise my voice slightly.

"Were there any witnesses?" I turned to the gawking crowd. "Did anyone see what happened?"

There was a moment of tense silence filled with shuffling feet and whispers.

The Gamma chuckled. "I don't know what you think you're—"

"I saw him back her into a corner near the east hallway when I went to the bathroom." A woman near the drinks table stepped forward. "He was...pressing in."

The Gamma sputtered. "What? I didn't—"

"I saw what happened," another woman from the next table chimed in. "He called her over for a drink and then grabbed her wrist. He was trying to pull her away."

An older couple nodded solemnly. "We noticed something as well. He seemed aggressive."

A young waiter nervously stepped forward. “He grabbed her wrist. I saw it, too. She pulled away, and that’s when she dropped the tray.”

The Gamma blustered. “You people don’t know what you’re talking about. She’s lying—”

Lucian stepped forward, calm and cold. “Are you calling multiple guests liars? Because it’s only your story that’s different, and that sounds like grounds for disciplinary action to me.”

The Gamma paled.

Laura’s face tightened, turned to Imani, and said lowly, “Go clean yourself up. We’ll revisit this later.”

“No,” I said firmly. “You’ll apologize to her.”

Laura stared at me. “Excuse me?”

“You embarrassed her in front of dozens of guests for doing nothing wrong. You owe her an apology. And you’ll do it the same way you berated her—publicly.”

Laura’s face reddened. “I answer to Lady Celeste, not to you.”

I folded my arms. "And what about Alpha Kieran? Think he'll be pleased to know this is how you treat his staff?"

One thing I always admired about Kieran was that he never discriminated within his pack and treated everyone equally. I just hoped that wasn't another part of him that had been swept away under Celeste's glittery wave.

Laura's face darkened, but before she could say anything, the Gamma huffed in disbelief and shoved through the crowd, the smugness gone from his features, replaced by fury of embarrassment.

"I'll be taking this to Lady Celeste," he growled, eyes flicking spitefully between Laura, Imani, and me. "We'll see how long you keep your tongue then."

He stormed off, pushing past a couple of younger pack members who didn't bother hiding their disdain.

Imani stood frozen, hands clenched at her sides, gaze dropped in shame.

Laura turned to her with a smirk curling the corners of her lips. "Well then, you heard him. When Lady Celeste hears of this, there'll be consequences. You think anyone's going to back you up then?"

My hands balled into fists.

I took a step forward. "Are you seriously threatening her in front of half the party? After witnesses have spoken?"

Laura turned to me again, eyes narrowed with open contempt. "You shouldn't get involved anymore or you'll face consequences, too."

This time, Maya moved. "What the fuck did you just say?"

Laura's eyes flickered uncertainly, like she didn't know if Maya was someone to be respected or not.

"Lady—"

"I'm not a lady," Maya snapped.

"And clearly, neither are you," I added. Laura's mouth fell open slightly at my tone, but before I could continue, Imani moved forward and caught my wrist.

"Please," she whispered, her eyes shiny with unshed tears. "Please don't say more. I can handle it. I don't want to cause more trouble for you."

I looked down at her, stunned. She was pleading for me, not herself. She thought defending her would put me in danger.

A knot formed in my throat.

“You shouldn’t have to deal with this,” I said softly, but she only shook her head.

“This is how it is now,” she murmured. “Since we started answering to Lady Celeste. We keep our heads down, do our jobs, and pray we’re invisible. It’s safer that way.”

It hit me like a slap. Imani wasn’t just speaking for herself—she was speaking for every Omega under Celeste’s thumb.

I glanced around the room. Though the tension was thick, I caught several eyes—familiar ones. A few of the kitchen staff, a seamstress I’d worked with during past ceremonies, a Beta who had once sought me out for event planning advice. People I used to know. People who remembered how things were.

And people who now looked unsure, uncomfortable, even guilty.

I turned back to Laura. “If this is what the pack looks like under Lady Celeste’s rule, then Kieran should be ashamed.”

Her eyes flashed. “How dare you? You think you’re still something in this pack?”

“No,” I said calmly. “And I think I’m better off for it.”

I felt Imani’s grip loosen, but I didn’t step back. I stood beside her as the murmurs swelled, until Laura muttered something under her breath and finally turned away after shooting me one last glare.

The moment shattered like a spell lifting. People drifted back into their conversations, though several eyes lingered on me, watchful. Intrigued.

Imani exhaled shakily. “Thank you.”

“You don’t owe me anything,” I said. “You’re not the one who did anything wrong.”

Still, she gave me a quick, grateful nod before stepping away, tray trembling in her hands, but her back straighter than before.

And I stood there in the middle of it all, stunned by the sugarcoated oppression, thinking of Kieran.

Did he know this was going on? Did he care?

The Kieran I once loved wouldn’t have let this happen. He wouldn’t have allowed Omegas to live in fear under the rule of someone like Celeste.

But maybe that Kieran no longer existed.