

My Sister 63

Chapter 63 THAT'S THEATER

SERAPHINA'S POV

I couldn't speak. The words wouldn't come—not because I didn't know what I was supposed to say, but because everything in me rebelled at the idea of playing along with this twisted performance.

I'd been pushed into the spotlight like some reluctant understudy in a play I never auditioned for. I could feel the burn of every gaze on me—judging, waiting.

And then, on stage, I saw Kieran roll his shoulders, his stiff mask cracking. He cleared his throat. "I don't think—"

A sharp crash shattered the moment.

A gasp rippled through the crowd, and everyone turned.

Glass had shattered near the corner of the ballroom. A wine table lay overturned, a pool of crimson spreading across the marble like spilled blood.

The staff scrambled, voices rising in panic as the perfect illusion cracked.

“Oh dear,” Lucian said smoothly, his voice loud enough to carry across the room. “That was entirely my fault.”

My jaw dropped at the sight of him standing beside the toppled wine table, the remnants of a decanter dripping into a floral centerpiece.

I hadn’t even noticed him move from our table.

His face was the picture of regret and mild embarrassment—but I saw the glint in his eye. It hadn’t been an accident.

“I’ll pay for the damages, of course,” he added, brushing invisible lint off his sleeve. “So sorry, Celeste, Kieran.”

I looked back up at the stage. Celeste’s smile had faltered. My mother’s gaze was scanning the room like a hawk, like she was trying to find the next mishap before it happened.

And Kieran—Kieran was looking directly at me.

His expression was unreadable. What had he been about to say? Was he going to pressure me, too?

Celeste's voice, sharp and incredulous, cut across the murmur of reassurances. "You did that on purpose."

Lucian looked at her and widened his eyes innocently. "Oh, come now. What could I possibly gain from interrupting such a beautiful moment?"

Kieran leaned over and murmured something in her ear. Her spine stiffened, and she plastered her smile back on her face.

"That's...okay," Celeste's voice rang out, tight. "Let's not let that disrupt our night." She smiled, and my heart dropped. "Sera—"

"Oh, I'm so sorry." Lucian was suddenly at my side. "My companion was startled by the sudden...ruckus."

I blinked, realizing he was talking about me.

His hand was suddenly firm and steady on the small of my back. "Come, Sera. You're shaking."

"I'm not—" I started, but he leaned in close.

"Let me play the villain tonight. You've done it long enough."

I did not have to be told twice. I leaned into Lucian and closed my eyes. “Sorry, I... I feel faint.”

Celeste’s incredulous scoff rang out, and I fought the urge to smirk.

She wasn’t the only one who could play a role.

And just like that, I let Lucian lead me away.

CELESTE’S POV

I watched them disappear through the crowd, fury bubbling beneath my perfectly painted exterior.

The crack of glass still echoed in my mind, and the smug look on Lucian’s face made my blood boil.

He’d done it on purpose. I knew it. Everyone else might’ve been fooled, but not me.

I’d planned every moment of this night down to the most minute detail, where I would force my sister to concede defeat in front of everyone—perfect.

I was not going to be robbed of my rightful victory.

“Celeste,” Kieran said lowly, “let it go.”

Fuck that.

I hitched my dress delicately and began to descend the stage, brushing Kieran’s hands off.

I was going to drag Seraphina back on this stage and choke the blessing out of her if I had to.

“Celeste, darling!”

As soon as my glass heels descended the last step, I was enveloped by a flurry of voices and flashbulbs.

High-ranking members from Nightfang, Frostbane, and other allied packs, the press, and all the fashion bloggers and socialites I’d invited—each one eager to bask in the glow of what they believed to be a fairytale coming true.

They saw the tiara, the gown, the golden lights behind us. They saw power and beauty and victory.

Exactly what I wanted them to see.

I smiled. Of course I smiled. This was what tonight was about, and I was not going to let Sera ruin yet another thing I had worked so hard to acquire.

So I put the bitch out of my mind and basked in all the attention. This was my hard-won right.

Kieran had descended, too, standing by my side, silent and stiff, but I didn't care. Not even whatever brooding episode he'd been having since I told him about the party was going to ruin tonight for me.

Not when I was too busy being adored.

Together, Kieran and I floated through the crowd, flashing cameras on our heels, accepting congratulations and compliments.

"Celeste, you look like a goddess!"

"I always knew you two were fated!"

"Tell us how it feels to be reunited with your true mate!"

Each praise wrapped around me like silk ribbons, and I'd almost completely forgotten my annoyance.

Until—

"Quite a stir earlier," one of the Alphas—Walter Conlan of Silvercrest in Hollywood—murmured, swirling his champagne.

I paused. "What do you mean?" He couldn't possibly be talking about Seraphina and Lucian even after they'd left.

If that snake had managed to steal my attention—

"Between the Gamma and the Omega—quite the spectacle."

Oh.

Gamma Douglas had stormed into my dressing room earlier, furious because he'd been disrespected by an Omega and embarrassed by—surprise, surprise—fucking Sera.

Maybe inviting her was a bad idea.

I blinked. "Oh, that?" I laughed lightly, flicking a hand. "Just a minor disruption. I'll be sure to reinforce discipline among the Omegas. They haven't really had a firm hand, so they've been ill-mannered lately, but I assure you all that will change."

He smiled, but it didn't quite reach his eyes. "Yes, well, we wouldn't want things to get out of hand. Packs are watching."

Beside me, Kieran stiffened.

"I completely agree," I said sweetly. "A little structure never hurt anyone. They need to know their place."

Alpha Walter chuckled dryly. "Lady Celeste, you'll make an...interesting Luna."

I beamed. "I will, won't I? I truly believe—"

"Celeste." The air seemed to shift as Kieran hissed lowly.

I turned to him and caught the flicker of something dark in his gaze.

"We should...talk," he said under his breath, voice tight. "In private."

"Oh, now?" I arched a brow. "But we're in the middle of—"

"Now, Celeste."

The tone brooked no argument.

I pasted on a smile for the guests and waved demurely as Kieran took my arm. We walked through the winding corridor in silence, his grip just a little too tight, until we reached the side terrace.

The door clicked shut behind us.

"What the hell was that back there?" he asked sharply, stepping away from me.

"What do you mean?"

His eyes burned into mine. "I heard Douglas whining to you, and that's how you resolved to treat the situation after what he did?"

"He was disrespected by an Omega—your Omega." I frowned. "Is that how you run things in your pack?"

“My pack runs on mutual respect, and position isn’t permission to do whatever the fuck you want.”

I shook my head. “Are we really arguing about Gammas and Omegas on our night?”

“It’s not just that.” His fists clenched at his side. “What the hell was that earlier?”

I sighed in exasperation. “What now?”

“Margaret’s speech, for starters, and then forcing Sera into a corner like that?”

There it fucking was.

It always had to come back to Sera.

“She needed to give her blessing,” I said tightly. “It would’ve made everything cleaner.”

“Cleaner?” Kieran echoed, incredulous. “You were trying to humiliate her, trying to assert your dominance.”

“So? She deserved it.”

His jaw tensed. “You don’t get to decide who deserves what in my pack.”

My mouth dropped open. “Your pack? Excuse me?”

He stepped closer, towering over me now. “You are not Luna, Celeste. Not yet. You do not decide how things are run in my pack. If you pull this kind of stunt ever again—”

“What?” I snapped. “You’ll what, Kieran? You’ll ditch me for Sera again? Why don’t we just call her back now, and you can reintroduce her as your Luna!”

He went silent, and for one tense moment, I held my breath.

But then—

“You’re so quick to throw what happened ten years ago in my face and berate me about caring more about Sera than I care about you. But do you even care about me?”

I blinked. “Excuse me?”

“Not once did you ask about my opinion for tonight. You didn’t care that I didn’t have a say, that I was visibly uncomfortable.”

I scoffed. “You’re not a child, Kieran. If you’re not comfortable, speak. You’re just mad because I took control.”

“No,” he replied. “I’m mad because you made me complicit in something I despise. I stood beside you like a statue while you turned this night into a show about power and cruelty. That’s not leadership. That’s theater.”

He shook his head and added softly, “You humiliated yourself tonight.”

His words hit me like a slap, and my jaw simply dropped.

He ran a hand through his hair, suddenly looking tired. “I need air.”

I waved a hand around the open space. “How much more air do you need? Are you insinuating that I’m suffocating you?”

Kieran gave me one last scolding look before he turned and walked back inside, leaving me alone on the cold terrace, the applause from the ballroom muffled by the door.

I clutched the railing, trying to breathe, wondering how my perfect night had turned into anything but.