

My Sister 80

Chapter 80 GOOGLY EYES

SERAPHINA'S POV

A mix of relief and nervous anticipation lifted my chest as Lucian stepped out of his car and moved towards me with that effortless stride of his, all measured precision and calm confidence.

"Sera," he said, and the familiar warmth of his voice made me momentarily forget the tension that had been looming between me and Kieran.

I barely had time to respond before he closed the distance, and I could see the apology already there in his eyes.

"I'm sorry I didn't reach you sooner," Lucian said quickly, almost stumbling over the words. "I had to take an out-of-town trip for pack business the past couple of days, and just got back this morning. I—"

He stopped, clearing his throat. "I should have let you know. I didn't mean to worry you."

Relief flooded through me so fast it felt dizzying. "Lucian... It's okay," I said, my voice soft. "Really. I was just worried because I hadn't heard from you, that's all. I understand you're busy."

I gave him a reassuring smile as his gaze lingered on me, steady with the weight of his concern and sincerity.

The corners of his mouth lifted slightly, almost an answering smile, but not quite. He ran a hand over his jaw and nodded. "I just...I should have told you. I know that doesn't excuse the silence."

I shook my head. "You're forgiven," I said. "I was worried, yes, but I understand that you're busy."

"Not too busy for you," he countered.

Kieran's low scoff cut through the moment like a scythe.

I turned my head sharply to see him still leaning against his car, arms folded, looking every bit as infuriating as ever.

"Sorry," he said, not sounding the least bit apologetic. "I'm just having a hard time understanding your excuse." His dark eyes were trained on Lucian. "Were you on a business trip in another dimension? In space? Under the sea? Some distant floating island with no cell service?"

I gritted my teeth, forcing calm to cool the anger only Kieran Blackthorne could ignite in me. "Kieran," I said carefully, "can you wait for me in the car? I'll be just a minute."

He raised a disbelieving brow, and he looked like he was about to argue, but I didn't give him the chance.

I turned my back to him and gave Lucian my attention. This was the last time I would see him in a while, and I wasn't about to let Kieran ruin the moment.

Lucian shifted slightly, his eyes flicking over my shoulder before drawing back to me.

"Uhm..." He cleared his throat and took my hand, pulling me gently towards his car.

I flinched slightly at the thunderous sound of Kieran slamming his door.

I took a deep breath, exhaling through my nose as Lucian opened the back door of his car to reveal a large, neatly wrapped package taking up his backseat.

"I got you something," he said, voice low. "A parting gift. It's for you and Daniel, actually. Something to help you two bond."

"Oh, Lucian," I whispered, drawing my gaze away from the present to look at him. "This is lovely, thank you, but,"—I didn't miss the way he stiffened at the conjunction—"Kieran asked that I travel light."

When he arched a brow, I rushed to explain. "It's all part of the security protocols to avoid exposing Daniel's location."

“Right,” Lucian drew out, closing the car door.

“But thank you, really,” I said, feeling awful. “Maybe we can use it when Daniel comes back.”

“Yeah,” he exhaled, nodding. “Sure.”

Then his gaze softened, searching my face. “Look, Sera, Kieran was right. I didn’t go anywhere without cell reception.”

My breath stilled. “Then why didn’t you answer my calls or text me back?”

He exhaled heavily. “I was in my head a lot this trip, berating myself.”

I frowned. “Why?”

He answered my question with another question. “Sera, did I let you down last time? With the rogues, I mean?”

“No,” I answered immediately, reaching for him. “Why would you think that?”

He shook his head. "I should have been the one to save you—"

"You did save me," I said. "You took on all those rogues at the restaurant. You saved me back at my father's funeral, and you've been saving me ever since. You gave me OTS, new friends..." I drew closer. "You."

The look in his eyes softened.

"You could never let me down, Lucian."

The tension left his shoulders, and for a fleeting second, he seemed almost...human, not the inscrutable, confident Alpha I'd grown used to seeing.

Then he leaned in, closing the small space between us. Before I could process, his lips brushed mine in a gentle kiss.

My heart skipped a beat, my surprise fading as I tilted my chin up to kiss him back. His hand lingered on my cheek, just enough to feel the warmth of his skin when he pulled back.

"We've only been on one date, and now you're leaving. I hope this brief separation doesn't affect us," he whispered, voice low and earnest.

I blinked, surprised by the openness in his words. Lucian rarely—if ever—expressed himself like this. Sure, he was free with his compliments and words of comfort, but I'd never seen him express vulnerability or uncertainty.

And yet, standing there in the soft morning light, I couldn't help but feel the sweetness of it all, the quiet reassurance that even if his life was a mountain of responsibilities and obligations, I mattered in it.

"I don't think it will," I said softly, leaning into him just a fraction, savoring the moment while I could. "I'll be back before you know it. And we'll pick up right where we left off."

Lucian smiled faintly, his lips brushing mine as he leaned in again. "I'll hold you to that," he murmured.

I nodded, holding his gaze a beat longer. There was just something so...grounding about him, a calm certainty that always made me feel safe.

The moment was shattered when Kieran's impatient voice cut through again, sharp and mocking. "Here I was thinking you were in a hurry to see your son, Sera. But please, by all means, waste the whole day making googly eyes."

I closed my eyes, sighing softly.

I'd seen many versions of Kieran—cold, distant, dominant, enraged, possessive, indomitable...I could go on and on—but this utter childish petulance was new and already aggravating.

I took a breath, lingering a heartbeat longer with Lucian before finally retreating.

“We can’t communicate due to security reasons, but I’ll see you when I’m back.”

He gave me a soft smile that didn’t quite assuage the sudden hardness in his eyes. “Have a safe trip, Sera. I’ll be thinking of you.”

I gave him one last smile before I turned away, heading towards Kieran’s car.

Kieran straightened as I slid into the passenger seat, lips curved in an infuriatingly smug way. “Don’t tell me you’re going to waste your whole vacation with Lucian Reed stuck in your head,” he said, voice low but carrying the usual bite.

I rolled my eyes and said nothing.

“The silent treatment, really, Sera?” The smugness was gone from his voice, replaced with an edge that almost made me smile.

I closed my eyes and settled into the seat. “Wake me up when we get to the airport.”

There was a beat of heavy silence where I fought with myself to keep my eyes closed and not give him the satisfaction of a reaction.

Finally, he snorted and started the engine, the low rumble of the SUV vibrating through the seats.

I let out a breath, keeping my eyes closed.

The drive to the airport was tense but quiet. I focused on my breathing, letting the hum of the tires and the occasional turn of the wheel ground me.

Periodically, I felt the weight of Kieran's gaze, but I stubbornly kept my eyes closed.

This trip wasn't about him—it was about Daniel. And if he wanted to act petty, he'd have to do it silently.

At that point, I made a promise to myself: I wouldn't engage with Kiernan on this trip—not unless it involved Daniel.

Other than that, I would stay as far away from him as I could.

That was the only way I could survive this trip with my sanity intact.