

My Sister 97

Chapter 97 LOVED AND CHERISHED

SERAPHINA'S POV

I turned, and there he was, emerging from the other end of the hallway almost like a scene from a movie.

His eyes swept over our own scene—a flushed Celeste clawing against Kieran's hold, shrieking like a banshee, Kieran himself caught between restraint and agitation, and me standing apart, my pulse racing, my chest heaving.

And then those eyes landed fully on me. Sharp. Shielding. Protective in a way that almost made my knees weak.

Without hesitation, he closed the distance and placed himself squarely in front of me. The air around us shifted like a storm rolling in, adding a different kind of tension I wasn't sure I minded.

I instinctively shifted closer and let myself lean into the solace and safety Lucian's presence promised.

I took a deep breath, and his scent had the same effect on me as an aromatherapy oil—relaxation. Tension and stress relief.

“Is there a problem here?” His tone was deceptively polite, but the bite laced underneath was unmistakable.

Celeste froze, her chest heaving, her lips parting soundlessly. She was disoriented for maybe two seconds before more acid spewed out.

“What the fuck are you doing here?” she hissed, her eyes like two blue flames.

Lucian’s shoulders tensed only slightly, but he answered coolly. “I came to pick my girlfriend up from her trip.”

Girlfriend...

Warmth pooled in my stomach, and I had to bite my lip to hide my instinctive smile.

No one else was as pleased as I was, though. Celeste actually honest-to-goodness snarled. And Kieran was in serious danger of shattering his molars with how hard he was grinding his teeth.

“Go ahead, collect the shameless bitch,” she growled. “Better she cling to you like the blood-sucking leech she is and stay the fuck away from Kieran!”

Heat clawed up my throat, the sting of her words sharper than I wanted to admit. Before I could even form a retort, Lucian’s voice cut in, low and edged with steel.

“Watch your tongue, Celeste. Especially when you’re speaking about my future Luna.”

The corridor seemed to still. I could almost hear the collective gasp from the passersby and nurses not-so-subtly eavesdropping on our little scene.

Even Kieran’s hands slackened where they held Celeste back.

Lucian didn’t flinch under the shock that rippled through the space. He took a single step forward, enough that Celeste had to press against Kieran and tilt her chin up to look at him.

“If men fall for her charms, that isn’t her fault. The difference is, I’m lucky enough that she’s chosen me. And I don’t take kindly to anyone insulting what’s mine.”

The words landed with a weight I felt in my bones.

‘What’s mine...’

Maybe it was hypocritical of me, but the possessive words sounded different when Lucian said them.

I didn’t feel like a toy he owned; I felt like something precious. Loved and cherished.

Celeste's laugh was brittle, scorn layered over her visible unease. "You must be mad, Lucian. Her? A pathetic wolfless castoff? Even her husband's pack did not accept her as Luna, and you want to bring such a disease into yours? You'll be the laughingstock of the entire world."

My nails dug into my palms, and for a split second, I couldn't tell if the twisting in my chest came from her venom or the echo of truth it hit against.

But before I could spiral, Kieran's voice rang sharp, Alpha command threading his tone. "Enough, Celeste."

She turned to him, gaping as if he had struck her.

Lucian didn't even glance at Kieran. His gaze stayed locked on Celeste, colder than an arctic wind. "You might want to save your laughter, Celeste. Because, unlike your family and her two undeserving former packs, I've always known Seraphina was born for more than you could ever imagine. She will make an excellent Luna."

His lips curved into an indubitably confident smile. "You'll see soon enough."

And just like that, he turned to me.

"Hey." He smiled.

“Hi,” I breathed, stunned.

“Ready?”

I gave the slightest of nods, and his hand slid to the small of my back. It fit there so naturally, and I couldn't resist leaning in.

He steered me firmly past Kieran and Celeste, their stunned expressions playing in my peripheral vision.

Despite it all, a smile danced on my lips as we walked out of the hospital, the silent satisfaction of leaving them behind humming like wine in my veins.

By the time we reached the parking lot, the tension that had wound me tight finally began to unravel—only for Lucian to catch me off guard all over again.

He spun me gently but decisively, pressing me back against the cool metal of his car.

“Lucian—what—”

My gasp was swallowed by his mouth. My hands went to his chest instinctively, half to push, half to hold on.

But his lips moved against mine with an intensity I'd never felt from Lucian before. Fierce. Claiming. As though he was floating away, and kissing me was the only way to anchor himself.

My fingers curled into his shirt, anchoring myself as I tilted my head up to accept his kiss. The warmth from his arrival earlier spread from my stomach through my whole body, along with a tingling that had me pressing closer, wanting more.

But then he pulled away, laying his forehead against mine. His breathing was harsh and unsteady, his eyes closed.

I'd never seen Lucian like this before—almost like he'd momentarily lost the reins of the control that so firmly leashed him.

“What’s wrong, Lucian?” I panted softly.

He pulled back just far enough for me to see the storm in his eyes as he opened them. “Tell me you weren’t actually thinking of going back to him.”

My pulse stumbled. “What?”

“Kieran,” he ground out, his mouth tightening like the name hurt coming out. “I heard what you said to Celeste, and I know you could have anyone you wanted, but—”

A laugh escaped me, breathless and sharp. “Are you...jealous?”

The muscle in his jaw ticked, but he didn’t deny it. “Yes.” His voice dropped lower, rawer. “Damn right I am. I’ve spent the past few days telling myself to trust you, that you’d never let him crawl back into your heart after everything. But the thought of you with him—alone on that island, for days—”

He broke off, his hand sliding up to cup my jaw, thumb stroking just beneath my ear. “I missed you, Sera. More than I thought was possible.”

My amusement faded away, and something inside me softened. Guilt and sweetness tangled until I didn’t know which pulled harder.

“Lucian...” I whispered, cupping his face. The stubble on his jaw lightly grazed my palm, and I couldn’t resist placing a chaste kiss on his lips.

“I only said those things back there to rile Celeste. Kieran is...my past. My painful, lonely past. I never want to go back.”

I might have momentarily wavered; I might have lost my damn mind on that island. But I could see everything clearly now.

Kieran belonged with his Celeste—and I belonged with Lucian.

‘Mine...’

I shook my head. “I’m not going to go back. I’m focusing on my future now.”

My voice trembled slightly. “And if you’ll have me, I want that future with you.”

Lucian’s hand tightened at my waist, a rush of something like relief breaking across his features before he bent down again, kissing me with a gentleness that quickly melted into fire.

The kiss deepened, heat winding low in my stomach.

His lips demanded more this time, coaxing and taking all at once. I could feel an edge of dominance in him, a dark edge he rarely let show—but instead of frightening me, it sent sparks racing under my skin.

It wasn’t tender or hesitant or nice like our other kisses; it was demanding, urgent, unrestrained.

I loved it.

My palms flattened against his chest, and I could feel the thunderous roar of his heart as his body pressed closer, pinning me between him and the car.

The world outside blurred—until the sharp chime of my phone broke through.

We stilled, breathing hard, foreheads pressed together.

Lucian muttered something vicious under his breath before digging in his pocket for his phone.

He rolled his eyes when he saw the caller ID. “Of course,” he muttered.

Then he handed it to me. “For you.”

I was trembling so much I almost dropped the phone twice before I finally answered the call and brought it up to my ear.

“Sera-fucking-phina!”

I almost dropped Lucian’s phone a third time as I winced, holding it away.

Lucian chuckled, his irritation giving way to fondness. "She missed you, if you couldn't already tell."

I laughed, bringing the phone back to my ear. "Hi, Maya."

"I fucking missed you!" she yelled.

My grin split my face in two. It was a little unbelievable and a lot overwhelming that my absence had had such an effect on Lucian and Maya.

I wasn't used to people wanting me around, let alone missing me when I was gone.

"I missed you too," I told Maya, emotion clogging my throat.

"I have a welcome back present for you!" She was still shouting. I could hear bass in the background and a loud clattering and other people yelling in the background.

"Is it tinnitus?"

"Ha ha ha!" she barked. "I missed your sarcastic ass. Tell Lucian to get that ass over here, pronto!"

She hung up, and my hand dropped from my ear. I laughed softly, shaking my head.

“Looks like I’ve been claimed by someone else tonight.”

Lucian arched a brow, lips still hovering a dangerous inch from mine. “Do I need to be jealous of her, too?”

I shook my head, smiling. “I have it on good authority that Maya is ‘die-hard Team Lucian.’”

His answering smile was slow, heated. “Good. Then she won’t be mad if we keep her waiting a few minutes longer.”

And before I could protest, he kissed me again—hungry, unashamed, fierce.

I clung to him tightly, letting every other thought fall out of my head.

The world around could wait.