

My Sister 99

Chapter 99 GIRLS' NIGHT

SERAPHINA'S POV

The hotel was entirely ours for the night.

The steam-kissed air drifting from the outdoor pools, the faint notes of sandalwood and mineral water, the low hum of chatter and laughter echoing down the cedar-paneled halls—it all belonged to us.

At some point, I began to wonder if this was less about welcoming me back and more about a mini vacation for OTS.

I loved it either way.

As the party began to wind down and people began to retreat to their rooms or out into the pools and spas, I wondered what the rest of the night would hold in store for me.

I thought Lucian might ask if I wanted to stay with him.

The way his hand lingered a fraction too long on my lower back as we walked toward the elevators told me he was debating it.

His eyes, warm but restrained, flicked toward me more than once, like he wanted to speak but was waiting for the right moment.

My pulse skittered with every stolen glance, my skin prickling with anticipation. Staying with him overnight was a big step, especially only after one date, but I didn't think I would say no if he asked.

But before he even could, Maya popped up between us like a whirlwind in silk pajamas, looping her arm through mine.

"Sorry, Lucian," she declared mock sternly. "I let you pick her up and have her for the party, but I'm claiming Sera tonight. It's strictly a girls' night."

Lucian's brow rose ever so slightly, but the corners of his mouth twitched in that fond exasperated smile he reserved for when he was dealing with Maya.

He looked at me then, one brow arched as if to ask silently: 'Are you sure you want that?'

I was surprised by my reluctance. As much as I wanted to spend time with Maya and catch up, the thought of leaving Lucian's side made me feel bereft.

But I nodded. "Yeah, she's right. We need to catch up."

Maya smirked in victory and tugged me toward the elevator, tossing a flippant wave over her shoulder.

“Don’t pout too much, Alpha. You’ll have her back tomorrow.”

Lucian’s chuckle followed us into the elevator, low and indulgent, and the sound warmed my stomach even after the doors closed.

Maya’s room was on the last floor, tucked near the end of the corridor.

When she flung the door open, I was met with the scent of eucalyptus and citrus oils she’d already set to diffuse, plus the unmistakable crinkle of snack bags spilling out of a tote, and wine bottles in coolers.

“Pajamas,” she ordered, pointing toward the neatly folded set she’d placed on the bed. A pale peach cotton set, soft to the touch, embroidered with tiny white moons along the hem.

“I bought them for you; put it all on, no arguments.”

I unfolded them, and my eyes widened when a matching pair of lingerie fell out. I picked up the three strings masquerading as a thong and the matching ‘bra’. I would be shocked if it covered anything more than my nipples.

“Maya,” I sighed.

“What?” She smirked.

I laughed, shaking my head, but slipped into them anyway while she fussed with arranging bowls of fruit, chocolates, snacks and fizzy drinks across the little coffee table.

When I emerged, Maya was already curled cross-legged on the bed, her hair in a loose halo around her head, eyes glittering with mischief.

She patted the space beside her like a queen beckoning a courtier.

“So,” she began the moment I sat down, “progress report. You and Lucian. Spill.”

I groaned, flopping back onto the pillows. “Progress report, Maya? It’s a relationship, not a reconnaissance mission.”

I winced when she squealed, drumming her hands on the bed excitedly. “A relationship! You have no idea how happy that makes me, Sera.”

I smiled. “Yeah, me too.”

She shrugged, tearing open a bag of Takis. “To be honest, I was worried.”

I turned to her, propping my head up with my hands. “About what?”

She tossed a piece at me, which I caught clumsily.

“About your trip with Kieran,” she said, and the spicy corn chip turned to ash in my mouth.

“What about it?”

“I mean, you were stuck on a tropical island with him for days.” She shifted closer, those sharp eyes of hers tracking my movements. “Anything happen between the two of you?”

“I—what do you mean?”

She rolled her eyes. “You’re gonna make me spell it out? No...bold romantic encounters under the moonlight?” She waggled her eyebrows, unaware of how accurately she’d hit the nail on the head.

I cleared my throat, sitting up and turning away. “You read too many romance novels.”

She arched a brow. "That's not a denial."

I coughed, reaching for a bottle of sparkling water. I downed half its contents before I spoke again. "Of course it's a denial. I'm with Lucian, remember? I thought you were Team Lucian."

The corners of her lips twitched. "Yeah, I am."

She threw a handful of chips into her mouth. "Just wanted to make sure you still were, too," she mumbled as she chewed.

"I am," I insisted.

She nodded. "Such a shame, though."

"What?"

"How romantic would it be if Lucian and Kieran had to fight for your heart?" She dropped the bag of Takis and began to gesticulate animatedly. "The old versus the new; two Alphas battling for the ultimate price"—she pointed to me and smirked—"your heart."

I shot her a look, trying not to mentally replay every single time Lucian and Kieran had stood off with me in the middle.

“Come on, it’ll be awesome. Lucian would obviously win, and Kieran’s heart would be dashed in the process.” She spread her arms out. “That, my sweet Sera, is what I call justice.”

I snorted. “Sorry to dash your hopes, babe. Never gonna happen.”

It was incredulous enough that Lucian wanted me, but the thought of two Alphas fighting over me was more absurd than...

I couldn’t even think of anything more absurd than that.

Her pout was so exaggerated I had to laugh again. “Fine, ruin my fantasies. Be boring.”

I shook my head, chuckling. “If you’re so desperate for a love triangle fantasy, why don’t you find another male wolf for Ethan to battle with?”

She scoffed. “I don’t think there’s another male in existence that can measure up to Ethan.”

My smile widened. “So, I take it you two made up?”

Instantly, the playfulness softened into something warmer. She leaned back against the headboard, a dreamy little smile curving her lips. “Yeah, we did. Things are good. Really good, actually. We’ve found our rhythm, I think. Less fighting, more laughing.”

I squealed, leaning in to hug her. “That’s amazing, Maya! I’m so glad.”

She squeezed me tightly. “There is something else...”

I pulled back. “What?”

“We met each other’s parents.”

My eyes widened. “Oh? For real?”

She nodded, twisting a strand of hair between her fingers. “I mean, it was more of a Zoom meeting with my parents, and I met your mom officially when she was first taken to the hospital.”

“And?”

She shrugged. “My folks are pretty supportive and have let me live my life majorly how I like. They would have been okay with any mate, but I could tell my dad was really happy he’s an Alpa.”

I chuckled. "And my mom?"

"I actually expected it to be weird, and was surprised Celeste hadn't poisoned her against me. I mean, she didn't hug me or throw me a party or whatever, but she was...nice."

I exhaled in relief. Ethan was traditional to his core, and I knew it would gut him if our Mother didn't approve of his mate.

"I can't believe you're going to be my sister," I whispered in awe.

She exhaled on a soft laugh. "Don't hold your breath."

My brows furrowed slightly. "What do you mean? Aren't things perfect right now?"

"They are. But..." She paused, chewing her lip. "I'm not ready for marriage. Not yet. Ethan talks about it sometimes, and I know he's serious—I love that he's serious. But I love where we are right now. The excitement, the silliness. The lovey-dovey dating phase." She shrugged. "Marriage—especially to an Alpha—comes with a shit ton of responsibility. I don't want to rush into all that just yet."

I nodded. "I understand." I reached forward and cupped her cheeks, squishing them together. "Enjoy all the phases for as long as you want."

Her eyes softened. “Thanks.”

“So...” I shifted, lying back and placing my head in her lap. “Tell me more about your family. You practically know every dirty secret of mine.”

She laughed softly, stroking my hair. “There isn’t much to tell. You already know my dad’s a Beta. He always had high hopes for me—said I could do anything an Alpha could do, maybe more.”

A wistful smile danced on her lips. “He’s part of why I do what I do—I want to prove him right.”

I smiled. “He must be so proud of you.”

Her smile widened. “Yeah, I think he is. Especially since I started working with OTS.”

“How did you actually start that?” I asked, realizing just how little I knew about my new—best—friend.

Maya tilted her head, eyes flicking toward the ceiling as though dredging up memories. “It was years ago. I left home a little while after I turned eighteen, a little too sure of myself. I spent my time and resources traveling around the world trying to make a difference wherever I could. I mostly lived in impoverished areas—helped out where I could, human and werewolves alike.”

I stayed still, listening.

“One day, I crossed paths with a pack that had no love for outsiders. A group of vengeful Alpha wolves—strong, angry, and looking for someone weaker to exert their power on. They were in for the shock of their lives when they met me. They hadn’t expected me to be as strong as I was or to fight back, but soon, their shock wore off, and they overwhelmed me. Fast.”

She clutched a pillow to herself, her voice softening. “I was still young. I didn’t know half the things I know now. I thought...that was it.”

My heart clenched. “Maya—”

“But then he came. Lucian.” A faint smile touched her lips. “Like an actual knight in shiny black fur. It was beautiful to see, Sera. He just...dismantled them. One by one. Efficient, calm, like it was no more troublesome than swatting away flies.”

I smiled, remembering how he’d saved me from the rogues at my father’s funeral and at the restaurant.

The smile dimmed when the image of another wolf—with golden brown fur—tried to shift into my subconscious.

I shot it down and refocused on Maya.

“And then when he was done. He held his hand out to me and smiled warmly, and said, ‘Thanks for loosening them up for me. I don’t think I could have taken them down otherwise.’”

I laughed, picturing it so clearly—Lucian, unshakable and steady, calmly standing against impossible odds.

“He invited me to join him afterward,” Maya continued. “Said he was putting together something different. A group that wasn’t bound by politics or power, but by choice and determination. Out of The Shadows. I didn’t even hesitate. I would have followed him anywhere.”

I whispered, “You trust him that much.”

“Yes.” Her eyes met mine, steady. “Even now, after all these years, he’s never given me any reason not to. He’s hard to read sometimes, distant, maybe a little closed off. But he’s a good man, Sera. The kind you can build a foundation on. I’ve seen him grow... from gloomy, repressed, almost suffocating himself with restraint... to someone more composed, more grounded. And lately—” she paused, smile softening, “—lately, I’ve seen him loosen up. Because of you.”

I swallowed, heat curling low in my chest. “Because of me?”

She nodded. “You’ve changed him, Sera. He laughs easier. Smiles more. There’s lightness where there used to be weight. Don’t underestimate what that means.”

Her words sank into me like warm tea, sweet and steady.

I thought of Lucian's rare smiles, the way his eyes softened when they found me, how he'd admitted—so uncharacteristically—that he was jealous, that he'd missed me.

And beneath the sweetness of remembering, a familiar flicker of guilt passed too: that I'd wavered, that I'd let old wounds with Kieran cloud what stood right in front of me.

"I hope we can be happy together," I said softly.

Maya reached out, squeezing my hand. "You will be. I know it."