

In Love With My Evil Stepbrother Chapter 10

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Chapter Ten "Help! Somebody helps!"

I yank the door with all my might and yells. My voices and the sound of door rattling echo in the dark and empty corridor. But only death silence falls upon me. It's getting dark outside. The tour must have left hours ago. So I'm all alone in this observatory right now. Doesn't this fancy school have a security guard or something? But on the second thought, this is summertime. Who patrol during summer vacation?

I panic a bit at the thought of that. I'm not exactly afraid of ghosts. But the thought of being left alone in an empty building with no food and water terrifies me.

Mr. Ramirez said he'll meet me after the tour. But the tour ended hours ago, and he still hasn't come and find me. Maybe he thought I left with Eason. Maybe something turned up and he must leave in a hurry.

If that's the case, then I'm screwed. "Fuck!" I pound on the door, feeling more frustrated than ever. Nothing good has happened since I moved back to Boston and met Eason again. Maybe Valerie was right. I should keep my distance with him. He's like a plague that only brings bad luck.

I examine the room, looking for a way out. There is a small window located on the upper side of the wall, near the ceiling. I might be able to fit through that.

I stack chairs together and climb up. My temporary ladder sways precariously under my steps, but I manage to grab the edge of the window before it collapses. Taking in a deep breath, I contract my chest to the smallest and push my body through the tiny exist. The hard concrete scrapes my skin. But fortunately with one hard pull, I'm through.

I twisted my right ankle when I drop off to the ground. God that hurts! I groan a curse and head to the gate with a limp.

I was thinking about ways to get home, when suddenly flares of flashlight appear from the darkness with heavy footsteps approaching. I look up in surprise and find a few figures coming towards my direction.

"Ms. Moore!" a security guard cries out, "I found her! Over here!"

Then I recognize one of the men as Mr. Ramirez. He runs towards me and finally slows down at last few steps, visibly relieved.

“Nat, are you alright?” he holds my shoulder. “Yes.” I’m surprised at seeing all these people. Seems that they’ve been looking for me.

Mr. Ramirez nods and turns around to look at Ms. Dave, who just arrives at the scene. “This is not acceptable,” his voice cold and stern. A few people clearly flinch under his gaze. Ms. Dave looks at me, “maybe we should hear from Miss Moore first. What happened? Why didn’t you come back with the tour?”

Valerie’s name was on the tip of my tongue, but I swallow it back. If I tip off Valerie, I’ll have to tell them everything, probably involves Eason in. Things will get way more complicated. And I know how high school hates snitchers. Don’t want to go down that path before I even enter school.

“I lock myself in the observatory, accidentally. I tried to break out. But the lock snapped.”

A thin smile twitches across Ms. Dave’s lips. Mr. Ramirez stares at me, contemplating, then asks again, “Are you sure?”

I nod, without saying anything else.

“Then an immediate repairment of the school’s old facility is necessary. I imagine now the school has enough founding to cover that expense, correct?” Ms. Dave smiles, of course. The school really appreciates your generosity. You have my word, Mr. Ramirez, that nothing like this will ever happen again.”

Then they walk us to the gate and watch us leave in our car.

Mr. Ramirez sits in the back seat with me. When the car starts moving, he speaks up again, “Nat you can still tell me what actually happened.”

I gulp, knowing that my silly little lies can’t trick him. “It’s nothing...me and some girls got into a fight. It’s stupid. Nothing you should worry about.”

“Really?” His smile grows wider, “Making enemies prior to school? You are a lot like a Ramirez.”

My cheek turns red. I can’t tell if this is a criticism or compliment.

“Well, since you’ve already made up your mind to face this alone, I can only respect that and stay out of your way. But remember—” he raises his hand to pat on my shoulder, “—you can always ask for help.”

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With summertime coming to an end, mom went all crazy getting me ready for my new school. She bought all sorts of expensive and unnecessary things for me, and even asks if she should hold a party to celebrate the beginning my senior year, which I firmly declined.

“Why not? You can invite your friends over and I get to meet the parents from your school. Wouldn’t that be nice?”

I have to remind her, “mom, I have no friends here.”

Mom seems so very disappointed. She sighs and spreads her hand, “Fine, but at least buy some nice dresses. I heard there’s homecoming ball, held on the first week of your school. You gotta find something to wear for that.”

“How do you know about that??”

“Because Shawn got an invitation. He’s an alumnus.” She sees the look on my face and adds, “I know you don’t want me to go shopping with you. Don’t worry, I got a perfect person for

you.”

She drags me out of my room and goes downstairs. Stepping into the living room, I’m shock to see Eason standing up from the couch, his lips pressed into a thin line.

“Eason is apparently free this afternoon. So he kindly offers to take you. Aren’t you so sweet, Eason.”

“It’s nothing, Mrs. Ramirez,” he says in a glum tone, as if forced into this. After our awkward fight in school, we have both try to avoid each other the best we can. We’ve run into each other a couple times during dinner in the townhouse, but we never spook. Even if our eyes met in the air, we’d quickly look sideways. So why on earth did he agree to this all of a sudden? “Mom, I really don’t think this is a good idea—” “Please. I’m asking you a favor,” mom whispers back into my ears, “Shawn was so glad that you guys were getting along. With you back, Eason has been more willing to show up here. It’s a good sign. Could you please spend some more time with him? You know, do some brother and sister thing?’ Only if she knew her dear stepson has kissed her own daughter. “We should probably get going,” said Eason listlessly. “Yes. Please go.” Mom shoves me forward, “Buy something pretty honey. Enjoy your date!”

Mom was trying to be funny. But an uncomfortable look passes our face at the same time. I ask him the moment we get into his car, “why did you say yes to this?”

“Like I had a choice. Your mom got it all planned out for us,” He revs the engine deafeningly and accelerate pass the block. I am not surprised when he takes me to the fanciest mall in the city. While he’s tipping the valet, I jump off the car and head outwards. “Natalia!” he quickly catches me up, “Where the fuck are you going?” “Out, apparently.” I shrug, “there’s no way I can afford anything in there.”

He visibly clenches his teeth, “I’ll pay for anything you like. Just go!”

I was still going to resist, but he grabs my elbow forcefully and drags me through the entrance. People look at us oddly as he escorts me into a designer brand store.

The sales attendant welcomes us at once, “good afternoon. Can I help you with anything?”

“She needs something to wear for a ball.” Eason pushes me forward.

I stagger along a few steps and remain still at the spot, embarrassed. Everything in this store is so gorgeous and, needless to say, extravagant. This is not a place for me.

But the sales attendant has gestured me to follow her, “of course, Miss. May I ask what’s the occasion?”

“it’s-umm-a homecoming ball.” I say dryly.

The sale lady leads me to a rack. I’m wary of touching the fabric while flipping through the clothes, afraid that it might get stained. Finally, I pick up one plain black dress, “How much is this?”

“Very good choice, Miss.” She gives me a bright smile, “This is our runway style. It’s an open back embellished ruched crepe gown. The nice and clean cut will greatly accentuate your figure. And it’s currently for sale at \$9600.” I almost cry out loud. A simple black dress for \$9600? Unbelievable. Eason takes a seat at the sofa and orders me, “go try it on.” I try to salvage my last thread of self-esteem, “But I’m not really—” “Go try it on right now or I’ll just buy it,” says him impatiently. I roll my eyes at him and head into the fitting room. The sales lady closes the drape for me and tell me to let her know if I need anything. I slip into the dress and can’t help but admire its beauty. The fabric something close to silk, so soft and smooth, with a layer of natural gleam under the light. I know it’s too expensive to be fell in love with, but still...

I step out of the fitting room, feeling a bit uncomfortable. I’m not used to wear high heels and anything so tight. I feel like a clown walking on stilts. But Eason’s expression changes immediately the moment he sets eyes on me, as he involuntarily sits up from the sofa. “...what do you think?” I clumsily turn around in full circle, as his eyes follow me closely. Then he stands up from the sofa, steps towards me. I’m a bit wobbly on my high heels, so he reaches out to hold my hand and keep my balance. Gently, he leads me close to him, and tugs a lock of my hair to the back. “You are so beautiful, Natalia,”

says him in a low and husky voice. I can't help but shiver. The way he looks at me, it's so hot and intense. Almost like he can see through my head. "May-maybe I should take this off for now," I stutter and run back to the fitting room. I pull the drape close and cover my burning cheek. He's so unbelievably handsome and attractive. When I'm close to him, it's almost impossible to resist the temptation. I can't control myself, can't stop the quivering under his touch, can't run away from his gaze... I let out a low groan. No this can't be happening. I can't fall for him. He's my brother, he already has a girlfriend, he is the wrong choice. But the next second, the drape opens unexpectedly. I look up and find Eason standing by the door.

"I'm not done changing-"

"I know." He steps in and closes the drape behind him, "They have a necklace, goes nicely with your gown."

Before I can say no, he moves closer and places the diamond necklace on my neck.

Goosebumps appear when the cold jewelry touches my bare skin. His fingertips brush through the back of my neck, soft like feathers. He adjusts the necklace a bit and holds my shoulders, "what do you think?" I can't think right now. His hot breathes spread through my skin, burning up every sensation. The place his hand touches me sends down thrilling electric current down my body.

I open my mouth, but no words come out of it. And the next I know, he's pushed me to the mirror and caught my lips with his.