

## 15 15-Eyes On Me

Helanie: 1

"Turn her around!"

"Let's do her together!"

"Look at her, take a closeup of her face when I c\*m on her"

"No! Get off me!"

"Get the f\*ck away from me, you assholes!"

I felt trapped. The darkness was consuming me. I could hardly breathe.

"FUCK OFF!" I nearly screamed as a hard knock on the bathroom door jolted me back to reality.

"What the hell is taking so long? I need to use the bathroom," Charlotte yelled from outside.

I glanced back at the mirror and quickly stepped away, avoiding my own reflection. I wasn't sure if I was losing my mind, but every time I looked into the mirror, my reflection seemed to stare back at me, almost as if she were asking why I



hadn't done anything about those jerks.

"Get out!" Charlotte banged on the door again. Taking a deep breath, I moved to the sink, careful not to meet my reflection's gaze, and splashed cold water on my face before leaving the bathroom. Charlotte shoved past me, deliberately brushing my arm to make her frustration clear, and slammed the door shut behind her.

I wondered what she felt when she looked in the mirror. Her short black hair with long brown eyes must be so attractive. She wasn't a broken soul like me. 4

The storm outside was raging, but everything had been secured, so the women from the basement had finally come out.

I was standing in my spot when my mother and Emma walked in. Charlotte emerged shortly after, her hands and face freshly washed.

"I can't believe this," my mother exclaimed, throwing her arms up in exasperation before pacing away. If I had any other place to go, I would never have burdened her with my presence.





"She's so stubborn. The moment she heard you're wealthy and living in luxury, she wormed her way back into your life without a second thought," Charlotte continued her tirade against me. I wondered what I had done this time to upset her.

I don't remember her being this toxic. Maybe her mother taught her how to manipulate and discard people perfectly.

"Norman has asked her to leave. That means he's furious with her, and now with me, because I'm the reason she came here." So that was why my mother was losing her mind. It seemed like every conversation they had somehow revolved around me.

When I first told her about Norman, she was too busy worrying about the storm. But now, she was bringing it up again.

"The rogue king requests your presence at dinner," a maid announced as she entered through the slightly ajar door.

"Ugh! Let's go. I don't want McQuoid thinking I'm upset just because Norman is kicking my daughter out. He'll start questioning how I'll



treat his sons if they cross me," my mother muttered, her thoughts entirely consumed by her own image and reputation.

Not once did she ask why I looked so pale, or why my chin was bruised, or why there were bite marks on my arms. I had tried to hide them, but she must have noticed the black eye and the other bruises when I arrived.

"What about her?" Charlotte gestured toward me.

"She has to come too. Otherwise, McQuoid will think I'm a bad mother," my mom replied, her gaze as hollow as her words when she looked at me.

"And it might be her last dinner," Aunt Emma added with a shrug. I followed them to the dining room where Lord McQuoid was already seated.

I sat down next to my mother, despite her obvious discomfort. I kept my head lowered, forcing myself to stay seated and not pass out.

"Where are the brothers?" My mother forced a smile every time she mentioned her stepsons.





It reminded me of the fury in Norman's eyes, my eldest stepbrother. He practically glared daggers at me earlier, nearly choking me with his harsh looks as he passed through the living room, heading upstairs to find his brothers.

"Norman and the others have been running around, taking care of the academy and the mansion. And I believe they're still a bit upset about what happened this morning," Aunt Emma responded, her gaze slyly shifting toward me.

"They should be here. They ought to have one last dinner with their stepsister," Lord McQuoid insisted, causing my mother to shoot him a harsh, judgmental stare.

"Why? Can't you see how much her arrival has upset Norman? He never raised his voice like that before, and Maximus has never threatened to leave! Why are you trying to ruin the little bond I've managed to create with your sons?" my mother complained, her frustration clear as Lord McQuoid shook his head.

"Let's just eat," Lord McQuoid said as he started on his meal, prompting the others to follow. I hesitated to touch anything at first.



That's when Norman reappeared, and I instinctively straightened up. He had changed into a white shirt, his sleeves rolled up, exposing his muscular arms and a tattoo of a devil's eyes on his left forearm.

"It's fine. We haven't started yet," Lord McQuoid replied, smiling as if pleased his son had joined us.

"The others are still handling matters at the academy. They might not make it tonight," Norman said, his voice calm again, though I couldn't forget the way he had spoken to me earlier.

I noticed that Norman hadn't glanced at me once. His muscles were still taut, his veins prominent, making it clear he wasn't comfortable—his whole body seemed too tense for that.

I reached for the spaghetti bowl, but Charlotte's sharp glance warned me to leave it alone. I nodded silently, watching her place a single loaf of bread on my plate.

"Why just a loaf of bread?" Lord McQuoid noticed, and finally, Norman looked in my





direction. I realized then that I had been staring at him far too intently. The way he leaned over the table to reach for something, his broad shoulders hovering over the dishes, the way his massive fingers gripped the fork—it all captivated me. The silverware seemed almost invisible in his giant hands, and everything around him looked so small in comparison. When he took a bite, his red lips brushed the spoon clean, and then I felt his eyes on me. That's when I realized just how inappropriately I had been staring.

I quickly looked down, embarrassed to have been caught by him.

"She has a tiny stomach. I don't think she can handle the fancy food yet," Emma remarked as if I had just wandered out of the wilderness. I had eaten good food before, but I had to admit, the dishes in front of me were prepared with such precision and made from the finest ingredients.

"She's a young woman, still growing. She needs proper nourishment. Serve her well," Lord McQuoid didn't appreciate Emma's attitude.

I wondered if he noticed her stopping me from



taking anything other than the bread. As Emma grudgingly filled my plate, I started eating.

Ugh!

I couldn't believe how embarrassing I was. The moment I had a spoon in my hand, I began shoveling the food into my mouth as if I hadn't eaten in years. They all stared at me in silence until my mother nudged me with her elbow.

"You must be really hungry," Lord McQuoid commented, and I nodded, managing a weak smile.

"I haven't had solid food like this in a week. This... tastes really good," I murmured, my voice shaky, tears welling up in my eyes. The whole table listened to me, no one interrupting. It felt like I was on a desperate mission, trying to store up food for the time I'd spend searching for a home after they kicked me out of here.

It wasn't until much later that I finally looked up, only to find them all staring at me in shock.