

EI POV

Her life had been turned upside down and inside out. Her father Taro, had passed away not even a year ago and now her mother had not only met someone. But had married him and now they were moving out to Bear Lake, Utah. Not somewhere that Eliza wanted to go, she didn't know Logan Greystone. Only that he was some wealthy Real Estate Developer who lived in what her mother told her was a lavish gated community in the most amazing apartment complex that he owned.

That they were going to live there, on the top oor, that she would love it there. Everyone was really friendly and everyone in the apartment complex knew each other and got along. There would be lots for her to do this summer. He had one son, who was 22 years old, named Conner and she would meet him and his friends when she arrived.

EI had argued about going. She had not long turned 18 and was considered an adult and able to stay in her family home by herself. She wanted to stay here with the people she knew and all her friends before she left to go to Italy to study. That was her plan, it had always been the plan to go to the University of Bologna, it's where her father had studied, it's where she wanted to study, was supposed to go.

But apparently, one Logan Greystone didn't think it was appropriate for her to do so, and to her horror, her mother had told her that Logan was right, that her university of choice was just too far away, and she couldn't go. The funds allocated for her studies abroad were now in Logan's hands and he was going to nd her a nice university to attend here in the states.

They had argued relentlessly about it when her mother came home, her application was already in, and Logan had taken it upon himself to cancel it. No one had even considered her or talked to her about it, he'd just gone ahead and done it. What she wanted did not matter to anyone anymore. She'd been denied the right to stay in her father's house. They hadn't even packed any of it up, to go with them on this move. She was pretty sure that Logan didn't want anything of her father's. All she had been allowed to bring were her things, a few suitcases. That was all.

It was a long drive and she was sitting in the backseat unhappy and both her mother and the man who was supposedly now her new father, according to her mother. An arrogant SOB as far as she was concerned, were both chatting away all happy. When she had refused to get in the car yesterday and leave, stalked off, he'd practically demanded of her to get in the car, and she'd told him, or yelled over her shoulder, uncaring of what he wanted. That she had a bloody right to go and say goodbye to her friends. Then had continued to stalk away from that man.

Then she'd just not gone back to the house, had gone off to Cordi's place and opped down on her bed and nearly cried, it wasn't fair everything in her life was now gone to s**t. She'd come home yesterday from her job inside the local university library, a job she loved, to nd a strange man inside her home and her mother in his lap. She'd not met this Logan before. Had glared right at him before she'd got an introduction and then been told they were all packed and she should get in the car. It was a long drive to Utah.

She'd not even known they were coming or expected her to go back with them. Knew her mother had been out there in Utah with him, she had been living on her own for the past few months, while her mother was off with her new boyfriend, well now her husband, some rich asshole that was now apparently in full control of her life and her life savings.

She had stayed at Cordi's, not gone home at all, ignored all the calls her mother had made, ignored the text message that had stated 'Elize, this is Logan you will come home now.' Had showed it to Cordi and muttered let's get the hell out of here, and they'd done just that. Got in Cordi's car and driven away to a party that was going on at some guy's house that Cordi's brother knew.

They'd stayed out all night and she'd had a few too many drinks, needed it, she thought. Wasn't even old enough to drink, but to hell with it. If she was going to be forced to move and live in some stranger's house who now thought he was her father and could tell her what to do. She wasn't about to make it easy on him.

She was going to be dicult, which really wasn't like her at all. She was usually a nice, polite, well-mannered girl. Her father had raised her well, but this year had been tough. Her mother had seemed to have just forgotten about her husband, a man she had supposed to have loved with all her heart. She hadn't mentioned the man's name not once in the past three months of meeting Logan. Frowned at EI even when she brought him up, it was like she didn't even want to recall him.

EI wasn't going to forget him, he had been kind and loving, wanted her to explore the world and have all her dreams come true. He was nothing like the new asshole in her life. Who'd not taken kindly to her being out all night. Come home hung over and near vomit on him. Had been aiming for his shoes, the man had been quick to move out of the way. She didn't think she'd ever seen someone move that fast before.

She'd gotten his raised dad's voice at her and told her to go and shower. He wouldn't have her stink up his car, the minute she had been dressed she'd been shoved into that car of his and told not to cause any more trouble.

Within less than ten minutes, Logan and her mother were chatting happily, about going home and spending time together. It wasn't her home and she didn't want to go, she was being made to go. Spent that very long drive staring out the window or texting Cordi about how she hated her new stepfather.

The only comment she had made was why weren't they taking anything from the house? That she wanted to keep her father's car. "The rest of the important things for you will be shipped Eliza." He'd told her "They will arrive in a few days."

She'd said nothing after that, just muttered something about her father's car, had better be there or she'd make his life a living hell. There had been silence after that comment. She was making it plainly clear to all that she did not want to go with them. Didn't think it was necessary at all. The yelling yesterday with her mother should have told them all they needed to know.

Had actually pointed right at Logan and stated "I don't know him, he's not my father, never will be. I'm not bloody going."

He'd stood back and watched the two of them argue about her going with them. Hadn't stepped in until her mother was near crying about Eliza yelling at her "Did you even love my father, cos you moved on bloody quick." Had stated hurtful words because she was hurting herself. Because she didn't want to leave her family home with all her memories of growing up here with her father. He'd only been buried 9 months ago. It had only taken her mother 6 months to forget him.

Her mother had half whispered, half sobbed "Don't I get to be happy too?" and that's when Logan had stepped in and told her to grow up. She was 18 and should act like an adult. Now she was being forced to move to another state where she knew no one at all. Into a man's house that she did not know, didn't want to know.

They only stopped for food and to ll up the car. It was a large four-wheel drive, not that she cared, it was too ashy for her liking and it reeked of money. Everything about this man was expensive, but she already knew that about him. Her mother had told her he was wealthy. EI didn't really care about monetary things. Just wanted to leave and go study abroad, she and her father had been putting money aside for as long as she could remember for her to go abroad, a university fund. It had been in her dad's name and then transferred to her mother's, who'd stupidly handed it all over to Logan and now she had nothing.

She'd seen the massive gates that had rolled open for them to pass through and heard her mother's excited voice state that they were home, to have a good look at the community here. She just knew she was going to love it.

EI doubted it. It was only going to be until she could get her money and get out of here, go overseas and get her degree, hell she might never come back. It wasn't like her mother would care, she was all consumed by Logan now.

EI did look out the window at the gated community they were driving through, it was tidy and neat, nothing seemed out of place really, a bit odd, it was late in the evening, and she didn't see a single street light. Though there were many homes with lights on in them. Not a single house looked run down to her, and Logan commented "how about I drive through the mall and you can see where the teens hang out."

She'd not cared to answer, but he had done so it wasn't all that big, a few shopping boutique's and two cafes. One bakery and a swimming complex that had plenty of water slides, there were kids in there playing and swimming. There was a large open park with many people barbequing. She noticed next to the swim centre.

They saw many people look up and wave and Logan wave back, also saw her mother wave back and smile at them. She did not, though she found many eyes on her, as the car moved on. It was still a ten-minute drive to the apartment complex.

That place was huge, looked like a grand hotel, had columns out the front and a massive set of grand stairs that led up to it. There was a big, grassed area on either side of the stairs, with a few bench seats along it. She could see a young man standing at the top of the stairs, wearing light grey slacks and a white dress shirt. Looked like Logan, could only be his son Conner, she guessed.

Logan pulled the car up right at the stairs and got out, she sat and watched as her mother didn't move a muscle and waited for Logan to walk around the car and get the door for her. Who had she turned into?

EI opened her own door and got out herself, glanced up at the man standing at the top of the stairs. He was staring at her, saw him look her over. Said nothing, he just returned his eyes to his father effectively dismissing her. His dark blue eyes had been hard and cold on her, and she got the distinct impression he didn't want her here anymore than she wanted to be here herself.

"Father, Brittney." He addressed them.

"Son, how was everything while I was away?"

"Fine..." his eyes moved back to her and then he stated, "I can handle the family business."

"I'm aware, no issues then?"

"None I couldn't handle." He stated.

"Good, Connor, this is Eliza, your new stepsister. Eliza my son, Conner."

His eyes were back on her, "Hello." He stated, sounded board.

She just looked up at him, and said nothing until her mother prompted her "EI, play nice."

"Why?" she thought to herself "Hi." She stated, mimicking his board tone and turned away from him.

"Eliza, now I know your 18, so I thought you could have a place of your own. I got you a one-bedroom apartment up on the top oor."

She heard his son mutter something unintelligible and watched Logan glare at him, must have picked up what she couldn't. The man simply turned and walked inside. "Conner, you will get Eliza's belongings and make her feel welcome." Logan had grated out. So, it wasn't just her he got annoyed with.

She stood and watched as Conner stopped walking as he was about to go inside the apartment complex, then turned and glared at her, "We've got people for that father."

"Yes, we do. But you also need to play nice."

Seems she was right. He didn't want her here at all. Well, she was gone the minute she could be. EI could see his jaw ticking as he stalked passed her, but he said nothing. She had noticed that it was only her things that had been packed up, nothing of her mothers. Didn't need it apparently, Logan had bought her everything she could possibly want, or would do.

"I'm not staying with you and mother?" She questioned as they walked inside.

"I also thought she would be with us, Logan." Her mother commented.

"I thought about it, she's 18 and needs her own space." Had seen him turn and look right at her. "I have only one request, Eliza, which you will follow at all times. You will never enter my ooe without knocking and being asked to come in, even if the door is open. Is that clear?"

"Crystal." She muttered and got glared at.

"That tone won't be tolerated either."

"Really what are you going to do? Kick me out, good go ahead. Pack me off to Italy, I'd like that." She shot right back.

Could feel anger rolling off of him nearly right away, stood there and stared at him as he stared at her. "I won't tolerate disrespect, young lady. You will learn that quickly here."

"EI, please just try and get along, this is your home now. Please give it a chance." Her mother sighed "I know it's different but..."

"Are we staying or going?" It was Conner, and she knew he wasn't addressing her, was looking right at his father.

"She is staying, it's what Brittney wants."

'Not what I bloody want.' EI thought to herself.

"Then move it and show her to her room. I'm not a porter."

She was taken to the top oor of the apartment building, which was ve stories high, and got out of the elevator and walked down to the western end and she heard her mother murmur "Its far away from our suite."

"It's best that way," Logan told her simply.

"But all the way on the other side of the building? I don't know if I like that."

"She will be ne. You'll see."

All the way on the other side of the building she thought to herself. This man who apparently owned this building and married her mother without even meeting her, not once, was making a clear statement to her: she was not a part of his family. Was as far away from him and his family as he could possibly put her.

Her room was neat and tidy, a simple one-bedroom apartment, large and comfortable. She had her name on the room door: Eliza Hunt. Well, at least she wouldn't get it mixed up with all the other rooms down here, Eliza there were, no apartment numbers on any of the other doors down here.

Conner put her suitcases down and was gone without a word. He didn't want anything to do with her at all. That was clear. Got herself a crappy stepbrother as well as a crappy stepfather.

"There's a fully stocked kitchen for you through that door," Logan told her. "Your mother had all your favourite things to eat brought in for you. There is a nice ensuite with a soaker tub. I'm sure you'll like that and your walk in is massive. Settle in and we'll have breakfast in the morning, I'll send Conner to get you."

"Yay." She muttered and got a disapproving frown from him. Then he just turned and left, taking her mother with her.

"You should unpack." He stated right before he closed the door.

EI turned and looked around the room. She'd not been given a key or anything, though she'd not seen a lock on that door either. Walked over and looked at it, there didn't appear to be one, just great in a strange place with no lock on her door. Would request one she thought rst thing in the morning.