

Rising from the Ashes (Andrew and Lauren)

#Chapter 1786 - Read Rising from the Ashes (Andrew and Lauren) Chapter 1786

Hank chuckled. "Hope I didn't make things awkward, Ms. Driscoll. I just arrived in Gabo Creek, and the moment I met Hannah, it was love at first sight. I figured I'd bring her along today. I hope you don't mind?"

Scarlett smiled, but it did not reach her eyes. "Why would I mind? You've clearly got charm and skill. I mean, to win over Ms. Keller in such a short time? That's impressive."

She gave a low chuckle and teased, "Judging by how close you two are, I wouldn't be surprised if you already slept together! I'm pretty direct when I speak. I hope you both don't take offense!"

Hannah flushed, a mix of embarrassment and irritation on her face. Even so, she did not deny it, which was as good as admitting it.

On the other hand, Hank looked smug, practically glowing with pride. "Hannah and I are genuinely in love. Some things just happen naturally, and we couldn't help ourselves."

Scarlett's smirk. "Passion between a man and a woman isn't a crime. But from what I've heard, Mr. Keller Senior is known for being very strict with his daughters. He may not be so thrilled about this."

Hank puffed up with arrogance and smugness. "I'm a Special Ops agent. I won't say too much about my status, but at the very least, I'm more than worthy of Hannah!"

Hannah looked at him with starry eyes. "Hank is a hero who saves the world, a handsome and cool agent. My dad is just an old-fashioned man, and my business is none of his concern!"

Scarlett did not press further, but inwardly, she sneered in disgust. She thought Hannah was just another brainless tramp.

And Hank? He came from Chetvine, so there's no way he was innocent. He was nothing but a scumbag in a Special Ops uniform.

Who knows how many hookers he had been with since landing in Blumedale?

It was laughable how this Hannah was throwing herself at him like some lovesick fool.

Scarlett's face showed pure amusement as she eagerly anticipated George's reaction when he learned about this. She said, "Alright then, Mr. Armstrong, Ms. Keller, let's head inside!"

The group chatted and laughed as they walked toward the corporate building entrance. But at that very moment! Bang!

Just then, a muffled gunshot rang out. By the time the sound reached them, the Barrett's devastating bullet was already speeding straight toward Scarlett's face!

"Watch out, there's a sniper!" someone shouted.

"Protect Ms. Driscoll!"

vel

The executives and bodyguards around them yelled in unison. However, their actions were perfectly coordinated—they all dove for cover, prioritizing their own lives first.

Everything else could go to hell.

In the critical moment, Hank's expression darkened as he grabbed a nearby bodyguard and yanked him into place behind Scarlett like a human shield.

The bullet ripped clean through the bodyguard and kept going, straight for Scarlett.

Nevertheless, that brief delay was all she needed. With a fierce shout, she twisted her body in a nearly inhuman motion and dodged at the last possible second.

The bullet that was originally aimed

at her arm grazed her skin and slammed into the concrete floor. Even so, her entire right arm went numb, blood gushing in every direction.

She did not stop. She ducked through the building's front doors in a flash, avoiding any follow-up attack.

From inside came a furious roar. "Find that bastard now! I want him torn apart and ground to dust!"

Outside, Hank turned sharply, eyes locking onto the building across the plaza. "The shooter is on that rooftop! Surround the building immediately!"

Desperate to win favor with Scarlett, he sprinted off at full speed toward the source of the shot.

However, Andrew was already gone. He never intended to kill Scarlett outright, and this was just retaliation—a warning. Had he wanted her dead, she would be gone.

Nevertheless, the fallout would have been massive, and too many innocent people would have been dragged into it.

Andrew was not afraid of consequences, but he did not want to implicate the Keller or Peck families just yet.

There was also Derek to consider. Openly declaring war on the Driscolls now would put Derek in a difficult position.

Hank's interference had reduced the damage considerably. If he had not gotten involved, Scarlett would have lost her entire arm. Yet, Andrew was not bothered by the result.

Hank was not useless. As a trained Special Ops agent, his reaction speed was top-tier.

And Scarlett? She was clearly elite. That almost impossible dodge confirmed she was already at the peak of martial king level.

If Andrew wanted to fight her head-on without unleashing his second seal, it would take everything he had.

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The sound of someone storming up the stairs echoed. Andrew pulled his cap lower, slipped out of the emergency stairwell, and opted to take the elevator

instead.

Hank, charging up from behind, paused at the landing to check the floor. Then, he suddenly spun around and bolted back downstairs.

Inside the elevator, Andrew let out a cold chuckle.

Trying to play tracking and counter-tracking games with him? Hank might be a trained agent, but he was not even on his radar.

Before the elevator reached the lobby, Andrew got off on the third floor. He walked straight to a window, flipped over the ledge, and jumped, landing in the back parking lot behind the building.

Victoria was already waiting there with the engine running. Andrew grabbed the door handle, jumped in, and buckled his seatbelt. The whole sequence flowed seamlessly, like something out of an action movie.

Meanwhile, Hank was waiting on the ground floor when he noticed the elevator had stopped on the third floor. He cursed under his breath and sprinted upstairs in just two seconds.

Peering out the window, he caught just a glimpse of Andrew's back as he got into the car.

"Damn it, nobody escapes right under my nose," he growled.

He slammed his fist against the windowsill so hard it cracked. He was determined to find this killer because, first, he wanted to impress Scarlett, and second, he wanted to prove his own capabilities.

As an agent, letting someone slip away right under his nose was a major insult.

Later, Hank returned to the Driscoll Corporation across the street, where Scarlett was waiting.

"Ms. Driscoll, are you alright?" he asked with concern.

Scarlett's arm was already wrapped in bandages and hung in a sling around her neck. She replied, "It's nothing, just a minor shock injury. Anyway, I thought you'd be bringing the shooter back to me. But from the looks of it, even you couldn't catch up with him?"

Hank frowned at her words. Scarlett seemed to be questioning his competence.

He let out a cold snort and replied,

"The guy's got a few tricks up his sleeve. I figured he'd take the fire escape, but when I got there, switched it up and used the 19

I waited on the ground floor, hoping to trap him, but the bastard slipped out on the third floor and jumped out the window."

Scarlett nodded. She had already regained her composure from the earlier shock. Her expression was now cold and steely. "From what you're saying, he must be skilled in tracking and counter-tracking. Sounds like we're dealing with a professional." Content betongs to

Hank scoffed. "Ms. Driscoll, he just got lucky this time. But give me one more shot, and I'll definitely bring him in. I've already memorized his build, and if he shows up again, I'll recognize him."

Scarlett gritted her teeth. "I'm not waiting for the next time. This is the first person who's dared to target me on Gabo Creek territory. He clearly doesn't know who I am, and I'll make him pay dearly for this mistake."

She immediately ordered her subordinates to pull the surveillance footage from the shooter's building and all surrounding areas that might reveal his identity. However, they worked until late into the night with no results.

The only thing visible in the surveillance footage was a man wearing a low-pulled cap, carrying a long black bag on his back. Beyond that, there was no useful information.

"We can confirm this man was the shooter. But Ms. Driscoll, with just this blurry figure in the surveillance footage, we'll never be able to identify the real culprit," a subordinate reported hesitantly.

Scarlett leaned back in her office chair, holding a wine glass in her good hand. She had expected this outcome, so she was not inclined to blame her subordinate.

Suddenly, Hank spoke up. "I've been studying this guy, and honestly... he looks kind of familiar."

Scarlett did not seem interested. "Oh? Who do you think it is?"

Hank did not sound fully confident, but said, "He kind of resembles someone

named Andrew Lloyd. I have only met him once since I arrived in Gabo Creek, so

I can't be completely sure. Ms. Driscoll, do you have any bad blood with him?"

Scarlett's eyes turned icy cold as she set her wineglass down. "I have no grudges against this Andrew, and he shouldn't even know I exist."

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"It's just that the Driscoll family doesn't like him and plans to eliminate him. Did he discover I was behind the last incident?" Scarlett wondered aloud.

However, she quickly shook her head after saying that. Even if Andrew knew she was trying to kill him, she doubted he would dare to turn against her. Besides, the sniper from earlier had been extremely professional and was clearly a real hitman.

Andrew had some skills, sure, but he was no assassin.

Scarlett dismissed the idea entirely, believing there was no way Andrew was behind the ambush.

It did not add up.

Hank laughed. "Yeah, I don't think it was him either. The guy's got decent medical skills, and as for his fighting ability, it's hard to say, but he doesn't exactly strike me as tough. Besides, anyone bold enough to go after you wouldn't be some nobody."

Meanwhile, Andrew had not gone home right after escaping. Instead, he waited near a street corner not far from the Keller residence. He did not have to wait long before a sleek black Mercedes pulled over, and a figure stepped out, sneaking around.

It was Hannah !

Andrew walked out from the shadows and stepped directly in her path.

Startled, Hannah jumped back and was just about to lash out when she saw who it was. The insult died in her throat, though she still snapped, "What the hell, Andrew? You scared the crap out of me creeping around like that!"

Andrew stared at her coolly. "The Keller residence is just a block away. Why did you get out here instead of pulling into the driveway?"

Hannah looked uneasy and huffed. "What's it to you? Maybe I just wanted to stretch my legs, is that not allowed?"

Andrew's expression remained blank. "Hannah, you didn't want to get dropped off at home in case Logan or someone in your family saw you, right? You don't have to explain. I'm not interested."

He added, "But I'll give you one piece of advice-Hank isn't a good guy. Keep hanging around him, and you'll pay for it sooner or later. But that's not even the biggest issue. The real problem is that you're a Keller.

"Logan and Mr. Keller Senior both care about you. If something were to happen because you're running around with someone like Hank, someone who's at odds with the Keller family, they'd be the ones getting hurt."

Hannah's face turned pale, then

even paler. "How do you know I've been with Hank? Oh, I get it now. You're a damn creep, Andrew. You followed me, didn't you? You saw me with Hank and got jealous, so you stalked me to gather

information about my whereabouts, right?"

She became increasingly agitated, her voice growing louder. Pointing at Andrew, she shrieked accusations with a face full of rage.

Andrew shook his head and let out a cold laugh. "Idiot. I've said what needed to be said. Whether you listen or not is your problem."

He turned and walked away without another word. Even staying another second felt like a waste of breath.

Yet, Hannah was not done. She stomped after him, swinging her purse like a weapon. "Andrew, you're disgusting! You're not even a real man!

be with whoever I want

That's my right, my freedom You really think you're someone important, don't you?

"If it weren't for my brother and my dad backing you up, do you think you'd be anything in Blumdale today? Don't act like your little reputation gives you the right to boss me around or tell me who I can

see! Compared to Hank, you're not even in the same league!

Andrew was already far off, but his eyes turned even colder.

Of the Keller sisters, Hannah was turning out to be the most clueless of the three.

Emily might have been a little proud and a touch self-absorbed, but at least she was not some love-struck airhead.

Freya, the second sister, was working with Aspen to run a new entertainment company and was all-in on building her career. She had the brightest future out of the three-smart, focused, and not easily swayed by temptation.

But Hannah?

If it were not for George and Logan's sake, Andrew would not even bother warning her. Whether she thrived or crashed while hanging around Hank had nothing to do with him.

He had done what he needed to do. If she did not want to listen, that was on her.

Rising from the Ashes (Andrew and Lauren) #Chapter 1789 - Read Rising from the Ashes (Andrew and Lauren) Chapter 1789

There were only two days left until New Year's Day.

Andrew brought his three lovely ladies to Aroma Exchange.

Zachary did not dare slack off and had Ruth personally handle their full reception. Meanwhile, he personally escorted Andrew upstairs to a private room.

"Captain, you should have given me a heads up that you were coming!" Zachary seemed somewhat nervous.

Andrew smiled. "Have a seat. I just came to see how your preparations are going."

Zachary pondered for a moment, then shook his head. "I'm not too confident. I became Jerome's student mainly to advance my martial arts skills further. However, Jerome is a grandmaster, and the requirements to advance from outer to inner disciple are extremely strict. With my current abilities, honestly, I'm not sure I can make it."

Andrew nodded, showing his understanding. Then, he pulled out a small bottle and handed it to Zachary.

He said, "There are two miracle pills in here, both seventh grade. They should significantly boost your strength. Take one now, and take the other on the day of your assessment. That should take care of any problems you might face."

Taking the small bottle, Zachary looked incredulous. "Seventh grade Divine Pills? Captain, where did you get these? They're too valuable! I can't accept them!" Though he looked at the bottle with admiration, he still tried to return it. Andrew waved him off with a chuckle. "I prepared these specifically for you. Keep them! As long as I have the raw materials, I can make these in no time."

Zachary hesitated for a beat, then finally gritted his teeth and accepted the gift. "Captain, thank you! You've always been the guiding light in my life. Whether or not I make it to an inner disciple, I'll never forget what you've done for me."

He was about to bow deeply in gratitude, but Andrew stepped aside and said flatly, "You know my personality. When I help someone, I don't expect repayment, and I certainly don't need your formalities. That stuff means nothing to me."

Zachary grinned sheepishly. "Alright then, let's go out and drink! I'm going to toast you three big ones in a bit."

Andrew waved his hand. "Take it easy on the drinking. I'm trying to stay away from cigarettes and alcohol these days."

Zachary gave him a knowing look with a sleazy grin. "I get it... I totally get it! Those three ladies of yours must be keeping you busy every night. Seriously, though, you're running three fronts at once, so your body's got to stay in top shape!"

Andrew smacked the back of his head. "Enough nonsense. Let's just go grab that drink."

Aroma Exchange was Zachary's business. The bar occupied two basement levels and had quite a reputation in Blumedale. It was an et

hotspot for wealthy youngsters and even the occasional low-key powerhouse looking to unwind.

Upstairs, Lauren, Francesca, and Aspen sat in a cozy private booth on the second level. They sipped their drinks while watching the crowd move below.

"I've never been here before. The place has a great vibe," Lauren said with a bright smile, lifting her glass.

Francesca shook her head slightly. "I'm not much of a drinker, so I don't really see the appeal."

Aspen gave her a warm look. "That

makes sense. You're a doctor, and you've always been the serious type. But honestly, this place is high end, And it's run by one of Andrew's close friends."

The three chatted and laughed. Since Francesca did not enjoy alcohol, she ordered a fruit tea instead.

Suddenly, a man in a white suit strolled over, holding a glass in one hand and a bottle in the other.

He said, "Evening, ladies! Would I be lucky enough to join you for a toast?" Francesca turned and instantly frowned. "You again?"

The man in white beamed even wider. "Ms. Aicker, what a coincidence!"

It was Hank, the same guy Francesca had found unbearable back at Blumedale Hospital.

She did not hold back this time either and replied, "Sorry, we're already with someone. Mr. Armstrong, please move along."

Hank did not leave. He shamelessly grinned. "No worries. Even if Ms. Aicker's not feeling it, I still have two other gorgeous ladies right here."

He turned his

gaze to Lauren and

Aspen, and his eyes lit up. Both were stunning, absolutely irresistible, in

his mind. If he could charm either of them tonight might turn out to be fucky one

"Let me introduce myself. I'm Hank Armstrong, Special Ops."

Hank flashed his signature smile, thinking he looked incredibly suave.

Lauren returned a polite but clearly uninterested wave. "Mr. Armstrong, nice to meet you."

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Lauren said plainly, "We three ladies would like to have a private chat, so we won't be entertaining you."

Aspen was even more direct. She picked up her phone and started scrolling through Tik Tok. She did not even glance at Hank, treating him like air.

Hank felt slightly embarrassed, but he was not ready to back down. The three stunning women in front of him were leagues above the likes of Hannah, and if he could land even one of them, he would die a happy man.

"Ladies, I think I ought to reintroduce myself. I'm Hank Armstrong, Special Ops. You know what that is, right? We're the ones who handle high-level classified missions. You don't see us often on Holtrien soil, but when we do show up, we're always the center of attention."

He laid it on thick, trying to paint himself as someone powerful and mysterious. That tactic had worked like a charm with Hannah before, but not this time.

Lauren was already losing her patience. "Mr. Armstrong, yes, we heard you the first time. You're amazing, you're brave, and you're definitely very impressive. But if you're trying to pick someone up, maybe try somewhere else. The three of us are all married."

Aspen added calmly, "And my husband just happens to be in this bar. He's on his way over right now."

Hank's face darkened immediately. "You three gorgeous women are already married? Now that's a surprise. Whoever married you must be one hell of a lucky guy."

There was a soft laugh, and just then, Andrew arrived with Zachary.

Hank turned and scowled. "You? Don't tell me it's you. Please! These three women obviously come from wealthy, powerful families. What could you possibly have that makes you worthy of them?"

Andrew casually took a seat between Lauren and Aspen. Then, he reached out and held Francesca's hand.

All three women blushed slightly. Public displays of affection from Andrew always flustered them, even if it made them happy.

"Whether I'm worthy or not, Hank, you're seeing it for yourself," Andrew replied with a grin.

Hank's face turned even uglier. He sneered. "Wow, Andrew, you really are something. All three of these women are married, and you're hooking up with them at the same time? All I need to do is give their husbands a call, and you'll be buried six feet under before you even know it."

Andrew smiled wider. "Go ahead then. Give them a call."

Hank was fuming at Andrew's boldness. He turned to Francesca and demanded, "Ms. Aicker, you're a married woman. So why are you hanging around with this guy? I saw you at Blumedale Hospital. You seemed so pure, so above it all."

Francesca looked bored. "You done? Then let me save you the trouble-Andrew is my husband."

Hank froze. His jaw dropped. "He's your husband? Then how can you just stand there while he messes around with other women?"

Lauren gave a faint smile. "Sorry, Mr. Armstrong, I forgot to mention that I'm Andrew's first wife."

Aspen added, aloof as ever, "And I'm the third."

Hank's scalp tingled, and the wine bottle in his hand nearly slipped. "You're telling me... all three of you are Andrew's wives?"

The women answered in unison, "Bingo."

Hank could not stop the shiver that ran through him. He stared at Andrew like he had just witnessed the worst kind of injustice.

What kind of ridiculous luck was that?

"Sorry for interrupting," Hank muttered at last. He did not dare stick around because every second longer, he felt more humiliated.

Andrew's life honestly looked better than a king's. He had three beautiful wives doting on him like that, and it was unreal.

Hank had taken just two steps away when something suddenly hit him. He turned back around, glaring at Andrew with fury.

"You bastard!

rd! So, Chantelle's your

wife, too, right? No wonder you two

checked into a hotel room last time! Andrew do you ha any idea how

many single guys there are in this country? 200 million singleseand more than 30 million of them are lonely men! You are public enemy number one to every single guy out there! You know that?"

Andrew silently cursed Hank for being a brainless fool. He was just asking to get him into trouble. Sure enough, all three of his wives turned to glare at him, their faces anything but pleased.

"You went to a hotel with Ms. Garcia?"

"Did you cheat on us?"

"Andrew,

what bou better come clean. If

is true, we'll make

even be

you're se drained you won't able to get out of bed"