

The Return of my First Love

Chapter 4

For the first time in a long while, I slept soundly.

The plane touched down at 7 AM in Sydney,

Jason was already waiting at the arrival gate.

Even after all these years, he looked the same—tall, sharp features, ridiculously handsome.

If anything, the years had only made **him** more attractive, adding a quiet confidence that made him even harder to ignore.

He stood out in the crowd.

I spotted **him** instantly,

Sneaking up behind **him**, I tapped his shoulder.

He turned, and the moment his eyes met **mine**, his whole face lit up.

Then, without **warning**, he pulled me into a tight embrace.

We stood there for a long **time**, neither of us willing to let go.

When he finally pulled back, Jason's smile faded, his eyes scanning my face.

His nose turned red.

Then, voice thick with emotion, he whispered, "**Emily**. You've lost weight."

He gently pinched my cheek, eyes **full** of concern.

"Come **on**, let's go. I called a bunch of our college friends."

"They're all waiting at **my** place."

I powered my phone back on to let my parents know I was safe.

The family chat had over ninety-nine unread messages.

Lucas's texts were flooding in so fast **my** screen lagged.

I didn't bother reading them.

Nothing they said mattered anymore.

I'd made up my mind.

I swiped left on the group chat and deleted it.

Then I opened Lucas's messages—
not because I cared, but because I needed to see if he'd signed the
divorce papers.

I scrolled up to his first text:

Emily, you think I'll just let you go?

Dream on.

He'd shredded the divorce papers into tiny pieces and even sent me a picture—
shreds of paper scattered

across the floor.

The rest of the chat was filled with voice messages.

"Emily, we agreed to this marriage for our parents' sake."

"We've been playing our roles for five years. You think you can just quit now?"

"Emily, this is low—even for you."

"You leave, and I have to deal with this mess alone?"

"You can't avoid me forever. I'll be at your parents' house every day."

"You have to come home eventually."

His voice got more and more unhinged.

I didn't even bother listening to the rest.

I exited the chat.

Then his name popped up on my screen.

Lucas was calling.

I hesitated for one second.

Then hit decline.

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But he kept calling. Over and over. Like a madman.

I had no other choice. I yanked out the SIM card from my phone, tossed it into a random trash can, and walked away without looking back.

That night with Jason was a blast.

We drank, we laughed, and we let loose like we hadn't in years.

Our friends instinctively knew when to leave, slipping out before midnight, leaving just the two of us.

Fueled by wine and old memories, we poured our hearts out.

Bottle after bottle, I drank like I was making up for lost time.

For three years, I hadn't allowed myself to indulge—not a single drop, all because of that damn baby plan.

But now? Now I was free.

I leaned against Jason's shoulder, drinking until everything blurred into darkness.

The next morning, I woke up with a pounding headache and a heavy heart.

I flipped open my laptop.

Three years of trying to get pregnant had wrecked more than just my body—it had cost me my career.

Lucas had always brushed it off.

"Babe, our family is loaded. Just enjoy being a rich wife."

"Why stress yourself out with work?"

“You’ve got a good life. Why make it hard on yourself?”

At first, I’d fought to keep my independence, determined not to let marriage consume me

But the pressure kept building.

Everyone whispering, judging, pushing.

In the end, I gave in.

I quit my job and devoted myself to “starting a family.”

And for what?

ambitions.

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To be lied to? Drugged? Humiliated?

I let out a bitter laugh.

The Sinclair family had groomed me to be the perfect Harrison wife, and Lucas had been busy screwing around behind my back.

Pathetic.

Shaking off the bitterness, I focused on updating my résumé. I sent out applications to every major job

site, determined to rebuild what I’d lost.

That’s when I saw it.

Lucas had posted a public message—on a freaking news site.

In flawless English, it read:

“My wife arrived in Sydney on July 6th, but I can’t find her.

If anyone has information, I’m offering a \$1 million reward.”

I barely had time to process that insanity before my phone rang.

It was my mom.

I hesitated. Then, stupidly, I picked up.

The second she saw my face, she burst into tears.

“Emily, how long are you planning to keep this up?”

“Did you really think we wouldn’t be able to track you?”

“As long as you have any connection to me and your father, we can report you missing.”

“The police can and will find you.”

“Surveillance cameras are everywhere. You won’t get far.”

“And now Lucas is already on his way.”

Her words sent a bolt of rage through me.

I had spent years trying to communicate with them.

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Pleading, compromising, trying to be heard.

And what had it ever gotten me?

Nothing.