My Great Escape Led Me to You

Chapter 4

Emily Blair snapped back to her senses. "I already told you I'm not going."

Emma George shot her a furious glare. "Why are you being so stubborn? Do you realize what a chance this is?"-

Emily clenched her fists, refusing to back down. "A chance for what, exactly?"

Emma's voice grew sharper. "A chance to get Andrew Lane's attention, of course. Isn't that what you want?"

Maybe it was something left over from her past life, but just hearing Andrew Lane's name sent a jolt through Emily's chest.

Her eyes prickled with tears. “I absolutely do not—”

Knock, knock, knock-

The sudden rapping at the door cut her off mid-sentence.

Emily didn't have time to hide the hurt in her eyes before she looked up and met Andrew Lane's cold, impassive stare from the hallway.

The moment their eyes met, she was struck by a vivid memory-this was exactly how he used to look at her: as if she were something worthless, as if she barely existed at all.

For a split second, her mind tumbled back to that suffocating, miserable previous life.

She took a few steps back, tearing her gaze away, but even without looking, she could feel Andrew Lane's piercing presence fixed on her.

He must have overheard her conversation with Emma.

Andrew always despised people who schemed, and Emma's intentions couldn't be more obvious.

There was no way he'd just pretend not to hear.

Emma froze, her face a mess of panic. "Mr. Lane, I didn't mean—"

“That's enough. I'm not interested in any of this disgusting drama,” Andrew said, his voice laced with contempt, eyes narrowed in distaste as he turned away.

Clearly wanting nothing more to do with them, he tossed a final sentence over his shoulder. "Grandfather says dinner's ready."

Once Andrew left, the room fell into a heavy silence.

Emily steadied herself, voice barely above a whisper. “Mom, is this really what you want?"

Emma shut the door, jaw tight with frustration. “All the more reason not to give up now."

"I don't care how you feel. Don't even think about packing your bags."

There was no reasoning with her mother's stubbornness, so Emily gave up and walked downstairs.

Emma trailed behind, sulking.

At the dining table, Kevin Lane and Andrew Lane sat across from each other, a few empty seats between them.

Emily paused behind Andrew's chair.

She used to always sit at his side, fussing over him, offering to serve him food. He'd just push her offerings aside, never even glancing her way.

Looking back, it seemed impossibly foolish.

Now, keeping her composure, Emily crossed the room and pulled out the chair beside Kevin Lane, sitting down with quiet confidence.

Her smooth, deliberate move drew surprised looks from Kevin and the house staff alike.

Even Andrew, who usually acted as if she were invisible, stopped mid-bite to glance at her, his gaze cool and unreadable.

Normally, no matter who was visiting, Emily would squeeze in beside Andrew, chattering away, oblivious to how much she annoyed him.

But today was different. For the first time, she sat far from him.

Emma hurried over, grabbing her daughter's wrist. "What are you doing? Go sit next to Mr. Lane-quickly!"

Emily slipped free of her mother's grasp and looked at Kevin. “Grandpa, is it alright if I sit here?"

Kevin's eyes, usually clouded, brightened with interest. “Of course you can. But weren't you always glued to Andrew before? Did you two have a falling out?"

"No," Emily murmured, lowering her head.

Andrew heard her reply and let out a quiet, derisive snort.

Emily's words faltered.

Kevin's eyes flicked between her and Andrew, a knowing smile tugging at his lips. "Alright, you're already seated. Let's eat."

Emma had no choice but to sit down beside Emily, still quietly fuming.