

A Love Forgotten Chapter 4

I turned to head upstairs. Elijah looked so humble that it was a sight for sore eyes.

Just then, the woman asked gently, “How are your injuries, Ms. York?”

I turned around, saying reluctantly, “Much better.”

Elijah stopped her from asking more. “She’s fine. She just got a little banged up here and there.”

I sneered. “You didn’t bother visiting me when I was in the hospital, Elijah. How would you know that I’m fine?”

His expression darkened. “Stop this nonsense, Ariana.”

“Nonsense?” I laughed. “I’m just stating a fact. How is that nonsense? Or do you think everything I say is nonsense?”

My disgust for him peaked at this point. Though I didn’t remember anything about the past seven years, I was sure Elijah’s neglect of me and his claims that I was only throwing tantrums had angered me countless times. It’d be a miracle if I could remain sane and calm after all that.

The woman suddenly curtsied in my direction. I frowned. “What are you doing?”

She lowered her head, sounding aggrieved as she said, “I came to apologize to you, Ms. York. I know you must’ve gotten the wrong idea after seeing my WhatsApp conversation with Elijah.”

She looked up, her eyes glistening with tears. She looked pitiful.

I was about to mock her when someone suddenly charged into the house and shoved me hard. “You’re a nasty bitch, Ariana! You were the one who threatened suicide! What does that have to do with Josie? Why did you force her to apologize to you?”

I fell backward from the shove, and an intense pain spread through me, starting from my waist. My heel also hurt like hell.

Then, I heard myself cry, “She’s Jocelyn Cornell?”

I looked at her and appraised her seriously. She hurried over, looking like she wanted to help me up. I spotted the smugness that flashed in her eyes, though. I knew my eyes weren’t playing tricks on me.

She kept apologizing to me. “I’m so sorry, Ms. York. Are you hurt anywhere? Evan’s just a child—please don’t get mad at him.”

Evan?

I turned to look at the young fellow who'd shoved me aside. I guessed he was Evan Linden, Elijah's younger brother. He and Elijah had similar looks, after all. He glared at me, looking like he wanted to rip out my throat to appease Jocelyn.

I grabbed the banister and slowly pulled myself to my feet. Evan stood protectively before Jocelyn, looking like he would fight me to the death if I were to do anything to her.

Instead of saying or doing anything, I slowly made my way upstairs. For a second, the trio downstairs didn't know how to react to that.

Elijah was probably waiting for me to fly into a rage or kick up a fuss, and Jocelyn was probably waiting for me to scream and shout at her so she could pretend to explain.

Meanwhile, Evan was surprised. He was probably waiting for me to yell at him like a shrew and call him an ingrate.

They waited for a storm that never came.

I headed upstairs and slammed the door shut.

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I'd forgotten about Elijah, but I still remembered Evan. He was my cousin Jason Shaw's classmate. I remembered that before I turned 18, Evan affectionately called me "Ari", as Jason did.

At the time, he'd been young and poor, so he'd been sent to an upscale nursing home owned by the York family. One summer, I'd gone there to spend time with my grandmother, Liza Johnson, and had happened to see him alone in the garden.

"Oh, my. Are you alone here?"

I remembered speaking to him with plenty of snacks and goodies. Evan had initially been wary of me, but he'd joined Jason and me for some fun times after learning I was Jason's cousin.

That had been a happy summer, and it had passed in the blink of an eye. I'd always thought Evan considered me his sister, but that wary look on his face earlier was so unfamiliar.

He hadn't been too rough when shoving me earlier, but it still hurt like hell. He wasn't just pushing me—he was pushing the Ari in his memories away.

I noticed a weird sensation on my face and touched it—it was wet with tears. I slowly wiped them dry.

Damn it. Elijah hadn't made me cry, yet Evan had.

I knew I couldn't stay in this place anymore. After drying my tears, I started packing my things.

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Downstairs, in the living room where Ariana couldn't see, Jocelyn looked at Elijah guiltily. "Did I come at the wrong time, Elijah? Ms. York looked furious earlier. Maybe you should go talk to her."

Elijah snarled, "Ignore her—that's just what she's like. She'll be fine after some time."

A trace of dislike flashed in his eyes. Evan, who'd been quiet before, suddenly said, "You shouldn't come here alone anymore, Josie. Ariana is a..."

He wanted to say how I was a freak who would hurt Jocelyn, but he suddenly recalled how I had looked at him before heading upstairs. I looked like I was filled with disappointment and sorrow.

He shook his head irritably, trying to get rid of his odd feelings. Why did he feel like I wasn't the same as in the past anymore?

He'd only wanted to keep me from hurting Jocelyn—it wasn't like he'd pushed me on purpose and couldn't understand why I had given him such a look. He hadn't done anything wrong!

After brainwashing himself, he blurted, "You should send Josie home, Eli. I'll stay here and watch that freak for you."

Jocelyn looked even more guilty. "I'm sorry you have to go through this, Evan. To think she'll berate you despite you being so young... If you get the chance, please help me to apologize to Ms. York. We can't let this misunderstanding become worse."

Evan looked touched. "You did nothing wrong, Josie. That freak is the one who pushed all the blame on you! You have to protect yourself, but Eli and I will protect you, too."

Satisfaction flitted past Jocelyn's eyes. She rubbed Evan's head and said, "Alright, then. I'll get going."

She looked at Elijah and said gently, "Maybe you shouldn't send me back, Elijah. I'm fine getting back to the hotel myself. It's a little off the beaten path, but I'll be okay alone."

She glanced upstairs, looking worried. "You should really talk to Ms. York. If not for her using the York family's money to help you, your company wouldn't have made it through that crisis so easily. It's natural that she's a little haughty now. You should be more tolerant."

Elijah frowned. "She can't take credit for getting Linden Group past that crisis. If not for me and my staff working together, no amount of investments would've helped."

He paused as his hatred for me grew. “I don’t want to talk about that from now on. If Ariana thinks she can make me bow and scrape before her for life because of this, she’s wrong!”

He grabbed his car keys and wrapped an arm around Jocelyn’s shoulders. “Come on, I’ll send you back. It’s dangerous for women to be alone at night.”

Evan chimed in, “It’s getting late, Josie. Hurry up and head back.”