

SUMMER'S END by Olivia Miles

EXCERPT

Andrea sighed, deciding not to push the topic. Kim was upset with Andrea for not going with her yesterday and unwilling to communicate it, and Andrea had plenty of things she could say to Kim, but now was hardly the time. Her clothes felt stale from the long drive, and her skin felt dusty from the carriage ride. She needed a long, hot shower or a soak in the claw-foot tub in the bathroom at the top of the stairs. Maybe an evening walk.

Preferably somewhere she could get some cell reception. It might be a Saturday, and she might be on vacation, but that had never stopped her before.

“Well, I’m going to get settled. It’s been a long day.” And judging from the way things were going, it was going to be an even longer two weeks.

She picked up as much of her luggage as she could carry and began her ascent up the winding stairs, admiring the carved wood banister and the tall window that let the light flow in on the landing. She took in the high ceilings once she reached the second floor and walked to her old bedroom, letting her hand rest on the old brass knob—they didn’t make them like this anymore. Inside, her room was just as she remembered it. A wrought-iron bed flanked by two small tables. A window seat with a view of the lake. Someone—probably Kim, but possibly the caretaker—had already thought to crack the window, letting the evening breeze flow. It was so quiet, as if the outside world didn’t exist at all, and all that she had to focus on was the beauty of this house and everything surrounding it.

She supposed there was certainly a worse place to be trapped.