

Escaping My Step-Monster

Chapter 1

The world says I'm wrong, but I think I'm right. I'm Zenndy and my life has flipped upside down. Everybody says the change was for the better, but obviously they're all wrong. First my mom dies, and then out of nowhere, this tall, starry-eyed woman appears side to side by my dad and announces their engagement. I mean seriously, who does that? Oops, gotta stop writing. The groom just said "I do."

Ever since they started dating, he's a whole different guy. He got a tattoo on his belly that says "Lafanda." The reception was disgusting. The catering Lafanda wanted was this really weird French restaurant that serves small bite-sized entrees and escargot cake.

Chapter 2

I'm telling you, Jake, she's my worst nightmare. She criticizes everything I do. She asked me to mop the kitchen, and then she criticizes on how I handle the mop. "You do always have Aunt Clara," said Jake in a sly, little voice. "You're right, but she will never let me just abandon my dad and barge in on her home, would she?" "No, said Jake." "But then again, I am desperate. You know what? You're right. I am going to move in with Aunt Clara," I boomed. Lafanda was outrageously mean, so it made perfect sense.

"Bye, see you on Monday," I yelled as I started to walk home. "Bye," he yelled back. Step by step I walked into the monster's cave.

Chapter 3

As I walked through the door, Lafanda was singing along with the TV. Her favorite show is about hunky men who sing opera. She caught me looking at her as I scurried to my room and gave me a nasty smirk. I opened my door and then I remembered I had a book report due on Monday. I haven't even read the book. So all weekend instead of playing with my misfit friend, I was stuck in the house reading and writing. Almost done, I told myself. One more paragraph! Then I heard Lafanda's high-pitched yell. "Zenndy, get your butt in here!" It was Sunday afternoon, so I was exhausted. Without answer, I stalked into the kitchen. "What do you want," I grumbled. "Don't talk to your mother like that, Missy," my dad said walking into the kitchen. "She's not my mom," I shot at her with a glare. "Still, don't talk to her like that," he ordered. "So what do you want?" I murmured. "We're taking a trip to Aunt Meri's. "Nooooooo!" I cried and stormed off to my room. Aunt Meri had 32 cats, lived in Massachusetts, and every meal of the day she eats rice. But then I had an idea. I could switch planes and fly to Aunt Clara's in New Mexico. I quickly pulled out my laptop and looked up flight places and times. The flight from Georgia to Massachusetts was at 11:00 tomorrow. Tomorrow! If I wanted to make that plane switch I would have to pack fast.

Chapter 4

The flight to New Mexico was at 11:30. This was perfect. Now I just had to buy a plane ticket, pack, and call Aunt Clara.

This was harder than I thought. I dumped out my wallet, piggy bank, and sock drawer. I had stashed some money in some old socks for an emergency, and Lafanda was the biggest emergency in the world as I knew it. In total, I had \$388.63. I looked up how much it would cost for the ticket on American Airlines. It cost \$205.00. I had enough! I went to the attic and pulled out the biggest suitcase I could find. I had a simple way of packing. I pulled out all of my drawers and dumped them in the suitcase. Then I stripped my closet of shoes and clothes.

Chapter 5

Now I just had to call. I picked up my cell phone and dialed her number. Rjiing--Rjiing--Rjiing-- "Hello?" "Um, hi Aunt Clara, this is Zenndy." "Oh, hi Zenndy." "So you know how Lafanda moved in? Well, it is kind of torture. I'm going to ask you something that sounds crazy, but in my mind, it's not." "Ok." "Here we go. I--I want t-to move in with you." "What? Why?" "It is like I told you, torture." "I would love that, but what about your dad?" "Oh, he wouldn't mind. He has ignored me ever since Lafanda came along." "Now that doesn't seem like my baby brother. Does he know you're coming?" "Oh, of course," I lied. "Well, ok then." "See you tomorrow at 3," I chanted.

Chapter 6

It was the morning of the day my life was going to change. I hopped in the cab with my dad and Lafanda and drove to the airport. We went through the sensors and I was all clear. I was in line as my watch turned 11. We were boarding. I counted down in my head, 3, 2, 1, now! I dashed across the airport to my plane. It

took me a while because it was a big airport. It was 11:12. They would already be on board, so they couldn't come looking for me. I was safe. At 11:25, I pulled out my ticket and walked through the process. "Ma'am, since you're flying alone, how old are you?" "18," I lied. I was really 13, but I had to lie. I got on, sat down, and we were off.

Chapter 7

The plane ride was amazingly smooth. I got on, and got off. I got in the cab and it drove me to Red River, New Mexico. I walked to her house, knocked on the door, and waited. She opened I with a big smile on her face. "Zenndy! Hello!" Now I knew, I was home.