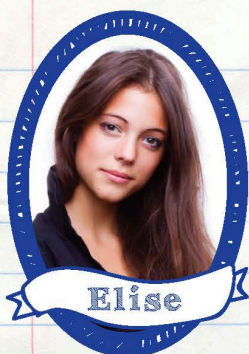




All About My Selfie

Book 4

Shannon Freeman



Elise



Carson



Mai



Emma



Monroe



Finn



Miss Arina



Chapter 1

The Swansons

Emma Swanson was always trying to find her place in Texsun City. It wasn't her fault that she'd been shunned by her peers. She wasn't sure who to blame. She just knew she didn't measure up somehow.

Her family had money and beachfront property. Emma had every luxury a girl could want. But it wasn't enough. She'd tried out for cheerleading twice. She didn't

make the cut either time. Then she gave up trying to be popular. She was over trying to fit in.

Instead, she tried to find things that interested her. Like art or horseback riding. She wasn't seeking anyone's approval. It didn't matter.

She heard the rumors about her grandfather's fortune. How other families had not been as successful. It was easy to blame him. Nobody complained when the rice industry was booming. Money grew on trees. Then taxes took their toll. Some found it hard to stay afloat. But not Emma's grandfather.

Thomas Swanson had been a smart man. He was able to spread his money around. In other words, he hid it. Then he bought out his partners. He passed his fortune down to his children.

Many resented his quick thinking. Some moved on to different businesses. Others just

went under. Emma didn't know how much of the story was true. She believed some of it had to be. She loved her grandfather. He was shrewd. He knew how to handle money. One thing was for sure, he loved his family. That was what mattered to Emma.

Unfortunately, his dealings with his former rivals made Texsun City a difficult place to live for Emma. And made Summit Middle School especially tough. Emma could ask him to donate money to build a better library. Or ask him to make some grand gesture that would create goodwill. Grease the path for her. But she didn't want to. She wanted to be accepted for who she was. If the other girls wanted to hate her because of family rivalry, then so be it. She knew one day she would figure it out on her own.

When Carson Roberts showed up at Summit Middle School, Emma found "her tribe." The girls instantly hit it off. Who

knew opening Summit to so many new faces would be Emma's salvation? It was just what she needed. And at the perfect time.

Carson was a breath of fresh air. They had a common enemy. And they found a kindred spirit in Mai Pham. Emma had known Mai for many years. But they had never really opened up to each other. Each was dealing with her own walls, built to protect them from the SMS mean-girl cliques.

"Emma! Come downstairs, darling," Miss Arina called.

Miss Arina was Emma's rock. She had been her nanny since infancy. She was the constant in her world. Her nanny got Emma through the hard times. Her parents had a lot on their plate. Her father ran Swanson Rice. Her mother worked tirelessly with Texsun City nonprofits.

Emma ran down the staircase to her

nanny. Miss Arina's solid frame was waiting in the foyer, wearing a starched white apron over her clothes.

"Your father just arrived in town," she said in her heavy Russian accent. "Your parents are taking you out for dinner tonight. You need to get ready."

"Mommy and Daddy?"

"Yes, dear. Now go get pretty, please. Put on something that makes those green eyes pop."

Miss Arina hugged Emma tightly. Then she retreated into the kitchen.

Emma returned to her room. She looked through her closet, debating what to wear. She already knew where they were going to eat. Whenever her parents called for dinner out, they sat down at Sartain's.

Where else did people from Texsun City go when they all got together? Sartain's

wasn't fancy, but it was good. They had the best barbequed crabs in the area. You could eat as much as your stomach could handle. Plus, Sartain's was mellow. They would be able to talk. Catch up on their lives.

Emma decided to go casual. She slipped on her green cashmere sweater, skinny jeans, and brown Uggs. She was ready for some barbequed crabs.

When the limousine arrived in the circular driveway, Miss Arina called for her. Emma ran to meet her parents, who were waiting patiently for their only child. Her father hugged her tightly. Her mother watched her with loving eyes.

"How's my girl?" she asked when Emma was allowed to come up for air.

"I'm fine, Mom. Are you here for a while this time?"

"I am, darling. Thank God."

They talked until they pulled up at

Sartain's. They were seated immediately. Then they ordered. The family continued catching up while they ate. Their fingers tingled from all of the wonderful, finger-licking spices.

"It's good to be back in Texas," her father announced.

"Yes it is," Mrs. Swanson agreed. "So how is Mai doing with her singing?" she asked Emma.

"She's fine. We have a few shows coming up soon. And I wanted to ask a favor of you both."

"Anything, dear," her father replied.

"Well, I wanted to see if it would be okay for Mai to perform at the Rice Festival this year."

"That's an excellent idea," her mother said approvingly.

"We have some big names coming into town for that," her father said. "But I'm sure we can add her to the roster. We'll find a place."

“Oh, thanks, Dad. She is going to be thrilled. I can’t wait to tell her.”

They continued eating until they couldn’t possibly eat another crab. They sat stuffed in their chairs, vowing that they needed a month to recover before they could return to their favorite family restaurant.



Emma Swanson hasn't won any popularity contests at Summit Middle School. Not that she hasn't tried. The rejection hurts. But her friendships with Mai and Carson give her confidence. She's happy to help Mai with her budding music career, until she posts a popular selfie. Then it becomes all about Emma.