

# Read Novel Married To A Cruel Billionaire Chapter 1

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### The Proposal

#### Ember's POV~

They say storms are only temporary. But the lives they cross never remain the same. You either perish, or grow so inured even the mighty storm gets enamoured of you.

I blew out a long sigh and took a turn to park my dad's car in our front yard. Another day of job hunting went in vain. My previous workplace was shut down due to bankruptcy, and the new places didn't want an employee with an experience of less than a year. Now if they wouldn't let me have the opportunity how was I supposed to get experience?

My parents ran a bakery shop. After my dad had an accident while working in the King's factory as a mechanical engineer, he couldn't work anymore, and they started this small business, but it wasn't enough. So I needed a job to support them.

My feet slammed on the brakes as a black limo, parked in our driveway, caught my eye. My brows furrowed, and I racked my brain for any possible relative who rode a limo, but nah, none did. Curiosity gnawed at my tummy, and I parked the car by the side of the road, ignoring the protests of our aged neighbor. Speeding inside the house, I tip-toed near the drawing room and peeked from behind the door frame.

Oh, blast manners! The girl needs to know!

A man in a white suit sat in the head sofa, the gray roots of his hair and beard beginning to peek. "Let's cut to the chase, shall we, Joseph?" he said, authority lacing his tone.

"Err... sure, Mr. King, sir," dad replied, sitting across from him accompanied by mom.

Mr. King? As in Mr. Bryan William King? The billionaire businessman and dad's former boss? But what was he doing here?

"Splendid! I want your daughter as my daughter-in-law."

The gaps in my parents' mouths could fit a whale. As for mine, well, that whale with its baby and baby's dad, and many more babies could fit, and they wouldn't even have to squirm.

I know, I know I exaggerated, but that's how it actually felt.

The Kings wanted me as their daughter-in-law for their son Hunter William King, the most eligible, most handsome bachelor of New York? But why me when there were so many prettier women on earth dying to be his? Heck, he could even marry a princess.

Mr. King gave a laugh at seeing their expressions. "Now, now, no need to give me that look, Joseph. I just want a fair, decent girl to be our daughter-in-law, not one of those-," his face contorted into a grimace, "-gold-diggers my son dates."

"B-but sir... Y-your son... He doesn't really have a good reput- oomph!" A nudge from mom stopped dad from completing the sentence.

"Oh, come on, Josephine! All this time we'd been acquaintances, wouldn't you keep my wish?" His lips stretched into a sweet smile, but his eyes glinted with tacit demand.

For the next few minutes, Mr. King kept pestering dad. It seemed he made up his mind and wouldn't take 'no' for an answer.

My stretched brows creased to a frown. The reason he told about choosing me didn't seem harmful, however, the uneasiness in the pit of my stomach didn't talk the same. Marriage was a big step of someone's life, and I needed to think.

Inhaling deep, I sauntered inside. "I appreciate your proposal, Mr. King, but I need time."

All heads turned towards me. With a sweet smile on his face, Mr. King got up, and so did my parents with concerned faces.

"You have a beautiful daughter, Joseph and intelligent too," he stated striding towards me, power radiating off of him. "I hope you'll make the right decision, darling."

Then he was gone.

To be married to Hunter King would be like a dream come true for most girls including me, but getting married like this was never my plan. What about my responsibilities? I couldn't just leave my parents to be on their own when they needed me the most. I had always wanted to build my own identity, have a decent job, a bigger home and most definitely, a bigger shop where my mom could bake as much as she wanted, and dad could mess the batters up trying to help without any worry.

I looked at my parents; a twain of hesitant frowns latched on their foreheads.

What if I said no?

In the next few days, I got my answer.

"Be safe, Dad!" I stood on our porch and waved dad off. We were out of groceries, and so, dad decided to go shopping. He waved at me and started walking down the street.

Dad didn't want to bother his recently-polished baby car since the shop wasn't far from home.

I smiled at our neighbor's dog playing in their yard. Turning on my heels, I took a step to head inside but stopped as alarmed barks reached my ears. Whirling around, my eyes landed on the bulky figure in all black on the street. The man glared at the animal, and cowering, it ran away. He directed his gaze ahead and resumed walking while pulling something out of his jacket. The bright glint the object reflected hit my eyes causing them to close and open back two times wider. I followed the direction of his gaze, and my heart almost jumped out of my chest.

"Dad..."

Without any delay, I dashed towards my father.

"Ember! Where're you going?" dad asked upon seeing me.

"I just remembered I-uh... I need to buy some things as well," I replied, breathing hard. Gazing behind I found no trace of the man anymore and let out a sigh of relief.

Phew! Always overthinking, aren't you?

After buying all the necessary stuff, we got back home with dad cracking jokes and me laughing, not because they were funny, but because they were just so terrible one had to laugh. Our laughing came to a cease as we entered the house to see mom with the phone in her hand, a crease formed in her forehead.

"What's the matter, Sofia? Who was it?" dad inquired, leaving the shopping bags on the floor and walking to mom.

"I just... got an email from the IRS. They said... we have three years of bills due," hesitation laced mom's voice.

"What? We already paid it all!"

My heart, that had calmed down, accelerated again. What was going on? First the strange man and now IRS?

"Maybe... someone pranked?" I offered, hoping to lighten the tension.

"Could be." Dad nodded. "Fucking jobless morons got nothing better to do."

"Joseph! No cursing in the house."

"Yeah, yeah. Sorry." Dad placed a quick peck on mom's cheek as all the creases vanished from her face, and a blush appeared.

I chuckled at them. Their relationship was something I always dreamed to have when I got married. At the mention of the word, my mind wandered to Hunter; I doubted I would happen to have something similar with him considering his reputation.

Shooing the thoughts away, I picked up the groceries and headed to the kitchen. Maybe someone was indeed pranking.

I only had to be proven wrong.

A couple of days later, I sat in the public library going through job circulars and filling in applications. A sudden discomfort in the stomach stirred me in my seat. Pulling out the emergency granola bar, I looked around at the few other people present, all minding their own businesses. Shrugging, I munched on the bar, sighing in content.

Happy tummy, happy mind.

My happy mind furrowed as the bench beneath dipped, and I inclined my head to the side. A tremor ran down my spine as I observed the bulky man in black from the other day sitting right before me. I shot to my feet, ready to run.

“Sit,” he ordered.

“Wh-What do you want?”

He slid a black envelope across the table and got up. “Mr. King says hello.”

At the mention of the name, my eyes widened, and I picked the envelope up sliding the paper out. Unfolding it, I scanned my eyes over the letter, and my stomach churned.

This could make me lose jobs before I even got one.

A negative character reference letter.

“What the hell! He can’t do that.” I looked up to meet an empty bench before me.

I flopped back down, my mind a swirl of questions and confusions. Why?

The same things kept happening the following days. I started seeing the strange man more and more following my parents, the emails for bills kept ringing, even my job applications kept being refused. I couldn’t bear seeing the line of worry getting permanent on my parents’ foreheads, I couldn’t sleep at night being in constant fear that the dangerous looking guy would end up doing something horrible to them.

So, at last, I made a decision.