

# Captive of My Mafia Crush - Chapter 1 Chapter 1

## Chapter 1

"I don't like the idea of my girl stripping, Iris," my boyfriend Steven says, glaring at me with his arms crossed. "It's disgusting and impure. And I need my girl to be pure."

Steven is my college sweetheart – we've been dating for nine months, even though he's graduated. He's very disciplined and reserved, the son of a pastor, though he's very good to me. He's always stressed that we'll wait until the night of our wedding to be intimate, which makes me feel so respected and safe.

On top of that, he's made millions of dollars trading cryptocurrencies. As someone who grew up with nothing, that financial security makes me feel so protected. He's the most generous and intelligent guy I'd ever met and I'm so lucky to be with him.

"Steven," I reply, "I swear to god I would never do anything to betray you at the club – I just dance." I kiss his cheek. "But I'm running late, and we need to pay rent. Everything will be fine."

Lately Steven's tied up his money in some crypto investments. To ensure the best returns, he's invested everything he has and is staying with me for the moment. He's been working so hard for the last month, but it's taking a toll on him. He rarely takes phone calls, doesn't really leave our place, and he drinks more alcohol than he used to to calm his nerves as he stares at his computer almost all day long.

So, I took up a couple shifts at the strip club to cover us in the meantime. I am a university student in hotel management, but dancing is in my nature - at first it was a weight loss goal as a teenager, then it was a way to hold on to thoughts of my mom, and then it became part of who I am.

Unfortunately, there's no money in classical ballet, my favorite. So, even though it wasn't what Steven wanted, I took a part-time gig at a strip club and I give Steven my salary to help with his business.

Being an exotic dancer wasn't my first choice either, but if I can make money from idiots who want to shove their hard-earned dollars into my g-string? I don't see any shame in that.

Eventually I convinced Steven that this is true – my dancing is just an investment in his company. I am glad he's letting me help – I just want to do whatever I can to get our life started.

I arrive at the club at 8:00 on the dot, smiling at Pete, my manager, who gives me a nod. The music pounds through the low-lit club and I note that it's busier than usual tonight.

Some of the other dancers wave to me and I wave back, but I make a beeline right for Anthony, who's already got a big smile on his face just for me.

"Hey cutie," he says, pulling me close as I slip behind the bar and wrap my arms around his waist.

"Hey gorgeous," I say, laughing up at him. Anthony – he is gorgeous, but alas, my heart belongs to Steven. And even if it didn't, Anthony is as gay as a purple handbag. Still, he's my best friend here, and I love when his bartending shift overlaps with my dancing.

"What's going on tonight?" I ask as he slings an arm around my shoulders. There's a busy, exciting vibe and the dancers all have on their flashiest outfits, their best perfume.

"Nothing escapes you, does it, baby?" Anthony replies, I grin at the compliment. "Rumor has it big shots are coming in – mob guys, the real deal. Some are saying that the Mafia King is going to make an appearance."

"Whoa," I say, my eyes going wide. "Seriously? Isn't he...dangerous?"

"Only if you go against him," Anthony says with a shrug.

"I heard he took out his own brother," I whisper, leaning close to Anthony and looking around anxiously, like he's already here. "That he's completely ruthless –"

Anthony just laughs, shaking his head. "Iris, just don't do anything to piss him off. For us? The presence of the Mafia King in our club just means money," he says, grinning. "So, I'll finally be able to afford that Botox I've been dreaming about, and you can hand your asshole boyfriend an even bigger check than you usually do!"

"Shut up," I say, scowling and smacking my friend half-heartedly on the chest. Anthony, like Emi, isn't Steven's biggest fan. "I won't get any of the money anyway," I sigh. "Pete never puts me in the VIP room on nights like this."

"Because you," Anthony says, teasing me, "only like to shake your little booty – you're never willing to let anyone touch it –"

"Ew!" I wrinkle my nose at Anthony even as I push away, laughing and hoisting my bag higher on my shoulders. "I'm not letting some old mafia lech touch me for a couple of extra bucks –"

"For how much these guys are going to drop?" Anthony says, raising an eyebrow at me. "Hell, I'll let them touch me."

Laughing again, I wave over my shoulder and head for the dressing room. Anthony calls after me, wishing me luck. I blow him a kiss as I move through the curtain.

It's always better working here on nights like this, when everyone's in a good mood, even if I am anxious about the prospect of the Mafia King being here.

I mean, he's been all over the news, and where he goes? Violence seems, inevitably, to follow.

The good mood in the room completely changes all of a sudden when Lily – our top dancer – gives a little moan and collapses to the floor. Our manager Pete is through the curtain a minute later with some of our bouncers, who pick Lily up and carry her to the back.

Pete's pissed though. He spins, looking around the room with his arms crossed

"You!" he says suddenly, pointing at me. My eyes go wide. "Irene! Come here!"

"Iris," I correct, and then I bite my lip with anxiety when Pete rolls his eyes like it doesn't matter and beckons me closer.

"You're going into VIP for Lily tonight," he snaps. His eyes flick over me. "And I don't want to hear any of your bullshit about just being a dancer, all right? "

He spins me around, shoving me towards the door. "Now get out there and remember what I said - the only answer you have for these mafia bosses is yes."

My legs shake as I walk towards the curtain.

Next Chapter