

A new beginning

Ariana's pov.

We sat at the dining table, and awkward silence was stretched around us. The dinner was served. One by one, servants kept coming and placing the dishes on the dining table. They almost served everything on my plate. I stared at my plate for a long minute before deciding from where I should start and choosing soup to start tonight's dinner.

I picked up a scoop and took a mouthful of soup. It was really delicious and I was really very hungry.

I kept sitting, bowing my head, quietly swallowing my vegetable soup. Because of what happened just a while back, I could not lift my head and look into Vincent's eyes. He sat across from me and I was too embarrassed to talk to him. I could feel the uneasiness and tension growing between us because Vincent was also avoiding eye contact. He was busy sophistically feasting on his royal dinner. I meant the variety of food that had been served on this huge dining table was sufficient to feed a whole town.

Now the silence had become overbearing and only the sound of the clicking of steel on porcelain was echoed throughout the hall.

I heard Vincent clearing his throat. I discreetly peered up "Ariana" he called my name delicately, making me look up at him, and I froze momentarily. Those blue eyes were enchanting, pulling me into them. I got lost as I always did whenever I looked into them. He seemed to stare into my eyes before he averted his eyes, and I came out of my trance.

"What are your plans for tomorrow?" He asked softly.

"Oh, I am sorry, I forgot to inform you, sir," I said, putting down my spoon, and Vincent glared at me. He looked pissed.

"It's Vincent to you, Ariana," he scowled.

"I mean Vi... Vin... Vincent..." with great difficulty, I finally took his name and released a breath.

Though it really sounded so nice, as it was rolling softly on my tongue. I wanted to repeat calling him by his name again and again, like incantation.

Ariana, get a grip, girl, otherwise, you will lose your face. Control your crazy self, Ariana. My inner self scolded me.

His expression softened, and his eyes gleamed with satisfaction.

"Umm.. I got a new job recently and tomorrow is my first day at the new company," I murmured slowly, and I doubted he had even heard me. But he nodded.

"I will drop you on my way to the office. Be ready on time," he instructed lazily.

I blinked at him. So, he heard me. That was strange because I was sitting at quite some distance.

I nodded subtly. Again that uneasy silence spread. I continued eating silently.

After dinner, I went to the room. I was in that room again and the memory of the incident that happened in the bathroom occupied my thoughts. I couldn't forget those red eyes staring at me. I could still see them whenever I closed my eyes. They were so scary.

I felt something was really weird around me in this room. I got some eerie vibes coming from my surroundings. I threw my terrified glance around to inspect the room once again. I still felt someone watching me from a hidden corner. My eyes wandered around frantically, trying desperately to find out that it was my illusion and nothing was wrong with this room.

I never felt insecure living alone in my small house, and this mansion was full of people, yet I felt a kind of fear clawing my heart.

I threw myself on the bed and closed my eyes tightly as I pulled the sheets to my head, and slept inside the sheet, leaving the lights on.

The next morning, I got up early to prepare for the first day in my office. I actually didn't sleep properly last night. I was afraid I would look like a shit.

My luggage was not with me. What would I wear for the first day of my new job? I heard a knock on the door and a servant came to tell me that I could use the wardrobe as all the dresses were mine.

Like seriously?!

Mine?!

I could use any of those expensive dresses?!

I squealed with excitement as soon as the servant left after informing me.

I ran towards the wardrobe, opened it and stood there tapping on my chin. It was so difficult to choose amongst so many dresses. I picked up a white blouse with a black pencil skirt for my first day. It was very expensive and brand new as the price tag was still intact, and it gave me a formal look that would look good for the first day in my office.

I paired this attire with a pair of black heels that I also found in the wardrobe. I quickly gathered up my hair and tied it to a neat and smooth pony. I applied light makeup, some mascara, and pink lipgloss. Giving myself once over, I giggled, feeling happy as I looked so good and different in those clothes. My whole life I lived in poverty, buying used clothes at the cheapest prices. Hell! Clothes were never on the list of my necessities. So, I never had the luxury of wearing such expensive clothes until now.

The excitement mixed with emotions overwhelmed my senses when I thought about the new job. This job paid me insanely well. I didn't think I was the deserving candidate. But I prayed to stay in this job for a long time, unlike my other jobs.

When I went down the hall, Vincent was already waiting for me. He looked up at me as I descended the stairs and his eyes trailed over my body, lingering over my curves longer than usual. I shivered involuntarily under his icy cold gaze. I stood before him dreading with my fingers nervously. He couldn't say anything but his face told me he appreciated the sight.

He held his hand toward me. I shyly placed mine in his hand. His long callous fingers wrapped around my palm and he ushered me towards the parking lot. He helped me to settle inside the car. My heart uttered at his sweet gesture. Rounding the car, he sat beside me.

His proximity made me nervous. Sitting beside him in the small space inside the car, my heart was pounding so hard as if it wanted to jump out of the cardiac chamber. His smell aroused me and I couldn't do anything about it. I focused on my breathing to calm my poor heart down. I scratched my nails on the leather seat to get some relief as I suppressed a groan that threatened to pass through my lips.

But I quietly sat there, clenching the fabric of my skirt in my hand in an effort to stop shivering too much. The fabric of his pants touched my thighs and my body shuddered in response.

Hell! I was in trouble. He noticed as he frowned, looking at me.

"Are you cold?" Vincent asked in his cold and sensual voice. "Driver, turn the air conditioning off." He instructed the driver gruffly without waiting for my answer.

"No! Umm... I am... okay," I managed to reply despite it being too hard to speak when my head was clogged with his bewitching, so manly smell, the rain and forest.

"No, you are not okay. You're shaking like hell," he growled, frowning, and began to take off his suit jacket. I winced at his tone. Was he angry? His breathing seemed to race, match mine.

"Here, put this on," he held his suit jacket in front of me, and sounded as breathless as I was.

"No, I am perfectly fine," I refused. How could I take his expensive jacket? I was scared of even touching it and, moreover, this wouldn't help me.

"Take this, Ariana," he insisted with a bored expression as he thrust his coat toward me.

I hesitantly took his jacket this time and mumbled a thank you.

And having his jacket around me doubled my problem as now I felt surrounded more by his fragrance. I felt like I would pass out any second.

I thanked God thousands of times when the car finally parked outside my office building. I immediately removed Vincent's jacket and, without glancing back at him, I placed it on the seat beside me. Without delaying for a moment, I jerked open the car door and slid out of the car.

I headed directly towards the office. After submitting my documents and signing some official papers, I finally got my offer letter. I was informed that I had to report directly to the company chairman.

That was strangely weird and made my gut churn with more nervousness. My work was only as an assistant manager, and it was not very important to report directly to the boss. But all I could do was not to argue with the HR team. I damn cared about the rules and reasons as long as I had this job. Finally, I was introduced to my team head.

My team head explained to me my work, and in an hour, I started working, sitting at my desk. I got my desk and computer. I touched the stuff on my desk. Everything seemed to be new and unused.

"Hi! Ariana, right?" A beautiful brunette came to my cubicle.

I nodded, raising my head from the computer.

"I am Lena from the IT department and girl, it's lunchtime. So close your file and stop working. You need to eat something before you kill yourself and work tirelessly," she said smilingly.

I glanced at my watch. She was right. It was lunch time and I was too indulgent in work to realise the time.

"Yeah, just after completing this file," I replied, moving my fingers quickly on the keypad. But she held my hand and pulled me up to my feet.

"No, darling! The lunch break will be over in 30 minutes, and you won't get to eat anything after that. The rules are strict over here. I am telling you, leave the work. You can continue after eating something. Let's go," she said with enthusiasm as she dragged me with her.

She walked us to the cafeteria, where her friends were already waiting for her. They all glanced at me curiously.

"Guys, meet Ariana, the new girl in our office," Lena said with excitement.

"Ariana, she is Olivia," she gestured to a blonde girl.

"Hi, Ariana! Can I call you Ari?" Olivia asked.

"Yes, yes, of course! My friends actually call me Ari. Nice to meet you, Olivia,"

"Call me Liv," she beamed.

"She is Serena," Lena gestured to the girl with dark hair and green eyes.

"Hey, Ari! Welcome to C-corp," Serena cheered.

"And he is Sawyer," she gestured to the handsome man.

"Hey, pretty girl!" He showed me his brightest smile and took my hand to bring it to his lips, and lightly placed a kiss. I blushed instantly.

He chuckled, "you look younger for this job. How old are you exactly?" And his remark made me crimson red.

"Sawyer? Never ask a girl her age," Serena slapped Sawyer's shoulder.

"You must be brilliant and efficient if you are offered this job because it needs a highly qualified candidate with great experience," he said and shook his head, glancing at me keenly. "Never mind, you got this job, and congratulations, Ariana. Welcome to the office," he gestured with his arms outstretched.

"Th... thanks," I stammered.

I was not used to making friends. I felt nervous around people being extra friendly with me.

"Sawyer, you are making her nervous," Lena scolded him.

"My bad, lady. Please forgive me," he touched his chest and bowed slightly.

"N.. No problem," I managed to answer.

I was again nervous to hear that this post needed a highly qualified person. What if I could not work according to their expectations, and this job would also slip away? The thought alone was terrifying.

"Let's order something," Olivia suggested, and everyone walked to the billing counter.

I ordered my sandwich and coffee, and everyone else had their food. We gathered around a table.

"You know, everyone here is very friendly in our office. You are going to enjoy working here. But if you want to talk to someone, I am always there to help," Lena offered with her beautiful smile.

She was beautiful and nice. She looked like she was in her early twenties. She had a copper-toned complexion with a very slight hint of reddish caramel and a perfect figure. Her hazel eyes reflected her inner beauty too. Her brown shoulder-length hair was smooth and straight with reddish streaks. She was gorgeous.

Sawyer took a seat beside me.

"Hey! I am sorry if I said something to upset you," he said politely.

"No, no, that's fine," I answered.

"You sure?" he wiggled his eyebrows playfully.

"Yeah!" I giggled.

He smiled and nodded.

"So, Ari, how was your first day?" Serena asked.

"Oh, it was... nice. I made some new friends," I smiled, glancing at them all.

"Yeah?! We found a new friend too," she said and giggled.

"To whom you are reporting?" Olivia asked.

"Umm.. I am supposed to report to the chairman directly," I muttered.

"Whoa! Really, girl?! Are you from an influential family or someone very rich? First of all, you got this job, and now you are reporting to the chairman directly. Tell me you are someone appointed to spy on all of us," Sawyer said, laughing.

I didn't know why I was instructed to report to the chairman.

"Ah! No! I am none of these," I choked.

"Don't mind him, Ari. Sawyer is just kidding. We knew you got this job. You deserve it," Serena said, glaring at Sawyer.

"Oh girl, you know our new chairman is very handsome and charming. I just wish I could also report him directly. Ari, can you please do me a favour? Whenever you go to meet him, take me with you," Olivia winked and giggled.

"New chairman?" I was confused.

Because of the recent incidents that happened in my life, I couldn't keep up with the recent news updates. When I applied for a post in this company, I remembered that Mr. Smith was chairman.

"Yeah, you don't know about it? He bought our company only a week ago," Olivia chirped. Her eyes glinted whenever she mentioned our new chairman. That girl already had a crush on our boss.

"I guess I missed some news. So, who is the new chairman?" I asked, being oblivious.

His name might be on his signature in my office letter. I was very nervous when receiving my appointment letter that I missed the name of my company's chairman. They must be thinking about me, what kind of fool I was, as I didn't even know the name of the company's new chairman.

"It was everywhere in the news, too hard to miss it," Lena said,ipping her hair. Her eyes gleamed as she talked about the new chairman. "Anyway, our new chairman is Mr. Vincent Arnault. He has so many businesses all over the world. But suddenly he became interested in our company and bought it at a very high price. It was also in the news that he paid more than its worth just to buy it at any cost."

Lena caught me off guard with this information, and I almost dropped the coffee mug.

Vincent, our new Chairman?

This couldn't be true, right?!