

New Job

Ariana's pov

Jack took me to meet some people who were helping us to get a job on a ship. He didn't wait for one more second when I agreed. The interviewer guaranteed that I would get a secure job and that the payment would come on time into my bank account from where my family could withdraw. I closely observed their faces when Jack was talking to them. They looked like someone shy and suspicious. I gasped to notice. Sometimes their eyes turned scary. They didn't look trustworthy. Not at all. And placed deeply into their eyes as the eyes seemed to be... dead?! Oh, God! Did I imagine it, or was it true? No! No! It couldn't be true. How could someone dead talk and walk? Maybe I began to imagine more.

So, they said that they would help with accommodation and settling down. They would transport us, the girls, to a place where we would learn more about our job. They didn't make us sign an employment contract or anything on paper. Everything was verbal. Now I had become more suspicious. I looked at Jack, and he seemed to be calm and happy.

"Jack, are you sure we can trust them? Because they didn't give us anything on paper or didn't sign documentation. How can we believe their words? We don't know them so well," I asked Jack, as we needed to think about it again. But he seemed to be desperate to earn money anyhow.

"Stop it, Ariana. You are overthinking. Otherwise, I've seen people willing to pay to get such a prestigious job that pays well too. So we are lucky enough to have these people helping us get you this job that will pay you ten grand. Aren't you happy that now all of our problems will end? And when this year is over, we can nally settle down with enough money in our bank accounts. I can't wait to be rich. We will never have to worry about money," Jack scolded me. He seemed to be very happy about planning our future.

"Yes, and your mother will also get the proper treatment," I reminded him, just in case he forgot about his mother when planning a future.

"Yes, yes. You are right. My mum! My mother!" he smiled hesitantly. "Now she can survive. We will have enough money for her treatment, and this will be possible because of you, Ariana. You just came into my life as an angel and made me happy. I love you so much, darling, and I really thank that moment when I met you," he said in a heavy voice.

He was very emotional. I loved this about him. He was my everything. My life! My only hope! The only light warming my gloomy heart.

Jack had said he would make me the happiest girl in this world. He had promised me the moon and stars. I knew it was very lmy. But what could a girl dream more of? He loved me, and only this mattered to me. I could do anything for him and our love. I would sell my soul to the devil to get this smile on his face.

"I love you too, Jack. And one day we will be happy together," my eyes became wet as I thought about this.

It was the most challenging time of our lives, and we needed to keep ghting to survive the odd time. I had faith in God that one day this struggle would be over. My problems would be over, and I could also live a happy, normal life like an ordinary girl, as I had always dreamed. One day Jack and I would start a family and have many kids, not one or two. We would be married, and his mother would be happy, healthy, and alive to give us her blessings. I looked up and hid my tears, blinking them away. I quickly wiped my eyes to not cry in front of Jack. I knew he hated tears and weeping and lost control.

I was just ready to trade my soul to the devil to make my dream of having a happy family come true.

"Ok, now this girl has also been selected. You should bring her here tomorrow with her luggage. We will start in the afternoon. Be strictly on time," a dangerous-looking man informed us. His voice was terrifying, making my heart jump even more beneath my ribcage.

"Jack!" I clenched his shirt from behind. He looked over his shoulder at me and shot me an annoyed look that told me to keep quiet.

"Of course, sir. We will be there on time. Thank you so much for your help. I hope I will get the money on time," Jack said to that man.

"Yes, you will get your commission on time. Finn never makes false promises. You know that," that man shrugged Jack off and went to meet other girls waiting for their turn.

The following day, I came with my luggage stuffed carefully in a very old, thin due bag. Frankly, I didn't have many clothes to wear. I used to wear my old pyjama pants as I could still t into them for the last two years. I was very tiny and thin. That made me look very unattractive compared to the girls my age, as I was told thousands of times by people and realized that I didn't even look like a seventeen-year-old girl who would be eighteen in two months.

Jack came to pick me up earlier. We rode by bus to the seaside, where we were supposed to meet the other girls selected for the job on a ship. I was excited as well as scared inside. I was excited because I had never been on a ship. But I never went away from Seattle for as long as I remembered. This place was more than home to me. I knew every corner and street of it. I had been here all my life. So it really scared me to go to an unknown place. I was never informed where the ship would be going to depart. And being on a ship meant I would be surrounded by water, and I never knew how to swim. I hated that part during my interview. If I had told them the truth that I couldn't swim, they would have rejected me in the rst part of my interview, and I was desperate to get this job, not for myself but for Jack's mother.

I was lost in my scary thoughts when Jack touched my shoulder and made me jump a little. I looked outside the window and realized that we had arrived at our destination. We slowly stepped off of the bus and walked towards an old-looking shipyard. It seemed not to have been working for a long time as it was totally worn out, and it looked like a place to keep used goods and not working instruments and equipment. As I strolled ahead, the weird vibes I got from this place increased with each and every step.

I grabbed Jack's hand tightly, hoping he could sense my fear and just think once more about this decision. But he remained nonchalant.

"Jack, I still feel that something is shy about those people. Look at them. Their eyes are void of everything. No emotions. No feelings. And their size is inhumanely large. I haven't ever seen someone as big as them," I spat out my fear.

"You are overthinking, Ariana. Maybe they are from some other country. That's why they are different from us. You haven't been everywhere in this world. So how could you say it with such condescence?! You have insecurities because of your past. It is not good that you stand out against everyone you meet and nd they are not just looking like us," Jack refused to believe me and shrugged me off.

"You stay here. I will go and meet them," he ordered huly and walked away.

I meticulously searched for my surroundings. There would be 70 to 80 people in number. Or maybe a hundred. I saw some girls coming there sobbing and weeping. It was pretty strange. Why would they be crying if they were going to get paid well for a decent job and they would be doing it willingly? It might be possible the thought they were leaving their family made them sad, unlike me. After all, I didn't have any family to leave them alone. But I was also feeling emotional about leaving Jack, and the knowledge that I wouldn't be able to see him for a long time kept me on the verge of breaking into tears. I dabbed the corners of my eyes with my ngers as I sniffed to stop myself from sobbing.

"Ariana, everything is settled, and you can do your job comfortably and live on the ship as long as required. Listen, baby, just do whatever they say. We can't afford to lose this job. They already paid me in advance, and the rest will be paid when you get a permanent position in this job," he detailed as he came back after nishing all the formalities.

"Don't worry, Jack. I will do my best and won't disappoint you," I promised, trying to smile but failing miserably.

"That's like my good girl. I am leaving now. Take care of yourself," he said and leaned forward to kiss my cheek.

He never kissed me in public, and inside my heart, I was disappointed by his not claiming me in front of the world.

I sighed and touched his cheeks with love, looking at his face with all the love in me. My heart cried as he pulled away. I ashed him a dull smile before turning and walking toward where the other girls were standing. I still hoped in the corner of my heart that he would stop me at the last moment and say he loved me as much as I did and couldn't live without me. But nothing happened.

I turned to look at Jack. He had disappeared. Just like that, he was gone, leaving me alone. Again, I was disappointed that he was so much in a hurry to leave me. He didn't even bother to wait until I went. I coaxed my panicked heart by thinking maybe he had something urgent to attend to. And we were not some luxurious couple who always used to show their love and affection. It was an unspoken understanding between us. We were together because we loved each other. We didn't have to tell our partners about it hundreds of times daily.

A man came quickly and took my bag from my hand without even asking.

"You don't need this. We will give you clothes and all the stuff to use," he instructed sternly.

"Now, all the girls, move towards the room," he ordered, and we were lined up in a queue, slowly walking in the direction they guided us.

"Alpha Hunter has found out about it." I heard one of those men whispering to his partner. They are all the same in height and build. He continued, "I am afraid that we will all die if our king nds out about us."

I frowned, totally clueless about what they were talking about. But something was wrong, I knew from his terried voice. They were denitely doing something illegal. Otherwise, why would someone kill them if they were innocent and doing nothing terrible?

"So, it would be better if we hurry up and move all the girls to another place before they reach here," one of them muttered in a fear-lled voice.

Now my fear had come true and it was clear that they were not good men, and we were all trapped in a conspiracy. They lied, and now I doubted they would give us a job. They had something else on their minds. I trembled with the thoughts. My heart was warning me from the beginning, but I ignored all the signs. I needed to think about escaping quickly before it was too late. I looked at the girls who were all there but didn't know what was going to happen to them. I didn't even have any idea what they were going to do with us.