

Every Mafia's Favorite Girl – The Soul Known 3 |

Novel Drama

3: “Mister Bathrobe”

“The Hub” had earned its name long before Aren was born into either of her lives.

Perched atop one of the grandest Lombardi-owned hotels in Borgata, this meeting chamber served as the beating heart of the city’s underworld.

For generations, the ten ruling Houses had gathered there to negotiate territory, broker alliances, decide which fortunes would rise or collapse before the month’s end — and occasionally, betray each other.

Once, the Lombardi name engraved at the entrance had meant absolute authority.

Now, it felt more like a tombstone.

At the head of the long table sat Gian Lombardi.

His presence was still commanding, though time had begun to weigh on him. His shoulders remained broad, his posture straight, yet lines were etched into his face, and his hands trembled faintly when he thought no one was looking.

His gaze, however, was fixed not on his rivals, but on the empty space to his right.

His daughter’s place.

His heiress.

His greatest failure.

For years, Gian had watched Ariana sink deeper into self-destruction, numbing herself with narcotics while bleeding the family’s finances dry one reckless indulgence at a time.

Every scandal had chipped away at House Lombardi’s standing.

Every absence had humiliated him further.

Today, he expected her to deliver the final blow by not appearing at all.

Several seats away, Armando Ombra — the man whose voice now carried the most weight in the room — leaned forward slightly.

His fingers steepled lightly over the table, a calculated smile already playing at the corners of his mouth.

“Would your daughter show up on such an important day, Don Gian? Or has she found something more entertaining than her own inheritance?”

Gian didn’t even look at him.

“I have little hope on that front,” he replied, voice dry with exhaustion.

Armando hummed softly, sounding almost sympathetic.

“Perhaps that is for the best. It’d be unfortunate for an heiress to witness her family legacy ending before she has the chance to inherit it.”

Around the table, the remaining Dons said nothing, though many exchanged subtle glances.

Some of them looked satisfied while others merely resigned. But none of them missed the implication in Armando's words:

House Lombardi was finished.

Armando's quiet triumph, however, lasted only moments longer. At precisely the appointed hour, the heavy double doors opened.

The shock that rippled through the room came in three separate layers.

First, there was the timing.

Ariana Lombardi was never on time, if she arrived at all.

Usually, the room wouldn't even wait for her; they would quietly acknowledge her absence after thirty minutes, then move on like it was merely routine.

Second, there was the silhouette.

Gone was the long cascade of platinum hair that had always defined her presence. In its place — a sharp, chin-length bob that framed her face.

Halfway down the table, Caio Sartori narrowed his eyes, a rare look of shock flickering across his face.

'That's not possible.'

Just two hours ago, she had been tangled in his sheets with enough hair to spill across half his bed.

Now... *this*.

Finally, the third and perhaps most horrifying of them all — the attire, and the cargo.

In a room dominated by black tailored suits and couture gowns that easily costed small fortunes, Ariana Lombardi stood wearing a modest cream cardigan over a floral sundress.

And in her hands... a bright pink box.

"I apologize for the wait," she said, her head inclined in a calm, polite greeting. "I stopped to buy cupcakes."

Instead of entering fully, she lingered stiffly at the threshold, wide doe eyes moving slowly across the room with quiet anxiety.

There were ten Dons in total, seated at the long table. Behind them stood dozens more: heirs, advisors, assistants, and guards lining the walls.

'Ah... damn me.'

She bit her lip.

'I should have asked Isabella for a headcount.'

Her box of twelve cupcakes was falling woefully short.

The silence that followed was absolute — the kind of silence reserved for a misfired

gun.

At the head of the table, Gian Lombardi slowly rose to his feet.

"A-Ariana?"

For a man who had survived decades in Borgata's underworld without trembling before rivals or bloodshed, his legs suddenly felt disturbingly unsteady.

Aren recognized the man's face almost immediately.

He looked like the photo on the contact saved as "Father" in the phone — a man the original Ariana hadn't cared to reply to for over a year.

What surprised Aren most was how Gian reminded her of the Operative Head from her previous life. Both were men hardened by time, yet she detected a certain softness in his eyes as he looked at her.

Aren smiled then — a small, genuine thing that reached her eyes, hoping to mend things with this man on the original Ariana's behalf.

"Yes? Would you like a cupcake?"

The question only stunned Gian Lombardi further. He stood motionless, his lips trembling.

His daughter was smiling at him. Her eyes were clear, calm, and — most importantly — entirely sober.

The room remained a soundless void for as long as Gian struggled for words.

At last, Armando Ombra broke the tension with a low, amused chuckle.

"What a pleasant surprise. I would love a cupcake from your daughter as well, Don Gian."

Relief washed visibly across Aren's face.

'Oh. Phew.'

'A fellow cupcake lover.'

She walked toward Gian first and handed him a strawberry cupcake with both hands.

Then, she turned to the rest of the room.

"I'm very sorry," she said, slightly blushing. "I did not realize there would be so many people here. I only brought twelve."

No one complained.

In fact, no one made a sound.

Aren took the silence as polite acceptance, relieved that they weren't angry. With quiet grace, she began distributing cupcakes around the table, while the most feared figures in Borgata's history watched her like frozen statues.

Gian held his cupcake, his gaze never leaving the strawberry frosting.

Caio Sartori watched her most of all.

His gaze tracked every movement she made, searching desperately for a trace of the

woman he knew. He found only an unassuming girl, who seemed more concerned with the cupcake count than the potential dissolution of her empire.

When Aren reached his place at the table, she paused abruptly.

It was only then she realized he was a Don, since he held a seat at the table.

Compared to the other nine men, he looked noticeably younger, perhaps in his early thirties, though the cold edge in his expression aged him considerably.

She smiled then, glad to recognize an acquaintance in a room of strangers.

"Good to see you here, Mister Bathrobe."

The title landed like a live grenade.

Several men standing behind Caio visibly stopped breathing.

One advisor looked moments away from spiritual collapse.

Caio, for his part, instantly stiffened.

"I don't need one," he said flatly.

Aren studied his face in silence for a while. His gaze avoided hers completely, fixed instead on a distant point somewhere along the opposite wall.

'He looks more stressed than before,' she concluded.

Without comment, she placed two cupcakes in front of him.

"I said I don't—" He turned sharply, ready to snap at her.

By the time his gaze landed on her, she had already moved on to the next person.

As Aren continued around the room, three additional figures caught her attention almost immediately. They weren't seated at the table, but they looked like they could use a cupcake.

First was a young man with such refined beauty that he almost looked unreal. With light blond hair and pale teal eyes, he resembled an ethereal being made of light.

This was Jeremiah Castellano, heir to the House controlling Borgata's casinos and blood sports. He smiled at Aren when she walked past him, and the expression alone transformed his entire face into something luminous.

'An angel in human form,' Aren thought, with stars in her eyes.

She entirely missed the way he looked at her the moment she turned away — as if she were a fascinating specimen he wished to examine in total privacy.

Next was a man with blond hair of a darker shade. His eyes were a piercing green, and though shielded behind a pair of glasses, they looked no less sharp.

This was Isidore Accardi.

He looked no older than Jeremiah, yet he was no mere heir. He was a consigliere.

Officially, his house handled the financial infrastructure that fueled Borgata's immense wealth through the Accardi Bank, where he himself served as Vice Chairman.

Unofficially, they specialized in laundering enough money to destabilize governments,

and he was the brain behind the entire operation.

He had glanced at Aren once when she entered the room. He then returned to the stack of papers in his hands and had not looked up again since.

Every movement he made was so efficient, precise, and perfectly economical that Aren felt a quiet admiration just watching him work.

'Exceptional discipline.'

She slipped past him silently, careful not to interrupt his concentration.

The last was a younger man with dark brown hair and warm hazel eyes — the youngest face in the room.

This was Jordan Marchetti, heir to the House responsible for supplying weapons across Borgata. He stood behind his father with a strained expression, staring down at the carpet as if he wished to disappear into it.

'He doesn't want to be here,' Aren realized, with mild concern.

Unfortunately, she had already run out of cupcakes. She gave him an apologetic look instead.

When Aren finished, she found herself standing awkwardly by the door.

Her eyes darted left, then right.

'Um... where am I supposed to stand now?'

Seeing his daughter looking lost, Gian finally snapped out of his frozen state.

He called out to her immediately.

"Come, Ariana. Stand beside me."

Aren nodded at once.

"Ah— yes, of course."

She quickly crossed the room and took her place at his right side.

At last, the meeting began.

Cedella is a passionate storyteller known for her bold romantic and spicy novels that keep readers hooked from the very first chapter. With a flair for crafting emotionally intense plots and unforgettable characters, she blends love, desire, and drama into every story she writes. Cedella's storytelling style is immersive and addictive—perfect for fans of heated romances and heart-pounding twists.