

Don't Fall For Mr. Hart

C 7 - The First Day

The First Day

My next day's preparation for work began at five o'clock in the morning. It didn't bother me; I couldn't sleep anyway. After filling my stomach with an extreme amount of caffeine, I was ready to begin my first-ever undercover assignment... or so I thought.

I hated skirts. Why did I have to wear a skirt to work? I also hated wearing heels, but these three-inch monsters were currently bending my inexperienced feet at awkward and uncomfortable angles. My fisted-into-balls hands were hidden in the long sleeves of my well-tailored navy blazer, which also wasn't something I usually wore. My back had never been more straightened, nor had my chin been raised higher. Without a doubt, if stiffness had been a sport, I would have set a new world record with every step I took.

A few rushed heartbeats later, I stood in front of one of the most impressive New York City skyscrapers, questioning my sanity, but it was too late to change my mind. I inched to the side and looked at my reflection in the mirrored glass window before I would enter the depths of corporative hell. I smoothed my slick-to-perfection high ponytail, then corrected my black-rimmed glasses that, according to some, were supposed manifest my intelligence. My carefully buttoned-up shirt with a Mandarin collar formed a subtle, conservative vibe, while that damn pencil skirt thoroughly clung to my buttocks, exposing the curve of my feminine asset.

I wasn't ready to enter. I didn't think I would ever be ready for that task. I could already tell that this was going to be the most terrifying thing I had ever done. Sucking in a ragged breath, I swayed toward the main entrance. I moved to the end of the fast-moving line of people walking through the revolving door and looked up at my new workplace—the Hart Global Corporation.

I minded each tiny step I took, stretching the fabric of my skirt as I swayed forward. I cursed under my breath more times than I could count, and I seriously hoped that no one was watching me while I fought against my awkwardness.

"Charlotte Madison," I introduced myself to the security guard, who gave me a once-over before bending down to search for my employee pass in the drawers of his desk.

"Here you go," he grunted, all but throwing the card at me.

Hiding another curse behind a stretched smile, I walked to the entrance gate and placed my brand-new card on the scanner. I waited a few seconds, but the gates didn't open. I took a deep breath and put the card down again. Nothing happened. My head snapped

toward the guard who had given me the card, but, of course, he was too busy talking to his colleague to notice my glare.

"Calm down, Charlie," I muttered, ignoring the annoying comments of the people standing behind me. "It's not good to kill people on your first day at work."

I was about to place my card on the scanner one more time, but someone swiped his own pass through my scanner before I could. The gate opened. "Welcome to Hart Global," I heard a deep man's voice satiated with amusement.

I followed the source of the sound and saw a blond-haired man with sparkling green eyes and golden-brown skin. His full lips spread into a teeth-flashing smile as he passed the security gate next to mine. "Aren't you coming? It will close if you don't walk past it," he urged, a chuckle lacing his tone.

"Um... yes," I murmured, taking a few fast steps forward and meeting him on the other side. "Thank you," I managed, forcing my lips to curl upward.

"Don't mention it. The first day is the hardest." He extended his hand. "I'm Logan Branson."

I zeroed in on the hand. It was near twice the size of mine. As my eyes moved up to his arm and shoulder, I noticed that the expensive blue suit jacket barely embraced the muscles hidden under the fabric. Then I studied his face, the carefree green of his eyes, the sun-licked complexion, and his wavy, slightly ruffled hair. "Do you work here?" That might have been a stupid question, but the man in front of me looked more like a beach surfer—a hot beach surfer—than a multi-billion-dollar company employee.

He burst into laughter before grabbing my hand and shaking it. "As a matter of fact, I do. I'm a Strategic Director. Nice to meet you, Miss"—he looked down at my employee pass—"Charlotte Madison."

I chuckled nervously before stiffly correcting the side of my glasses in a learned gesture. "I apologize, Mr. Branson. That was rude of me."

"Don't worry about it." He grinned, flashing his white teeth again. "And call me Logan."

I fixed my smile, brightening it a bit. "Then, please, call me Charlie." Then I cleared my throat. "Is it obvious that it's my first day?"

Something wicked surfaced in his expression, but then he shrugged. "I have a good facial memory, and I haven't seen you here before."

His answer was smooth, but not quite honest. I smirked. "Are white lies your specialty?"

Logan leaned over me. "All kinds of lies are my specialty but don't tell anyone. It's a secret."

I couldn't help but chuckle. "You're a dangerous man, then. Should I be worried already?"

His perfect smile widened. "Never." Then he started walking toward the elevators, and I followed him. "Which floor?" he asked as he was about to press the button.

I drew in my confidence before answering. "The last one," I said, watching his eyes widen. "It's my first day as CEO Hart's secretary."

He nodded and slowly looked me up and down. "That is... quite surprising."

I frowned and followed his line of sight, checking if there was anything wrong with my clothes. Everything seemed perfect. I was supposed to look highly professional, and, in my opinion, that was exactly how a secretary of a nearly seventy-year-old respected CEO should look like. "Why do you find it surprising?" I demanded.

Logan shrugged, his eyes shamelessly dropping to the well-hidden swells of my chest. "It's just... I don't know." His eyes finally met mine. "It might be refreshing," he stated, pressing the top-floor button.

"Refreshing?" I crossed my arms, feeling more annoyed by the second.

He read my deadly glare correctly and hurriedly raised his hands in surrender. "I didn't mean anything bad," he assured. "But... have you seen him?"

"Seen who?" I all but hissed.

"CEO Hart," he offered with a meaningful smirk and raised brows.

"Of course, I've seen him." Well, truthfully, I'd seen pictures of him. Alexander Hart was an elegant gentleman, looking handsome and ideally presentable in a tailored suit. But he was almost seventy years old, for God's sake! I knew that there were surely many women who would ignore the age gap and try to seduce him, but I wasn't one of them, and I surely didn't like Logan's insinuation!

"And?"

Were the stereotypes in his head so deeply engraved that he didn't even think that not every female secretary working in a big company wants to seduce her wealthy boss?! My hands fisted, but somehow I resisted my urge to punch him. "I'm a professional, Mr. Branson," I strained through my teeth.

He chuckled. At the same time, the elevator stopped, reaching the top floor. He followed me as I walked to the end of the corridor, where the CEO's office was, and then turned around the corner. "Good luck!" I heard him sing as I was about to knock. A heartbeat later, I heard the buzz of the unlocking door, and I let myself in.

"Good morning, Sir. My name is Charlotte Madison, your new secretary," I introduced myself, awkwardly talking to the back of his chair as my new boss faced one of the floor-to-ceiling windows in his huge office.

"Nice to meet you, Charlotte." His voice was nothing like I expected. In fact, it sounded terrifyingly familiar. It was deep, rich, and mouthwatering. My new boss turned his chair, and my heart began to thunder. My eyes zeroed in on the desktop level and slowly moved upward. The man sitting behind the desk wore a dark-gray three-piece suit, looking as if he was born to wear suits and give women heart attacks. His chiseled chin and cheekbones, and his hair black without a single silver strand might have resembled Alexander Hart's features, but it certainly wasn't him. I knew who sat in front of me, but I was desperate to find something that would prove otherwise.

His ocean-like blue eyes met mine, I stopped breathing. I tore my eyes off his crazily sexy features and looked down at the plate on his desk...

My world began to spin, and I stumbled back. This couldn't be happening! Was this some kind of sick joke?!

"Is everything OK, Charlotte?" My new boss stood up and stepped out from behind his desk.

I watched him move toward me, taking in his large frame wrapped in that damn suit as my salivary glands turned hyper-productive. He extended his hand while curving his lips into the hottest smirk I had ever seen. "I'm Aiden Hart." The sound of his name gave me a full-body shudder, and I almost moaned. "I'm the new CEO of Hark Global Corporation."