

My Sister's Wedding

Chapter 2: The Job

PIPER

The shrill ring of my phone jolted me from my thoughts. I hesitated before answering. “Hello?”

“Piper, it’s Edna.”

I sighed, trying to keep my voice steady. “Hi, Edna. What can I do for you?”

“I have a job for you.”

“Edna, I told you, I’m out. I put in my notice,” I replied, frustration seeping into my voice as I tossed my purse onto the counter.

“Yes, dear, but this is good for you. It’s a two-week job and you’ll be getting \$40,000 in commission.”

I froze, my heart skipping a beat. That was a lot of money; it would help so much. “I— I don’t know.”

“We both know you need it. And it’s the perfect job for you. He doesn’t want anything but a companion for a family event. No strings,” Edna explained.

“Seriously?” I asked, my voice wavering with disbelief. It wasn’t often that a client didn’t expect more.

“So? Do you want it?” She asked impatiently.

“Yes, I’ll take it. But this is my last job. After this, I’m done,” I replied before hanging up the phone.

The next day, I walked into Advantage with a mix of anticipation and dread. “Good morning, Miss Stringer,” the girl at reception greeted me cheerfully.

“Hello, I’m here to see Edna.”

“Yes, she’s waiting for you. Go on back.”

I offered the girl a tight smile before making my way to Edna’s office. The room was filled with racks of high-end clothing, and Edna sat behind her desk like a queen on her throne.

She was a small, formidable woman with platinum blonde hair cut into a sharp bob and deep brown eyes that seemed to pierce your soul from behind her thin glasses.

“There you are, Piper dear,” Edna called out, her voice dripping with false sweetness.

“Hello, Edna. How are you?” I asked, trying to sound casual.

“Good, good. Take a seat and we’ll go over the profile.”

I sat down across from her desk, my hands fidgeting in my lap.

“So,” Edna began, flipping through a file in her hands, “This is a very important client. Most likely one-time, but he has connections that we want. He’s a bit different from other clients you’ve had. He has no desire for anything intimate, nothing more than a date for a wedding.”

“Two weeks for a wedding?” I questioned, my curiosity piqued.

“The Young family is from Boston. Old money, very old. They are one of the wealthiest families on the East Coast, and the son, Tate, has done exceptionally well for himself.

“There will be a total of five events for the wedding, plus the week after in the Maldives. Apparently, the family is accompanying the new couple on their honeymoon.”

“Seriously?” I tried to hide my excitement at the thought of an all-expenses-paid vacation.

“So, you will need to be on your best behavior,” she warned, peering at me over the rim of her glasses. “You will need to make conversation and act like a lady of class. I know that’s something you can do.”

“Now,” she said, snapping the file shut, “let’s find some things for you to wear.” Edna stood from her desk and gestured toward the racks of clothes.

“These are so expensive...” I whispered, running my fingers over the luxurious fabrics.

“Yes,” she replied, “and I expect them back in good condition.”

“Of course,” I agreed.

“You will need several cocktail dresses for the week, including a gown for the wedding. All of these are high-end name brands. You need to look the part. I was thinking of one of these for the day of the wedding.”

She held up three dresses, and I scrutinized them carefully.

“Red probably shouldn’t be in the mix, considering you don’t want me to look like an escort and everyone looks sexy in red. The black is for a funeral, not a wedding.”

I stepped forward, taking the third dress in my hands. It was a long, light blue lace dress. It was beautiful. "This one, this is perfect for a spring wedding."

After choosing a few more dresses for the rehearsal dinner, cocktail mixer, family dinner, and an extra just in case, we moved on to regular clothing, making sure I had what I needed for the honeymoon trip.

"Remember, you are there to make his life easier. He wants a date to take the pressure off himself and be stress-free. You will behave yourself and you will make it an enjoyable trip. Got it? I don't need to remind you how much this job will help you."

"Got it," I replied, gathering the clothes and rolling my luggage full of expensive things out to my car.

On my way home, I stopped to see my dad, knowing I wouldn't see him for a couple of weeks.

"Hello, Miss Stringer," the attendant greeted me with a warm smile as I walked into the home.

"Hello," I returned the smile, "how is he doing today?"

"Well, he's okay. He had a rough morning. But he seems to be in a good mood. He's in the library."

I found my father sitting in a large chair, engrossed in a book.

"Hey, Daddy," I said softly, sitting beside him.

He looked up at me with a blank expression. "Hello."

"What are you reading?" I asked, trying to keep my voice steady.

"Whitman," he replied.

I nodded. Whitman was his favorite. He used to read the poems to me when I was younger. "Can I hear?"

He gave me an odd look before leaning forward and reading from his book. I smiled as I listened, finding comfort in the familiar cadence of his voice.

He looked up at me when he finished and smiled, "Did that help? Now, don't forget that your paper on this poem is due on Friday."

I smiled sadly, "Yes, it helped a lot. Thank you, professor."

I sat with him for a while longer, listening to him read aloud to me. After a while, I stood from my chair and walked out of the room.

No matter how many times it happened, I always had a hard time when he didn't recognize me. Today, apparently, he was reliving his days as an English professor at the university.

"Have a good night," the attendant chimed as I walked out to my car.

He had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease about a year ago. We had run through his retirement money, and insurance would only cover so much.

That was why I had started working at Advantage. The pay was undeniably good, and the care facility was expensive.

But after a few bad clients, I was done. I would have to find some other way to support us.

I headed back home to pack. I hadn't met this man I was working for, but just by the clothes I had to pack, I knew it was going to be an interesting two weeks.

Continue to the next chapter of *My Sister's Wedding*