

Chapter 2

His Promise: The Mafia's Babies

We had reached the private room and were waiting for further instructions. I didn't even know what I was doing here, but I didn't really have a say in it. This wasn't supposed to be like this. I should've been downstairs, dancing with the other girls.

I looked around me and took in my new surroundings. I had been working here for six months, but I had never been in this room before.

It was strictly forbidden and well guarded for a reason. The second floor was for important business meetings, which was obvious because the room was full of security. I saw many faces I hadn't even seen before and knew exactly for what reason. I was never supposed to see them.

"Calm down. You're shaking." Faith laughed as she caressed her fingers through my curls.

I hadn't even noticed how bad I had been shaking until she mentioned it. I took a deep breath and looked down at my legs while trying to control myself. I didn't know whether I was freaking out because I was about to see the same man I had been trying to avoid or because I would be in a room with many powerful and dangerous men all at once.

"Just hand them their drinks and snacks, and that's it. We don't have to dance or do anything. It's just as easy as that." Luna reassured me, but her words only freaked me out even more.

"Everything you hear in that room stays inside of that room. When someone says or does something inappropriate, you let security handle it," Luna instructed.

Everything you hear in that room stays inside of that room. Those were not words I was unfamiliar with it as Christian showed me how it worked.

These men weren't average businessmen but mobsters if that was even the proper term. Deep down, I knew if I made one wrong move, dropped a drink, or did anything remotely stupid, which was pretty much my daily routine, it was pretty much the same as asking for a death wish.

"It's easy money, and we don't even have to do much. Just breath and relax, squirrel." Luna sighed, annoyed. It seemed as if I was already getting on her nerves, but I couldn't help it. These girls might've been used to doing this, but I was not.

Easy work? It was easier said than done. All I had to do was make sure not to drop anything.

"Come on, girls, let's go." A familiar man suddenly spoke. He wore a black suit and seemed tall and toned. My eyes moved from his warm tan skin to the gun in his pockets, and I couldn't help but freeze for a second.

Get it together, Serena. Of course, he had a gun. You knew what you got yourself into.

"Hey, squirrel, aren't you usually downstairs?" The guy approached me and stepped forward so he could take a better look at my face.

I had never officially met this man before, but he knew who I was for some reason. Of course, he knew, that was their job, to keep an eye on all girls.

Or maybe he knew who I was because he was always next to Christian, and the two seemed close? No, that couldn't be it. Why would Christian even talk about me?

"Y-yes." I barely whispered. He gave me a warm smile and placed his hand on my bare shoulder.

"I'm Marc, don't be scared. I'm here to protect you." He said and looked down at his gun. It was an admirable attempt to calm me down, but it only made things worse. "Serena, right?"

I forced a smile onto my face and gave him a nod. That was right, Serena, and not squirrel.

Out of the corner of my eyes, I watched as different men in suits, including two of the Lamberti brothers, Enzo and Gio, entered the room and observed them as they made their way over to the large table. Luckily we were still behind the bar and separated by glass, so they could not see us. "Are you okay?" Marc asked.

"Yes," I answered and looked at him with pleading eyes, almost begging him to get me out of here.

"Lucio told us not to touch or even breath near you, but he's the one who brought you up here...I don't get it, especially with it being such an important meeting." Marc spoke, confused.

I was just as confused as him and wondered why Lucio gave them those instructions, but before I could ask anything else, Luna took over the conversation.

"Lucio had to leave last second. Enzo brought her here." She told Marc. "Makes sense." He chuckled while eyeing me up and down one last time.

"Okay, time to get to work, ladies!" A man yelled and handed us trays. He, unfortunately, gave me the one with champagne, and all I wanted was to disappear. I felt confused and unsure what to do, so I walked behind the other girls and followed their lead. I got no instructions, nothing. They expected me to know what I was supposed to be doing, just like that.

"Just follow my lead." Faith whispered in my ear before she pulled my shorts to stop me from walking. We all stood in a line, and I followed their stance while I tried to balance the tray of glasses in my hand.

It was not a circus, and serving men was not in the job descriptions, so I was still confused about why I was even here.

I didn't know where to look and awkwardly looked around me until my eyes caught Christian, who had walked in as last. Behind him was the one person who was always by his side, his right-hand and cousin, Johnny Lamberti.

Unlike Christian, Johnny was a warm person and always smiled at everyone who walked past him, so having him here calmed my nerves a bit more.

Christian had a strong presence, and the moment he sat down, everyone around the table went silent. Even if I didn't know who he was, I would've guessed what kind of status he had. I would've been lying if I said that he wasn't attractive when the man was a walking god.

His beautiful almond-shaped hazel eyes matched his soft olive skin. His full dark brown hair matched his thick and perfectly shaped eyebrows, and even with the suit he was wearing, I could still notice his toned build.

"Don't stare at the boss. Are you crazy!" Faith whispered in my ear. I immediately followed her words and lowered my head. Faith was right. What was I even thinking? Did he see me?

"Shouldn't your brothers lead this meeting? I'm sure Lucio is not crazy enough to let a twenty-three-year-old kid lead this business meeting." One of the men laughed and playfully nudged the man beside him, but the others gulped in fear and looked at Christian to see what his reaction would be.

Christian doesn't like to be embarrassed. That was one thing I had noticed about him. Christian wanted to be in control and wouldn't dare to lose it.

Those were the exact words the girls never missed when they were gushing over him. Everyone looked at Christian, awaiting his reaction, but all he did was chuckle.

"My dad chose me, so I lead this business meeting, not my older brothers." He spoke, unbothered before he proceeded to continue. All the terms they used were highly confusing to me, and I was bored to death, so I ignored it while only one thing went through my head. How much longer did they expect me to hold this tray?

I had one goal. That was not to pay any attention to Christian, but he was the one to lead the meeting, so it wasn't that easy.

My legs felt numb and were close to giving out while I tried my hardest to hold the tray. I could not drop it.

I took a deep breath and focused my attention elsewhere. All I could do was wait for the minutes to pass by while I did everything from counting tiles to counting the seconds on the clock.

"It'll be over soon." Faith giggled in my ear and calmed my nerves. If anything, she knew how much I sucked at standing still. It wasn't meant for me.

"Give the men something to drink!" Gio Lamberti suddenly spoke and guided his hands towards the men at the table.

Luna stood at the left side of me and gave me a slight nudge so that I couldn't lose my balance. "That's your cue. You're the one with the drinks."

That's right. I was the one with the drinks.

I looked from Luna and the tray to the men who watched me and carefully walked forward as I made sure not to drop anything. If I were allowed to sweat, I probably would've.

I was determined not to make any eye contact and walked around the table to give everyone a glass of champagne, which, crazily enough, worked out for me. So far, so great.

When I had two more glasses to go, I felt myself go lightheaded and accidentally spilled a bit of the champagne.

A good scenario would've been for it just to have fallen onto the table, but no, it reached the suit of the man who sat right in front of me. "What are you doing? Apologize!" Gio sternly demanded while I flinched at his tone. Gio was someone you did not want to cross and a certified perfectionist.

"I-I'm s-so s-sorry." I stuttered and took a napkin to clean the man's suit, but before the napkin could even reach his suit, he grabbed my hand and squeezed it.

"Don't worry about it. It's just a suit." He chuckled. I was surprised by his laid-back comment and finally found the courage to look up at him. The man looked around my age, so he was probably not that old schooled. He had a warm smile on his face and frowned his eyebrows as he caught me staring. I looked down with a blush on my face but quickly recovered when I heard a cough from Christian's mouth.

With a pit in my stomach, I turned around and faced the same man I had been trying to avoid the same way how he had been trying to avoid me. The last time he looked me in the eye was when I accidentally blocked his path a few days ago, and he rudely ordered me to move aside.

I moved along and placed down his champagne in front of him, but before I could move, his hand quickly wrapped around my wrist and pulled me closer, so he could move his lips towards my ear. "Are you okay?" He asked.

I couldn't help but notice the hint of worry in his voice, but his actions startled me. I had prepared myself to get yelled at, so I quickly pulled away from his grip and took my distance before giving him a nod. I froze in my spot and couldn't move until I noticed how Faith's eyes were begging me to return to my spot.

"Are you okay?" Faith asked this time. The fact that I almost fainted because of nerves was already embarrassing enough, so the only thing I could do was nod my head.

Even though Faith promised it would all be over soon, it wasn't. Minutes turned into an hour, and I even started counting sheep. All of this was getting ridiculous.

I looked from Christian to the guy who told me not to worry about me messing up his suit, and by the look of it, they seemed close to one another. It was weird to see Christian smile, but the mysterious man showed me that he was perfectly capable of doing so.

The man caught me staring and shot me a wink while I immediately looked away. As if it couldn't get any more embarrassing.

I knew it was too late, assuming I slept with my boss, but I did not want to get involved with these people in any single way. Better yet—I didn't even want them to know my name.

Making enough money to pay my bills was the only thing on my mind.

After what felt like hours, the meeting was finally over, and all the men were leaving the room. I lowered my head and didn't dare to raise it until all the men eventually left the area, but when I saw a figure walking towards me, and my eyes met with a pair of oxfords, I didn't know how fast to raise my head and looked at warm brown eyes.

"I'm sorry, but are you sure you're not sick?" Christian's cousin, Johnny, apologized with a pitiful look on his face and held his large hand against my forehead. I tried my hardest to hide the blush which was working hard to appear on my cheeks and gave him a nod. "I'm fine."

"It's okay. I also fell asleep." Marc joked and wrapped his arm around Johnny's shoulder. The two joked around while the other girls were desperate for their attention and joined in. My attention shifted to Christian, who leaned against the door with an unimpressed look on his face.

He closed his eyes and cleared his throat, making everyone turn their heads to look at him.

"Marc, you bring the girls back, and Johnny, come to my office." He spoke in an irritated tone before he left. It was silent, and everyone stared at each other to see if we had all heard the same thing. "So, that's my call." Johnny smiled and immediately obeyed his cousin as he walked out of the room.

"I think it's time for me to bring you all back," Marc spoke and led us out of the room.

"You haven't been skipping any meals, right?" Faith asked me, and it was not hard to guess that she was possibly talking about me barely succeeding in staying on two legs.

The truth was that I felt like shit, but if you did not feel well, you could not work, and I wasn't in any state to miss out on the money, so I shrugged it under the rug and gave her a nod. "I'm fine. I just got a bit nervous, that's all."

Faith eyed me suspiciously but shrugged her shoulders and wrapped her arm around my waist. "Good, it would be sad if you had to miss out on work."