

## A Candlelit Dinner With Inamorta

I wake up to Ben shaking me, I open my eyes, my neck cramping.

I move my head and look around, why am I in a bathtub?

"What time is it?" I ask, waking up.

"It's ten in the morning," Ben helps me out of the tub.

"How'd I end up in the tub?" I ask, holding my head.

"I don't know to be honest, I don't remember much from last night,"

Ben says.

"Jeez, we must've had a good time then," I laugh.

"We must've,"

We leave James' house and I go home to shower.

I enter the house and quietly walk towards the stairs.

"Veronica," My mom says behind me.

Shoot. I turn around and look at her, she's sitting on the couch with my father.

"How was your night?" My mom asks.

"It was fine," I say then go to walk upstairs.

"What did you do last night?" My father asks.

"Went to a party,"

My dad gives me this astonished look.

"You went out to a party?"

"Oh don't act so surprised, I'm sure mom told you all about what I was up to when you le , but did she tell you what she was up to?"

"Sasha, what is she talking about?"

"Oh! So she didn't-"

"Veronica go up to your room," My mom speaks fiercely.

"No, she was getting drunk every single day, she wasn't home at all, she was gone for days leaving me by myself, and when she was home she only yelled at me, she.. She slapped me," I shout at them.

"Sasha, you nevertold me about that,"

"Why would she? Only wanted to make me look bad," I just look at her, walking up to my room.

My family is fucked. Maybe the reason why I'm so interested in Ben's family is because they get along, because they love each other. Unlike mine.

I strip down and turn the shower on. I take my make up o and look at myself in the mirror. How did I get here? Why does my family have to be messed up.

I hop into the shower and wash myself, I close my eyes and allow the water to run down my body.

I suddenly hear shouting come from downstairs, I turn the tap o and wrap a towel around myself.

I exit my room and walk down the stairs to find my father shouting in Ben's face at the door. Ben just stands there awkwardly.

"You get out of my sight! You're the reason why all of this happened, why she ruined her life for a while! Why she drank and skipped school! Fuck you! You're never allowed in my daughters life!" He yells at him.

"But sir, I love your daughter-"

"You do not love her"

"Father!" I shout at him.

"Veronica go back upstairs," My father calmly speaks to me.

"No! Ben was there for me when you weren't, he helped me get through the roughest part of my life, I love him and he loves me, that's the end of it, come on Ben," I take Ben's hand and take him up to my room.

"I do not like this young and stupid boy who encouraged you to drink and party," My father yells at me.

"Go ahead and say whatever the fuck you want about me and how disobedient I am, but do not and I repeat do notsay shit about Ben who you don't even fucking know! Were you there for me when I was dealing with you leaving us? No! But Ben was, he was always there when I needed him, he alwaysmade me feel better, he made me feel not alone, he is the most important man in my life, he makes me happy, and if you can't stand your daughter being happy, then don't bother coming home for good," I tell him straight up.

"Young lady, he is not going up to your room when you're not wearing any clothes!" My father spits at me.

I ignore him and continue walking.

We enter my room and I close my door, I look at Ben.

"I'm sorry about my father," I feel so bad.

"It's okay love," Ben tells me.

"No, it's not I'm sorry he said all that, he doesn't know you, doesn't know how amazing you are, how you've truly helped me," I peck his lips.

"Thank you for the things you said about me," Ben smiles at me.

"I meant all of it," I kiss him.

I go to the bathroom to get changed into a loose shirt and pyjama pants.

I exit the bathroom and lay in bed with Ben for the day.

"I love you Ben," I tell him.

"I love you too Roni," He kisses my forehead.

### Josh's POV

"Do you see how disrespectful our daughter is?!" I sigh.

"Well Josh honey, a lot of stu happened while you were gone, Ben was the only source of happiness for Roni, and I am forever grateful for the role Ben plays in her life," Sasha speaks calmly.

I sigh, I don't want the boy who ruined her in her life.

"I don't care Sasha, he's a bad influence on her, now she's cursing? Do you not realize how corrupted our daughter is now because of him?"

"Look, I wasn't going to tell you this, but because Ben is the one who makes Veronica most happy, I'll tell you, all Veronica would want right now is for you to accept the man who she loves, and I know he loves her, a er I had slapped Veronica," Sasha begins. "She tried to commit suicide.. Ben was the one who found her, he was the one who stayed with her the whole time in the hospital, he stayed by her side through everything that her and I went through, I think you need to get to know Ben,"

I just sigh. I didn't know that Veronica attempted suicide... Were things really that bad?

"Whatever, I'll think about it, but how am I going to get this family put back together? All I want is for Veronica to accept me into this family again, I truly do want things to be the way they were,"

"That's the thing Josh," Sasha sits us down, "things can't go back to the way they were, Veronica is a whole new person, she can't go back to who she was before everything happened, and me? I can't be the same woman I was back then, looking back on it now, I don't like the person I was, I like who I am now, I am stronger than I was back then, and so is Veronica, we can't go back to the same family we were back then, but we can fix it, we can create a new home together, but I think that sitting down and talking to Ben will be a start to fixing things between you and Veronica,"

I rub my face in frustration.

"Okay, I'll sit down and have a talk with the boy, if that's what it takes to fix things,"

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