

## The Secrets Of Meera by Flameillumination Chapter 12

### Chapter 12 The Girl in Red

The whole day Arthur kept feeling guilty about the cute girl who got hurt because of him. Her lovely face, her big, beautiful eyes, her heart-shaped lips, her soft, flushed cheeks occupied his mind the entire day. He couldn't stop smiling because of the way she reacted after seeing the needles. Her jump and her shouting and over the top acting made his heart fill with joy after a long time. He even found the way she scolded him before the eyes of everyone, endearing. She was the second girl who talked to him that way. The only girl who ever spoke her mind in front of him without fear was Alice, that's why he became friends with her. It was her job to keep his condescension in check. Since he was a child, he was burdened with the status of the heir of a conglomerate. People wanted to be his friend because of his money and power, but not Alice. On the first day of kindergarten when everyone was treating him as royalty, she showed him his place. She was one true friend he had in the whole wide world. In order to avoid fake friends, he created a persona of a rude, arrogant man but slowly the personality of his fake persona started seeping into his real life. Alice always reminded him when to be real and when to be a rude magnate. But after her death, he completely absorbed that persona which someone broke through today. For the first time in a long time, he felt hope. Without even trying, the cute angry girl made him care for her, smile at her gestures. Women practically threw themselves before him, but he was never interested in anyone. All he was interested in achieving new heights in business every day and his friendship with Alice. He had few girlfriends but none of his relationships were successful. He was a man of few words and seldom made his love life public. Due to his lack of affair despite being a media darling led people to speculate that either he is a heartbreaker hiding from the world or a gay or asexual. To avoid all the branding his mother asked him to get married but he never gave a thought about spending his life

with someone. After much pressure from family and media, he asked Alice to marry him, and she agreed. They had a lot of fun making a fool out of everyone. They used to work together, have fun together. But after her death, all he had was his work. The media trial declared him as her murderer because she died after he proposed, and conspiracies and rumours started spreading. It further catapulted him into his rude persona. If he was scary before Alice's death, he became scarier after that.

But someone was changing it in just one meeting. He picked her twice in his arms but was still not satisfied. He wanted to hold her forever, look in her eyes forever. He kept thinking if he should ask Neha to introduce her friend to him. But he discarded the thought the next moment as it was against his established personality. Her name 'Meera' kept echoing in his brain. He wanted to meet her again.

In the evening Daniel informed him he invited the CEO of Spriha to the ball but before he could tell him the details about her, Arthur disconnected the call as he was busy thinking about someone special. No matter what he did, he could not get her out of his mind. He was not even sure if he wanted to get her out of his mind. While showering, while cooking his meal, while eating, while sleeping, all he could think about was the girl in red, blood red. Because his stupid cufflinks had sharp edges. He took the cufflink in his palm and stared at it. It was a gift from Alice and now it hurt someone. Should he feel happy to see the gift reminding him of a friend or should he feel guilty as he cut someone smearing her in red? The next morning, he woke up with a heavy head as he couldn't sleep well. The crimson hand of the girl kept haunting him. He wanted to find her and ask her if she was ok and then apologise to her. But to do that he would have to ask Neha and show everyone his soft hearted personality which he was not ready to do. He went to the office, crossed paths with Neha multiple times but was not courageous enough to ask about Meera. Evening came and it was the time to attend the masquerade ball and meet with the CEO of Spriha who would help him

kick start his CSR efforts which were close to his best friend, Alice's heart. He dressed in a black tuxedo and drove to the venue. Ryan was waiting for him near his parking spot. He came out of the car and with a stern look asked Ryan, "why do we have to attend this stupid ball? Please do remind me again." He buttoned his jacket and looked at Ryan who was dressed in a navy-blue tuxedo looking handsome. "Sir! As you know to restart our social responsibility plans, we need funds as our profits are not sufficient for time being. And you need money to provide basic needs to the needy. Also, as you know Daniel has invited one of the famous humanitarians from India, the CEO of Spriha. So, this will be a perfect opportunity to woo her to collaborate with us. I personally think this will be great for our future. Good CSR means good public image, good public image means good media coverage, good media means improvement in brand value, hence

increase in profit," explained Ryan. "Hmm. You always think like a cs, don't you?" "That my job sir." "Good. That's why you are my right hand." "Thank you," replied Ryan when he suddenly spotted Daniel standing on the other side of the parking lot. "Oh Great! Daniel is waiting for us next to his car. Let's go in together." "No Ryan! He is not waiting for us," observed Arthur. Daniel, as usual, was dressed in a debonair grey suit and was repeatedly checking his wristwatch and looking at the entrance gate of parking. A gorgeous black car that had the Spirit of Ecstasy displayed on the hood, approached Daniel's side hiding everything albeit his face. From the side visible to Arthur Neha exited the car with a big smile, in a beautiful blue gown with her black hair flowing, matching

earrings and beautiful Cinderella slipper, *and greeted Daniel with a handshake. He never saw Neha attending the ball even once so what was important about this ball. He got his answer when he saw another girl exiting from the other side of*

the *car where* Daniel was standing. The classy *car was* obscuring his line of sight. All he could see was her hair folded in a neat bun with *diamond earring: dangling from her ears. One timeless* beauty *drove away* revealing another epitome of grace and exquisiteness. The elegance and *magnificence* before his eyes *made* his heart flutter and he had butterflies in the stomach. She turned a little *towards* Arthur and he *stopped* breathing after he *saw* the Girl in Red. She was wearing blood red backless *evening gown which made* her skin *you even more*. She was unquestionably radiant. Her left hand was neatly *wrapped* in red ribbon. Not only Arthur, but Ryan *was* also *impressed*, “Whoa! Isn’t she the one who got hurt yesterday?” *Exclaimed* Ryan, Arthur was too busy staring at her that he didn’t even hear *what* Ryan said. The *following* moment he saw Daniel pointing at him and *mouthed something which* made the girl turn completely *towards* him.

The Girl in Red turned around and lo! Arthur’s heart stood still, he gasped. Her beautiful big *brown eyes were* staring at him. All three *moved towards* Arthur and Ryan who *were* staring at the coming party with their *mouth open*, “Good evening, sirs,” Neha greeted both Arthur and Ryan. “Good evening, Neha,” replied Ryan but Arthur was still speechless.

“You...,” stumbled Arthur. His *mind was* unable to form words let alone sentences.

“You... *are you following me?*” Asked Meera, teasingly, “In *your dreams*” Arthur replied. Her tease made him regain his senses. Quickly he brought back his rude *avatar*. “Ohh that would be a nightmare,” mocked Meera, “I leave it,” said Arthur, shockingly as he was not expecting a witty reply from her. “Good as *I was not* in a *mood* to show a spoiled brat his rightful position, again.” Daniel and Ryan stood there in shock not able to believe what they just heard. It was more

shocking for Daniel as he *was* hearing such a tone in front of Arthur for the first time. No *matter* she *reprimanded* his boss once, this encounter was equally astonishing for Ryan. In just a *few words* she pulled Arthur *from* his high horse and dropped him way below the *yound*.

“*You dropped your jaw*, again,” she whispered to Ryan, too. Neha’s hand, and walked away while staring at Arthur. He was looking more than handsome; he was looking pulchritudinous, divine. She tried hard not to think about his beautiful personality and charm but failed splendidly, She knew she had to hate him for being involved in Alice’s death *somehow*, but her heart was not ready to listen to her brain. She had few boyfriends before and a *few crushes*, but *no one* made her heart race as Arthur did. She brushed off all her

feelings and went inside. Daniel didn’t know what to do, whether to follow Meera or stand with his boss, so he stood at his position completely motionless. Arthur signalled him to go after her and hesitatingly he ran after Neha and Meera. “Holy smoke! She is... she is the philanthropist from India?” Ryan said surprisingly after finding his sense of speech. “Oh no! You... you called her poor and pathetic. Damn! She’ll kick your ass, no offence Boss.” “None was taken, as she did that already... twice,” said Arthur while still staring at the Girl in Red walking away from him. “Let’s hope her fight with you does not hinder our joint venture.” “What do I pay Daniel for? It’s his job. Let him manage her. Let’s get inside and you get my mask.”

“Yes sir! This way please.”.

Ryan escorted him inside and brought two masks, a blue one for himself and a black one for Arthur. They put their mask on their eyes concealing their identity and entered the masquerade ball.

She was still thinking about escaping the room when her heart leapt out of her chest. She noticed a red dress among the outfits hanging from the dress racks. She ran towards the clothes stand and took out the red dress. It was the same as her dress. The shape, the size, the cut, the fabric, everything was the same. How was it possible? “It means my kidnapper was there at the ball. Who could it be?” She let her mind race back to the memories of the ball to identify the culprit.