

A Gift from the Goddess by Dawn Rosewood Chapter 12

Chapter Twelve

The next day started like normal. I had breakfast in the kitchen with my mother before Lucy helped me get ready for school. Lucy didn't mention the letter and acted as if everything was normal which I was grateful for.

My father was away on business but would be returning today and I was internally very excited to see him again. I didn't want our relationship to turn out like how it had in my previous life. I knew now that deep down he loved me, even if he didn't show it outwardly. It wouldn't be like how it was before where I would always try to avoid him out of fear of disappointing him.

The school day seemed pretty average too. People were still staring but most had already forgotten about the day before. I was also thankful that there had been no strange encounters. 1

However, I couldn't help but notice that, in my attempt to be more aware of the people around me, I'd caught sight of Cai kissing a random girl a grade or two above me. They were giggling and sneaking off into an empty classroom to do Goddess knew what.

I sighed internally and rolled my eyes. He was one of those guys.

I headed to the library, ignoring the scene I'd witnessed, and walked directly to my spot in the back corner. Immediately, I began making a list of things that would need to be set up. Things like new bank accounts, investments, etc.

Though somehow, I became so invested in my work, that I didn't even notice someone approach until a small timid voice piped up.

"Um, h-hi... Ariadne," the voice stuttered.

I looked up and saw a girl about my age with mousey brown hair and blue eyes. She was small and held herself with an air of social awkwardness.

"...Hello," I said cautiously, unsure as to what she wanted.

I didn't immediately recognise her but she did seem vaguely familiar. As if it were on the tip of my tongue and I should have known who she was.

"Um, I see you in the library every day. I usually sit just further down a bit. B-but it's okay if you don't know me!" I could tell she felt extremely nervous to be talking to

me. "...I just wanted to say I heard you stood up to Brayden yesterday, and I wanted to say thank you."

She nervously tugged on the sleeves of her sweater.

"He's never been very kind to me," she continued, "but no one in the school has the rank to be able to stand up to him. And I—I know you didn't do it for me! But I just wanted to say thank you anyway."

I wasn't surprised to hear Brayden was a bully to the weaker wolves. He always gave off that sort of air about him, but I had luckily never needed to worry about him in high school. I'd only gotten involved yesterday because he had crossed that line first.

"Anyway! S—sorry for bothering you. I'll leave you to your work," she said and went to leave.

She'd noticed how I hadn't said anything and took my silence as a confirmation I wasn't interested in talking to her. Truthfully though, I was silent in thought over how she reminded me a little of myself in the past. I could feel a similar loneliness inside her that I could relate to. In a way, we were also both victims of Brayden, but that was something I wouldn't be able to explain to her.

"Wait," I said to her, and pointed to the book in her hands. "... What are you reading?"

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She looked down at her book and then smiled fondly, "Oh, this? It's my favourite. I'm rereading it for the fourth time. You'd probably think it's just a dumb kid's book though. It's a fantasy novel."

I smiled gently at her. "May I take a look?" I asked, and held out my hand.

"S—sure!"

She handed me the book excitedly and I examined it. I'd never really read many fiction books in the past, choosing more for academic reads. The idea seemed interesting though.

"You can borrow it if you like!"

I looked up at her, surprised. "Didn't you say you were reading it?"

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"No, it's fine! I have so many other books I can read."

I thought about it for a minute but felt bad if I turned her offer down. Especially after seeing how excited she was at just the thought of me borrowing it.

“Ok, I will have a read. Thank you, ahh...,” I trailed off, realising I didn’t even know her name.

“Myra! I’m Myra,” she smiled brightly.

“Nice to meet you, Myra. I’m Aria,” I said, returning her smile softly.

Her name was bothering me now too. I still felt like I should have known who she was but couldn’t place it.

The bell for class then rang and I gently placed the novel inside my backpack along with my notebook.

“Well, I better get going, but I’ll return it when I can,” I said, standing up.

“Oh, no rush! I know you must be pretty busy.”

It was a little sad but it was true. I was even busier now than I had been in the past and knew it would be hard for me to find the time to read for leisure. However, I felt like I had done something good regardless, particularly after seeing her become more confident from just a small conversation.

We said our goodbyes after that and left for our classes.

When I got home that day from school, I was excited to see my father had returned just as my mother had said. Just as I had reacted with her, I ran into his arms and hugged him tightly. And whilst I did try my best not to become a full crying mess this time, as I had done with my mother, I couldn’t stop the few tears that did escape me.

Peeking up, I managed to catch a glimpse of him looking confused at my mother, who mimicked his reaction with a shrug. But nevertheless, it felt nice when he finally wrapped an arm around my shoulder to reciprocate the hug. It was a welcome feeling being able to finally do it without cell bars between us.

Not long afterwards, I was in the kitchen when Lucy walked in. Given it was just the two of us, I took the opportunity to talk to her privately.

“Did you deliver that letter this morning, Lucy?” I asked.

She smiled at me, seeming as if nothing was off. “Of course, Miss.”

I appreciated how she didn't ask any questions about it or wonder why I had sent her to an abandoned lot to deliver it.

Slowly, I got out of my chair and began to make some tea, heating up the water to start the process.

"Oh, are you making some tea?" she asked.

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"Yes, I thought it would be nice to surprise mother and father with it."

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I studied her features carefully to see if I could detect anything off about her, but she just smiled back at me.

When the water was heated, I started to mix in some herbs and allowed them to settle into the water.

"Oh, is that a new tea? What herbs are those?" 1

"Just a special blend I picked up. It helps relax the body."

She watched as I then served it into two teacups.

"Can you please give these to my parents?" I asked.

She looked down at them confused. "Wouldn't you prefer to surprise them with your own hard work?" I shook my head. "No, that's okay."

She smiled and agreed to help, leaving the room with the two teacups in hand.

I could feel my hands shaking with nerves the entire time she was gone, anxiously waiting to see if my plan would be carried out. Any second now Lucy was either going to return, or a warrior was going to burst in here arrest me for murder.

I could feel every second passing slowly. Had I made a mistake? Should I have waited a bit longer before executing the plan?

But my fear was alleviated slightly when I saw Lucy return to the kitchen, a smile on her face still.

"Did you give it to them?" I asked.

“Yes! They enjoyed it very much.”

I studied her every movement and facial expression, waiting for any sign that she was lying or was uncomfortable. But when I didn't see anything out of the ordinary, I decided to push the plan a little further.

“That's wonderful! They should start to feel the herbal effects shortly,” I said enthusiastically. “Here, I made you a cup as well. Let me know what you think.”

I gently pushed the teacup towards her and she looked at it.

“Is there something wrong?” I asked, narrowing my eyes at her.

She wasn't touching the drink and instead was staring at the teacup a little strangely.

Immediately, my heart sank. Had she only been pretending to not know what I'd just done?