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<Candyland>

by <Growing Desires>



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Thank you for three wonderful years

-Growing Desires

Chapter One

“I can’t believe it... I’m finally here... Candyland...”

The name felt a bit bland, uninspired and cheesy but there was no denying their impact on the world. Candyland was the leading retailer in confectionery. Chocolate, Candy, Ice creams, even sugary drinks. They had it all. They are firmly in the number one spot thanks to their crazy research and development division. I knew that because my father had been working there for a number of years. Thanks to him I was now starting a new job there. The R&D department was underground, literally, it was entirely on lockdown and there were no leaks at all. The factories on the surface, all of them, had a tunnel to the underground facility. The true Candyland.

To get there, you had to be doing a lot of things right.

Or know the right person in my case.

My father’s good word had a lot of weight behind it. He was a key contributor to their designs and machinations. He was one of the foremost

people in the R&D department.

As his daughter I knew I needed to make sure I lived up to his name and make sure I didn't embarrass him. Being 21 and fresh out of college, I was certainly a bit fresh to work, this was going to be a tough gig, I knew that, but I was determined.

I had long brown hair that trailed down my back, it was straight and smooth. The dark hue made my blue eyes really stand out, many of my friends said that my look alone could capture the heart of a boy if I so wished. Love was not really something I was massively interested in; I was too ambitious right now in my life. I was quite tall for a girl, standing at six feet tall, I looked quite imposing with my athletic frame, especially with my trim body fat, my muscles popped even more.

"Emma! I'm so glad you're here. Follow me, your dad is this way." A short older woman startled me. She looked familiar, I was sure it was Dad's lead partner.

"Oh Jean? Is that you?" I took a shot.

"Why yes! How on earth did you know?" She looked shocked at me knowing.

"My dad talks about you all the time, very good things."

"Oh, that's lovely. Your dad is a good man. A genius too! Come, come quick, let's not make him wait." Her smile turned into a hurried walk down the corridor.

"Here she is, boss." Jean caught the attention of my father.

“Emma.” My dad stood up, he was a short man too, 5’5, just barely, he looked up at me. “I’m so proud that you’re here...” he wrapped his arms around me and gave me a squeeze. “Told you Jean, she’s fit, should be at the Olympics or something, but instead she wants to follow after her dad.” The older man chuckled.

“Dad...”

“I’m just kidding, I love that you’re here. We can do some amazing things here, I know it.”

As he looked to continue there was an alarm sound coming from his phone. “Crap...” He looked at me with sorrow filled eyes. “I’ve got to shoot, this is urgent.”

I watched him run down the hall, I had never seen my dad run ever.

He really cares about this place...

“Don’t worry honey, he does that often, your father is a very important man.” The older lady stood up and gestured in the opposite direction that my dad just ran. “Let me give you a tour.”

I followed Jean and with each step the smell in the air got richer, sugarier.

I guess it is a candy factory...

It was strange, I don’t think I’ve ever smelled such a strong smell in all of my life, the artificial aroma of various sweets had combined into a pungent cloud that filled the whole facility it seemed like. We arrived at a large door; it looked like one of those doors from a nuclear bunker or something. I saw Jean

tap her keycard against the screen and with a wide opening arc the giant thick steel door opened.

There was an explosion of air that blew against my face, the smell of the sugary delicacies behind the door almost knocked me off my feet. It smelled so thick I thought I was eating the treats.

My face must've been a picture because Jean chuckled. "You get used to the smell."

I looked behind the door and expected to see some sort of factory, but I was met with a strange looking cave. It didn't quite look like rock.

Jean took the first step toward the door, and I promptly followed her. The smell of cocoa was becoming so intense, the lighting made it look like the wall was brown.

Almost like...

"Chocolate." Jean interrupted. "Before you ask."

Jean seemed so chill about it. "Chocolate?" I asked.

"Yeah, the whole place is made out of food. Everything, I mean everything, you see from here on. Entirely edible." Jean laughed. "Not that I would suggest that you might end up like one of them..."

Her mysterious and ominous tone made me worry. I got closer to the wall and saw that it was actually made out of chocolate, like her words were not enough, nor the smell, but I needed to see it. I ran my nail over the surface and saw how it made a small spiral like chocolate would.

"One bite won't hurt." Jean added. "Don't make it a habit though."

I placed my finger between my lips and sucked the brown shaving into my mouth. The flavour was rich, intense, incredible.

Tastes just like a... Candyland... Bar...

Things were starting to click together in my head now. I followed her through the cave, and we found ourselves approaching a light. When we finally saw the entrance to the cave I gasped at the glimpses I could make out.

Is that...

“Welcome to Candyland!” Jean exclaimed.

I gawked over the vast valley of land, nestled between mountains of dark, swirling ganache, the Chocolate Valley unfolds in a breathtaking panorama of edible landscapes. The river, a thick, glossy torrent of melted milk chocolate, meanders through fields of cocoa nibs that shimmer like finely tilled soil. Nearby, a cluster of charming buildings rises from the chocolate-covered earth; their walls are a patchwork of white and dark chocolate squares, and their roofs are tiled with delicate wafers. Dominating the skyline is a colossal factory, a marvel of confectionary architecture shaped like a giant bonbon, its smokestacks puffing out fragrant clouds of powdered sugar. Every detail, from the fudge-rock boulders to the caramel-glazed trees, contributes to an enchanting scene of delicious artistry.

Is it all Candy? This whole place?

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