

## Chapter 1

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# The Audition

LUCAS WAS SITTING in one of the wooden chairs against the wall looking through a magazine when the door to the casting office opened. Abby walked in and scanned the room quickly for a seat. When she couldn't find one, she sat down gracefully on the carpeting and leaned against the large, black canvas bag she was carrying. Lucas wasn't able to take his eyes off her.

Abby was tall and thin and had long blond hair tied back in a ponytail. She was wearing a white blouse and red pants. Her shoes were red leather sandals with flowers on the straps, and her toenails were painted with red polish. Lucas was staring at her. When she looked around the room a second time, she noticed him and smiled. Her smile seemed to light up the whole room, and Lucas thought, "There's someone I want to meet. She's not afraid to smile."

The casting office assistant looked up from her desk and spoke to Abby.

"Miss, did you fill out the forms?"

"No," Abby said, as she stood up to get the papers.

She handed the assistant her resume and photo and took the forms for the audition.

Lucas got up and offered Abby his seat, but she politely refused.

“Oh, thanks a lot, but I’m comfortable on the floor. I’m used to it.”

The casting assistant began calling out some names. Lucas and four other men walked out the opposite door that led to the theater.

About an hour later, after Abby had her chance to try out for a part in the play, the casting assistant came out of the theater and said, “You can all leave now. I’ll call in a few days if you got a part in the play. Thank you all for coming.”

Abby found herself wondering what had happened to the young man who had offered her his seat. He never came back into the office. She wasn’t sure what that meant. Oh well, she thought. She lifted her bag and swung it over her shoulder. She promised herself that she would stop carrying such a heavy bag because it was beginning to hurt her shoulders and back. Inside were her tap shoes, a pair of sneakers, a change of clothes, a makeup kit, a book, a calendar, and a bottle of water. What would she take out? She would have to take out something because dragging the bag around all day on subways and buses was becoming painful.

It was April now. Abby had arrived in New York three months ago. Ever since she was a little girl, she had wanted to be an actress. She loved acting in school plays and felt happy being on a stage, reciting

her part or making up her own words when she forgot the exact words. She had graduated from Yale Drama School in New Haven, Connecticut. Now she was going to auditions at theaters in New York City and hoping to get a role in a play. Although she was a star in many plays at Yale, now she was dealing with the real world. Every day she had to check the ads in the paper for open auditions. A few times she was called back by a producer, but so far, she hadn't been hired. She tried hard not to get discouraged. To keep up her spirits, she practiced yoga and meditated.

Although she hadn't found work in the theater, Abby worked as a waitress at a small café in Greenwich Village. The restaurant, Mama Cucina, was two blocks from her apartment on Jane Street. She loved her neighborhood! There were always people around, and she enjoyed walking everywhere. It reminded her of the small town in Ohio where she grew up.