Write a short story (or beginning to a short story) that starts with one of the following lines:

1. The lights appeared out of the darkness
2. He laughed in my face
3. He didn’t let on that he was scared
4. He didn’t look anything like what she expected

Your story should be at least 1 page single-spaced (no more than 2 pages). Typed, size 12 font.

He didn’t look anything like what she expected. As soon as she stepped into the great hall of the castle, Aria's eyes were immediately drawn to the tall, dark-haired man standing at the center of the room. He was dressed in a simple tunic and trousers, with a cloak draped over his broad shoulders. His piercing blue eyes met hers, and she felt a jolt of electricity shoot through her body.

Aria had been sent to the castle by her father, the king, to marry the prince and secure an alliance between their two kingdoms. She had expected the prince to be a handsome, charming man, much like her childhood friend who had been betrothed to her before he had died in battle. But the man before her was nothing like that.

There was something about him that drew her in, something mysterious and dangerous. She couldn't quite put her finger on it, but she knew she was drawn to him. As she approached him, she noticed the way his muscles rippled beneath his tunic as he moved. She could sense his strength, his power.

"Welcome, Princess Aria," the man said in a deep, gravelly voice. "I am Prince Arin."

Aria felt a shiver run down her spine as she looked into his eyes. There was something in them that made her heart skip a beat. She could feel herself getting lost in his gaze.

"Your Highness," she said, trying to compose herself. "It's an honor to meet you."

Arin gave her a small smile, and Aria felt her heart flutter. She knew that she shouldn't be feeling this way, that she was here to secure an alliance, not fall in love. But she couldn't help the way she felt.

As the days passed, Aria found herself spending more and more time with Arin. They would talk for hours about everything and nothing, and she found herself opening up to him in ways she never had before. She could tell that he was different from the other princes she had met before. There was something about him that made her feel alive.

But as much as she tried to ignore it, Aria knew that she was falling in love with Arin. And she knew that it was a dangerous game to play. She was here to secure an alliance, not fall in love with the prince. But no matter how hard she tried to resist him, she couldn't.

As the day of the wedding approached, Aria found herself torn between duty and her heart. She knew that she had to marry Arin to secure the alliance, but she also knew that she couldn't live without him. In the end, she made a decision that would change her life forever.

On the day of the wedding, Aria stood at the altar, her heart pounding in her chest. As Arin approached her, she took his hand and looked into his eyes. She knew that this was where she belonged, with him.

"I, Princess Aria, take you, Prince Arin, to be my husband," she said, her voice steady. "I promise to love you, honor you, and cherish you for all the days of my life."

Arin gave her a small smile, and Aria knew that she had made the right choice. As they exchanged their vows, she knew that she had found her true love, and that nothing would ever come between them.