

CH 11

Harmony

She bid Deidre farewell, and smiled at the reminder she'd given her about making sure not to forget to speak with Garrett before leaving. She wouldn't forget, he was the new boss, and she'd not really had anything to do with him at all today. This would be their rst real interaction other than that request at lunch.

She was waved into his oce and smiled at him as she stepped in and walked over to his desk, sank down in the chair when he motioned for her to. His smile lit up his whole face, he was a handsome devil of a man. She wondered absently why he wasn't married.

"Please, Harmony, call me Garrett, not Mr Owens. We can be on a rst-name basis, unless at a board meeting, if that is alright with you?" he stated.

"It is," Harmony nodded. It was what she preferred.

"I've been listening to you out there the past few hours, and watching the way you put my calls through, your tting in well already, and it's just your rst day." He leaned back in his chair to look at her.

"It's almost like my last job, taking appointments, I always had to check Mr Williams schedule rst, he had meetings with clients, mediation and court dates and other various things to be worked around, all the time. I am used to that."

"Good, now there are a few things I'd like you to know about me. Firstly, I only drink caffeine before 2pm. After that, if I ask for a cup of coffee, it must be decafe. I take my coffee with almond milk and 1 teaspoon of raw sugar."

She wrote it down and nodded, repeated it back to him so he knew she had it right, "Do you want me to have a coffee on your desk when you get in?" she asked.

"No, I get in at varying times. I'll ask if I want you to get me a cup of coffee."

She nodded "Alright. Do you have any allergies?" she asked.

"No." he chuckled, and she looked up at him questioningly, but he waved it off.

"What kind of snack foods do you prefer?" she asked.

"Now here I was thinking I was going to tell you what I needed, but it seems you have questions of your own."

She looked up at him and smiled a little. "Sorry, I think there are some things I need to know as your secretary, for those days when you miss meals, and need me to put something in front of you, to remind you to eat."

"I will tell you on any given day what I am in the mood to eat. However, if you want to bring me something to eat, and I haven't asked for anything, because you think I need to eat, I will eat anything but sh, never put sh in front of me. But trust me, I will not waste away.

"I also don't particularly like it when my secretary sits at her desk and munches away all day. Please don't do that, it will irritate me, and I'll end up cranky and..." he sighed.

She raised an eyebrow at him after writing down he didn't like sh, "You have a temper."

"Yes, I won't lie to you, my last secretary left due to walking into my oce unexpectedly, and I was, unfortunately, chastising an employee quite loudly, and she freaked out and quit."

"Over you yelling at someone?" Harmony frowned, then shook her head a little, "Mr Owens..."

He cleared his voice "Garrett please."

"My apologies, Garrett, I've seen it all, being a paralegal, angry clients getting into it, Lawyers going head-to-head, and I've had to call building security many times. You, yelling at someone won't affect me, I assure you."

"I don't know I'm pretty scary some days." He grinned right at her, and she laughed at him, knew he was making a joke at his own expense.

"Oh, I denitely see that." She waved at his happy demeanour.

"So on that note, about entering my oce, please don't ever enter my oce of your own volition if the door is closed, always press the intercom and request permission. Never just walk in. I do not like unannounced visits to my oce. That will actually incur you, my temper."

"Good to know." She nodded.

"Now, if the door is open, feel free to knock on it and request to come in and speak with me, if you need something. I also don't like gossip, so please don't do that at your desk. I think the work place is not a place for that at all, and I don't like people muttering about others behind their backs, and being disrespectful on purpose."

She nodded and wrote it down, "I come here to work not chit-chat." She smiled at him, "if I want a conversation, I'll do that, in my break."

"Excellent, I think we will get along." But then he leaned forward and placed his arms on the desk, and looked right at her, and she knew, he was debating with himself about asking her something.

"You may ask, I'll tell you if I'm uncomfortable answering something or deem it inappropriate in anyway." she smiled at him.

"Good, I like honesty, so on that note... When we did your reference check, it didn't come back so good," Garrett stated simply, but he was frowning as well.

"What?" she frowned at him. "I am good at my job, and Mr Williams..."

"Rest assured," he held up a hand to stop her, "I dug deeper, Mr Willams, when I got him on the line, gave you a glowing reference. Getting to him was another matter, our reference check for you was redirected to one Damien Blackwell." He stated, looking right at her.

She frowned right at him, that didn't make any sense to her. "I never worked with him ever."

"No, but he was the one to take the call, and he said some not-so very nice things about you. Called you lazy and lax in your duty. Told Wyatt you were sleeping with your boss, and so they couldn't re you due that you'd claim s****I harassment."

"I was what?" she gasped "I have never done that, Mr Owens, I assure you. I have only ever had one..." she cut herself off and took a breath in and tried to calm herself, counted to 10 and murmured, "Thank you for telling me, I guess that counts for why I couldn't pick up a job before this one... Thank you for actually pushing to speak with Mr Williams."

"There is a reason I did that." He leaned back in his chair once more and looked right at her, "I've seen you in the papers with Damien Blackwell, you were his girlfriend of many years... I'm guessing a bad break-up, and the one you slapped was him."

She didn't really want to talk about that but nodded. "Yes, a bad break-up, and yes it was he I slapped, twice." She muttered.

"May I inquire as to who broke up with whom, just because I have some dealings with his father's company at times, and you two, well might come face to face, here in the oce on the odd occasion."

She was just staring at him now, and he nodded. "I understand it's personal, I just want the heads-up. I'll also always tell you if he's coming, and it's unlikely I'll leave you in his presence alone."

Harmony sighed, and though it was personal and still very fresh. She got the feeling her new boss was actually trying to look out for her, so she answered his question, "I broke up with him," she muttered "He was..." she couldn't even say it out loud, she realised. They'd been together for a long time, and she didn't know how long his affair had been going on.

"I don't need to know the reason." Garrett smiled gently at her, "You two were together quite a while from my knowledge."

"Three years." She nodded and then chastised herself internally, as she closed her eyes and sighed a little, "I'm sorry, this is not something I want to talk about." She stated when she nally looked at him.

"Alright." He nodded "Is there anything else you want to know about me and my needs?" Garrett changed the subject for her, bringing them back to work.

"Um." She'd lost track of her original train of thought. "Oh, your mother told me I had to pencil in dinners twice a week for you, at 8pm each Wednesday and Monday."

"Why?" he asked with a frown marring his handsome face.

"Hmm, well." she chuckled "I do believe, if you'll excuse me for one moment to repeat her." she asked, knowing it would be considered gossip on some level, or disrespectful, and Deidre was his mother.

He nodded "Go on," he muttered.

Harmony got the feeling he understood what she was about to state, "My boy is so very stubborn and getting him to go on a date is near impossible. He always tells me his schedule is full. So just pencil in for me two nights a week for dinners, I'll sort the rest out." She watched him roll his eyes and shake his head and chuckled softly. "She just wants to see you happy, Garrett."

"Hmm, she is always trying to nd me a wife, thinks I'm getting old." He murmured "If that's all?"

"Pencil them in or not?" she smiled at him.

"Go ahead, I'll eat out with the boys, or make a late night meeting to get round them. I'm naughty like that." He chuckled softly and she chuckled with him. "Go on home, Harmony, and I'll see you tomorrow."

She nodded and stood up, packed herself up and left the oce. Drove home to her apartment, anger welling in her over what Damien had done, bad-mouthed her to anyone and everyone that had called to reference check her. How could he be so cruel when he was the one that had been cheating on her, for god only knew how long.

She banged into her apartment and yelled in frustration as she tossed her handbag down on her couch. She should never have signed that agreement with his father. She stalked off to her room and yanked it out to go through it, to see if he had breached anything in it.

She was going to let that footage out if he had, she'd done nothing wrong to him, loved him, really had loved him, and now she just hated him. Wished she had beaten the hell out of him, instead of just slapping him twice. She sat down with it on the table in front of her and went through it once clause at a time.

She couldn't believe what he'd done. He tried to stop her from just getting another job. How was one supposed to live if they couldn't get work? Thankfully, Garrett Owens had known who she actually was, and seen through that man. Found a way to get her real reference, and was willing to hire her.