

Chapter 47

"Miss Catherine, Mr. Martin wants you to come to his office immediately," my new boss said, appearing at my cubicle. "You can go up now. Have you finished that list I gave you?"

I looked at that short, stocky man with his round tortoiseshell glasses and smiled. He was quite a character, but he was very kind and would not hum all day long in the office.

I had been assigned to the commercial department, where the entire floor was open with cubicles arranged in groups of four. The only enclosed office belonged to my boss. It was a busy and colorful environment, filled with noise – everyone was talking all the time, on the phone or to each other. I found it so relaxed and interesting that I thought I would adapt well here. I had even made a friend already, but now with Mr. Martin calling, I worried he might have changed his mind about hiring me.

I looked up and handed some folders to my boss, confirming:

"Yes, Mr. Maurice, everything is organized here with reports. Would you like me to explain anything?"

"No, you can go up to talk to the big boss. If I have any questions, I'll find you later. But go quickly, he seemed to be in a hurry to see you," my boss replied, rushing me.

I left my cubicle and headed to Mr. Martin's office like someone walking to the gallows. In the elevator, soft classical music was playing, and I tried to contain my anxiety by doing a breathing exercise.

When I reached the president's secretary's desk, she smiled and told



to go in as Mr. Martin was waiting for me. I knocked on the door, entered and closed it, saying:

"You asked to see me? How can I help?"

When I looked up, I saw not only Mr. Martin but also Melissa and Alexander sitting there. Holy crap! I was definitely getting fired. It couldn't be possible that he had come personally to humiliate me once again. My eyes welled up with tears and my body trembled.

"Catherine, please come closer," Mr. Martin spoke kindly. "Alexander came here to talk to you, so I'd like to know if you want to speak with him."
"

I looked at Alexander, confused and not understanding what more he wanted from me – hadn't all the unfair accusations and humiliation been enough?

"Mr. Martin, with all due respect, if this isn't about my work at this company, I have nothing to say to Mr. Miller," I said, looking at my boss, trying not to cry.

"Catherine, this has nothing to do with your work here. In fact, Maurice told me you're doing very well, and I'm happy I hired you. Alexander's matter is about what happened at his company," Mr. Martin said, trying to reassure me.

I looked at Mel, who was watching me with concern. When I turned back to Alexander, his eyes seemed pleading, with huge dark circles underneath and a worn-out appearance. My heart twisted, but I wouldn't let him hurt me again.

"Unless Mr. Miller has come with the police to arrest me, I have nothing



to say to him. So, Mr. Martin, if possible, I'd like to return to my work," I said firmly and heard Alexander sigh.

"I came to apologize, Catherine. Could you please hear me out? I made a mistake." Alexander spoke in a hoarse voice, rubbing both hands over his face.

I was confused. Melissa came to me and said, "Look, friend, if it were up to me, this clown wouldn't even get near you, but it seems he won't give up. So just listen to him once. Better here than at home with Peter around."

My friend was right, I didn't need to bring this near my son. So I agreed.

"Fine, Mr. Miller, I'll listen to you, but it'll be after my working hours," I said firmly.

"Catherine, please, as your boss and new friend, let me give you some advice. Talk to Alexander now, use my office. Melissa and I will be in the meeting room if you need anything. I've already made it clear to Alexander that you're not alone," my boss spoke with all gentleness, making it clear he would defend me.

I sighed and agreed - if that's how it would be, let's rip off the band-aid. Melissa and Mr. Martin left, and I was alone with Alexander once again. My heart was racing; I loved this man, but he had hurt me deeply, I was wounded.

He walked toward me, and I stepped back. I couldn't let him touch me because I knew I wouldn't resist.

"Cat, don't do this, let me come closer," Alexander spoke with sadness in his voice.



"Sit down, Mr. Miller. You want to talk to me, I'll listen, but that's all," I said harshly.

We sat down, and he seemed to have pain and sadness on his face. But it was just my wishful thinking that he missed me as much as I missed him, I was sure.

Alexander sighed and told me everything they had discovered. He said it was Celeste who had set me up and that she was the one leaking information, but they had to pretend they didn't know anything until they could find out who her contact was.

I wasn't that surprised that Celeste was a traitor; she was always lurking around, wanting to know everything.

"Catherine, forgive me. I was stupid, I acted on impulse, I was unfair and cruel to you. I'm deeply sorry, Cat. We were involved and when I saw those emails, I was hurt, I didn't want to listen to anyone and didn't give you a chance to defend yourself. Please forgive me!" Alexander Miller was begging for my forgiveness as if it were that simple, but it wasn't.

"Mr. Miller, you threw me out of your company. You spat a bunch of insults in my face. You didn't listen to me, didn't even allow me to defend myself. You said the gutter was where I belonged." I sighed, feeling tears falling from my eyes. "Do you really think it's that easy? That just asking for forgiveness will make everything forgotten? It's not, you broke my heart in a way I never imagined possible."

He reached out to touch me, and I moved away from his touch.

"Don't touch me, please," I whispered, closing my eyes.

"Catherine, please, give me a chance, we can fix this," he pleaded.



"Unfortunately, I can't, Mr. Miller. I was thrown out, humiliated, trampled on. I can't simply forget. I appreciate that you took the trouble to come here and say that you've cleared up the matter, and I'm sincerely happy that you're making progress in discovering who's been sabotaging you, but I can't offer you more than that."

I lowered my head, stood up, and left the room. I went straight to the conference room and entered sobbing, crying as if there were waterfalls in my eyes. My friend ran and hugged me. Mr. Martin gently placed his hand on my shoulders and said:

"You and Melissa can go home whenever you want. I'll let Maurice know. See you tomorrow. You have a friend in me, Catherine," he said and left me with my friend.

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