



## Chapter 50

I looked around at everyone in that room, not understanding anything. Besides me and my boss Mr. Maurice, there were Melissa, Mr. Martin, Alexander, Patrick, Rick, Mari, and Alan.

What was this about? I looked at Mel, and she shrugged, just as clueless as I was. Mr. Martin pulled out a chair, gesturing for me to sit next to Alexander. Was he kidding?

I was already suspecting this was just another one of Alexander's tricks to get to talk to me. Of course, he wouldn't buy the system. But I would be professional and do my best there; at least my boss could evaluate my performance.

"Catherine, please, I know you're an excellent professional and can handle this," Henry spoke as if he had read my mind. "I asked for your presence because you worked at Group Miller and are familiar with the problem they're facing now."

"Of course, sir. I'll help in any way I can." I sat down and acted professionally.

Mr. Maurice began the software presentation, and I added insights and opinions. We made a good team, understanding each other well during the meeting. When we finished, the questions started, and I answered everyone's doubts while my bosses smiled happily at my explanations.

Alexander looked at his team members as if asking for their opinion.

"Fantastic, Alexander. The system is very secure. I think you need it in the company," Alan spoke with certainty.

"I thought it was excellent too. I had no idea your company had



developed something this good, Henry," Patrick commented.

"Well then, Henry, just send us the proposal, and we can close the deal," Alexander spoke in that businessman tone that made him so sexy.

Melissa distributed the folders with the proposal, and they didn't even hesitate. It was decided right there, with only the service contract left to sign the following week.

The meeting ended and the atmosphere became relaxed with random conversations. Everyone came up to me giving hugs, kisses, and saying they missed me. Alexander remained seated, just observing.

"Cat, you know tomorrow is Mari's farewell party, right?" Rick pulled me to the back of the room, speaking quietly.

"Yes, I know, Rick. I'm going to miss her so much," I said, feeling sad about Mari's departure.

"We all will. But it'll be good for her, and they've decided she'll come here once a month. I guess nobody in that company can live without Mari.

"I didn't know about this, but I was happy about the possibility of staying in touch. Rick continued, "So, your name and Melissa's are on the guest list. You can't miss it."

"Oh, Rick, I'm not going. No way I'm setting foot in that company again. I don't want to be kicked out again," I said defensively.

"Who's going to kick you out, girl? Everything's been cleared up. They should never have doubted your loyalty in the first place," Rick spoke as if it was obvious that I was welcome.

"It may seem cleared up, Rick. But the way Alexander treated me and Patrick's look that day, it hurt a lot. I don't want to go back there," I said



with teary eyes.

"Pretty woman, I've already kicked Patrick's butt. He was a jerk for not defending you. And Alexander, don't even get me started. But you have to come, for Mari," Rick was insistent.

"Okay, I'll think about it. Thanks for inviting me, you're a good friend, I miss our lunches," I said sincerely.

"Well then, let's schedule some lunches. Let's plan something for Saturday, I want you to meet my wife. She's also furious with those two idiots," Rick said and let out a laugh.

"Excuse me, Rick, but one of those idiots wants to apologize," Patrick said, appearing behind me. Rick said goodbye and left.

"Look, Patrick, you don't have to apologize to me," I immediately said, although I was quite upset with him too.

"Of course I need to, Cat. I offered you my friendship, and when you needed me, I didn't support you right away. I really feel sorry for being such a jerk to you."

"Patrick, I understand you had information that incriminated me. It's a shame you accepted it as absolute truth without investigating. But I get it; after all, you and Alexander are like brothers, and you needed to support him," I said, lowering my head.

"Cat, supporting Alexander doesn't mean acting unjustly. I was wrong. Just like him. I should have acted like Mari, Rick, and Alan, who never doubted your loyalty for a second."

"Let's forget about it, Patrick. You've already cleared everything up. It doesn't matter anymore."



"Yes, it does matter. And I would really like you to forgive me. I am sincerely sorry."

"Alright, Patrick, don't beat yourself up!" I said, trying to end the conversation.

"Great, so you're coming to Mari's party tomorrow and coming back to the company?" Patrick said hastily.

"Neither one nor the other. I'm never setting foot in that company again," I said firmly.

"But Cat, I thought I was forgiven," Patrick looked at me, confused.

"I'm putting this behind me, Patrick. I really don't hold any grudge against you. Don't worry about it."

"I guess I'll have to grovel for your forgiveness too, huh?"

"No one's going to grovel, Patrick. We're good, and you don't need to ask for forgiveness," I assured him with a smile.

"Alright. We'll win you back," Patrick said with a wink. "Another thing, Cat. I brought your check. You worked, it's only fair that you get paid."

"I won't accept that money, Patrick. Don't insist, I don't want anything from you all. I hope you won't push this and avoid creating another problem," I looked at him with a stern expression, leaving no room for discussion.

"You're being proud, Cat," Patrick said with a sigh. "And you have every right to be. I'm sorry things are so broken, and it's our fault. But we'll work hard for your forgiveness. And you'll come back to us."



Patrick tucked the check into his jacket's inner pocket, smiled at me, and left the room. I found that quite amusing and smiled back at him.

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