

## Chapter 774

She also reinforced my libido driven ambiguity – essentially she encouraged me to be a man-whore because I had a voracious sexual appetite. Thus the reason I knew I could pick up a date at any bar within five minutes. Of greater relevance was that I could tell the difference between Dorian and Attic Greek, real 19th dynasty Egyptian versus a Cairo backstreet knock-off, Old Kingdom Hittite and Gaelic Celt from the Early Roman Republic period.

This one room was worth a mint. I was brought back from my ruminations by a sublime call to order. The room grew quiet, the women stood solemnly and then Ms. Hayden St. John (aka Marilynn's Grans) began a deep intonation – a chant. Each of the elder members of the board took up the song based on seniority. When all the board members had taken up the anthem, the junior women uniformly began to sing a different song at a higher pitch.

The final refrain ended with a sorrowful echo. The women sat down and the business began. Now I knew why they didn't give a damn that I was in the room. They were talking in a language less than a thousand people worldwide probably knew – except for this crowd. The main reason was the fact this language last enjoyed mass usage during the time of the Iliad.

I knew the language because the aforementioned Archeology professor had a kink for poetry in dead languages. Her reading to me while engaging in intercourse was the erotic equivalent of the equestrian arts. My passionate reciting to her in the same tongues inspired her to a bedroom rendition of bronco busting. I had a desperate desire to establish my best poker face.

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Letting any of them know I could follow the conversation seemed unwise. The first two hours of the meeting were normal corporate greed and malfeasance. I handled a call from a concerned caretaker. A nanny of one of the board members had a child come home sick. I accessed her information, contacted her pediatrician and set up the appointment in as muted voice as possible.

When they adjourned for a break, I moved next to the mother and waited to be recognized. She got around to me after she impressed upon me that I was insignificant. When she was informed of the issue, she became angry and concerned. She couldn't take my word for anything, making all those calls all over again. When it turned out to be exactly as I told her, the oddest thing happened.

"You performed admirably," she smiled and patted my cheek. Well, duh! "What is your name and who controls you?" Controls me? I didn't like that at all.

"Cáel Nyilas, Ms. Beyoncé Vincennes" (the board member's name). In this 'first name' corporate culture, I wasn't sure how to address a board member and Buffy had been of no help.

"Katrina Love is my department head," I finished. (w)urw.Ŋo ve l w o r m. c ô m

"You seem to be very polite and useful, for a man," she kept smiling. That was nice right up to the 'for a man' part. "It was a pleasure," Beyoncé added. I thought she was about to hug me – beyond strange. Instead she extended her hand for me to shake.

This time it wasn't a mistake. I placed a chaste kiss upon her knuckles on purpose because suddenly a classically romantic gesture seemed liked the career-positive thing to do. One of the other ladies standing close by casually remarked to a companion in Old Kingdom Hittite.

"Look, she didn't have to train him, or anything."

I successfully resisted flinching as I released Beyoncé's hand and backed away. Training? If I became involved with any kind of behavioral training I was demanding a serious raise to that outrageous salary I was already getting. They finished their break in short order and returned to their meeting. The second portion was worse – much worse.

They began chatting about breeding programs, harvesting mates, selective marriages and assassinations to advance their cause. Oh My God. They were a crazed female cult trying to take over the World and my internship was a 'test case' for a new male training program. I guessed that Khalid 'washed out' and not in a good way.

I was truly tempted to whisper to Buffy that I was going to the bathroom, take the elevator, exit the building and flee. No, not flee to my apartment. I'd stop by there, but after that I'd keep going. I wasn't sure where I would stop running. These chicks were global. I'd always wanted to bike my way down the Andes. Southern Argentina looked good – just me and some penguins.

Work called and I responded. Issues were dealt with and even Buffy seemed pleased by the time lunch rolled around. The two of us checked out the servings. The individual junior members collected and inspected the plates for themselves and their seniors. We were around in case anything went wrong.

"Why did you kiss Beyoncé's hand?" Buffy addressed me out of the blue. She was almost polite.

"Did I do something wrong?" I inquired.

"It isn't what I've come to expect from you," she looked me over inquisitively. "You kissed my hand, but I discerned that you felt it was a mistake."

"You are also combative with the other new hires," she grinned, "yet you are not a suck-up as evidenced yesterday. Such a submissive gesture to Beyoncé isn't like you unless you are aiming for the stars." wŴw. N © ∇ v L Ŵ ( o ) m . c o M

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"How about considering it to be a spontaneous action of respect?" I regarded her.

"Besides, I don't even know what she is in charge of," I shrugged. "I felt like doing it so I did it."

"Well, I'm impressed," Buffy smiled. "Do you want to go out for a drink or two after work?"

"It's against the rules," I reminded her.

"I won't tell if you won't," she winked.

"Doing so is wrong. I know it's wrong and that's what matters," I explained.

"Does that really matter to you?" she was back to reading my intentions.

"Yes. It should matter to you too," I said.

"Interesting," and that was that. I didn't deserve answers or explanations.

Once the plates were cleared away and any trace cleaned up, the meeting lasted for two more hours. The reason they didn't want any of this getting out to the larger world was clear. They apparently engaged in murder, slavery, and illegal genetic engineering. That was on their good days. I kept a low profile and the hope that I'd make it out of the building in one piece - until the meeting ended.

As we exited into the spacious hallway, an accident of fate took over. I was sent ahead to retrieve some parcel one board member had brought for another. Four women in front of me – two seniors and two juniors – abruptly stopped to share some joke. I stopped. The two women coming up behind me didn't, pushing me into the Indian junior member.

I immediately backed off and apologized. She turned and looked pissed. Her backhand caught me flat-footed. Cursing in Hittite, she called me a bull's buttocks then hauled off to slap me again. I took a half-step back.

"Would someone please call 9-1-1?" I announced in a loud, clear voice. "This woman just assaulted me." I was praying that, with the meeting over, they would pretend to be human once more.

No one did anything at first. The conversation muted. Not even Buffy looked like she was coming to my aid. Such is life. The junior Indian chick smiled evilly and launched her slap. Recall her backhand caught me off-guard the first time out. She swung, I blocked then shot two lighting jabs to her chin. Down she went, stunned.

The only remaining noise was me moving. I wiped off my belt, rolled the little princess onto her stomach and pulled both her arms behind her back.

"What are you doing to my \*\*\*\*\*!" shouted the Indian Senior. I started lashing junior's wrists together as I tried to reason out what that term meant. I guessed it was 'apprentice', or something close to that.

"Your unwillingness to obey the laws of the land you find yourself in doesn't concern me," I glared at India Senior. "Now I'm..." was all I got out before she kicked me. I don't mean some kind of old lady stomp. No, this was a spinning kick to the shoulder. It would have been to my head, but I almost dodged in time.

The women stepped back to give us room in the hallway to fight. More accurately, they made room so she could kick my ass. I was using boxing. She was using some sort of fluid, acrobatic style of martial arts I'd never seen before. It emphasized kicks and redirecting energy. Down I went. She began to untie her companion as I got up.

I came at her, she put a foot to my gut, followed by a palm strike to my trachea and a second one to my forehead. Down I went again, then forced my way onto all fours. This time, India Senior was waiting for me. I struck at her feebly, she knocked my arm aside then slammed her heel into the back of my skull, bouncing my head off the floor. Sadly for her, I have a really thick skull.

She had half-turned to her companion when I crawled up for more punishment. She gave an annoyed grunt and launched a kick at my ribs. Boxing hadn't worked so I went for Brazilian jujitsu, my second best martial arts style. It surprised the shit out of her. Ten seconds later I was preparing to snap her damned neck when I felt the others closing in.

"Cáel!" Buffy screamed. "Stop that right now." My sixth sense kicked in. There was no way I could win this fight with my brawn. I elected for the cerebral response. I let go of the woman and rolled away – right onto the feet of the closest female group. Odds were looking good they were about to pound on me as well.