



Capable

Grace

I grit my jaw, barely controlling the rage that makes my blood boil. " Maybe you know people that do things like that, Mr. Costello, but I am not like them. Please refrain from verbal harassment. "

" Verbal harassment? " He snarls, shooting up from his seat.

I clench my hands into fists, standing my ground. " Yes, Mr. Costello. It's verbal harassment. You are saying things that are making me uncomfortable. "

He rounds the table with a speed that makes me take a step back.

" You think you are all that just because you slept with a higher-up, huh? " He sneers, closing the distance between us. " but you are just one of their adventures. They don't give a fuck what happens with you down here as long as they have paid you by getting you this job. "

" Why do you assume that I got this job because of a vulgar reason like that? " My eyes narrow on him.

He sizes me up, from head to toe, his gaze leering. Uncomfortably, I shift my weight from one foot to another.

Suddenly, he grabs my upper arm and drags me to the glass wall to our right. I gasp, struggling to free myself.

" Mr. Costello. Take your hands off me! "

" Look. " He hisses, pointing a finger towards the others working on

their desks.

I free my arm and take a step away from him before following his gaze.

"They are all high achievers. They have graduated from the best colleges in the fucking world and have done internships in one of the three big companies. They have talent, experience, and awards. Some of them have won national and international competitions and designed buildings that are appreciated internationally. What credentials do you have?" He rants, his voice loud and shrieky.

My palms sweat as I stare at the efficient people, working tirelessly on their spots. A pang hits my heart, making me press my quivering lips together.

If Lily hadn't taken everything from me, if Mom and Dad had allowed me to attend the college I was accepted into...if I was not used to doing everything they wanted from me...

I would have impressive credentials just like the people working on this floor—a floor that is just beneath the CEO's office, a floor where the most talented and cherished people of this corporation work day and night to make things happen.

"What do you have?" Mr. Costello scoffs sarcastically. "Your body? And a beautiful face? That's it?"

"I can...prove myself." I whisper. Even if I don't have the credentials, I believe I have talent. Tristin believes so too.

"How? Do you want me to let you work on a project?" He chuckles, walking back to his table.



" Yes. " I state hesitantly and turn to face him. " Give me a chance, Mr. Costello, and I will prove that I am not a useless addition here. "

" You can ask your higher-up to force me to do that for you. That way I will know who is your connection. " He grins, his teeth showing.

I sigh. This is all a joke to him.

" I will not ask anyone to do anything for me. I will prove to you that I am capable. " I insist, running my hands down my skirt.

I don't know why I am reasoning with a man like that. It's all so stupid.

But...I have to find my footing. I can't keep relying on Tristin for everything.

" Capable? " He rolls his eyes and snatches the paper from the table.
" Go in the kitchen and make coffee for everyone. That's what you are good for. "

Surprised, I stand there for some time. Is this a sarcastic remark or an order?

" What the fuck are you searching on my face?! Go do what I asked you to do. " He snaps loudly, sending me scurrying towards the door.

I release a breath on my way out and walk back to the blonde girl. This time, she picks up her head.

" Are you leaving? " She asks.

Her eyes drip with disdain for me just like Mr. Costello. So all these

people think I got here by jumping the ladder and they hate for me for it?

Most of it is true, yes. But I am not completely hopeless. I can work.

I sigh. "where is the kitchen?"

She scans me from head to toe, like that team manager did just now before pointing her finger towards the right.

"In the right corner." She says. "I want two spoons of sugar in my black coffee."

Dumbfounded, I stare at her. How does she know—

"Boss makes sure that nepotism cases like you start from there." She explains before my thoughts run wild.

I nod curtly and approach the kitchen. Someone starts from somewhere, right? It can't be that bad. I just got insulted and humiliated but it's still better than not having a job at all.

But I am proved wrong. When I make the coffee and deliver it to every desk, they accept it without thanks. When I give the coffee to Mr. Costello, he throws the cup on the floor and starts shouting.

"Is this what you are capable of?! Go make it again and make it less bitter."

I turn to leave but he issues another order. "Clean the place before you go."

I glance down at my feet that got splashed with the burning hot coffee before looking up again. It's fine. Everything will be alright.



I grab tissues from his desk and wipe the floor clean while he watches with those disgusting eyes. Then, I pick up the empty disposable cup and walk out of the office.

The rest of my day until lunch time is spent with making multiple cups of coffee for that team manager while he keeps throwing it in my face every single time before making me wipe the office clean and sending me for another cup again.

By the time, the floor people gather for lunch and leave...I am exhausted and my feet are turning red. But I am relieved. At least, they are all leaving and I won't have to endure this torture for some time.

They shoot me skeptical looks on the way out and don't bother asking me if I want to join. My throat clogs as the last person steps into the elevator and the doors close.

Sighing, I slump against a desk and remove my feet from the heels. I might get blisters if I don't apply an ointment on the burns.

Nibbling on my lips, I look around but find nothing for help. Even my stomach is starting to hurt.

Suddenly, the elevator doors ding open again. I put the heels back hurriedly and look up to find Luca strolling towards me. His eyes scan the empty space before landing on me.

" Ms. Whitlock. Boss wants you in his office. " He tells me as he nears me.

I look around the space and nod slowly. " Please lead the way. "



Luca leads me to the elevator and to the top floor. We step out into a lavish corridor. The black-and-white space appears clean and expensive.

I look around the corridor, then at the desk in one corner and the big black door at the other end.

To my relief, the reception desk is vacant.

"Boss made sure no one knows just like you wanted." Luca informs, noticing my stare towards the desk.

"Oh." My cheeks warm up.

We approach the double black door before Luca takes his leave. "Please go inside."

I nod, knocking on the door. My heart misses a strange beat as I open it and step into the cold office.

Instantly, my eyes are drawn to the huge mahogany table at the end and the man sitting behind it on his executive chair.

When he senses my stare, Tristin glances up and rotates the pen he is holding in his fingers. His gaze lowers to my body as if scanning me but it carries a distinct coldness. It's not like that of Mr. Costello. He doesn't make me uncomfortable.

"Little butterfly." His voice sounds breathy.

"You wanted me to—"

Suddenly, his gaze lifts to my eyes, cutting me off. "What happened

to your feet? "

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