

His kiss 57

Chapter 57

Gabriela froze for a heartbeat, blindsided by Wesley's insight. How could he possibly have guessed what was on her mind? Had he already learned about her one-night stand with Brenden? The thought alone made her pulse quicken. Forcing her lips into a polite curve, she replied evenly, "I'm not here to see Mr. Saunders."

"Oh? Is that so?" Wesley's gaze drilled into her—dark, unreadable, laced with a faint edge of impatience. "As far as I know, you're still just a sales department intern. So why exactly are you on the twelfth floor?"

Her mind scrambled for an answer. The easiest escape would be to butter him up and hope it worked. But with Wesley, whose moods shifted like quicksilver, one wrong word could backfire spectacularly.

She'd tried flattering him before—sometimes it had bought him a smile, other times only a cold look. Never had it earned her anything of substance—not even a token bit of overtime pay, let alone a permanent spot at the company.

Perhaps, she'd been playing the wrong game all along. Wesley wasn't the type to bask in compliments. If anything, he seemed to enjoy being scolded.

She thought she'd finally cracked a piece of his puzzle—yet one look at that impossibly handsome face, and every biting remark she might have mustered dissolved on her tongue.

Watching her cycle between wary hesitation and dawning comprehension, Wesley could practically read her thoughts. The mere idea of Brenden staining his reputation had his fists itching to drag him back for another beating.

With a flick of his wrist, he dismissed her, his tone edged with cool detachment. “Get back to work.”

Grateful for the reprieve, Gabriela wasted no time slipping out, hurrying back to the sales department. Aubrey barely glanced up before calling across the room, “Gabriela, there’s a company notice!”

She hurried to her desk and opened the company email.

The bold text leapt out at her. “Brenden Saunders has been found responsible for spreading rumors about our CEO. As disciplinary action, he will be reassigned to the Claei Swea well-digging project effective immediately.” Gabriela stared at the screen, momentarily frozen. Claei Swea was all the way out in Afluena—if Brenden was shipped there now, would he even make it back before the New Year?

She’d already gone through enough trouble just to secure this fake boyfriend arrangement, and now Brenden had gotten himself into a mess. Honestly, with that level of brainpower, his romantic resume of thirty-eight girlfriends defied all logic.

While she stewed, Aubrey’s voice chirped right in her ear. “They’re calling it a project assignment, but really, it’s punishment. He’ll be digging wells. Turns out Mr. Saunders’ little rumor about Mr. Moss being a masochist was totally bogus. I knew it was nonsense.”

Gabriela almost laughed at Aubrey's shamelessness. This from the very same person who'd been practically buzzing with excitement to share that juicy bit of gossip earlier—and then let it slip to the office.

Aubrey wasn't finished. "Oh, and I heard he made a massive scene at the meeting. Stood right up and called Mr. Moss a jerk in front of everyone. No wonder they're shipping him off to Afluena."

Gabriela's stomach sank. With this mess blowing up, there was no way he'd be back before the New Year. And without him, where on earth was she supposed to find another man to drag along to Phyllis's wedding?

She fired off a quick message to "NotASaunders." "Why are you being sent to dig wells? How long is this project going to take?"

Wesley stormed back into his office, his mood already black. Seeing Gabriela's text only soured it further. He shot back a blunt reply. "I don't know!"

A jolt of panic raced down her spine. "Is this because you spread that rumor about Mr. Moss being a masochist?" she typed furiously. "Why can't you keep your mouth shut? Even if it's true, you should've kept it to yourself. And now what? Are you planning on spending the rest of your life in Afluena digging wells?"

Wesley's jaw flexed as he read her message, every word steeped in her frustration. Her reply made his grip on the phone tighten until it nearly cracked.

He shut his eyes, forcing the irritation down before he typed, “The rumors are false. Completely fabricated. Don’t believe a word of it.” Gabriela was caught off guard when she read those words. Something in his tone didn’t match the usual cocky bravado. Could it be that Brenden had finally learned his lesson and decided to act like he had a shred of sense?

Her shoulders eased as she tapped out another reply. “You’d better watch yourself from now on. Don’t go running your mouth about the boss. I’m warning you—he’s petty enough to blow up over nothing. I used to butter him up every day, but he just ignored me and refused to pay for my overtime. He’s a ruthless businessman who likes to exploit his employees. What possessed you to spread nonsense about him? You’ve dug your own grave. Listen, give it a few days for him to cool off, then go apologize properly. You might earn his forgiveness and be transferred to headquarters soon.”