+120 Points at most

Chapter 10 EMILY

Late at night or early morning—dependingon what you'd consider five am to be—we finally locked up. My legs were killing me, and my stomach complained about the too-small meal I had several hours ago.

It had taken forever to get the customers out, count the money, and turn out the lights. But, when I stepped out of the building I breathed a little easier.

Money was tight as it was—beinga college student livingoff-campus in New York City, but this job helped considerably. The tips were great, as were the paycheck I got every other week when I worked that weekend.

"Do you want me to wait with you at the bus stop?" Mark, my manager, asked as soon as we got outside.

My pride wanted to say no, I didn't need anyone to watch over me, that I could handle myself. But... this was in the middle of the city. I would admit, I was scared of beingon my own at this hour.

"It won't be too much of a problem for you?" I questioned, but I knew he would say no like he always did.

"Of course not, come on." He started walkingtowards my bus stop, which he did every time we closed up together.

Mark was a couple of years older than me. He was probably considered attractive, with his carefully styled hair, perfectly plucked eyebrows, and an athletic-lookingbody. Still, I could never see him like that. For me, he was my boss and only that. Which made it even more awkward when I knew he didn't see me as just an employee. His discreet way of hittingon me happenedfar too often not knowingwhat he was doing.

"When's school starting again?" He tried to do small talks, but damn, I'd just finished an eight-hour shift with noisy people and loud music; I craved some peace and quiet.

"In four weeks." Truth be told, I couldn't wait for it to begin. I would start my last year of my bachelor's degree in Marketing, and it was my one true dream. I loved everything about it and couldn't wait until I finally got my degree.

"Ah..." He sounded disappointed, and seeing the question in my eyes, he elaborated. "I probably won't see you as much. I mean, you will be busy with school and..." Mark trailed off, staring out into the distance, his brows knitted together.

+120 Points at most

"I'll still work every other weekend." I tried to comfort him, and it felt weird doing it. We weren't close, not at all, but it seemed he thought we were closer than I considered us to be.

The bus saved me for any more awkward talks. "Well, this is me. Thanks for watching out for me." I made sure to keep the distance between us, especially when I saw he wanted to move in to give me a hug. I probably should start saying no to him when he asks to follow me to my bus stop. It was sending the wrong message.

"Right." He rubbed his neck. "See you in two weeks?"

"I'll see you in two weeks," I confirmed, giving him a little wave as I stepped onto the bus. Yeah, I really needed to stop having him wait with me. It was starting to get more awkward each time it happened.

My apartment was small and crappy. There was a hole in the ceiling where it leaked water, and I needed to have a bucket underneath to collect the drops. I suspected the walls had once been white but were now a dirty yellow. As for space, my living room was also my bedroom and dining room. It was also my kitchen since I didn't have a divider between the rooms—a tiny bathroom with just enough space to brush my teeth in between the toilet and shower.

To say the apartment was cramped was an understatement, but it was mine, and I was happy about that. It could've been worse; I could have lived with people I didn't like. Or, I could have a roommate who tried to poison me by spraying something in my food while I wasn't around. Sounded crazy as hell and improbable, but I've heard it happened before to someone else.

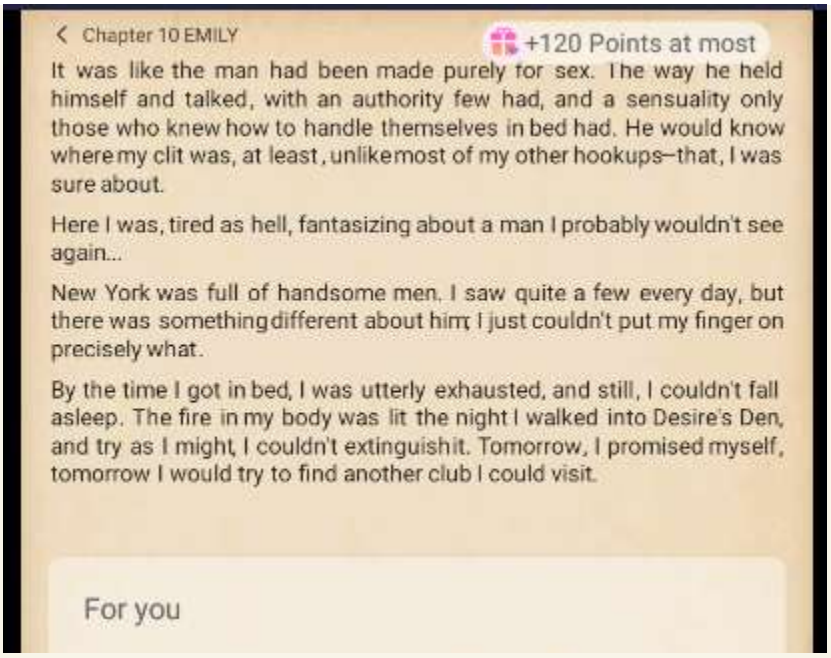
No, thank you. This girl right here needed her own space.

Locking up the door, I dragged myself in, throwing my thin jacket on the hanger attached to the door. I had no energy and had to fight to keep my eyes open. How was I going to manage to work this late every other weekend while going to college?

I started working at Euphoria when summer break started, and it had been great. But with school starting again and possible internships, I just didn't know how I could do it all. The thing was, I needed the money, so I had to figure it all out somehow. I didn't want to rely on my parents either; I was an adult now... But by being an adult cams adult problems.

Just one year left, and I will graduate with a bachelor's degree. Then, I would sort out my shit and get my life in order. Maybe I'd get a master's degree later on, but that was definitely down the line. For now, I wanted some real working experience in my chosen field.

Pushing the thoughts out of my mind—I didn't need to stress about that now—I sat down for a quick meal. While I ate, my mind returned to the man I had served at the bar.


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It was like the man had been made purely for sex. The way he held himself and talked, with an authority few had, and a sensuality only those who knew how to handle themselves in bed had. He would know where my clit was, at least, unlike most of my other hookups–that, I was sure about.
Here I was, tired as hell, fantasizing about a man I probably wouldn't see again...
New York was full of handsome men. I saw quite a few every day, but there was something different about him; I just couldn't put my finger on precisely what.
By the time I got in bed, I was utterly exhausted, and still, I couldn't fall asleep. The fire in my body was lit the night I walked into Desire's Den, and try as I might, I couldn't extinguish it. Tomorrow, I promised myself, tomorrow I would try to find another club I could visit.
For you