

Chapter 8 I'm Planning To Resign

"Ms. Fowler?" Leyla called out.

"Just leave them here." Noreen's reply came out smooth and steady, without a trace of wavering.

Leyla lingered for a moment before murmuring, "Mr. Evans mentioned... you're moving to the seventeenth floor today. This office belongs to Miss Dale now."

Noreen's gaze drifted toward the wide glass windows.

From the thirty-second floor, the city stretched out in sharp, familiar lines. Countless late nights with Caiden surfaced in her mind—long hours buried in the Southtown project, every triumph and setback carved into these walls.

All of it would soon belong to Jessica.

She didn't argue, didn't fight back. Wordlessly, she began tucking her personal things into a box.

When the elevator doors slid open on the seventeenth floor, a row of curious faces turned toward her. A few colleagues watched her with muted pity, others busied themselves with their screens, and a knot of younger women bent close, whispering in barely muffled tones.

She drew herself upright and strode through the corridor, the crisp rhythm of her heels echoing against the polished marble.

"Ms. Fowler!" Jax Blake from the finance department hurried after her, slightly out of breath. "About the final payment for the Southtown project, it has to go through the new..."

He abruptly stopped, a flush creeping up his neck. "I'm so sorry, Ms. Fowler. I meant to talk to Miss Dale. I forgot for a second."

Noreen's quick glance at the document confirmed it—Jessica's name had replaced hers in the approver field.

"It's alright," Noreen replied, her voice cool as glass. As she turned, the

bulletin board in the break room caught her eye. A photo from the Southtown project celebration hung there—her team, their smiles wide with hard-won pride. Jessica's portrait had been pinned right over it, slicing through the image so only half of Noreen's shoulder remained.

At her newly assigned desk, a plain cardboard box sat on the chair, her things carelessly tossed inside.

She sifted through the jumbled papers until her fingers brushed against a small photo frame buried beneath a pile of files.

Inside the frame was a snapshot from last year's annual gala: she in an elegant gown, Caiden beside her, his rare smile caught by the camera.

On the back of the photo, the date she had scribbled in secret remained faint but visible.

That night, he had leaned close and said, "Well done."

Leyla trailed in with her own things, indignation coloring her voice. "Mr. Evans has crossed the line! Everyone saw how many nights you pulled for this project. If it weren't for you, it never would've wrapped up this smoothly. He promised you that promotion—then hands it off to someone else behind your back. And to a newcomer, no less."

"The newcomer happens to be the daughter of the Dale Group's CEO," Noreen replied evenly. "With her on board, he can secure more partnerships."

With an exasperated breath, Leyla finally let the sigh escape. "Still, it's so unfair to you, Ms. Fowler. Is Jessica even half as capable as you? She's just riding on the fact that she's Mr. Evans' girlfriend."

Noreen's grip on the file tightened briefly, her knuckles paling against the crisp paper.

Three years into their marriage, not a single soul knew she was Caiden's wife. He had never once announced their relationship in public.

Meanwhile, Jessica had barely joined the company, and the whole building already buzzed with talk of her romance with him.

She rested a steady hand on Leyla's shoulder. "I'm the one getting pushed down, Leyla. You don't need to come with me to the seventeenth floor. Stick with Jessica. It'll give you a better future."

Leyla shook her head so fast her ponytail swayed. "No way. I want to stay with you."

"Be smart," Noreen urged softly. "Your future matters more than loyalty right now."

"But..."

"No buts," Noreen cut in, dropping her voice low enough that only Leyla could hear. "I'm planning to resign."

The words stunned Leyla into silence. Her lips parted, as if she wanted to say something—offer comfort, beg her to reconsider—but nothing came out.

She just stood there, wide-eyed, as the weight of Noreen's quiet decision settled between them.

Catching the unspoken sympathy in Leyla's gaze, Noreen simply turned on her heel and headed out.

The moment she stepped into the hallway, a ripple of noise rolled through the office—Jessica had arrived.

A cluster of eager employees swarmed around her, their voices bright with flattery as they guided her through the workspace.

Jessica's stiletto heels clicked sharply against the floor, her elegant posture wrapped in a poised, untouchable smile.

When she crossed paths with Noreen, the corners of Jessica's lips flattened, her expression cooling as she said, "Could you make me a cup of coffee and bring it to my office on the thirty-second floor?"

Her cutting tone stilled the room. Curious eyes flicked between the two women, the tension so obvious it hung in the air like static.

Her disdain for Noreen wasn't subtle—it was as plain as day.

And everyone understood that from this moment on, Noreen's place in the company was going to be a battlefield.

Noreen's expression, however, remained smooth and unreadable, not a flicker of emotion slipping through.

Leyla rushed forward, her voice slightly rushed. "Coffee, right? I'll bring it to you right away, Miss Dale."

"The one Ms. Fowler has looks good. I'd like the same," Jessica insisted, her mouth curved in a pleasant smile while her eyes glittered with deliberate malice.

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A faint curve ghosted across Noreen's lips. "Making coffee isn't in my job description. If you needs an assistant, you can hire one."

Without granting Jessica another glance, she strode off on her own, her heels striking the floor with quiet defiance.

For you



The M.C. is a bit of a...