

## Chapter 160: The benefit of the doubt.

Hanna's POV:

"Well, Hannah, I'm so sorry that we didn't get a chance to see the architects today," James told me at the end of the afternoon. I could see that he

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was sorry about this because I know that he was willing to get the experience first hand. And he was super happy that I was there to share the work with him so he could learn from other professionals more than just administrative work.

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"Don't worry about that, James. We'll have another chance tomorrow," I told him dismissively. He was kind of young and probably didn't know that this type of opportunity happens all the time because I was hired for this purpose, so he would have the chance to see whatever he wanted to see with the architects in the near future.

"Yeah, I'm sorry that Katrina was here today, though," James told me quietly.

"Why?" I asked him innocently. I knew that I had some reservations against her but I couldn't explain why I was so wary of her. But this was affecting others at work and I was dying to know why James felt the same.

But he didn't say a thing to me. Instead, he shook his head and murmured: "I believe that this is a story for another day. Don't worry for now, we're gonna be fine," he told me while I was grabbing my purse to leave the building.

Suddenly at that moment, I decided to go to the kitchen instead. I was leaving but first, I wanted another cup of coffee to go. So, I went to the kitchen and put one of these capsules in the machine and I was waiting for my fresh cup of coffee when I heard a couple of voices whispering in the corridor. I didn't want to eavesdrop, but I couldn't help it.

"Why do you have to hire her?" I've heard Katrina's

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voice complain. "I don't like her at all!" I've heard her whining. I was a big girl and that didn't bother me actually. In fact, the feeling was mutual. But I really, really would like to know why she was treating me like this.

And then, I heard a second voice that said: "What do you have against her?" I heard Stone's voice talking back to her.

"I don't know, I just don't feel that she is the right person to be here, Lorenzo. I simply don't like her. It seems like we won't get along," She told him.

Wait a minute, was she referring to him by his first name? I asked myself. Were these two up to something?

"Why are you so annoyed by her presence, Katrina?" Stone asked her. "Do you think that she's going to threaten your position? Don't worry about that, darling. Your spot is only yours," he calmed her down.

"I... I don't know... Can we just get rid of her?" Katrina asked him without answering his question.

"No, we can't. This is Myers' hiring, and he put his foot about us offering her this position. I couldn't dissuade him. We actually don't need anybody else here for now, actually. But I trust his instincts as this firm partner, so I gave her the benefit of the doubt and let's see if she can prove herself as a

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good employee," Stone said.

I didn't take his answer to her as personal because at Brown's we refer to candidates like this sometimes, and the whole market does such things, as offering a temporary position for someone, and if this person does a good job, they offer them a more permanent position. What was really bothering me was the fact that Katrina wanted me out. And I had barely spent a single day at Myers and Stone.

Katrina sighed and complained: "So, she is Myers' choice, right?"

"Yeah, I'm afraid that it's out of my hands to do something about this for now," Stone murmured to her.

Ok, that made me a little annoyed, because it's not that I really wanted Stone to like me or something like this, but I wanted this job. I knew how rare these opportunities are, especially because I already had a career before, so this pivoting was a golden ticket for a new path in my life. Besides, I wanted to get along with people at work.

"Well, do something whenever it is possible!" Katrina complained again.

"Just get along, Katrina. You don't have to do these kinds of things with whoever comes to work in that position. It will end up looking as if the

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position is cursed or something like this while it's just you annoyed with whoever is sitting in that chair. Hannah will get tired of it in a minute. She used to be a billionaire. Honestly, I don't know what she is doing here," Stone told her.

"Really? How so?" Katrina sounded interested.

"She was married to Ethan Brown, and still carries his name as of today," He told her.

"Well, if I was her, I would definitely not leave such a man alone like she did," Katrina told him.

Not that my past was of their businesses but they actually didn't know how much I suffered in Ethan's hands prior to ending up here. Still, my coffee was finally ready, and I didn't have anything to do in the kitchen anymore. So, now my worry was about how to get out of this place without them noticing that I was listening to their private conversation during all this time.

"I guess we'll never know what you would do with a billionaire husband, right?" Stone asked Katrina. "After all, you're sleeping with me," he whispered to her.

"Oh, shut up nobody can know about this!" Katrina murmured to him.

Stone laughed at her and said: "Don't you really think that, people are suspicious about us... Extracurricular activities?" He asked her.

"They do suspect, but they don't have to hear a direct confirmation," she whispered back to him.

"Well, come on, let's go to my office so we can discuss this further," Stone told her.

"Yeah, I'm moving from the corridor but I'm definitely not going to your office. You know very well that we keep our businesses out of here," She said to him.

And suddenly, I heard her annoying high heels clicking on the floor when she left through the corridor. And a few seconds later, I heard Stone's low laugh. He seemed to find all of this very funny. After that, he went back towards his office.

I sighed a little tired. I barely had one day at my new job and apparently, I already have an enemy even though I haven't done something to her to the point that she would consider me as so. But from what I heard from Stone, Katrina probably did this to anyone who accepted this job. So, I just decided to leave the office for today as soon as possible. I made my way as discreetly as I could, and luckily she didn't see me, and in a matter of minutes, I was outside the building.

The ride towards home was uneventful. But I couldn't dismiss this awkward feeling. Of all the people in the office, why me? Damn it! I couldn't have one single moment of peace in my life. When Tess was finally gone from my life now. I

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had Katrina. And what made me really mad was the fact that I was a professional woman. I mind my own business. And there was no way that I could occupy her position because she was way ahead of me at work. So why did she feel so threatened by me? I could only imagine.

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But then when I got home, I forgot everything about her and her little chat with Stone because luckily, my little one was wide awake and ready to have some fun, So I decided to spend quality time with him. Well, at least for a couple of hours because some time around that, he was soundly sleeping in my arms already.

I took him to his crib, and gave him a good night kiss. After that, I programmed his monitor and left the bedroom so he could get some rest. When I got back to the living room, Patricia was there and we sat down on the couch to have a little catch up about amenities. I told her everything that I've heard in that kitchen, and she gave me some advice: "Well, child, you know that I've always worked with domestic affairs, but it's obvious that you must be careful here. This woman knows the people at your work better than you, so she can manipulate them against you," She told me.

"Yeah, I know very well what a woman with a better position is capable of doing to reach her goals," I mumbled to Patricia.

She nodded seriously at me and said: "So, I would be extra careful if I was you. And don't let her get you with your guard down," she told me.

"Thanks for the advice, Patricia," I told her.

She nodded and smiled at me. And then, she said: "Listen, child, I'll have to go for a few days because. My sister is sick."

"Oh, is she alright? Is there anything that I can do to help you both?" I asked her about it.

"Yeah, it's just that she has been through a surgery recently due to a broken leg, and now she needs someone to help her for a few days, at least until

she finds someone who can help her more permanently. So, I need to go for a few days, is that alright to you?" Patricia asked me.

"Of course it is! I can take care of my baby for a few days," I told her.

"Are you sure that you and baby Michael will be fine for a few days in my absence?" She asked me once again.

Well, even if I tell her the truth that I didn't think so, I couldn't say no to this woman. She suffered a lot just because she was caught in the crossfire between Tess and me in the past.

"Oh, don't worry about us. I think we'll survive," I told her. "Now, you should worry exclusively about your sister," I said.

She gave me a small hug and said: "Thank you for that, child. I promise I'll be back as soon as I can." And then, she waved me good night and went to her room.

I knew that I couldn't complain about Patricia, but timing couldn't be the worst. Right at the moment that I needed her most so I could show everybody at work that I was capable of being at this position she had this familiar emergency. Well, things couldn't get more complicated than that, could they? I asked myself.

And they did, but right at that moment, I didn't

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know that this was even possible.

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