

Chapter 165: Random numbers.

Hannah's POV:

The next day, I hoped that things would improve. I arrived at work early, fully prepared for the day, and just waiting for Katrina to call. Instead, she approached my desk and asked, "Hey, Hannah. I heard you used to work in finance, right?"

I replied with enthusiasm, "Yes, I did. I used to work in finance, and it's something I'm comfortable with. I dealt with high budgets and consistently met deadlines."

"That's good," she said. "I've just received a request from the client we met with yesterday. They approved the prospect, but now we need to send them a budget. Would you be willing to help with this?"

My smile widened as I accepted, "Of course, I'll help. Send me the details from yesterday, and I'll start."

Katrina smiled at me and asked: "Could you do it by 2:00 PM today?"

"I'll do my best," I assured her, eager to take on a task related to finance. It had been a while, but I believed it would be like riding a bike—once you learn, you never forget.

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As soon as Katrina sent me the details, I began working on the budget. It went smoothly, and I felt proud when I completed it by 1:30. I decided to inform her that the project was done.

I knocked on her office door and asked, "Hey, Katrina. How's everything?"

She replied with a neutral tone: "Fine. Did you have time to finish the budget prospect?"

"Yes, I actually did," I said, my pride showing. "I just finished it, and I think it's good. Considering what the clients wanted and what they reject, I believe they'll approve it."

I noticed her discomfort when I mentioned the rejection of the first project, and I suspected that she might have been the author of that prospect. Not wanting to upset her further, I avoided discussing it.

So, I decided to ask: "Should I send this material directly to the client?"

"No, you should send it to me," she said.

"Why is that?" I inquired.

Her response was direct, "You're new here, so all your work must be reviewed by someone in a senior position until the partners trust you enough to give you the autonomy you're seeking."

She was right. I wasn't used to this, but I knew that

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this was standard procedure for newcomers. So, I accepted and said, "Sure, I'll send it to you."

Katrina remembered that I hadn't had time for lunch and suggested, "Why don't you grab a bite while I review your work? We'll send it to the client in the afternoon."

I appreciated her thoughtfulness and replied, "Sure, I'll be back in half an hour."

After my brief lunch break, I returned to the office. Katrina came by my desk and said, "The budget project is approved. If you want, you can forward it to the client. I just made one or two adjustments in the explanation."

I was pleasantly surprised by her gesture, as I had expected her to take the credit as she did yesterday. Maybe she was extending a white flag to me, after all. So, I used the chance and I replied: "Consider it done."

Once I received the email confirming the budget's approval, I forwarded it to the client without reviewing it since I trusted my work. However, an hour later, Lorenzo Stone, with a grave expression, approached me and asked for a private meeting. "Do you have a minute?"

I replied, "Sure." Something was wrong; I could sense it.

We entered his office, and he closed the door. I

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asked, "What's going on?"

He led me to his office, closed the door behind us, and said, "Something awkward happened. The client didn't approve the budget you sent them." Lorenzo said to me.

"Really? Why not?" I asked, with caution in my voice.

Lorenzo explained, "The numbers were completely random, Hannah. They said your math doesn't make any sense."

I felt my stomach drop. Something was very wrong. "Can I see the file again?" I asked. Lorenzo agreed and displayed it on his laptop screen.

When I saw it, a chill ran down my spine. These numbers weren't what I had worked on. "Mr. Stone, this wasn't my work from this morning," I asserted. "I don't know what happened, but my best guess is the file got corrupted."

Stone just told me: "But I thought that you had a finance and business background, Hannah. What happened?"

"Of course, I do, sir, and I reviewed the numbers a couple of times. Katrina was the second person who reviewed the numbers for me," I explained, confusion building in my voice.

Lorenzo continued, "Well, I'm sorry to say that they

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couldn't find any sense in the numbers. And since you were the one who sent them the budget, they're blaming you for it."

My heart was pounding, and I could feel the icy grip of fear as I realized something was terribly

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wrong. "This definitely wasn't what I did," I stammered, desperation in my voice. "I swear to you, Mr. Stone, those weren't the numbers in my file this morning."

Stone looked at me with a mix of suspicion and concern. "So, what do you think we should do?" he asked me. I knew that he wasn't hostile. He just wanted me to come up with a quick solution.

"Let me fix this, sir. I'll send them the correct numbers in an hour or so," I suggested. "And do you mind personally reviewing the numbers this time? I think it will make you more confident in my work."

Lorenzo agreed, "Please do that. You're my last hope." He could sense the urgency of the situation. "I'm waiting for those numbers. Knock on my door anytime when you're ready again."

As I left his office, I mumbled, "Thank you, sir. I won't disappoint you this time."

With determination, I rushed back to my desk, meticulously reviewing the original file. I double-checked the numbers, ensuring that there was no room for error. Then, I sent the revised file directly to Stone, hoping that this time it would be perfect. I couldn't afford another mistake, especially with this client being so crucial to the company's success.

After he reviewed the work, he said, "Okay, I can see that these numbers make sense now. I'm personally sending them to the client. Thank you for redoing this work, Hannah." You know what, Hannah?" he began. "First, I must tell you that you were here because of Meyer's decision. He is one of the bosses too, and he has the right to hire anyone he wants. So, I actually have no say in that. And to be honest, you messed up quite badly. But I

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have to say, you've recovered impressively. Your potential is evident, but don't screw it up again, okay?"

Relieved and determined, I nodded and replied, ". " Thank you for trusting me with this again, sir. I will do my best from now on."

"Yeah, sure," He told me.

With that, he proceeded to send the client the correct numbers. It was a second chance that I wasn't going to waste, especially after what Katrina had done to undermine my work.

In the corridor on my way back to my desk, I encountered Katrin with her arms crossed. She asked happily: "How did it go?"

I smiled at her and replied, "Even though I knew what you did, I was able to fix everything because I'm capable. So, you don't have to worry, Katrina. I don't need your help. I can pave my own path here."

"Yeah, I know that you can do that, especially screw things up on your own," Katrina taunted me.

"What do you mean by all that, Katrina?" I asked her exasperatedly. I was getting tired of her silly small games.

Her condescending attitude continued as she scoffed, "You're making a mistake, you i***t.

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You're not going anywhere. You decided to make me your enemy from the beginning, remember?"

I shook my head at her and said: "You're not making any sense, Katrina. You put that target on my back because you wanted it. I'm no i***t," I told her.

"So, if you're not an i***t, as you claim, you know that it's just a matter of time. And you'll be gone. Because I'm the one who controls this place," Katrina retorted.

I simply replied, "That's what you think," and left her standing alone in the corridor. With newfound determination, I was ready to face whatever challenges lay ahead and prove that my abilities spoke for themselves, regardless of any obstacles Katrina might try to throw in my path.



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