

Chapter 8

Joanna hung up in such a hurry that Corinne was left listening to the dial tone before she could even ask anything.

Since she was still wrapped in a towel, she opened the closet to see if there were any clothes she could wear. Unfortunately, however, it was filled only with Jeremy's clothes. With few choices available, she grabbed a random white T-shirt and put it on before hurrying out the door.

Jeremy's T-shirts were sufficiently big for her that the hem reached down to her knees. It was the perfect size to be styled like one of those oversized casual shirt-dresses.

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Upon reaching Alpha Enterprises, Corinne swiped her access card at the door, and Joanna—who seemed particularly agitated—ran out to find her.

"Corinne, you're finally here! The manager wants you to go to his office immediately! You need to prepare yourself. Well, mentally, at least."

"The manager is looking for me?"

It was rare to see Joanna looking so nervous.

"What happened?"

Joanna glanced left and right, making sure that no one was around. She then whispered to Corinne, "The company's computers were all infected with a virus, and the system has crashed completely! All of the company's important files were lost..."

Corinne frowned. "And what does that have to do with me? They should be calling a technician to fix it if the computer's broken."

Joanna was evidently anxious. "The technicians are doing their best to repair it. The point is, Zoey reportedly told the manager that the virus came from your computer after you downloaded a game using the company computer.

"To make things worse, the boss invited some big shots to take a look at the company's new project today, but it's impossible to recover the presentation file that our department has worked so hard on. The entire situation left the manager fuming, and he'll definitely blame you right now!"

'Zoey? Zoey Firwood? The one whom everyone says has inside connections in the company?' Corinne thought.

Zoey, like Corinne, was still midway through their internship period. Their company, Alpha Enterprises, made the international top 500 list of companies. Annually, a large number of high-achieving students put in a tremendous amount of hard work and effort just to try and get into the company.

Corinne secured the internship after receiving a letter of recommendation from the principal of New Capital University, which was due in no small part to her excellent grades. On the other hand, rumor had it that Zoey was a relative of the manager.

With only one permanent position left that year in Alpha Enterprises' permanent employee quota, the battle to land that position was only between herself and Zoey.

By connecting the dots, Corinne could form a rough idea of what transpired.

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Before Corinne knocked on the door of the manager's office, she heard Zoey's voice from within. It sounded like Zoey was trying to persuade the manager to calm down.

"Don't worry, Uncle. The computers will be fixed eventually! This is all Corinne's fault for playing games during working hours..."

The manager, Richard Channing, said angrily, "Where is that blasted Corinne? Why isn't she here yet?!"

Corinne knocked on the door and pushed it open. "You wanted to see me, sir?"

When Richard saw her, he yelled, "Finally caring to show up? Are you supposed to clock in for work this late? You didn't give any reasons for your absence from work yesterday either! What kind of work ethic do you have right now?"

Corinne walked in and explained in a kind manner, "I'm sorry, sir. I got married yesterday, and I'm late today because I encountered some trouble this morning."

Richard felt that she had made a ridiculous excuse. "You got married? Well, assuming you did, couldn't you have applied for leave? What do you take the company for? Your own home? This is the first time I've seen an employee who does whatever they want at work! First, you were absent, then you came late today, and after that, you played computer games instead of doing your work!"

Corinne seemed to have been very obedient. "I don't have a lot of experience in marriage. It is my first time, after all. I promise I'll apply for leave next time around."

Richard was speechless, while Zoey could not stand to hear the conversation anymore.

"You're downright shameless, Corinne. If you were absent without a reason, just say so. The cheek of you to use 'marriage' as an excuse! That's the worst lie I've ever heard!"

At that moment, the door of the office swung open.

Alfred Ganz, the owner of Alpha Enterprises, stood at the door with another imposing-looking man. They had come just in time to hear what Corinne last said to Richard.

The man who came with Alfred was none other than Jeremy, and he narrowed his charming eyes slightly.

Richard was about to continue tearing into Corinne, but as soon as he saw the two men at the door, he stood up in a jolt and nodded at them before bowing to greet them. "Ah! Mister Alfred, when did you and Mister Jeremy arrive? Please, come right in."

Zoey looked over, and her eyes were filled with little hearts the moment she laid eyes on the handsome, dignified man next to Alfred.

Corinne was spacing out, so she casually turned her head to look at them. "That weird old man again? Why is he everywhere?" Corinne gasped in stupefaction when she saw Jeremy.

Alfred, the owner of Alpha Enterprises, asked with a serious expression, "What were you arguing about earlier, Richard? Did I hear something about the company's computer system crashing? What's going on?"

Richard sweated profusely as he pointed at Corinne and explained, "Mister Alfred, our company's new intern played computer games during work hours, which then led to our systems becoming invaded by a virus. The technical department is giving it their all to try and restore everything..."

Incensed by what he heard, Alfred asked, "What? Why is she still around then? Are you planning to give her the permanent position?!"

Richard shook his head at once. "No! Of course not, Mister Alfred! I'll fire her right away!"

The corners of Zoey's lips curled slightly,

Jeremy's stern eyes remained as cold as ever as his gaze skirted indifferently across Corinne without lingering for too long. He acted as if they were complete strangers and said icily, "Mister Alfred, it seems that I came at an inappropriate time today. We should reschedule if that's the case."

"I'm so sorry, Mister Jeremy. It was an oversight on my part." Alfred felt incredibly dismayed. He had put in tremendous effort to invite someone of Jeremy's stature, and the chances of Jeremy accepting another future invitation would be even slimmer!

Corinne saw Joanna peering anxiously from outside the office door and immediately remembered that the new project was the result of Joanna's first time leading a team. The possibility that she would be allowed to take up bigger responsibilities in the future would take a big hit if her present efforts went down the drain just like that. Furthermore, Joanna had taken very good care of Corinne during the span of the internship.

"Mister Jeremy!" Corinne called out suddenly.

Jeremy halted his footsteps as soon as he turned around.

Corinne walked toward him and said, "I understand your time is precious, Mister Jeremy, but the fact is that you're already here. If you just leave empty-handed, wouldn't it be such a waste if you ended up missing out on a good project?"

Jeremy's gaze was cold. "But you have nothing to show me right now."

Corinne gave them her word. "I'll have the new project plan shown to you in the time it takes for you to enjoy a cup of coffee!"

Alfred and Richard looked at Corinne in disbelief.

Zoey rolled her eyes in contempt. She doubted that Corinne would be able to fix something that overwhelmed even the professional technicians. 'Yeah, bluff all you want! This is just a desperate attempt at trying to fix the situation.'

After a brief silence, Jeremy remained non-committed. "Young people sure love a challenge. Alright, Mister Alfred, I'm here, and I'm feeling a little thirsty, so could I trouble you for a cup of coffee before I leave?"

Alfred snapped back to his senses and immediately ordered, "Well, why are you guys still standing there? Hurry and make some coffee for Mister Jeremy!"

"Yes, sir!" Zoey wanted to avail herself of the chance to interact with Jeremy, so she trotted away gracefully to make some coffee.

Corinne returned to her workstation and inserted a USB flash drive into the computer.

Joanna walked over curiously and asked, "What are you doing, Corinne? Do you know how to fix virus-infected computers?"

Corinne had a focused expression as she moved the cursor and replied, "I'm installing some antivirus software!"

Her response elicited a dejected sigh from Joanna. "Corinne, that's useless! The technicians said that the company was targeted by hackers, so there's nothing antivirus software can do about it!"

Corinne raised her head slightly and smiled faintly at Joanna. "No harm trying. Who knows what'll happen?"