

Inescapable

Copyright © 2022 by EggWhites

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law.

This is a work of fiction. Unless otherwise indicated, all the names, characters, businesses, places, events and incidents in this book are either the product of the author's imagination or used in a fictitious manner. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or actual events is purely coincidental.

Hope you like it, happy reading.

EggWhites.

Four Years Earlier

That was it. I couldn't take it anymore. My final exam was tomorrow. And this was *our* dorm. I snapped the earphones out of my ear, taking my eyes off the textbook that I was desperately trying to concentrate on. I glared at the girl who'd been a constant pain in my ass ever since I met her. There she was, laying on her bed, eating her chips, watching her movie on the stupid big screen I stupidly helped her install, acting like there wasn't another bitch with her in the room trying to study.

I had been living with her for more than a year, and looking at her still baffled me. I would never understand how someone could act so carelessly toward the people around them.

I gathered what remained of my courage, sucked in a breath, then called, "Rachel..." I slouched, hearing the weakness in my voice that she so effortlessly incited.

She frowned, banging her head against the headboard behind her, which startled me. She smiled sarcastically at me, as if she knew she wouldn't like what I had to say. Just like that I grew nervous. Something I learned along the previous couple of years, was that it was never a good idea to anger Rachel. But I hadn't even said anything yet! I merely called her name. What was her problem?

She pushed strands of her blonde hair behind her ear before she snatched the remote aggressively and paused the movie. "What?" She said, the sudden venom in her tone effortlessly putting me at unease.

"Can you..." I looked away from her, trying to look properly chastised so that she wouldn't mistake my request for defiance. "Can you please please please watch that on your laptop." I said. "My exam is tomorrow."

She sighed, and actually closed her eyes as if to suppress an outburst. "...What did I tell you about interrupting my relax time for silly shit Mandy?" She looked at me, her green eyes glaring.

"But.... it's always your 'relax time'—"

She cupped her hand on her ear. "Speak up four-eyes."

I pushed my glasses anxiously up the bridge of my nose, ignoring her insult. "Sorry. It's just that... my exam is tomorrow. And it's final in this semester! I need to get a good grade, okay?—"

"That's right Mandy," she snapped. "Your exam. *Your*...exam! Thought I made it clear that your damn exams aint my problem."

"But I..." my mouth gaped, and then I stopped, as she raised an eyebrow at me, daring me to keep talking. As I closed my mouth shut, probably looking like a whipped little kitten, the devilish smile I had grown to loathe and yearn for curled up her lips. A smile of utter enjoyment at how much power she effortlessly wielded over me.

Normally, this would be the end of it. A year ago, I would just suck it up and try to focus on my studying as best as I could, despite the noise, or I would take a trip to the library—even at this

late hour. But by now, I really couldn't care less about how good I do on the exam tomorrow. By now, I had my own selfish reasons for bugging her. But luckily, my bimbo, bully of a roommate was too stupid to figure them out, which was understandable, considering I barely understood them myself.

I took a deep breath, trying to fight the mixture of rage, excitement, and fear that ran through me. I threw my pillow right at her face and shouted at the top of my lungs. "Shut it off or else! NOW!"

She didn't move a muscle as the pillow hit her face then tumbled to the ground, revealing her calm expression. She looked at me blankly, slightly smiling, telling me silently that I was fucked.

I didn't even make it to the exam's hall the next day. Rachel did though. She went to the test, leaving me on our dorm's floor between our beds, hands tied behind my back and ankles tied together, my face bearing one black eye and my mouth stuffed with my sock, my lips curling into a perverted smile.

Present Time:

I sat down at my desk, exhaling a long sigh before taking a sip from my coffee. It was 7 a.m. My office's door knocked, and I groaned. "Come in."

My colleague Cindy opened the door and peered in. "Miss Mandy—"

I made a show of crossing my arms and raising an eyebrow at her.

She looked down, smiling apologetically. "Sorry. Mandy." She corrected herself. "First candidate is here."

"Thanks," I said. "Let them come in when they're ready—" I shook my head. "Matter of fact, give me a couple minutes to wake up. Then bring them in."

"As you like Miss N—Mandy." She winced over messing up a second time, then walked out and closed the door behind her.

Cindy was a bright girl. Why she failed to get it through her head on how I wanted to be called was beyond me. I was professionally her superior, and being 26, I was 3 years her senior, but ever since my promotion a year ago I still grew uncomfortable hearing the title. Didn't like the *boss* or *ma'am* she playfully used from time to time. Titles just sounded wrong in my ears, so much so I couldn't help but wince every time I heard them.

I let myself sink back into my chair as I drank my coffee. Feeling that I was running out of my wake-up time, I took a final gulp, and sure enough the door knocked, startling me. I hastily sat

straight in my chair and pushed strands of my messy brown hair behind my ears, and told whoever it was to come in.

First candidate walked in for his interview, and he looked almost as sleepy and dull as me. I didn't particularly like that the interview was to happen at 7 a.m., but our boss Mrs. Salia insisted, saying it would say something about the candidates who made it to the interview on time and the ones who didn't. I wanted to complain, but given that my lack of complaining was probably why she promoted me and why I was her favorite, I kept my mouth shut.

I was pretty sure that it wasn't my merit that got me the position I was in. Mrs. Salia had an attitude on her. She often lashed out, sometimes forgetting herself and acting really rudely. Quite simply, she wasn't the easiest boss. She had beef with pretty much everyone who worked for her, except me, the girl who never complained, and quite frankly, never had a problem with her stuck up attitude.

The other girls often praised me on how level-headed I was, on how I managed to put up with her. Little did they know that I had my selfish reasons.

The candidates rolled in one after the other. None of them was that qualified, none of them was that terrible either. Yet again, the position didn't really require that much and the pay was modest—too modest. According to Mrs. Salia, the lucky winner would be my assistant, and I was supposed to coach them so they could do my job when she'd promote me again; which was nice, except for the fact that I would have to share my office now. The soon to be filled desk was right there in the corner of my office. We were a small business, and space was limited.

Last candidate walked out of my office with a big smile on her face, feeling excited for some reason. All of them were so.... the same, that I might as well have picked an applicant with my eyes closed and it wouldn't make a difference. But I put in some time to decide. After half an hour of me rereading their applications, a knock sounded on my door. "Come in."

Cindy opened the door. "Another woman is here for the interview?"

I recoiled. "She's an hour late!"

Cindy just shrugged.

I sighed. "Fine, bring her in." It didn't seem fair to blow her away just because she was late for a 7 *fucking* a.m. interview. "But tell Mrs. Salia she was here on time, yes?"

"Got it." Cindy walked out.

I turned in my chair and started rummaging through the small pile of applications on the shelf behind my desk when I heard heels clicking and the door closing. "Hey," I said without looking. "Give me a minute, let me find your application..."

"Oh..." A voice said nervously. "I... don't believe I sent one."

My hands stopped rummaging through the box of papers, and my whole body froze at once. That feminine, high-pitched voice sounded awfully familiar. I cleared my throat, then gradually turned on my office chair, preparing myself for the possibility of seeing Rachel sitting on my chair.

My eyes nervously settled on her, then darted around every detail of her face. Golden hair and bright green eyes. Sharp nose and tight lips. Yep. There was Rachel. There was the incarnation of the devil sitting right there at my desk with a Starbucks in her hand.

I didn't know what the look on my face was, but it made her narrow her already thin eyes in confusion as if to ask me what's up. I shook my head, took a breath, adjusted my skirt and pulled my chair closer to my desk, then said, "You're an hour late."

"Sorry about that." her cute cheeks winced, but she didn't look that sorry. "My bad. 7 a.m. is a bit too late for most people. You should try making it at 6 or 5 a.m. next time." She chuckled nervously.

Although I agreed, I gave her a tight smile that didn't make it to my lips to tell her I didn't appreciate her joke. She pursed her lips, then looked away. My eyes scanned her up and down.; a silver skirt, a silver blouse, a black pair of high heels and nylons. It was like a professional corporation vomited on her. She even had a brown briefcase in her lap, and her usually messy hair that I had always remembered to be falling on her shoulders, was kept up in a bun. I stared long enough for her to give me another narrowed-eyed look, and I cleared my throat. "You said you... didn't send an application."

"No..." She said, then opened her briefcase with excitement. "But I *did* bring my CV."

I crossed my arms as she took her time looking through her briefcase. My shoulders grew tense and my sneakered foot tapped anxiously on the ground, waiting for the dumb bitch to recognize me. After about a minute of rummaging through her bag, she looked up at me with a guilty grin on her face.

"Let me guess," I sighed. "You forgot that too?"

"Kinda did." She nodded. She shook her head and adjusted her posture. "Why don't I just... talk to you about my qualifications."

I shrugged. And she started talking. I couldn't focus on a single word she said. All I could think about was that she didn't remember me. I remembered her! Up until a couple years ago, she was the first face I saw when I woke up and the last face I saw as I slept. She was the reason I was still single. The reason I couldn't look at another girl normally again. This bitch owed me money; thousands of dollars I blew on therapists with no results. And she didn't even recognize me?

"Is something wrong?" Rachel gave me a worried look.

I shook my head, removing the look of venom from my flaming cheeks and eyes, then smiled. "No." I said.

She smiled, though didn't look that comforted. I bit my lip anxiously, torn between bringing up the subject or just moving on with the interview. But I just couldn't fathom it. I mean... I did change since college, but come on! I couldn't have changed that much. A new nose and the absence of glasses couldn't have made it that difficult to recognize me. I cleared my throat, and propped my elbows on the desk with my chin between my fingers, so that my face was close and clear. "Rachel..." I said. "...Don't I look... I dunno... Least bit familiar to you?"

A surprised grin appeared on her face, as if the question came at her out of nowhere. "Familiar..." She narrowed her eyes at me. "I... did I... did you work in Carly's Caffé."

"No."

She pulled a smart, suspicious look on. "I could swear I saw you working there last week?"

"No you didn't." I sighed.

"...K." her tight lips pursed. "how about... Starbucks. You ever worked at starbuc—"

"No."

".....Are you sure—"

"I've been working here for two years Rachel!" I snapped, trying not to sound to aggravated by her stupidity.

"Okay then no you don't look familiar. I'm sorry." She leaned back in her chair in resignation.

"..." I didn't like that I had to tell her, but I lost hope of making her know me by face alone. Decided to tell her my name at first, but then I got a better idea. "...Four-eyes...Clown-Nose."

She recoiled, confused, before her eyes widened, then narrowed again as if to make certain of her suspicion. She snickered. "Wendy?"

"Bingo—NO" I shrugged. "It's Mandy."

"Holy fuck!" She leaned back in her chair, her face dumbfounded. "How long's it been? How are you?"

"I've been good," I nodded, instinctively mimicking her smile out of politeness. "Yeah, really good."

Her question got me thinking about where I was at this point in my life. I'd done pretty good for myself, this far. Working in a decent company—small company and relatively new startup, but still. Already promoted once, supervisor over like 20 employees—promotion that was less about my merit and more about the others being utterly unqualified...but still, I was only 26. I wasn't ashamed to get a bit of satisfaction over seeing Rachel sitting in the chair where I was three years ago, which meant I was way ahead of her, career wise at least.

Last thing I knew was that she was gonna be an *influencer*, whatever that meant. I remembered thinking that she got the body for it, the face, maybe even the social skills, and she would've probably succeeded if she weren't the dumbest bimbo on planet earth. Given that she was sitting there interviewing for a job—which I knew by heart she didn't have the slightest clue about—I was willing to take a wild guess and say things hadn't worked out the way she hoped. And I was in a hurry to verify that. "Enough about me." I shuffled in my seat. "How's your... insta....youtube....twitter thing been going?"

"OH..." She brushed me off with a grimace on her face. "Don't remind me. People are so resistant to change nowadays. They don't recognize good advice if it punched them in the face."

I nodded, unable to help my smile. “Are they?” I said. “What were you planning to talk about again?”

“Many things...” She huffed. “Discipline for career success, inner beauty, self-satisfaction.”

“Yeah...” My smile widened. “Right.” That was what a delusional full-of-self bitch looked like, Rachel Dams, being the total potato couch who spends at least an hour a day fixing her make up and can’t shut up complaining about every little trouble in her life, was no doubt the perfect candidate to teach people these things. My heart filled with satisfaction at seeing that her rude wakeup call was around the corner.

We chatted some more. Apparently she lived alone in a one bedroom studio close by. She wasn’t in touch with any of our old friends—or her old friends, considering I hated their guts—and her parents cut her off—something they should’ve done a long time ago. Every word felt like a joy to my heart, and I tried and failed to suppress my enjoyment at hearing every detail of her mess of a life. No wonder she was so nervous walking in here; she must’ve really needed this job, any job.

After about ten minutes of her running her mouth, we both went silent. And I noticed something. She wasn’t nervous no more. During that brief moment of silence, she was looking at me with an excited, stupid grin on her face, and she was leaned back with her legs extended in front of her, looking like she was hanging out in one of her friends’ houses, catching up with them after a long absence. Did that what she think we were? Did she think we were *friends*?

“So how you’ve been doing?” She said, taking a look around my office. “Pretty good it seems.”

“Huh...” I snickered as I looked around too. It was a messy office, and small and poorly kept, but it was mine. I resisted the urge to talk about my life. I was gonna show her the door any moment now; I didn’t want to rub her face in it. “Yeah. Doing alright. Look, Rachel, I wish I had some more time to catch up, but I have a busy schedule ahead of me.”

“Oh...” She leaned forward, grabbing her suitcase. “Don’t let me hold you. So when do I start?”

“...” I narrowed my eyes, unsure of what she meant. “Start?”

“...Yeah like..” She snickered. “The job.”

I didn’t try hiding my smile. “We’ll call you if we think you’re a good fit for the job.” I nodded.

She recoiled, probably a bit surprised by my sudden formal tone. “*We’ll call you.*” She shook her head, confused. “What do you mean *if*?”

“This is an interview.” I leaned back. “If you’re the best candidate, I’ll give you a call tomorrow.”

“Ohhhh...” She smiled and nodded slowly, giving me a teasing look and curling her fingers in quotes. “I get it. ‘if’.” She said, like we had this inner private joke, like I was acting. “Got it Got it.”

She waited for me to confirm, to match her silly attitude, then slouched her shoulders when I didn't. Despite how much I hated her, I couldn't let her go and wait at home for a call that was never gonna happen; that was just cruel. "You're..." I said. "Look... I don't think you're gonna get this job."

"What!" She yelled, making me recoil. "Four-eyes come on!"

"Don't call me that."

"Mandy Come on." She whined. "Why wouldn't I?"

"Some candidates here are a bit more qualified."

"Some Candidates?" She said. "Surely you can bump me up a step or too, turn a blind eye, right?"

"I was trying to be polite." I said. "You're at the bottom of the list—and to tell you the truth the list isn't even that promising. You managed to be the least qualified out of an already poorly qualified pile."

Her babyface a mix of worry and confusion, she said, "But I'm your friend!"

That made me shut up. *You're not my friend. You're the last person I'd call my friend. I fucking loath your guts.* I wasn't planning on saying that to her, but some of it must've showed on my face, because she leaned back suddenly and crossed her arms.

"Is it just me..." She looked at the ground. "Or are you not that... happy about seeing me?"

"Oh I am..." I chuckled, not able to hide my amusement anymore. This was great, to see that she was right where I thought she'd be, failing at everything, kicked from her house, forced to do the unthinkable and actually look for a job to support herself. "I'm thrilled. But I just... got what I wanted from it, that's all." I didn't lie. My heart was doing a little dance inside. I wasn't a gloater, normally, but I gave myself a pass this time. "This job needs the minimum amount of competence—you don't even have to be that smart to do it. And honey, you'd suck at it. Like...really mess it up."

For a moment, I forgot who she was, and I was a little moved by the broken, disappointed look on her face. If she had thought I had any feelings other than hate toward her, she didn't now. She cleared her throat and looked down. "Look...Mandy. Things have been so...shitty lately. I really need this job."

Was she begging? She was wasn't she? This is the best fucking day in my life! I fought the urge to hear her plead, and said, "I'm sorry your life isn't going as you want it to go—" I really wasn't. "But you're not getting a helping hand, and there's no way in hell you're getting a helping hand from me. There's the door." I stood up and gestured for the door.

She stayed in her place for like a whole minute, just looking up at me. I didn't know how it felt to realize your friend hated your guts, but I imagine it didn't feel that good. After a minute, she nodded, and stood up, giving me a polite formal smile before heading for the door.

Those five seconds where she walked felt like an eternity. I looked at the little corner desk on the other wall of my office, where my new assistant would be working. I looked at Rachel. "Wait."

She halted, then turned to face me, a blank look on her face.

I really wasn't as smart as I gave my self-credit for wasn't I. A once-in-a-life-time opportunity laid at my feet and I had been too stupid to see it. The job was being my assistant. I was to be her boss. Her *boss*. And she *needed* this job. And like the idiot I was I was going to let her walk out that door? I allowed my imagination to travel a couple months forward in time.

"Stupid!" I would call her.

"Yes ma'am." She'd politely answer.

"Thought I made it clear I wanted my coffee without sugar?"

"Sorry Miss,"

"Go grab me a fresh one, now!" I would lash out, and watch her scurry away. "RUN"

She'd run and I'd laugh.

"Before I Fire your brainless-ass."

"....Mandy?" her voice woke me up.

I removed the dreamy look off my face and shook my head. I didn't know what to say. Right there was my opportunity to take revenge on her, to make her feel as shitty as she made me feel for four damn years, to humiliate her. But this wasn't right. It wasn't right for me to take advantage of her situation.

But the identity of whom I was taking advantage of should really play a factor right? I mean this was Rachel! Know what, it would probably be immoral for *not* to make the bitch pay for what she did to me. I owe that, I owe that to myself. "Know what." I said. "I think I'll give you a chance."

"..." She gave me a long, confused look. "...You will?"

"Yeah yeah..." I almost jumped up and down with excitement. "But listen. You really *are* stupidly unqualified for this job, so you'll be walking on thin ice. Keep that in mind. Mess this up and our *friendship* won't save you. Got it?"

She grinned, allowing herself to get excited, and unlike me, didn't fight the urge to do a couple of mini jumps in her place. She nodded. Then both of us stood there for a while. She must've been confused. "...Are we..." She cleared her throat. "So are we cool or what?"

"Yeah we're golden." I nodded, deciding to let the next couple of weeks demonstrate how cool we really were. "You'll start tomorrow. Be here at eight, sharp."

“*Sharp.*” She said in a silly tone, giving me a wink.

“...I’m serious.”

“Oh...” She said. “Okay. See you tomorrow, *boss.*” She said teasingly.

“Don’t ca—” I almost said, then halted. *Boss sounds just fine.* “see you.”

She left.

The stupid grin didn’t leave my face for a second that day, from the moment Rachel left my office till I drove to my apartment.

It wasn’t until I was in the comfort of my bed, that I felt a bit worried, realizing something. I just invited Rachel back into my life. I had spent four years in college trying to get her out, and two years after that trying to get her out of my head, and now I welcomed her back in. True, she was to be my assistant, and I could probably get rid of her any time I wanted to but... she was back.

I shook the worrying thoughts out and tried to fall asleep. *I got this. I can totally get rid of her if I need to. Yeah...I can totally do that. Bitch works for me. I’m strong enough to handle her.* With that thought, I fell asleep.

It was the first day of college when I first met Rachel Dams. I entered my new dorm room, and there she was, laying on one of the beds in a pair of jeans and a tank top, my new roommate. I remembered thinking that she looked so...normal, and when I first talked to her she seemed more so. On top of that, I remembered thinking she was hella hot. And I let my eager imagination wonder off, thinking that I could possibly be talking to my first serious girlfriend. I had already realized I liked girls in highschool, but I never really did anything about that, and only managed to come out to my parents and a couple of close friends. So I thought, now, in college, maybe this could be my first serious relationship; I only had to find out... you know, if she was actually a lesbian and if she liked me and if I even liked her beyond her looks. I could never have guessed that I was talking to the person who would make the following four years of college a living hell for me.

Probably my first clue should’ve been the big ass TV she brought with her; a gift from her parents. I stupidly got excited for it, and helped her hang it on our wall. Second clue I should’ve got, was when she said, *I don’t actually give a shit about Economics. Just wanted to get away from my parents. Hey that rhymes!*

Third clue, were her third-grade jokes about my nose and glasses. My nose wasn’t even that big! And it was hella childish—let alone mean—to make fun of my eyesight. But she did; I acted like it was not a big a deal, not wanting to ruin our friendly first encounter.

First couple of weeks revealed to me what should’ve already been obvious. Rachel was a terrible roommate. Unlike here, I actually gave a shit about school. My parents had taken most of their savings to pay for it, and being able to find a job after I graduate and not have to return to their couch would be the least I could do. So good grades were a priority.

I didn't know if her parents were rich, or if she didn't give a shit, but Rachel looked like she wasn't the least bit concerned about any of this, which would be fine, if we didn't share a damn room.

It started with little things. She'd talk on the phone with her friends for like half an hour while I tried to study. She'd bust into the room like a SWAT team and wake me up. I would wake up in the middle of the night, and see that she was watching a movie on TV on high volume. And she'd have her friends over often, making studying impossible for at least two hours.

I spent a ton of time in the library, and I tried to listen to some music when I studied in the room if Rachel was being noisy. And I gave up on trying to keep the room tidy; Rachel was a pig. I would spend like an hour tidying up her mess and she'd undo my job in like ten minutes, laying her clothes all around, eating a bag of chips and throwing it to the ground, spilling shit on the floor.

I was never good at confrontation, so I sucked it up, until I couldn't. Despite my best efforts, my grades were suffering, and I was physically and mentally tired from having to put up with her bullshit. It was my room too! I should have a say in whether or not it turned into a dumpster.

Besides, some people, sometimes, just didn't know that they were causing you trouble. Sometimes only telling them and asking them to stop would be enough to solve the problem. Unluckily for me, Rachel wasn't one of those people.

It started with simple, polite requests, to turn the TV off so that I could concentrate, or hang with her friends outside instead of in our room, or to not slam the door so hard when she walked in. When that provided no results, I found myself constantly fighting with her. One of our fights got heated, and I was fed up with her childish attitude and uncaring nature so much that I jumped at her, trying to wrestle the remote out of her hand so that I could shut the TV off. We wrestled for the remote for like two minutes, and I felt like a second grader, before she managed to overpower me and pin me down on my bed.

I tried to fight her off. I failed. And when I grew tired, she used her socked feet to pin my hands to my sides and sat on my stomach, preventing me from getting up. I kept telling her to get up, and she ignored me, just kept watching her show. When my *annoying* bitching got too much for her, she removed a sock and shoved it in my mouth, then pinned my head to the bed with her foot.

I still remember how I felt that day. I was terrified. Humiliated, but mostly terrified. I froze under her as she just continued watching her show. I realized I was living with a bully. After her show ended, she just swung her feet to the ground and walked to her bed, like nothing happened, while I stayed glued to my bed, dumbfounded by what I had just been put through.

As weeks went by, situation got worse and worse. Every time I tried to complain or object about something, I'd find myself in some humiliating situation, with her on top of me. It got to a point where I'd barely say something that barely resembled a complaint, and she'd physically restrain me. When I stopped complaining, and just tried to suck it up, it was too late.

I couldn't tell for sure, but I really think she wasn't a bully before she moved in with me. It was like she discovered 'bullying' while living with me, discovered how effective it could be in getting what she wanted. She got bolder and bolder with time. The more I let her get away with,

the more she overstepped. When I stopped bothering her about the state of our room, she started demanding I clean it up. She started ordering me around, telling me to fetch her stuff and cook her food. It always went the same way. She'd tell me to do something, I'd tell her to fuck off, and she'd—with a big ass smile on her face—leap to her feet and hurt me, twist my arm or pull my hair or take my stuff and scatter it around the room, till I caved.

I spent time in the library as much as I could, but with how terrible things were in my dorm, my grades plummeted. I often spent nights doing her homework when I barely got time for mine. And the state of terror she constantly kept me in wasn't exactly ideal for me to focus on my studies. I was on edge all the time, dreading the moment she would give me her attention. She called me clown-nose and four-eyes, rarely using my real name, and I was too much of a coward to do the same.

And whether we were alone, with her friends, or with mine, she treated me the same. After seeing firsthand how I let her walk all over me, her friends started calling me names and making fun of me too. My few friends started calling me names and making fun of me. She made a hell out of every class we took together. People were generally nice, but most of them didn't particularly like someone who couldn't defend themselves. And before I knew it, I was a social pariah. That went on until the only *friend* I felt comfortable spending time with, was, ironically, Rachel.

Three years we spent like that. But it was the last year, specifically the last semester, that still brought me nightmares at night. Every day I thought about it... it made my heart crumble with shame and humiliation. I felt so stupid. I didn't know what happened, but the more I thought about it, the more I realized it was probably a mild mental breakdown. One day I woke up, and I just accepted it. I accepted I was living with a complete bully who couldn't be reasoned with, and I... instead of her having to make a fool out of me, I started making a fool out of myself. I basically leaped to my feet to obey her every whim. Obeying her felt...different, by then. I stopped fearing her, or fearing the pain she'd put me through. I *really* wanted to make her happy. I was so utterly stupid I wanted to punch myself in the face remembering it.

I found myself flipping over backwards just to hear her laugh or see a smile on her face. If she told me to get off my ass and fetch her a soda, I'd run and do that. If she told me to drop my textbook and come give her a foot rub while she watched her show, I'd kneel and say yes princess, jokingly...but I said it so fucking much that it stopped sounding like a joke.

If she winced and said my noodles tasted like piss and refused to eat it, I didn't tell her to go fuck herself and that she should be grateful I was cooking for her entitled ass; no, instead I apologized and said I'd do better next time. And worst thing was, by then, I did actually feel guilty for disappointing her. Her condemnation hurt me almost as much as her occasional praise made me happy.

I thanked my luck for one thing though: I didn't tell her about my sexuality. It wasn't that I didn't think she was a lesbian. She totally was, a closet lesbian—a closet with fucking fences around it, with the way she reacted with disgust every time a lesbian scene appeared on TV.

In fact, the easiest way to provoke her—possibly risking getting a black eye—was to imply in any way she was anything but straight. I found about that the hard way one time when she was checking this Instagram model she really liked. I didn't know if I was seeing things, but I could

swear she was staring at those tanned breasts a little too thirstily. I couldn't resist teasing her about it, and I said, "What? Wanna ask her out or something? Want me to get you her number?" I slept with a black eye that night. So that little incident told me all I needed to know, that and the fact that I noticed the way she often checked out her friends—even me, in some instances—or acted around them, all nervous and shy over the lightest contact.

All that made me suspicious, highly. But I wasn't till I walked in on her while she was watching porn that I was certain. She thought I'd be in a lecture, but I went there and the lecture was canceled. I walked back and got into our dorm, and she panicked on her bed and searched frantically between the covers for the remote to shut off the video of the two women making out on our tv screen. The idiot didn't even bother to put headphones on, and kept the volume down so it wouldn't make it to the hall. One would think the cat would be out of the bag after this little incident, but she acted like it didn't even happen. I asked her teasingly about what she was watching that day, and she just screamed at me to shut up.

So I had her figured out, but I wasn't stupid enough to tell her about me. I guessed that, considering she made fun of every little thing she managed to find about me, she'd make fun of that too, with how *disgusting* she pretended to find it—I didn't know if she had some strict religious parents, or if she was just homophobic for some reason. And I wasn't prepared to be mocked for that too, not by her. So I kept it a secret, along with my messed up feelings about her.

It wasn't until graduation day that I come to absolutely hate Rachel. After the graduation party, she said she was gonna move with her mother in the city. She gave me a kiss on the cheek, and she left. I remembered standing there for like two minutes as the realization dawned on me; she was gone. Fucking gone. Day after day, week after week, she didn't make contact, not even a message. It took some mental strength for me to admit to myself that all of that, all our time together, didn't mean shit to her; I, didn't mean shit to her.

So Rachel was out of my life, but she wasn't out of my head. She was gone, but the effect she had on me stayed. I think that was cause I was really attracted to her since day one. Even after I saw the obnoxious, entitled asshole hiding under that pretty face, a part of me still felt something for her. Like her appearance and attitude and troubling personality was a package deal and my mind just decided to take it all. I found myself moving from tolerating her selfish attitude to actually asking for it, and after she was gone, missing it.

All of the sudden, rudeness became hot. An entitled bitch acting all mean and insensitive made me feel weird. I never looked at another girl the same way again. I found obnoxious entitlement, what other people found revolting, attractive. I felt weird and uncomfortable under praise, and I gushed under criticism or mean jokes. That wasn't normal. That wasn't me; that was all Rachel's doing. She left, leaving a big whole in my life, one that I was so afraid to even try to fill—weird lesbian porn kind of filled it a bit though.

After half a year's salary on therapists, a ton of crying myself to sleep, and a couple years, I managed to forget about her, but I lost hope of permanently forgetting about what she did to me; it was something that simply couldn't be undone. I both wished for and dreaded the day a woman like her would enter my life again, cause I had no idea if I'd manage to do right by myself if that ever happened.

I woke up the next day, and immediately I felt a mixture of fear and excitement run through me.

I almost didn't want to go to work I was so afraid. But I managed to muster enough courage to get out of bed. This was supposed to be good for me. If I wouldn't be able to deal with Rachel while she literally worked for me, while I held her livelihood in my hand, then what good was I.

I said hi to Cindy before I stopped at my office door. It was 8:20 a.m. I should go in there and see her sitting on her desk like I told her. That was the *only* thing I told her to do. Be here at 8, sharp. I took a deep breath and opened my office door. My face fell to a frown as I looked at her empty desk. This was a great start.

I spent some time working at my desk, or trying to work, as my sneakered foot tapped anxiously as I waited for our new employee of the year to show up. At 9 a.m., she finally walked in my office—our office.

First thing I noticed was that she got rid of her corporate-looking clothes. Her sense of clothes didn't change that much sense college. She wore the same tight jeans, same bright green tank top, her blond hair falling on her shoulders. I reluctantly gulped as my eyes traveled down to her feet. There they stood, in a pair of paige wedge sandals.

I knew better than to look at them for more than two seconds, not prepared to recall any of the memories the sight would bring, and immediately shook my head and looked up at her. "You're late." I said bluntly.

"No I'm not." She chuckled as she put her purple purse on her desk. "You said be here on 9 sharp. I'm here on 9 sharp."

"No I didn't." I said. "I said 8."

"..." She pursed her lips at me like she was thinking. "...I'm pretty sure you said 9."

"I know what I sa—" I forced myself to take a breath. I leaned back, snickering my frustration away. "Know what. It doesn't matter. Just be here at eight tomorrow."

"..."

I read the disappointed pout on her face. "Problem?"

She sighed, then took a seat on her desk. "No."

"Good." I said. That felt good. That felt really good. I couldn't help but feel a bit pathetic at the amount of joy and pride I got; I mean, all I did was make my employee agree that she had to show up on time. But standing up to someone, to Rachel out of all people, even regarding something as silly as this, was a big step for me.

It did feel weird though. But this was why she was here for wasn't it. She was here to make it not feel weird for me anymore. Bitch had some making up to do.

"So..." she said after a while. "What is this job anyways? Is there something I'm supposed to be doing now?"

“I’m supposed to coach you on some things,” A wide smile curled up my lips. “But mostly, you’re my assistant. That’s the job. So I’ll tell you when I need your assistance.”

She narrowed her eyes, confused at my over-the-top smile, then nodded calmly. “Well, whenever you need anything.” She shrugged and leaned back in her desk.

We fell into silence. I pretended to work, while my eyes glanced in her direction every now and then. She was such a goof. She sat there, rocking back and forth on her chair, bored and not knowing what to do. I felt like I had brought my daughter with me to work and she was waiting for me to finish.

I decided against asking something of her for now; cause one, I didn’t actually need anything, and two, I was hella nervous about making a demand of her. I needed to take my time, muster some courage, grow some balls.

I tried to focus on my computer screen and just forget she existed. As minutes ticked by, I grew more and more enraged. I couldn’t concentrate on what I was doing for more than ten seconds, especially that she kept calling me every couple of minutes and tried to make conversation. She asked me about where I lived, my relationships, if I kept in touch with any of our friends. I indulged her, cause it really had been quite a while since we last seen each other. But eventually I just had to tell her that I needed to work. And with an annoyed roll of her eyes, she left me alone.

I managed to get some work done, and I was pretty sure I had spent at least an hour without being distracted. I looked at the clock on my computer; 15 minutes. I winced. Time moved slow. That didn’t surprise me. My mind was anxiously occupied with stuff more important than work. I took a random look her way.

I had to take a deep breath, suppressing a mini moan. I was looking in Rachel’s direction, but what greeted me were the soles of her wedge shoes, as she was leaning back in her chair and crossing her feet at the ankles.

Shoes were just shoes, before I met Rachel, and feet were just feet. I shook my head and looked back at my computer. *Focus.*

I couldn’t possibly tell her to put her feet down. It was her desk. It wasn’t my business. The innerworkings of my perverted mind weren’t her fault. It wasn’t her fault that the very sight of the bottom of her shoes made me tremble.

No. My office. My rules. One of my rules: I don’t want to have to stare at the soles of her fucking shoes while I work. That was only Fair. *Establish ground rules. Solidify your position. Show the bitch what’s up.....Any time now?*

“Rache—” I cleared my throat, as I could hear the pathetic weakness in my voice, and I said again, like a normal person, “Rachel.”

“Humm...” She said indifferently, her face hiding behind her rocking soles.

I froze. For about ten seconds, I didn't say a peep, as suddenly my lungs ran out of air. She shifted her feet to the side so that she could look at me, a questioning look on her face. "Mandy what?"

I looked at her blankly. *What if she said no? What if she told you to piss off? Oh my god! What if she got up and wrestled you to the ground, pinning you and calling you stupid...inviting all your employees to watch....laughing at you!*—I shook my head, and smiled, almost chuckled at how ridiculous I sounded.

We weren't at college anymore. We were two grownups—at least I was; she was barely that. But even she surely realized she couldn't get away with such absurd behavior here. The least bit of aggressiveness on her side and she'd get herself fired; hell, I could even press charges!...something I could have properly done in college too.....why didn't I? Why had I let her get away with it all those years—it didn't matter. What mattered was the now! And now Rachel worked for me. "Could you get your feet off the desk."

Her face wrinkled, as if that was the last thing she expected to hear. "My feet off the desk?" She snickered. "Why?"

"Because..." My mouth gaped as I tried to form words. "...Because....."

She cocked her neck, waiting. "Because...?"

"They're distracting!" I said.

She gave me a silly look, suspecting I was just messing with her. "Distracting?"

"Distracting." I nodded.

She looked at her feet, then at me, then at her feet again, smiling as her eyes grew in confusion every time they moved. "What..." She shook her head. "What about them could be so distracting...to you?"

I blushed, the stupidity of what I said dawning on me. "They're just distracting okay!" I said, way too loudly than necessary. "I'm being distracted here—you're distracting me—don't distract me...." Her face grimaced in confusion at my sudden shortness of breath.

"Geee..." She chuckled nervously. "Relax will you." She said, almost sounding worried as I regained the control I had lost for no apparent fucking reason. She gave me a comforting nod, then went back to her phone, but kept her feet up.

As I took a deep calming breath, I thought about just letting it go, considering how unfair it was of me to make a big deal about this. But I kicked that thought right out. It was simple: She wanted it one way, but I, her boss, her superior, not her weak-willed friend that she could push around and take advantage of, wanted it another. "Rachel," I said, with a confidence that surprised me.

She looked at me with a smile.

"Remove your feet I'm not kidding." I said firmly.

She slouched, disappointed we were on the same topic, then frowned in shock. “What the hell is the matter with you?”

“Nothing.” I snapped. “It’s my office. My working area and I don’t want shoes on the furniture.”

“*I don’t want shoes on the furniture.*” She mimicked me, something she used to do a lot, yet somehow it never stopped being cute—*childish*. The word was childish.

It took me some effort to suppress my smile, and keep a straight face to let her know I didn’t appreciate her ten-year-old attitude. “Is there a problem here?” I narrowed my eyes at her, holding my chin between my fingers, letting my implied threat hang in the air.

She gave me a long look. I knew that look. She was looking deep within me, trying to figure out if she could get her way, trying to figure out if we were two friends or a boss and her employee. Usually, there would be other weapons at her disposal, but we were two adults in an office, and she worked for me. “No...” She gave me a fake smile, then swung her feet off the desk. “There’s no problem.”

I nodded, barely able to keep my nervous victorious grin off my face. The hint of disappointment in her tone didn’t pass me, and actually made me feel a bit sad; it was so strange for me to not let her get her way. The smile she’d give me whenever I made her happy filled me with such warmth. The childish frown on her face now however, didn’t. It made me cold and scared and nervous. Something I had to get used to, I guess.

Before I knew it, the day was over, and it was time to go home. Day after proceeded the same, and so did the day after that. She spent most her time on her phone. And I pretended to focus on work. I was kinda surprised she didn’t go about walking in the office, getting to know everybody. She used to be very social and outgoing. Only time she left the office was when she needed to use the bathroom. Even when Cindy walked in multiple times and tried to make small talk with her to make her feel welcomed, she was barely talkative, not seeming interested in making a conversation. It seemed she did change, somewhat, no idea if it was for better or worse.

At the end of the week, Rachel asked me if I wanted to go get a drink, which caught me by surprise. I wasn’t in a rush to go home and didn’t have anything special planned for the day, so I said yes.

I regretted it, however. Spending time in the office with her was one thing. Outside, was another. She didn’t even do anything. It was all me. Old habits die hard. And I had a million habits that I needed dead. When I got out of the car, my instinct took over and I found myself walking to her side of the car to open her door, something I used to do as a joke; luckily, before I even realized what I was doing, she was out of the car before I managed to walk halfway to her. But I still skipped a couple of steps in front of her and made sure to be the one that opened the bar’s door. A gesture to which she smiled and brushed me off shyly, while I cringed.

I had to constantly watch my every move, remind myself to *not* pull her chair for her, to *not* be the one that goes to fetch the drinks, to *not* be a damn doormat.

It boggled my mind that that was how I used to treat her. I often used to do those things jokingly, but both of us knew that eventually they were more than just jokes. I liked it, almost as much as she did. My college years had escalated from me living with a normal girl, to a bully, to a princess...an evil princess that I enjoyed spoiling while she belittled me at every turn.

“What happened to your glasses?” She asked while putting our beers on the table and taking a seat.

“...Humm...” I widened my eyes, question catching me by surprise.

She pointed a finger to her eyes. “Your glasses.” She said. “You used to wear glasses.”

I didn’t like answering that question. So I took a bet on her level of naiveness. “...I don’t need them anymore. I....my eyes... healed.”

“...” She gave me a silly look. “Healed?”

“...Yeah healed.”

“...”

Just buy it, please!

She chuckled, “Eyes don’t just heal—”

I shrugged aggressively. “Fine I got Lasik.”

She cocked her neck in confusion. “Da fuck is that?”

“It’s a...” I said. “It’s a.... laser surgery, so that I wouldn’t need to put glasses anymore.”

“Surgery!” She leaned forward, her eyes widening in shock. “Why the hell would you do that?”

“.....So that I wouldn’t have to put glasses anymore.” I said.

She tutted, before taking a sip from her beer and looking away. “Dunno.” She grimaced, like she was remembering. “Always thought you looked cute in glasses.”

The fuck did you just say to me? “What?”

“What?” She snickered. “Just saying. Way you used to sit on the bed reading your book, your eyes *huge* behind the lenses... *so huge* making your face look tiny.” She chuckled to herself. “Looked weirdly attractive.”

Her compliment sent a shiver down my spine, but my arms crossed instinctively. “You called me four-eyes on a daily basis.”

“Yeah...” She snickered, like she just remembered.

“You said I looked like an owl.” I said. “You made me mimic owl voices cause I looked like an owl.”

“OH...” She lurched forward, almost shotting beer out of her mouth as she laughed. “That’s right! Totally forgot about that.” She raised her glass in my direction. “Those were the days right? Cheers roomie.”

Those were the days? My knuckles turned white as I gripped my beer, but I managed to resist the urge to throw it in her face. The raging look on my face didn’t pass her.

“...” She narrowed her eyes, and said hesitantly, “Right?”

What was I gonna say. It was a long time ago. And I wasn’t exactly in a mood to pour my heart out at her in the middle of the bar. I wasn’t ready to talk about whatever accusations I had about our time together. “Right.” I raised my glass and clicked it with hers with such force that it almost broke, before taking a big gulp and looking away from her.

She gave me a weirded-out look, like she couldn’t figure out if there was something wrong, then just shrugged and drank her beer. We chatted for like an hour about trivial stuff. As we did, my focus was less on what she said and more on her manner of speaking. She was almost a different person. I couldn’t put my finger on it, but something about her, some crucial part I used to remember about her personality, just wasn’t there. That, along with her anit-social demeanor around the office, propelled me to ask, “So how you like your new job?”

“OH...” She pushed a strand of her blond hair behind her ear anxiously, then nodded, not meeting my eye. “It’s fine. It’s good.”

Her lack of details wasn’t a surprise to me. After that first day, I decided to not be a bitch and start doing what I was supposed to do and coach her about the job. Only, I couldn’t. I didn’t want to. So I gave her a punch of documents and guides and instructions to read. She was excited at first. Then she realized she couldn’t understand shit of what was written on there, and instead pretended to be studying them while listening to something on her phone—and I knew it wasn’t some music to help her concentrate like she said. I felt bad a bit, but I wasn’t about to coach her shit. Fuck her.

“It’s your...” I said. “that’s your first job, right?”

She nodded, giving me a smile that didn’t make it to her eyes. The disappointment on her face didn’t pass me. She didn’t have to say it. I read her face: she didn’t expect, neither was she that happy that she was working in a boring desk job at 26. Hell, I wasn’t that happy with my job, and I unlike her always had realistic expectations, never rose my hopes up.

“I’m gonna have my own brand dummy.” She once said. “I’ll be a big motivational speaker and have my own brand. You’ll see.” She chuckled to herself while she browsed one of those Instagram pages, while I was at the end of her bed giving her a pedicure. I never understood the connection between what she wanted to do and the plastic barbie showing off her new Gucci shoes on her phone was, but she apparently saw a connection.

I always thought she was utterly stupid in her childish goals—not cause of the goals themselves, but cause she never seemed to have a clear plan of getting there...none of what she said made sense, especially that while she talked big, she mostly spent her time on her ass eating junk food and watching TV, failing classes and snapping pictures while I waited on her hand and

foot. But despite all of that, I always liked that part about her; she seemed to have such high hopes for her future, such confidence in that she was gonna get where she wanted to go.

Seeing her here now, I noticed that confidence wasn't there anymore. I didn't know what to feel about that.

"Yep..." She took a gulp from her beer. "First job. Lost my...professional virginity."

"Professional virginity." I snickered. Dumbass.

After what had to be my second drink, my eyes met the wooden clock on the bar's wall. 11 p.m. Shit. We'd been talking for hours. I didn't keep count on Rachel's drink-count, but judging by the dull, almost absent look on Rachel's face, I'd say she got a couple drinks on me, maybe more; And I knew for a fact she couldn't hold her liquor that well...not at all actually.

"Rachel." I said as a test.

She looked at me, a broad smile on her lips, her glossy eyes looking at me like I was something out of this world.

"Wanna head home?" I said.

"Head home?" She chuckled. Her head whirled away. "You sound very stupid. Like...dumb."

Yeah. Definitely more than two drinks. "Okay let's go." I rose to my feet, praying that she was at least able to walk and I wouldn't have to drag her ass to the car. But I remembered a more pressing matter now. "...Wanna split the check." Didn't mean to sound like a cheap bitch, but my drinks had to make quarter of the bill, at maximum; splitting it in half was generous of me. "Huh?"

"*Check!*" She mumbled as she shook her head at me, like I wasn't making any sense, like I was speaking Japanese. "What do you mean *check*?"

I nodded, knowing I was fucked. Even when she had money, she often stopped understanding English at similar situations. Whether her parents gave her two or twenty thousand as allowance, she'd be broke at the end of the month. *Guess It's my treat.* I walked to the cashier and paid the bill then came back for her. "Ready?"

She nodded animatedly, then stormed up to her feet, then took a step. She tripped, but I caught her. She didn't like that for some reason.

"Da fuck you doing." She slapped my face playfully away. "Hands off shithead."

"Shut up." I wrapped my arm around her shoulder and walked her out of the bar as she kept clobbering my face away.

"So where's your apartment?" I said as I drove away from the bar.

She yawned as she waved around with her hand. "Somewhere around here."

My head snapped towards her in fear. If she was being funny, I didn't find it funny. "Rachel, where do you live?"

“Apartment 34.”

“That’s great.” I nodded. “What street? What building?”

“Don’t know the street.” She brushed me off, talking like she was going to sleep. “Building has purple plants on the door though! Like flowers.”

“Rachel.” I let go of the driving wheel and gave her a couple of light slaps around the face. “What’s your address. Come on, before I leave your ass on the side of the road.”

“Just look for it.” She pushed my hand away irritatingly. “I’m sure you’ll find it eventually. Nothing is impossible. Believe in yourself.”

Motherfucker. Why hadn’t I seen that coming. I glared at her. There she lay, a drunk lump in my car seat, almost falling asleep. There was no getting her home. I didn’t want her spending the night at my place. And unless I was willing to just throw her ass in some motel, that was where she was going. “Fuck this.” I mumbled as I smashed the gas paddle.

“Yeah...” She snickered.

I drove to my apartment. I couldn’t let go of her for one second as I walked her from the car to the elevator and from the elevator to my door. She kept tripping up, and was singing *All By Myself* by the time I managed to drag her to the couch. I brought a blanket and covered her, lifting her limp jean-covered legs up. She was already awake, but I knew she wouldn’t take her shoes off by herself, and I didn’t want shoes on my white couch. So I bent and started unlacing her ankle boots for her.

“Wow...” She said. “Nice apartment you have here. Is it yours?”

I shook my head. My apartment was nothing special. It was a bit spacious, and had modern but low quality furniture—no fancy decorations or anything like that. But her dazzled eyes only proved to me how shitty her one-room apartment must’ve been. “Mortgage.” I answered her.

She froze for a second while I fought with her shoelaces. “What the hell is a mortgage—”

Bitch you majored in Economics! “Yes it’s mine.” I pulled her shoe off, not really in the mood to explain it to her.

By the end of it I was so exhausted I knelt there on the floor beside the couch. I took a good look at her, sprawled on the couch, her face dull, looking like she’d rather be anywhere else. Seeing her like this was just the creaming on top. I already knew, but it just solidified the fact; she was a mess. Was I more happy or sad to see her like this, I couldn’t decide. But for a second there, I felt like I was back in college.

When my eyes made it to her face, she was already looking at me blankly.

I cleared my throat. “All comfy?”

She nodded, looking as innocent as a kitten.

“Need anything before I go to sleep?”

She didn’t answer. She just laid on her side, just kept staring at me as I knelt at the end of the couch, her green eyes putting me at unease.

“...Rachel—”

“You always said I’m gonna make it.” She said.

“...” I cocked my neck, confused, not really sure what to say to that. Didn’t know if that was just drunk mumbling, or if she was actually expecting an answer.

“...”

“Guess I...” I rested a hand on her leg. “Guess I didn’t want to be discouraging,” I said.

She hummed. “Didn’t wanna bring me down?” She smiled drunkenly. “Protecting my feelings. Always taking care of me.”

My face blushed as I felt her socked toes softly stroking against my cheek, in a lazy gesture of affection. Following my first instinct, I rubbed my cheek against it gently, before I shook my head back into conciseness. I grabbed her foot and put it back under the covers, snickering nervously. “Yeah, especially that I got my ass beaten when I didn’t.”

Worst thing to do when Rachel got a brilliant new idea, or when she was excited about any particular thing, was to discourage her with this thing called reason and logic; after a couple of beatings, I just decided it was best for everyone if I told her what she wanted to hear. I rose to my feet, feeling my own head getting lighter. “Good night Rachel.”

I walked into my room and closed the door behind me. I stripped to my underwear and climbed under the covers. I needed to be in the safety and silence of my room to realize how messed up this day had turned out. Why did I have Rachel sleeping on my couch?

This wasn’t the plan! Why did I even say yes when she asked me out? Our relationship should’ve been kept strictly professional. Employee and boss. That was the only scenario in which I granted my power over her. Granted, I hadn’t been able to accomplish much, unless I could count me keeping her feet off my eyesight an accomplishment, but still, it was better than nothing.

Tomorrow would be different. I should remember who I was dealing with here. Not a friend in a crisis. Not even a colleague. She was the person who made my life hell for four years, who messed with my head and ruined my relationship goals. Only reason she was still here, was to make up for that. *Focus*.

I nodded to myself, closed my eyes and tried to fall asleep. Door opened, making me lurch forward in fear. “Jesu—” I stammered. “What are you doing?”

She staggered forward towards my bed. “Rocks.”

“Excuse me?” I grimaced.

“Rocks.” She pointed back with her thumb. “You’re making me sleep on fucking rocks—I aint sleeping on that damn couch.”

“But—but—”

She threw herself on the bed beside me before I could compose a sentence. She literally moaned as she stretched her limbs and flexed her back. “OHhhhh...” She almost cried out as she hugged my fluffy covers. “So soft...so comfy...make room.” She elbowed me in the ribs.

I stayed frozen in place for like ten seconds, looking at her with pure desperation in my eyes.

“Come on!” She whined as she elbowed me harder. “I’m sleepy.”

I cursed under my breath as I shifted aggressively away to the left side of the bed, making room for her. I turned on my side and pulled the cover over me. Before I could make my peace with her invasion, her arm flew over my shoulder, and her leg over my thigh. I flinched as she hugged me close to her like I was a pillow, and my skin prickled as her warm breath blew on the back of my neck. My limbs went rigid, as I tried to keep my body from melting in her embrace.

She hummed in comfort, then said, like she had just realized something obvious. “I missed you.”

“Bitch shut up and sleep please.”

“Good night.”

My body shrunk between her arms as she held me tighter, and my rigid limbs loosened; it wasn’t the first time that me and Rachel slept in the same bed. We often drifted off on her bed or mine while watching one of her movies. I wished I could say that it felt different now. But it didn’t. I longed for moments like this, even more now that it had been forever since it last happened, moments where she showed me affection, instead of the constant usual debasement. But that didn’t matter. I wasn’t the same dumb specimen I was in college. I learned my lesson. I didn’t mean shit to her, and this would be the last time I had her in *my* bed.

I hugged her arm close to my chest, smiling as I heard her already snoring lightly. *Might as well enjoy it while it happened.*

I whirled my brown hair between my finger anxiously as I glared at Rachel sitting in her office chair. It had been a couple weeks since my brilliant revenge plan commenced, and frankly, it had been going great.

Revenge never felt so sweet. I had her doing all kinds of stuff. I had her sitting on her ass all day, bored and with *nothing* to do—but watch movies on her phone. I *forced* her to go and talk to Cindy and other girls around the office to socialize a bit. And, as a final insult, as salt to the wound, I was going to pay her a month’s worth of work for doing just that. Get paid to lay on your ass. Revenge.

Mrs. Salia was already giving me shit about hiring her out of all people, especially that she knew Rachel wasn’t making any progress in learning my job; they crossed paths one time and Salia

asked her how things were going, also tested her, tried to talk to her about the company policy and such. Rachel talked, confidently like an expert, and managed in 46 seconds to leave no doubt in Salia's mind that she was clueless about the job.

Of course Salia just smiled politely then stormed into my office and gave me the schooling of a lifetime. I apologized and promised Rachel would improve in no time. After that she mentioned that I too should start pulling my shit together, as I hadn't been performing half as good as I used to; which was true, considering I was barely getting shit done with my mind occupied by the blond bimbo who never left my eyesight, as her every move and every word sent me on a trip down memory lane, every time remembering another ancient scenario with her. I took the schooling without a single word of protest.

But it did get me thinking about where I was going with all of this. What was I doing? Rachel's presence was hurting my job, hell, even my wallet; after seeing my apartment, it was kind of her green light to *forget* paying her part of the bill every time we went out. I guess I only had myself to blame for that, as I never managed to say no to her whenever she asked me to hang out. Just couldn't handle looking at the disappointment on her face—plus I actually liked spending time with her, to some degree. But I did learn my lesson, and asked her about her address, so that I could drop her ass home after we're done.

The point was, this couldn't continue. I didn't want Rachel back in my life, did I? She was here only temporarily, for me to push her around a bit, do right by myself, then kick her back into whatever hole she'd crawled out from. Today I decided that I'd do just that, starting now.

This shouldn't be hard. I'd start by ordering her around a bit. A normal person wouldn't care, but this wasn't a normal person, this was Rachel. She never worked a day in her life. She'd always had everything delivered on a silver platter, by her parents, by me, by whoever the hell she used to munch off of. So I was certain, that just a couple of rude demands, with no please and no thank you, would surely be enough to make her tear up. Same treatment the day after, and the day after, and I wouldn't be surprised if she quitted on the third.

I was standing near the shelves close to her desk, pretending to look for something, while I secretly mustered my courage to tell her go *fetch* me a cup of coffee. I never spoke in a rude manner to anyone my whole life. On the contrary, if someone worked for me, I tried to be extra nice and humble so that they didn't feel threatened. But now that was precisely what I needed to do.

I turned to her. She was dressed in a black conservative blouse and long jeans, watching something on her phone. She didn't look that attractive today, her hair slightly disheveled, and her feet, resting on one of the lower open drawers as a make-shift footrest, were hidden in black flats and nylons, both of which she rarely wore. This made it a lot easier.

I took breath, then said. "Rachel."

She took off her headphones—which I told her to wear at all times—and looked at me, smiling innocently. "Yes?"

“Go...” I felt like fainting, as air left my lungs. *Just tell her. Tell the bitch to run along and fetch you a cup of coffee. It's her job isn't it?* “Can oi—” I mumbled, turning her smile to a worried frown. What the fuck was going on? My vision almost had black spots staining it.

“Mandy?” She squinted, snickering nervously. “You’re scaring me.”

I just stared at her, the words stuck in my throat, chocking me. *You don't even have to be rude. Just ask her for a favor, politely. Say 'would you please go and grab me a coffee.' Go on. Come on.* “I...” I mumbled, then froze again. *Say anything! Anything's better than just standing there like an idiot. The fuck are you doing?*

I cleared my throat, then smiled regretfully for my show of utter awkwardness. “I’m heading to the Coffee machine.” I managed to say. “Can I get you anything with me to drink?”

“Oh...”

The actual fuck—

“No,” She shrugged. “Not really feeling like drinking anything.”

“Cool.” I nodded animatedly then bolted to the door.

“OH oh oh oh ...” She stopped me, like she remembered something. “I’m famished. Can you grab me a sandwich on your way.”

I recoiled, not really knowing what to tell her. “It’s a coffee machine, Rachel, not MacDonalds.”

She pouted in disappointment. “Okay. Then no, don’t need anything. Thanks.”

I opened the door and got out. I threw myself in the first empty chair in my way, catching the breath I had lost for some strange reason.

It didn’t sound right. Hearing those words come out of my mouth felt as natural as hearing Miss Mandy and Boss come out of anybody else’s mouth.

I waited on that girl hand and foot for four years. The girl that made a fool of me and laughed at me for far more times than I could count. I apologized to her when she was in the wrong, even begged for her forgiveness. I did her chores just cause she was too lazy to do them herself, made her bed and washed her laundry and cooked her meals. She didn’t even have to force me to do it, eventually. At first yes, she used force, but by our last year together, the smile she gave me or the gentle pat on the cheek was enough motivation for me to bend over backwards for her.

I had never felt so defeated. It was simply something I couldn’t do. Cause, as much as I hated Rachel, something deep in me saw her as someone who was above being ordered, especially ordered by someone as low as me.

Cindy halted a meter in front of me, probably surprised to see me sitting in her chair. “Is everything alright, boss?”

“If you call me that again, I’m gonna fire you.”

She winced. “Sorry.” She said while I climbed to my feet. “Do you need anything?”

“Yeah.” I nodded. “Where’s the closest MacDonalds?”

I got into the elevator and took it back up our office floor, my hand clinging to the bag including two burgers, one with pickles and one without. She used to hate pickles in her sandwich, but I got the extra one in case her taste changed over the last two years. Looking at my dull face in the mirror, I realized this was a lost cause. Why did I even bother. There was no getting back at her. Even if I managed to do it, I highly doubt it would change me. It wasn’t like humiliating her would somehow undo the four years I spent being her doormat.

But what should I do with her now then? Fire her? I couldn’t fire her. I couldn’t ask her for a fucking coffee...I couldn’t fire her. Maybe I should just... let the chips fall where they may. I exhaled a long breath of relief when I realized that. Letting go was so damn freeing.

I got my stupid cup of coffee from the machine then walked into my office. Rachel was occupied with whatever she was watching on her phone, so I didn’t say a single word. I just threw the bag of sandwiches on her desk and walked to mine.

She looked at the bag in confusion. “What’s this?—OH.” Her eyes widened at seeing what was inside. “Oh my god—thanks.”

There it was. That damn smile. She was showing an awful lot of excitement over a damn burger, but I just found it cute. I blushed, and shrunk in my seat as I took a sip from my coffee trying to hide my red cheeks. “You’re welcome.”

I watched her take the sandwiches and coke out of the bag with the excitement of a girl who got a new pony, before she immediately dug in, devouring half the first sandwich in one bite. She was never an elegant eater. She used to wipe her fingers in my hair when she finished as a joke and laugh as she watched me whine disgustingly before running to the bathroom to wash up. I never liked that, but like everything else she did, I learned to appreciate it—or at least get used to it.

“This is good.” She basically moaned as she leaned back in her chair and chewed. “Hey—” She mumbled around her food. “Do you know of any good tv sites? One I’m using is acting all crappy on me.”

“...” I winced. “What? TV sites?”

“Yeah like...” She said. “Sites that have movies and shows and stuff.”

“...”

“...Like Netflix?” She said, like I was stupid.

“Why not just use Netflix?” I snapped.

“...” She looked away from me, and I thought I saw a hint of embarrassment. “Don’t like them anymore.”

“...” I was confused for a second, before I frowned knowingly. *Just say you don’t like paying the fee you cheap bitch.* “You can use mine if you like.”

“...Really.” She smiled at me. “Okay I guess I’ll give them another chance.”

“I bet you will.” I said then I gave her the email, then I almost gave her the password, before I remembered, and walked to her to log in myself. “Just—” I took the phone from her hand. “Security and stuff.” I chuckled nervously as I typed in my password: *I_Hate_Rachel_Dams*. “There you go.”

“Thanks.”

“You’re welcome.” I walked back to my desk.

“Perfect!” With that, she put the earphones back in her ear eagerly and swung her legs, resting her feet on the desk.

I was just looking at her, not even noticing or planning to say something about it.

But her eyes met mine, and she squinted like she just remembered. “Right.” She said. “Sorry.” She started taking her feet down to the ground, but I stopped her.

“No it’s okay.” I shook my head.

She gave me a long confused look. “Are you sure?”

I nodded.

“...So what—” She looked more confused, and kind of offended. “Why did you make a big deal out of it before then?”

I gulped. I hated it when her cute eyebrows frowned, like I had wronged her. “I was just...” I searched for words. “I didn’t want you to get your desk all dirty. But it’s your desk so... just do what you like.”

“Oh...” She narrowed her eyes, looking half convinced, but just shrugged and put her feet back in their spot. “Okay how about this!” She said, like she got the most brilliant idea ever. She used the toe of her left flat to kick her right shoe, then kicked the other one off right after it, making it tumble to the ground. “Good?” She crossed her nylon covered feet at the ankles.

I didn’t answer. I was too busy staring in desperation at the two nylon soles taking over my eyesight. My heartbeat quickened, and I felt my stomach growing cold, as I looked at a sight that I had been missing for the last two years.

“What?” She asked, probably noticing my staring. “Don’t tell me my feet distract you.” She smiled at me knowingly. “I’m not buying that silly shit anymore missy.”

I almost didn't hear her, just kept staring at the pair of soles in front of me. I didn't realize how noticeable my staring was until I heard her worried voice calling me. "Mandy?" She shook her foot, as if to get my attention.

I shook my head and smiled at her awkwardly. "No." I focused on my computer screen. "Just put them wherever you like." I chuckled nervously. She grinned and got back to eating and watching her show.

As I sat there, my eyes didn't stay in the same place for more than a second. The sight of her was familiar but different, sitting there peacefully without a single worry in her mind. It was like we were back in that dorm, only looking a little older. *That's right.* I breathed in. *Just watch your movies, eat my food, and rest your feet wherever you please, be it on the drawer, on your desk, or on my face.* I nodded, then slammed my forehead against my desk in utter desperation. Whatever chance I might've had on focusing on my shit before, I had surely lost now.

I could blame Rachel for many things. I couldn't decide if I could blame her for my utter fascination with her cute slender soles. I doubted that fucking me up was her intention. When she'd pin me to the ground and shove her smooth soles in my face, she probably did it cause it was the easiest way to shut me up. She probably wasn't even trying to humiliate me. She just... did it cause it was fun. She didn't mean to create this new fascination in my mind.

Like all other embarrassing ordeals she put me through, I found myself going from hating it, to getting used to it, to loving it; this loving part I had always kept to myself. I went from fighting with her, to doing all I could to get out of her way, to deliberately provoking her, and praying silently that she'd manhandle or humiliate me in any way. Touching her feet became this...erotic, yet embarrassing experience. It was weird and I loved it. It wasn't just hers, I found out after she left me. I couldn't look at a pair of feet without imagining rubbing my face all over them. But looking at other girls' feet never even came close to looking at Rachel's.

Hers were where it all started for me. It wasn't so much the foot itself as much as what it reminded me of. I looked at them and I could almost remember what it was like being in that damn dorm again, being bullied by her, that mixed feeling of fear and shame and excitement. And she was as clueless then to what she was doing to me as she was now.

Look at her, sitting there, watching her movies with a bored look on her face, looking all innocent, oblivious to the *absolute* pervert basically devouring her nylon-covered toes with her eyes. What was wrong with it? There was nothing wrong with that right? I was just... privately admiring my friend's...beautiful...anatomy. *That's totally alright, not perverted at all. I'm too harsh on myself.*

I looked away. *You aint a pervert. Sure you're a bit weird, maybe your imagination a bit sick, but you aint no pervert*—my mind traveled back to the couple of times Rachel had me pinned on the ground, rubbing her soles up and down my red face to torture me, thinking that she was teaching me a lesson, while I was down there doing all I could to seal my moans in my mouth—*Not anymore at least. You're not a pervert anymore. So take your eyes off of her fucking soles and don't get any ideas. Just focus on your work.*

I did focus on my work, kept my eyes on my screen, till Rachel's damn foot flexed or her damn toes wiggled and my attention would snap back to them. I didn't want to be working right now. I wanted to be on my knees rubbing my face against her nylon soles.

As the image flashed in front of my eyes, I felt sick in the stomach, so much so I felt like throwing up. I shouldn't want that. I shouldn't even think about it. Days where that bitch humiliated me were over, and I should be glad that they were.

I noticed the arch of her foot flexing a bit too much, and her face slightly twisting uncomfortably. "What's wrong?" I asked.

She looked at me as if she wasn't sure if I said something or not, before she removed her headphones. "What?"

"...Is something wrong?"

"...No." She snickered. "Why would something be wrong?"

Why indeed? What the fuck was I even asking her here? "It's just that..." I cleared my throat. "...You look uncomfortable or something. You're making faces. And—moving your foot too much—" *Just shut up. Don't say words.*

"Moving my foot too much?" She frowned, like she, understandably, found what I said totally confusing. *How did you even notice that?* she probably wanted to tell me, but she just shook her head, like she just let go. "It's nothing. My feet are a bit sore that's all."

I nodded. "huh!"

"Yeah my house is like... close enough so that I don't waste money on a cap, but still far enough so that it's a pain in the ass to get here." She shrugged. "It's annoying."

I didn't really know what to do with that. I said nothing, and she smiled at me, as if to confirm that this was the end of our little awkward conversation, then got back to her movie. I looked at her for what had to be a minute, as I felt something utterly stupid cooking in my mind. ".....Want a foot rub."

"...What?"

"What?" I blinked, suddenly hearing what I said. "Nothing. Kidding—joking—leave me alone!" I brushed her off angrily and got back to my screen, my cheeks blushing.

"..." She gave me a suspicious long look, and a silly smile, before she slowly turned her head back to her phone. "Alright then. I'll...just get back to my movie here."

"Alrighty roo." I rose to my feet.

"Where..." She looked up at me as I walked to the door. "Where are you going?"

"Home..." I said. "I don't feel so well. See you later."

I walked into my bedroom and slammed the door behind me, dove face first into my mattress. Shame and rage and self-hatred ran through me, making my stomach shrink. I wanted Rachel out of my life, I just didn't have the power to do it myself. I couldn't muster the power to push her away. I wasn't stupid. I knew the effects of four years couldn't vanish in a couple years. I wanted to be degraded, humiliated, being made fun of; I was too much of a coward to pursue that, but I knew I wanted it.

But what I didn't expect, was that I would want Rachel out of all people to be the one that did this to me. It felt so... shitty, to hate someone. It felt shittier to not be able to get them back for what they did. But how fucked up in the head did I have to be if I wanted the bitch whom I loathed for treating me like shit for years, to do it all over again. I mean... I hated her. I physically hated her. This little piece of information should be taken into consideration by my little horny crotch shouldn't it.

I should've been laughing at her misery, not offering her foot massages. But the words flew out of my mouth before I could even think. Like my response was robotic. It was just the natural thing to say. My mind thought it okay to offer a foot rub to my employee, thought it natural for me to get up from my desk, leave my work, and go tend to her sore poor feet in the middle of my damn office. And this was all while Rachel had no idea of what ran inside my head. What if she did. What if she figured out what went on inside my head and tried to take advantage of it.

She was so nice. Nothing like the girl I knew from college. She was a grown-up, a nice person. But people never completely changed. She could easily still be the same cunt that made my life hell.

I turned on my back and jumped to my feet. I took my clothes off and crept under the covers. I knew exactly what I needed. These thoughts I had were poison. All I needed was to get the poison out. I needed to flick the bean. I needed to get her out of my head now, so that I wouldn't be a hot mess tomorrow.

My sick imagination had many visitors. Mostly, I thought about Mrs. Salia, the meanest person I knew. But today I didn't even bother trying. Only one person would quench my lustful imagination today and that was Rachel.

Fantasizing about her felt like I was returning to an old, self-destructive habit, like smoking or drinking too much. I felt like shit, and in the same time adrenaline was rushing through my veins. My skin prickled, as I imagined Rachel doing all kinds of mean shit to me.

I always started with something that she did do to me. I imagined her pinning me on the ground and sitting on my chest, using her knees to pin my arms down. I imagined her slapping me around. I imagined her pushing her toes against my big clown-nose and ordering me to sniff, while I grabbed her ankles and pretended to be struggling to take it off. Then I would let my imagination go free a little bit—using some of the weird porn scenes I had in buckets— and I'd imagine her sticking her toes in my mouth and ordering me to suck on them. In reality, she often took good care of her hygiene, but in my imagination, they were rank and dirty and sweaty, adding to my humiliation.

Out there, I couldn't bring myself to put myself through any of that. We were two adults. I didn't think there was a way to return to that, and even if there was, I wasn't sure I wanted to take it. But fantasizing about it was harmless. I already had the shitty memories; at least I could use them for something.

Following week showed me how utterly pathetic this attempt of taking her out of my head was. Turned out, that no matter how much you fantasized about your crush, you'll still act stupid and awkward when interacting with them. And my crush was basically with me at least 6 hours a day. I didn't want to fantasize about her. I wanted the real thing. But I was afraid to go after it. So all I could do was make do with the little joys I managed to squeeze out of my situation.

Those little joys were noticed by everyone, except for Rachel. For some reason, she found it totally normal that her boss brought her coffee when she wanted. Totally normal that her boss started driving her to and back from work every day. Totally normal that her boss was so surprisingly generous that she never asked her to pay her damn part of the bill.

"I'm confused." Cindy said to me from her cubical before I managed to creep into my office. She looked at me and the two chocolate milkshakes I had just went to Starbucks to buy.

"...What?" I asked.

"Is she your assistant?" Cindy crooked her neck. "or is it the other way around?" her teasing look didn't pass me. That was when I knew my situation was totally getting out of hand. Everyone must've found it strange, since Cindy, the nicest, most respectful girl I knew was now teasing me.

God... if it was the other way around it would've been too much easier wouldn't it. I shook my head and chuckled nervously. "You know me... I just like... making newcomers feel welcomed."

She pouted, like she was expecting more of a serious explanation. Then she just shrugged and smiled politely. I was about to walk into my office when I heard my name being called from behind me. I turned and my grin vanished as I saw Mrs. Salia standing in front of me, her face bearing a tight smile. "Mandy."

"Mrs. Salia." I greeted awkwardly in an overenthusiastic manner, trying to pretend like I hadn't been avoiding her for the past week. "How are you doing?"

She took a deep breath, her smile widening as she glanced at Cindy who sat in her cubical watching us, before she looked at me again. "I'm doing just fine." She nodded. "How are *you* doing?"

"Fine."

"Fine?" Her eyes darted between my face and the milkshakes I held awkwardly in my hands.

"..." I nodded. "More or less."

She crossed her arms. I had a hunch I was about to receive a verbal spanking as her wrinkled forty-something face twisted in an ugly grimace. “So Mr. Crain called me yesterday asking me why the shipment hadn’t arrived at his store yesterday?”

“...He did?”

“And Samantha called me asking why we had bothered to send her another extra load of our product when she hadn’t yet sold the first one!”

“...I think I dropped the ball there—”

“And I called Mrs. Lanigan to ask how her meeting with you went, and if she felt confident buying our shit now that Mandy addressed all her concerns. You know what she said?”

“.....” I winced.

“She said who the hell is Mandy.” She yelled, and I felt a sudden silence in the cubicles around, leaving no doubt in my mind that most eyes were on us. Salia never schooled me in front of them. Usually she liked to keep her rudeness private, but I guess today she was too mad she didn’t care.

“I’ll fix all of that.” I nodded, looking down at the ground.

“You do that.” She nodded. “And next time you plan on taking a day off, tell me a day in advance.”

“You got it ma’am—”

“What’s that...” She pointed at the two milkshakes in my hand, as if they’d been bothering her for a while.

“...” I looked down at them. “Milkshakes. Chocolate.”

“...” her eyes darted around my face in confusion. “You left your desk to go get Milkshake Chocolate?”

“...”

“...You can call for them you know.” She said. “Delivery.”

I winced. The reason I didn’t order delivery was that I didn’t want her to see him coming down to my office three times a day, trying to be sneaky and all. “I...Totally forgot about that—”

“Still...” She shook her head. “You have an assistant for that. She’s sitting there doing nothing. You should give trivial stuff like that to that brainless skirt you hired.”

The fuck did you just say about Rachel? “...I...” I nodded, gripping the plastic milkshakes with a bit too much force, searching for the right words. “I don’t like...to overwork her.”

She nodded, her smile widening but her eyes spitting fire. She looked at Cindy and chuckled spitefully. “Boss of the year everybody.”

“Thanks thanks.” I smiled politely.

“Get your shit together girl.” She said. “Get that—” she had to lean forward, getting closer to me so that she didn’t have to speak up. She liked to keep talk like that private. “Get that... brainless skirt you hired in line, or fire her, or I’ll have to fire you both.”

She walked away, leavening me leaning on my office’s door trying to catch my breath. I looked at Cindy, who was smiling sympathetically at me. She shook her head as she got her attention back on her screen. “I don’t know how you do it Mandy.” She shrugged. “She does have a point though.” With that she got back to work.

For the first time since I started working here, I saw her point. *Who does that old shrew think she is, talking to me like that?*

I grunted as I pushed my office door open. My irritated eyes immediately settled on Rachel as she lay back in her chair with her pink socked feet on the table. I could hardly blame Salia could I. Her rude attitude was always welcomed by me. But now that Rachel was back, it just felt like... if someone should be talking to me like I was a pathetic specimen, it should be her, this young, hot, obnoxiously entitled, green-eyed blondie, not that old hag. How could I get excited about that old shrew when I had the girl I had fantasied about for years sitting right here in my office.

“What was that all about?” She took her earphones off as she looked at me worryingly.

“Nothing.” I put her milkshake on her desk then walked to mine and sat down.

“Boss angry about something?” she said.

I sighed. I winced as I recalled the conversation I just had. This couldn’t continue. Salia liked me, or she liked having me around at least, that was the prime reason I got this job. But truth was, my job wasn’t that hard. Cindy could do it. A good number of people working here could do it. How long could my *yes-ma’am* attitude keep me safe? Judging by the threat Salia just made, not long. She could probably make her peace with a less docile employee, rather than one who kept fucking up left and right. “Yes.”

She just shrugged and took a sip from her milkshake, like it didn’t concern her, before she recoiled, and looked at it for the first time. “For fuck’s sake—” she yelled as she looked at the plastic cup in her hand.

“What?” I asked innocently, pretending to not know what her problem was.

“Jesus—” She extended the cup in my direction to show it to me. “How many times? Huh?”

I shrunk back into my seat, steeling myself for another little joy.

“Strawberry!” She looked at me like I was retarded. “Strawberry, Mandy. Not vanilla, not chocolate, not goddamn banana’s. Straw...be...rry.”

To answer her previous question, eleven times. Eleven times I had gotten her order wrong, so she could snap and talk to me like I was a brainless idiot who couldn’t comprehend words. I blushed and pushed my thighs together, doing my best not to start masturbating right there in my chair. Part of me really felt disrespected, and wanted to jump to my feet and shout back, reminding her she was talking to her boss, a fellow human being, but of course I didn’t. Cause every inch of

my body wanted her to throw the drink in my face and spank me as a punishment. “I’m sorry.” I apologized, hiding my smile behind a guilty face. “I’ll get it right next time I promise.”

She shook her head, shooting me a venom glare with her thin green eyes. “Whatever.” She muttered. She muttered in an irritated whisper, probably not intending for me to hear it, but I did. “Dumb idiot—How did you even get this job.”

I looked at Rachel, and my face fell in desperation as she angrily kicked her feet up on her desk again and returned to her show, reluctantly sucking on her chocolate milkshake. My eyes were glued to the cute soles of her pink socks right in my face. Yep. Masturbating to her did nothing for me. I wanted the real thing. I wanted her to get up from her stupid desk and sit in mine and shove her cute feet in my face and call me stupid. I wanted to be back at college, alone with her in my dorm, with nothing to worry about but making Rachel happy.

“What are you looking at?” she said, making me shake my head out of my slumber and look at her. She was giving me a suspicious look.

“What?” I blinked.

She raised an eyebrow, as if she suspected I was messing with her. “What are you...looking at?” She snickered, but her face remained confused. “Why are you always looking at me like that?”

How long had I been staring exactly? I felt my chest shaking with fear. What did she notice? Fuck her I didn’t do shit. *You aint got a thing on me.* “Nothing.” I chuckled. “I was just... deep in thought. You know when you think about something, you stare at something random.”

“...” her eyes narrow as mine grew scared and nervous. She took a deep, almost impatient breath, then just shrugged and recrossed her socked feet. “It’s just weird, how you always seem to be staring at my feet while you’re *deep* in your *thoughts*.” She said sarcastically.

“I...” Just kill me now. I didn’t know what to say. “I...” My cheeks grew hot and red and I couldn’t form words. That seemed to confuse her further, and judging by the widening smile on her face, amuse her somewhat.

“...What?” She said in a mocking manner. “You’re trying to take inspiration from them or something?”

She was openly teasing me now. My eyes darted from her taunting soles to her teasing smile, and I tried to say something. But in the end, I just smiled and pretended to focus my attention on whatever was on my screen.

I saw her shake her head and get back to her phone.

For the first time in a long time, I actually got some work done. I sent some emails to some of our customers, made some calls and scheduled some meetings. I wanted to prove to her that I didn’t have a thing for her feet. Fantasizing about her was one thing. Actually being in her presence was another. It was harder for me to forget what she did to me. And I wanted to resist, even though I knew how pathetic my resistance would turn out to be.

After a couple of hours of uninterrupted work, I leaned back. I didn't have much else to do for now, and my eyes were fixated on my desktop screen. I looked at Rachel, then wished I hadn't. Her bare feet were resting beside each other, her pinkish soles in my direction. Had she done this on purpose? Was she teasing?

Of course she was. Why else would she take her damn socks off? My eyes traveled from one little pink toe to the other, before settling at the white pinkish ball of her foot. How creepy would she think I am if she knew I had fantasized about each and every part of her foot? Was she open to that sort of thing? Probably not. She was a bit closed minded, if I remembered correctly.

"Hey..." I said, and she took her headphones off and looked at me blankly. I hesitated for a second, then decided to not think so much of it. "Remember back in college when you used to... pin me down to the floor and smother me when I annoyed you." I chuckled nervously.

She cocked her neck. "Smother you?"

"Yeah like..." I cleared my throat, already regretting it. "...When you... pushed your feet against my face this one time to embarrass me."

She looked away, and nodded slowly, as if to agree but without a single clue of what my point was behind bringing it up. "...Yeah. So?" she snickered, and waited for me to talk.

"....." But I didn't talk.

"Okay." She nodded and raised her eyebrows then got back to her thing. "Tell you what." She said. "I may have to do that shit again if you keep getting my milkshake wrong."

The fake smile I had on my face disappeared as my stomach shrunk. "Do what?"

She shook her foot. "Wipe them on your face to teach you a lesson."

Was she serious. She was smiling jokingly at me, but was she serious. I regained my breath and mumbled. "You're not serious right?"

She frowned, like I had just asked something utterly stupid. "You're weird today." She shook her head and returned her attention to her movie.

My eyes stayed glued to her feet as I imagined the possibility. Until her toes wiggled, slapping me back to reality. I didn't bother looking at her face. If she had caught me staring and was now giving me a teasing look, I didn't want to see it. I turned back to my computer and opened solitaire.

My face winced reluctantly as I replayed what happened in my mind. *Of course she wasn't serious you idiot.* To her, those were only our teenagerhood memories and we weren't teenagers no more. It felt like a lump in my throat that the most childish person I knew managed to understand that simple fact, while I couldn't bring myself to get over it.

Rest of the day proceeded uneventfully—thank god. I pretended to work, to play, or to watch shit on youtube, all the while trying to take sneaky peeks on her soles, that were probably

not that sneaky at all, considering that every time I looked at her, she'd be focused on her show, but her mouth would be curling into a subtle smile. So either what she was watching was that amusing, or she was both confused and amused by her friend and boss being unable to help herself but stare at her feet like candy.

I would never know what was so goddamn captivating about staring at a pair of feet. But it was. For me, because of her, it was. I thought about knocking it off, but, I just didn't care enough to. I was too much of a coward to take this further than this, but I could at least enjoy this, for now. *Just gaze at Rachel's soles, Rachel whom you hate and wish you haven't met, cause it's captivating and humiliating and you love it.*

I looked randomly at my computer's clock, and realized it was time to go home. I felt relieved, but also a bit disappointed cause... at home I wouldn't have Rachel's feet to stare at.....Unless!

"Hey..." I waved at her, trying to get her attention.

She took her earphones off, looking blankly at me. "What?"

"..." I took a second, to make sure if I really wanted to do this. "Time to go home."

"Marvelous." She leaned back, seeming tired as hell from spending the whole day on her ass.

"Wanna do something?" I asked, trying to not sound too eager.

"...Something?" She pursed her lips. "Like what?"

"Don't know." I said. "Just... hang out in my place if you like. Watch a movie, maybe?"

She contemplated the fact for a bit before she shrugged. "Sure why not." She heaved her legs off the desk and onto the ground, before twisting and rubbing her neck as if trying to drive the tension out. "Hey." She gestured with her hands to the ground around her office. "Can you get me my socks and shoes and put them on for me please, Thanks."

I nodded and stood up immediately, then halted. What was that request again? I looked at her as she ignored me. Did I hear that right? Why the hell would she ask me that. That wasn't normal. Was she testing me?

I grabbed my purse and walked till I stood near the door, pretending that I hadn't heard her. I didn't know what to do. Frankly I didn't even know if I was hearing things or if she really did ask me to put her fucking shoes on for her.

"Mandy?" She called me from her seat, almost sounding irritated.

"What?" I mumbled.

"Didn't you hear me?"

"...No."

“Can you put my shoes and socks on for me please?” She asked, like it was the most normal thing in the world, like she was asking me to pass the salt.

“...” I felt weak in the knees. Every inch of my body wanted to just sink to the ground and obey, but I was too scared to move a muscle. The fact that we were both adults in our mid-twenties suddenly became really clear. I felt weird hearing her say that. It felt weird that I wanted to do it. “Why...” I cleared my throat. “Is your back like... hurting or something?”

It all happened so fast. Her face grew confused, then she smiled, then she tried to hide it, and shrugged. “No... not really.” She said. “Just wondering if you’d like to do that for me.”

Just laugh it off. Just laugh it off and say ‘no, I wouldn’t like doing that for you’ ‘I wouldn’t like doing that for you’ ‘just put your own shoes on.’

“Sure!” I shrieked as I sunk to my knees. Once I was kneeling on the ground with her baffled eyes on me, I immediately regretted it, but going back now felt even weirder. Once I gathered her pink socks and sneakers from the ground and looked up at her, seeing the questioning sneer she aimed my way, I wanted to die. But I didn’t die, I just put my fingers inside the opening of her sock and stretched it, pushing it around her foot gently. My whole body shook as the tops of my fingers lightly touched the cold, smooth skin of her foot. I tried to keep my quick breaths under control as I grabbed the other one and did the same, as my eyes stayed fixated on the foot extended in my direction.

When her feet were hidden behind the pink fabric, I was hardly relieved, as I still had the awkwardness of the situation to put my nerves through a wreck. None of this was normal. None of it. And I would give my left kidney to know what was running through her head right now. I knew she didn’t see our relationship as boss and employee, but even between friends, this wasn’t totally normal behavior. I had friends. Friends had me. Me and my friends usually put our own shoes on. Cause who would accept doing such a thing? More importantly, Who would ask such a thing?

My fingers shook uncontrollably as I pushed the sneaker inside her foot, and more so as I tried to tie her laces.

“You alright down there?” I heard her say, but didn’t have the power in me to look up.

“Totally.” I heard my own shaky whisper out.

“Cause you look like you’re about to have a stroke or something?” She snickered.

“No...” I laughed nervously. I tied her other shoe and leaped to my feet, my sudden jump startling her. “Done.” I dusted my pants off. “Anything else princess?” I joked.

Whatever effect I was hoping for my joke to carry, it didn’t. Rachel just looked up at me, confused more than anything else. She just shook her head. As she got to her feet and gathered her stuff into her purse, I couldn’t help adding, “Remember when we were in college?” I laughed. “Remember when I used to call you princess?” I laughed more, way too loud and way too nervous.

She just snickered, as if not to be rude, and gave me a long look. “Yeah.” She said. “You were always... strange like that.”

“Yeah—” I halted, as what she said slowly registered.

WHAT? It felt like a slap to the face. *I* was always weird like that? *Me?* What about her? What? Her behavior didn’t exactly fit the definition of normality either did it? She was the bully. What I did was just.... A reaction to what *she* did. Granted, it was a weird reaction...but...still. I was a normal fucking human before I was stuck with her bully-ass.

But I wasn’t about to tell her any of that. I doubted that I would get any kind of sympathy from her; what was I gonna say? We just walked out of work and into my car, and I started driving to my house.

She mentioned on our way home that she was hungry. So we stopped at Mac on the way to order take out. The drive-through was packed, so I parked and decided to go get it myself. “I’ll be back in a sec.” I opened the door and almost got out, before she grabbed my arm harshly. I looked back at her, and she gave me a serious, threatening look. I mumbled, “What—”

“Chicken Royal.” She said, her tone firm and sharp. “Chicken, Not beef. And Extra Mayonnaise.”

“Got it.” I nodded and tried to get out, but she pulled me back in. “What?” I whined.

“And no pickles. None.” She let go of my arm. “Say it back to me please.”

“I’m not stupid I got it.”

“Just please say it back to me.” She said, sounding desperate and sad.

I sighed. “Chicken not beef with extra mayonnaise and no pickles.” I repeated it robotically, confidently.

“Please!” She said through gritted teeth as I walked out of the car.

I was in front of the cashier a minute later.

He gave me a friendly smile. “What’s your order?”

“Two Beef Royal with extra pickles and no mayonnaise please.”

“You got it.”

I got back to the car and threw the bags in the backseat. As always, she didn’t even offer paying, and I didn’t care to mention it. So, my treat. I wondered if the small joy I got from buying her free crap was worth it, as I was doing it a lot now. I mean, I didn’t have the best salary. I could afford eating out now and then, but not if I was constantly paying for two. But I just threw that thought to the back of my mind for now, along with all the other annoying worries.

“Home sweet home.” She took a deep breath as we entered my apartment.

I took my light jacket and shoes at the door and stayed in my purple tank top and black pants, my eyes following her worryingly as she walked around my living room. Last time she was here, she slept drunk and woke up hungover, didn't pay any mind to her surroundings. Now, she was walking around like she was considering buying the damn place.

I shook my head. Maybe not. I shouldn't read too much into her every action. She was just admiring my apartment. I laid the bags of food on the coffee table in front of the couch while she walked into my room. I grew nervous for a bit. What could she possibly want from my room?

Then I saw her walk out. She had gotten out of her jeans and tank top and got into a pair of fleece pink pajamas...my pajamas, silently communicating to me that she was probably spending the night, which was okay—great, actually, as I felt like I was having a sleepover with my girlfriend.....or the secret crush that I'd been perving on for the last month if I wanted to be honest with myself.

I was a tiny bit bigger than her, so the sleeves were a bit taller than her arms. The hems of the pants reached the top of her socked feet. All that considered, she looked cute as hell, and I felt a rush just looking at her. No one would ever believe that this petite, cute looking thing was an absolute monster just a few years ago.

I silently took a seat on the couch across from the TV, secretly praying to get a glimpse of this monster when she would take her first bite of her sandwich. She threw herself on the couch, breathing heavily like she had just returned from the most exhaustive workday.

I couldn't help but comment. "Sitting on your ass all day must be really tiring huh."

She looked at me, then pursed her lips like she was considering what I said. "It really is." She nodded slowly with a snicker. "Who would've thought."

I picked the remote and started navigating Netflix. I felt a thud on my lap, and I grew anxious. I looked down, to see her socked feet resting on my thighs. I gulped, then looked at her. She just smiled. This was okay, normal. I was the only person that could make it look not normal. She just... wanted to lay down, and there wasn't enough room.

I smiled back then returned my attention to the TV. "So... em...what do you wanna watch?"

"Whatever is fine. You chose." She brushed me off. "I trust your judgment."

I couldn't help but smile warmly. I used to always pick what movies to watch, and she always liked them. When she picked, it was kind of a hit or miss. She just sat her eyes on a poster then immediately picked one. I, on the other hand, spent half an hour searching. I read reviews, critiques, paid attention to ratings, basically all the stuff Rachel didn't bother doing.

But I couldn't spend half an hour now, so I just played one that I had watched before and that I was sure she'd like.

"Alright then." She rubbed her hands together excitedly before she snatched her bag of food and opened her coke, leaning back on the armrest, a wide smile on her face.

That made me smile. Only Rachel could get that excited about settling back and watching a damn movie while eating. It was her favorite hoppy. No junk food without a movie and no movie without junk food. How did she keep her figure, I could never know.

“...What?” She stopped unwrapping her sandwich to look at me, a worried look on her face.

I had been staring again. “Nothing.” I shook my head. I grabbed my sandwich and focused on the movie. But I kept one eye at her, remembering that her excited, overjoyed demeanor was about to change, pretty quickly.

I saw her take a big bite out of her sandwich, too hungry to even look at the content. She chewed, and I winced, feeling almost sorry for what I did. She looked so happy just a second ago. Her chewing slowed down, then slowed some more, and her neck twisted, as if she was resisting to shout. She swallowed, and I turned towards her, a blank look on my face.

“.....” I smiled apologetically. “.....is it good—”

“Mother *Fucker!*” Food basically shot out of her mouth as she yelled at me.

“What!” I suppressed my giggle with a miracle.

She wiped her sleeve over her mouth and looked at me with fuming eyes. “You’re doing this on purpose.” She said.

“Doing what on purpose?” I chuckled.

“Don’t...” She said through gritted teeth and thrust her socked toes in my stomach. “Don’t bullshit me Mandy.” She whined. “You got it wrong again.”

“Did I.” I took a sip from my coke. “Sorry.”

Her face grew all reddish and cute as she gave me a menacing stare. The look in my eyes was remorseful, but also a bit daring, like I was challenging her to do something. Provocations like these never went unpunished, shouldn’t go unpunished.

“Either you’re doing it on purpose or... ..” She shook her head. “or something must be seriously damaged in that brain of yours.”

“...” I took a breath. That little insult just lit a fire under my me to hear some more. *Go on. Make fun of my damaged brain. Call me stupid.*

“This is the last time.” She said. “Next time you get my shit wrong, I’m not paying you back.”

“...” I gave her a silly look. “You already don’t pay me back.”

“....oh.” She widened her eyes. “Shit that’s right.” She gave me a long look. I didn’t exactly know what she was thinking, but a slightly guilty look overtook her face as she seemed to calm down. She sighed, “Thanks anyways.” As she seemed to relax, my face fell into a desperate frown.

Don’t thanks-anyways me. What the hell is wrong with you?

I knew what she was thinking. She was thinking, "Don't be so ungrateful to Mandy who's been acting so nice towards you." She smiled at me politely then turned her attention to the screen.

Why does this always happen to me? At college I was stuck with a childish bully when I just wanted a normal mature roommate. Now I wanted a mean bully and all I had was this normal, boring grownup. Provoking her was so much...easier back then.

She couldn't have changed that much. She enjoyed bullying me, and I enjoyed being bullied by her. What changed? And she *asked me* to put her shoes and socks on for her back in the office. How normal could she be?

As I looked at the screen in front of me, feeling hopeless as hell, my eyes widened suddenly, as I recalled having a secret weapon. Acting like it was the most normal thing in the world. I slid my finger between her ankle and her sock, and slid it off swiftly. She raised an eyebrow at me, as if to ask me why I did that. I didn't say a word, and slid her second sock off, keeping confident eye contact with her.

"Mandy."

"Yes."

"Why did you take my socks off?" She said, almost sounding scared, probably recalling all the foot-related events of this long day.

"..." I shrugged. "They smell."

Her eyes widened, like she was beyond offended. "Fuck you no they don't."

"They do a little bit." I winced as I was embarrassed on her behalf, lying. They did smell. They smelled like feminine musk and washing powder, which was pleasant. But I needed them out of the way.

She just rolled her eyes and got back to her movie. I looked down, grabbed her ankle, took a deep breath mustering my courage, then started. I ran the tips of my fingernails along the sole of her foot, and she recoiled. I gave her a blank look.

"Don't do that." She said calmly. Her tone was leveled, but the threat was real. "Don't tickle me."

She was extremely ticklish. She withdrew her foot from my hand and rested back on my lap, then turned back, giving me a disbelieving smile, telling me what I already knew: I was acting like a kid. But I couldn't help myself by this point. "You remember what you used to do when I did that?"

"Enough with the college memories bullshit!" She shot me a half-irritated-half-amused smile. "But yeah I remember. I pinned you to the ground and tickled you till you peed yourself." She said. "Unless you want that to happen again, behave."

Even though I knew she was bluffing, I couldn't help but get excited by her words. We watched TV for about two minutes, as I mustered some courage to do it again. I grabbed her ankle, harder this time, and started running my fingers rapidly up and down her soles.

“MANDY...” She shrieked through her food-filled mouth as she squirmed in her seat, kicking her other foot frantically. “Stop it. What’s wrong with you?”

My cheeks burned with shame and embarrassment as I strengthened my hold on her ankle, feeling like the biggest creep on the planet. I always thought she was kind of childish, but fact was, there was only one adult in this room right now and that was Rachel. I didn’t even know what I was after. I just wanted things back to how they once were, and since she was too nice and I was too much of a coward to tell her how I feel, all I could do was try to provoke her.

“I’m serious.” She whined, throwing her sandwich on the coffee table beside us. “Knock it off!”

I didn’t knock it off. I did my best to keep control of her foot trying to wiggle free from my hand while I tickled her with the other one. Then out of nowhere. Something smooth and cold harshly pushed against the side of my face. The realization that it was Rachel’s bare sole making contact with my cheek and temple made me freeze, and my skin prickled as I felt my temperature rising.

“God!” She withdrew her foot from my hand, but kept her other foot in place, keeping my red face at bay. “What had gotten into you.”

I breathed slowly in and out, not knowing what to say. As subtly and as lightly as I could, I moved my head, rubbing my cheek gently against her smooth sole, like a cat nuzzling at her owner’s legs.

“What are you ten?” She snickered as she adjusted her pajamas, seeming to calm down. She took her foot off my face and put it in my lap again, giving me a long look to confirm that this was the end of it. I looked at her, and hopped that my eyes didn’t betray my messy state. She chuckled, shook her head at my silliness, then leaned to the side to grab her sandwich again.

But before she did that, I wrapped my arm around both her legs and started tickling her again.

“For fuck’s sake...” She cried out, like she was hopeless. “Know what!”

Both her legs withdrew from between my arm with force I wasn’t prepared for, then shot forward again, smashing into my face and pinning me to the armrest beside me. Her hands shot out and grabbed my wrists.

“You done?” She spat, sounding like a teacher schooling her student.

I was too busy enjoying the two soft soles shoved in my face to answer. Even with the amount of force she applied to pin me back, her touch was soft and smooth, like I got giant marshmallows pushing against my cheeks and forehead.

“You done or should I keep you under my feet till the end of the movie.” She said firmly. “I’m not kidding Mandy. If you keep acting like a kid I’ll treat you like a kid—I’ll keep you like this till the end of the movie.”

Keep me under your feet till the end of my fucking life. I wanted to shout at her. I didn't know what to say. I needed to say something that didn't make me sound like a creep, but in the same time would keep her feet right where they were. I decided to keep my mouth shut and see what she would do.

"I need your word!" She urged as she tugged on my wrists. "Tell me you're not gonna knock it off and I'll let you go."

I stayed silent.

After a short moment of silence, she said, "Fine. Suit yourself." She puffed.

I felt her leaning back in her couch. She pushed her soles harder against my face but let go of my wrists. I could knock her legs away easily if I wanted to. But of course I didn't try. She grabbed her sandwich and coke and I could hear her eating.

We just laid there, lights out, with only the TV light beaming on us. She laid comfortably on the sofa, with both her feet planted firmly on my face. I didn't know what she was thinking right now, and frankly, I didn't care. We weren't two teenagers anymore. And I suppose she found it weird that her 26-year-old boss/friend was sitting there allowing her to use her face basically as her footrest. If she found it weird, she didn't show it.

I allowed myself to take a deep breath, and shivered as the light feminine scent of her feet wafted through my nose. It smelt strangely pleasant. My tensed shoulders relaxed, and I felt all tension drive out of my body. Her tender toes rested gently on my forehead, the ball of her foot against my closed eye, her meaty heel against my lips. Why the fuck did this feel so good? Not only good. It felt captivating, like I couldn't get enough of it, like I could spend the whole night like this.

I preferred them if they had a stronger smell to them... like if she didn't shower for a couple days. It was more humiliating that way, pretending to be forced to sniff her smelly feet, like when we were younger. But I could appreciate them like this too.

I heard her snicker. "You're comfortable over there?" her toes wiggled against my forehead. "Don't you wanna watch the movie?"

I kept pretending to not know how to put letters together, and stayed silent.

One sole left my face, its skin clinging to mine as it did. Rachel crossed her feet at the ankles, keeping one foot planted against half of my face, and the other crossing over it. I mustered my courage and opened my now free eye. She smiled at me questionably, as if to ask me, "Are you planning to do something?"

My silence said it all, *No*.

Her smile moved to an annoyed wince, like she couldn't understand me, and she scoffed, before throwing a fried potato into her mouth and returning her attention to the screen. "You're weird." She said, "you've always been kinda weird, let alone, a constant pain in my ass—"

"How was I a pain in your ass?" I heard myself mumble against her foot robotically, suddenly feeling angry.

She recoiled, looking at me in shock. "Cat gave you your tongue back?"

"How was I a constant pain in your ass?" I repeated. I imagined I looked ridiculous with half my face still hiding behind her foot, but I didn't care.

"Well..." She shrugged. "You always gave me shit about everything. *Keep your voice down. Don't bring your friends here. Don't watch TV while I'm sleeping.*" She shook her head, like she grew irritated remembering it. "Such a control freak. Always bullying me."

I groaned and resisted the urge to shout. The absurdity of her accusations made me more amused than angry. She was so unbelievable. She really saw herself the victim didn't she? She was just trying to have fun, and her annoying roommate wouldn't let her.

"But I figured out how to deal with you didn't I?" She smiled to herself, sounding proud. "I just pin you down, and you turn silent and passive, like you are right now. You haven't changed." She nodded towards me. "I swear sometimes I feel like you do it on purpose. Like you enjoy getting your ass handed to you."

I looked up. How hadn't she figured it out by now? How could she be so thick?

She chuckled suddenly, like she remembered something. "Is that it? Do you enjoy having your friend's foot in your face?" She looked at me, her face bearing a teasing smile.

Her mocking tone made my crotch tingle, and I couldn't say a single word. My lack of response kicked her smile right off. She was joking at first. But my silence now confused her. After a while, she just shook her head and nervously pushed her hair behind her ear and turned towards the screen, ignoring me.

I was thankful for that for now. I needed my privacy for a second. I needed to enjoy this. I had waited a damn long time for it.

Would she notice if I pushed my lips against her foot? *Of course she would. Don't be stupid.* Did I care if she noticed? Was she ever gonna take this further than this? Cause if there was one thing I knew by now, was that I wanted this to go as far as it possibly could. I just didn't know if there was a civil way of getting there. I couldn't tell it straight. All I could do was imply. But I was laying there letting her rest her feet on my face, without a single word of complaint, and she was still in the dark.

What if she found out? How bad could it get? Hell...she might even find it funny! Right! Part of me realized it was my horny crotch doing all the talking, but fuck it.

I rubbed my thighs together, unable to contain my sexual excitement anymore. I puckered my lips, pushing them against the ball of her foot, leaving the lightest peck I could muster. I smiled to myself. She didn't notice. *STOP. You idiot. Knock it off.*

My crotch was screaming at me to continue. My brain was screaming at me to stop. Fuck my brain.

I closed my eyes and took a deep breath, and rubbed my thighs together, feeling the fabric of my panties scratch lightly against my petal. A moan escaped my lips, then I halted, feeling all

blood freeze in my veins. I opened my eyes. She was still watching her movie, whose sound probably covered my noise. She didn't even hear me. She was ignoring me.

The fact made me grow bold—or stupid, deepening on how one could look at it. With her feet taking over all of my senses, and with the thought of her focusing on her show, my hand moved by itself and caressed against my crotch. Tips of my fingers slipped inside my pants. I puckered my lips and kissed the ball of her foot.

It happened fast. The movie paused, rendering the room silent. Her foot flew away from me, and she bolted up, her back straight while she looked at me with her thin eyes wide open in shock. “What was that?” She said. Her eyes, initially amused, darted around my pale face, before going down to the fingers in my pants, and turning blank.

I didn't take it out. I didn't move a muscle. I couldn't. The shocked look she gave me rendered me motionless, and I froze as I watched her green eyes staring at me in disbelief.

“Mandy.” She took a deep breath. “What were you doing?”

“Nothing.”

“Nothing my ass...” She said calmly, but somehow managed to sound like she was about to kill someone. “You just kissed my foot.”

“I did no such thing.”

“And why's your hand in your...” She cleared her throat. “...pants?”

“They're not.” I snatched my hand away and crossed my arms. “...” I didn't know what to say. But maybe I should say the truth, this one time, and see how it goes. She probably already knew it on some level... How worse could it get? “...I just... like...” I shrugged, trying to sound like what I was saying was normal. “I just like how... your feet feel against my face.”

“...I think that's been established that you have a thing for my feet, as weird as it is,” She smiled at me sarcastically. “But why was your hand in your pants?”

Bitch did I really need to connect the dots for you. I took a deep breath, thinking about whether or not I should say my next thought out loud. *She'll find it flattering. Just tell her.* A very stupid part of my brain suggested. I listened to it. “I... like it... sexually.”

The look of pure rage that overtook her face and her cheeks turning blood red told me a lot. She didn't find it funny. She didn't know it, on any level. She didn't find it flattering. She was furious. I thought about what I would do if some guy or girl just said that to me, touched himself while he....did whatever...without even telling me. I would just tell them where they can shove it and leave. But I was a nice person. The look of pure rage on Rachel's face promised more than a mild schooling. Maybe I should call 911.

We both jumped at the same time. I tried to run away. She grabbed my arm and twisted it until I was face down on the ground. For a moment there I felt like I was being arrested.

“AHH...” I whined as she twisted my wrist and held it behind my back, and I felt her knee pressed harshly against my lower back.

“What did you just say?” She said through gritted teeth. “What did you just say to me?”

“Nothing I was joking.” I said with my face smashed against the carpet.

“Joking?” She snickered irritatingly. “You’ve been ogling my feet for fucking days. You’re not joking. You were planning for this.”

“SO...” I shouted at her though my carpet-muffled mouth. “Sue me—Ahhhahah” I cried out as she twisted my wrist harder, and the sharp pain made me feel like it was going to break under the pressure.

“You think I’m gonna sit there with my mouth shut?” She hissed. “Let you take advantage of me? Cause why? Cause I work for you? Fuck you.”

“No...” I whined through the pain. She made me sound so bad. “I swear it’s not like that. I wasn’t trying to take advantage—”

“Then how’s it like?” She said. “You were about to touch yourself right there in front of me Mandy! What did you think you were invisible? You knew I could see you.”

Just kill me now. “It was in the heat of the moment.” I cried out. “I’m sorry. I really didn’t mean to make you uncomfortable—”

“Shut up.” She pulled on my arm.

“Okay.” I mumbled weakly against the carpet.

The short moment of silence that followed was pure torture. My cheeks were red and my eyes were wet. I felt so ashamed and guilty I wished the ground could open and swallow me. One stupid line. What was I thinking telling her that? But it was more than that. Everything I did ever since she started working in the company. I felt so filthy.

Still, a part of me still felt relieved, like a weight was off my shoulders. She knew the truth now. Maybe not the whole of it, but a substantial part.

“I should be beating the shit out of you right now.” She said through gritted teeth.

I knew I wouldn’t enjoy that. She beat me once before. It wasn’t enjoyable, no matter how humiliating. It was just painful and my body stayed sore for days. I didn’t protest. I probably deserved it.

Her hold on my wrist suddenly started to loosen, so did the pressure of her knee. She turned me on my back, and my hands immediately shot to cover my embarrassed face.

She grabbed my wrists and held them apart effortlessly to look at me. She got a good look at my teary eyes, seeming to be a bit satisfied that I felt like shit about it all. “Okay...” She nodded. “Here’s the deal.” She pointed at the TV, her commanding tone serious. “You picked a really good movie...So I’m gonna finish it now. And you’re gonna go to your room till I finish. And we’ll talk after.”

“.....”

Taking my lack of response as agreement, she rose to her feet and sat on the couch, grabbing my sandwich and unpaused the movie.

I climbed up to my feet, and slowly walked to my bedroom as I rubbed my sore wrist. I turned towards her before I entered, and watched her as she took her frustration at the sandwich she was eating while she watched the movie. I didn't know if I was trying to be funny to lighten the air, or if my fall removed a bit of my brain, or if I was stupidly hoping she'd say yes. But I wiped my sleeve across my runny nose and said, "So do you want a foot rub?—"

I ran inside and closed the door, avoiding the remote she threw my way.

I sat at my bed and leaned against the headboard. I had to be in the safety of my bed to realize the full extent to which I messed up. Did she overreact or underreact, I couldn't decide. What would I have done, If I was just sitting there watching a movie with my boss, colleague, friend, like Salia, and suddenly looked at her and saw one hand down her pants while she was kissing my foot of all things? *God*.

I slammed my head against the headboard. The absurdity of what happened was too much for me to swallow. It was like someone else did that, someone I found creepy and untrustworthy. Not me. *Stupid*.

I waited there, holding my knees to my chest and rocking back and forth, counting every second till the damn movie finished. I wasn't worried that she'd leave. She still couldn't leave. She still needed to work. Things may be a bit more awkward at the office now, but she still needed to work. For now all I could think about was what was running through her head, what did she think of me.

I heard a soundtrack coming from the TV, and I knew the credits of the movie were rolling. Sure enough, I heard her call my name, and a cold chill ran down my spine as I rose to my feet. I pulled my blouse down and adjusted my messy hair, before walking out of the room.

"Turn the lights on." She said as she turned the TV off.

I squinted as the orange lights lit the room, then walked and stood near the couch. She nonchalantly dusted her pajamas and pants out of breadcrumbs and sat her coke on the table, before sitting with her legs crossed. "So..." She looked at me. "...What are you doing? Sit down."

I needed that invitation. I took a seat, and my eyes instinctively looked down.

"So..." She propped herself up and sat Indian style on the couch to face me, probably to hide her feet safely under her ass, away from my ogling. "Like that you won't get *distracted*." She gave me a condemning smile.

"Yeah," I blushed. Like I needed any more reasons to feel like a creep.

I sat there for like two minutes, avoiding to look at her eyes.

"You planning on saying something?" She said.

I looked at her. She was propping her chin up on her palm, looking at me. I shrugged.

"How long have you been...planning this."

"I haven't been planning this." I said defensively. "It just happened."

She shook her head, seeming unconvinced. "I've been thinking about it. More I think about it, I see it clearer. You manipulated me. You...gave me all that shit about my shoes on the desk, just so you could..." She winced, seeming repulsed as hell. "...have me take them off. So you could feast your eyes—Jesus, it sounds more perverted when I say it out loud."

I opened my mouth to protest, but then closed it. I really couldn't deny that could I. Even though it wasn't my original intention, it was what I got out of it eventually: I feasted my eyes while she laid there without a clue, every day, for hours.

She raised an eyebrow at me, as if to confirm we were on the same page, then scoffed. "And I thought I heard you wrong the other day, but I'm pretty sure right now. That day you offered me a foot massage. Were you really planning on sitting there and having.....your pervert fun with me without even telling me?"

"..." I looked at her, trying to look innocent. "You said your feet were hurting from walking too much—"

"Shut up." She gave me a knowing look.

"Okay...." It was worth a try.

She looked away from me and we both grew silent for a second as she seemed to think about something. Her eyes suddenly narrowed in confusion. "... I just..." She said. "Why did you offer me this job?"

"..."

"You said I was underqualified." She shook her head, talking to herself more than to me, thinking aloud. "All that time I was thinking you were so nice and trying to help me; I should've known better right. But still, it doesn't make any sense. What? Am I the last girl in the world? Why didn't you try this... thing... with someone else?—" She nodded, like she figured the answer by herself. "It's because we're friends right? Yeah. Either that or... I donno. Is it because you thought I was desperate?" She took a deep, tired breath. "I dunno. Don't wanna even think about it. You're a piece of work Mandy."

"I didn't offer you the job for that." I shook my head angrily. For some reason, I was suddenly shaking. She wasn't the victim here. I did something wrong. But it wasn't like she was blameless. And I needed some of that to be acknowledged.

"So you were just trying to help me?"

"No." I said curtly. "I..." I hesitated, not knowing if I should tell her, and if so what should I say. "I...did it to get back at you."

She recoiled, and a smile crept up her face. “What? To get back at me?”

I managed to hold her gaze, and my eyes must’ve spilled fire, cause she leaned back and crossed her arms defensively.

“Get back at me for what?” She raised an eyebrow.

“For college.” I snapped. “For everything you did to me in college.”

Her eyes widened. She chuckled. “What the fuck are you talking about?”

“Oh Je let me think,” I slammed my hand on my chin sarcastically and looked up. “Preventing me from studying. Making fun of me. Having your damn group of...devils... four times a week. Making fun of my looks, of my nose—of my fucking eyesight! Bullying me Embarrassing me Beating me. You were awful.”

The look on her face was pure shock. “Get a load of this! Did I ask you to be a pain in the ass 24/7? No, Honey. What was I to do? Let you walk all over me? If anyone was a bully back then, it was you.”

“You stuck my head down a toilet.”

She chuckled, then suppressed it. “It’s called a swirly. But *you* made me stick your head down a toilet for being so obnoxious all the time. You hid the HDMI cable when it was time for my show remember?” She corrected me.

I slammed my back against the back of the couch in hopelessness. I couldn’t reason with her.

“Now I admit.” She rose her arms in the air in resignation. “Maybe making fun of your glasses was a bit childish— but we were at college. We were teenagers come on. Friends tease each other all the time. We’re all a bit childish at college right?”

“No.”

“Well I was.” She shrugged.

“You were a complete bitch.”

“Grow up.” She brushed me off. “You made me miserable, and I returned the favor. It was a long time ago. It’s water under the bridge.”

“Not for me.” I snapped, my tone growing shaky and emotional, barely able to talk. “It.....it messed—you...messed me up.”

Her face twisted in confusion. She shook her head. “What’s that supposed to mean?”

My breathing quickened, but I stayed silent. The look of complete loss on her face told me I shouldn’t bother. She couldn’t even admit to how terrible she was. Even if I told her what she did to me, she wouldn’t believe it. She’d laugh her ass off at how stupid I sounded. “Nothing.” I shook my head and looked away. “Nothing.”

She kept looking at me for a second, then sighed. “And what did you...” She looked at me questionably, like she remembered something. “What did you mean by get back at me anyway? You gave me a job! That’s your revenge?”

“.....”

“Mandy.”

“I...” I whined. “I wanted to.....” I couldn’t say it out loud. Basically I was trying to use her need for the job to humiliate her. That just made me sound like an asshole.

Her brows arched, like she’d read the answer on my face. “You wanted to boss me around and make me suck-up to you? Shit like that right?”

“...” I shrugged. “More or less.”

“Try and take advantage of my situation.” She nodded, seeming repulsed by what she was hearing. “What a friend you turned out to be.”

“I was mad at you.”

“*For what?*”

“For college.”

“Shut up about college already.” She scoffed. “And why didn’t you go through with it anyway? You didn’t do any of that shit. If anything, you did the complete opposite!”

I shook my head. I couldn’t remember the exact moment where my plans changed from ‘take revenge on Rachel’ to ‘wait on Rachel hand and foot,’ but I remember that I just couldn’t do it. “I couldn’t.”

“You couldn’t?” She snickered. “What does that mean—You know what! I don’t even care.” She shook her head and leaned back, taking a deep breath. “You’re messed up in the head Mandy. And it’s giving me a headache.”

I decided not to respond, even though I felt like punching her.

We sat there for a while...a long while. She just leaned back and looked at the ceiling, looking deep in thought. And I looked forward, waiting anxiously. I knew what I wanted. If I remembered correctly that last year we spent together, was heaven. I was happy. Yes she was an entitled brat, but I was happy living with her. I only hated her cause she left, cause she made me love who she was then just left me. Life without her was boring. She had left a big hole which I hadn’t known about, until she came back to fill it. And now that she was back, I just wanted things to be like they were.

I heard her sigh loudly, so I looked to my side. She gave me a long, contemplating look. Then out of nowhere, she got her legs from under her, and stretched them on my lap calmly. I looked at her questionably as she gave me a teasing smile.

“So...” She pursed her lips, seeming to resist a smile. “You find my feet erotic huh?”

I sunk back in my seat as I looked down at them, her toes wiggling and taunting me in the process.

“God...” She covered her mouth to suppress a giggle. “It’s like you haven’t eaten in three days and you’re staring at a feast.” She shook her head. “That’s the weirdest thing I’ve ever seen. Like... really weird. Like... disgusting—”

“Yeah I got it.” I nodded. “Thanks.” I crossed my arms then felt propelled to add. “It’s really common you know!” I said. “Lot’s of people...find...feet attractive. Google it.” I found that out a year after she left me. But for some reason, the fact that a lot of people liked it, didn’t make me feel any less freaky about my situation. Maybe because I didn’t just have a fascination with feet; I wanted Rachel. Rachel’s feet. Rachel’s attitude. Rachel’s cruel bullying and mean words and obnoxious entitlement. Though, I did wish I was stuck with a more open minded broad, not with one that was so timid to even admit her own sexuality.

She scoffed. “Like I give a shit.” She shrugged. “I don’t care what people find attractive. It’s disgusting.” She kicked her feet and stuck her sole in front of my face as if to show it to me. “IT’s a *foot* Mandy. How can you find this *sexually* attractive?”

I bit my tongue as my eyes gazed at her white pinkish sole. I felt a mixture of emotion. Shame, for being into such a thing. Anger, at her, for mocking me for loving something that she herself made me love. But mostly I felt my cheeks burning with lust, and her taunting words only highlighted that fact. I simultaneously wanted her to stop mocking me and mock me more. I gulped, getting rid of the saliva that suddenly accumulated in my mouth. “I just do... alright.” I managed to say.

I looked up from her toes to see her amused pair of green looking at me with bafflement and joy both. “That’s...” She nodded, as if to confirm something to herself. “Just.....repulsive.” She let her foot fall, and crossed her ankles.

She let me live with that last insult for a while. Both of us just looked at each other without a word. She was looking at me with contemplation, her eyes cold, her teeth chewing on her lip. I knew that look. The look of an opportunist bitch trying to figure out what she could get out of a situation she found herself in. “You like my feet!” She smiled, like she was making her peace with the fact, before she cocked her neck. “Is it just mine?”

I hesitated. I didn’t know what made her ask the question. I thought about lying, considering that the truth would probably make my image that much stranger in her eyes. But I didn’t care. “Yes.” I looked down, unable to meet her smirk.

“...So...” She shrugged. “What do you imagine doing to them?”

My eyes widened, not expecting such a question. “I don’t know.”

“You don’t know?”

“..I....” I mumbled, not really knowing what to say. Why did she want to know? Was she considering letting me do it? What did she want?

“Come on...” She giggled, as she rose her foot and gently dragged it down the length of my arm, making me tremble. “Tell me.”

I took a sharp intake of breath as her cold toes ran down my skin. “...Touch them.”

“Touch them?” She gave me a silly look. “That’s the peak of your perverted fantasies?”

I chuckled nervously. I never realized how hard it would be telling her about this. I felt like every word that could come out of my mouth could provoke a look of either amusement or disgust from her. I was just scared. And her encouraging façade didn’t fool me. She was the last person I would want to talk to about this. Even if by some miracle she managed to admit she wanted a woman with her in bed, she’d still find my ‘perversions’ utterly strange and repulsive. But she was asking me wasn’t she? I knew she’d mock me, but if it would get me to what I wanted, why not.

“Don’t be shy... Perv Perverson” She gave me a sneer, but somehow still managed to sound kind.

“...” Being called a perv didn’t exactly feel bad. But it did hurt that this was just how she saw me now. That considered, there was probably nothing I could say that would cost something I hadn’t lost already. “Smell them.” I whispered, and she giggled, but quickly suppressed it with her hand.

“You wanna smell my feet?” She controlled her giggles. “What else?”

“...” I closed my thighs tightly around my hands, trying to control my rising lust. “...Kiss them.”

“BAH...” She flat out laughed, accidentally oinking and rolled her head back as I shrunk in my place and let her cackles torment me. “That’s fucking priceless Mandy.” She managed to say between chuckles. “You’re something else.”

She was laughing so hard her knees bent to her stomach, consequently making me stare at the soles of her feet as I waited for her to finish taunting me. I hated her. I really did. But I couldn’t stop myself from falling in love with how she made me feel. She wasn’t acting. She wasn’t doing this for me. She was just naturally an evil bitch when she needed to be. But my crotch was gradually getting wet over that evil bitch laughing at me.

It wasn’t like I didn’t have my own ammo to throw at her; she was a lesbian. I didn’t find anything wrong with that, but she certainly did. But those weren’t the rules of our relationship. She knew I knew, but we always acted like I didn’t, like I was clueless about her *little naughty secret*. And I had a feeling, a strong feeling that she was enjoying this right now, on more than one level, but she wasn’t gonna admit it, and I’d probably get my ass kicked if I even hinted at it. And she’d keep enjoying it as long as we both pretended she found it disgusting and embarrassing.

Her laughs eventually died down, and she heaved herself up and straightened her back. She shook her head and smiled as she took a last look at me. “Okay...” She caught her breath. “This was...” She couldn’t find words, so she just gave me a thump up sarcastically. Then she swung her legs to the ground and said, “I think I better hit the road. It’s getting late.”

“...” I shook my head, unable to understand what she just said. “*What?*” I practically yelled, and she recoiled.

“What?” She snickered.

I looked at her in complete loss. Was she toying with me? Was she just teasing me for nothing, to have a laugh at my expense and then leave? Why was she even leaving? I thought she’d like to spend the night, since she got into my damn pajamas.

“Do you want me to spend the night?” She asked, in a less playful tone.

“...Well...yeah...but also...I...” I thought about saying it to her straight. I had no more patience for beating around the bush. She knew what I wanted. “I thought we could.....” the words stuck in my throat. The absurdity of my request made it impossible for me to say it.

She cocked her head at me, like she was clueless about what I was trying to say. “What?” She then gave me a naughty, knowing smile. “Come on Mandy. You don’t expect me to let you indulge in your little...” She waved her hand around, trying to find words. “...little condition, with me. It’s your problem, not mine.”

My face went still with shock. I didn’t know what to do. I told her. I told her everything—not everything...but a good part of it. She knew, and she didn’t care. She gave me a friendly smile, then rose to her feet and started walking to my bedroom as I sat there motionless.

“...Please...” I heard myself say.

She turned on her heel towards me, her face twisted in confusion. “What?” she giggled like she didn’t hear me.

Did that what she want? Did she want me to fucking beg her? “Please.” I said, feeling my head grow light with shame and embarrassment as she looked at me with her eyes a mixture of shock and amusement.

“Come on...Mandy.” She winced. “Don’t do that to yourself. Don’t beg.”

She looked almost sorry for me—more amused though. But sure enough, I shut up. I couldn’t say another word, but my weak, pleading eyes and slouched posture must’ve done all the talking, cause she just stood there watching me.

“It’s not like I’m the only woman in the world!” She said. “Go find someone. I’m sure you can convince some other pretty girl to let you....” She smiled. “Do whatever.”

“I don’t want someone. It’s not just about...whatever, alright.” I said, doing my best to not sound pathetic, but I think that was a lost cause by this point. “I want you.”

I wasn’t seeing things. I saw the devious smirk pass over her face, just for a second then leave it. She put her hands on her hips and sighed, seeming impatient and embarrassed for me. “Didn’t realize you feel this strongly about me.” She raised an eyebrow. “Are you saying you like me?”

I nodded. I wasn't sure if I was lying or not. I knew I was obsessed with her. That was the reality of this situation. I didn't know if my feelings of lust could translate to love. And she didn't seem in a rush to know either. But her lack of reaction still surprised me. She didn't even know I was a lesbian. Or maybe she did. She had to know. But same as her own sexuality, she was probably ignoring it, denying it.

She just nodded. "Okay." She said. "But why should that be my problem?"

I didn't know what she meant. But I knew one thing. She was playing me. It was only a matter of time till she got to what she really wanted out of all of this.

"Cause..." I said. "Cause we're friends."

"We are?" She cocked her neck, like she was thinking about that fact. She walked back and threw herself on the couch beside me, looking at the ceiling in thought. "I complained like a hundred times about the state of my apartment." She shrugged, and my eyes narrowed in confusion. "And you live here all alone. Yet you never asked me to come live with you."

In my state of utter hopelessness, I couldn't help but smile knowingly. Bitch was already trying to take advantage of me. I looked around my apartment. All nice, and tidy, and spacious. It was my safe haven. I loved it. Was I really prepared to share it with her? Living with her did have its drawbacks, but overall, even with my job and my independence, I was never as happy as I was in that dumpster of a dorm, just cause Rachel was there with me, turning my boring college years to the most lustful experience I had my whole life. "Do you wanna?" I shrugged.

She looked at me suspiciously. "Do you mean it? Or are you saying that just to get in my pants—or in my socks!" She chuckled. "I think that's the more appropriate metaphor."

God you're a bitch. "No..." I smiled sarcastically. "... You're right I should've offered sooner. I want you to move in."

She gave me a long look, like she was contemplating the fact, before she shrugged. She tried to hide it, but the excitement and joy was obvious on her tight innocent smile as she looked around the apartment.

After about a minute of her basically devouring my living room with her eyes, her eyes met mine, and she nodded, like she just remembered her side of the secret bargain we pretended didn't exist. She shifted back on the couch and leaned her back against the armrest, putting one of the cushions behind her and rested her soles on the little space in front of her.

"I guess we are." She nodded to herself. "Despite the repulsive shit you tried pulling on me an hour ago, I guess we're still good friends. That's the only reason I'm letting you indulge in this sick want of yours. I hope you realize that. Cause I'm not into that crap." She shook her head. "Plus. I'm straight."

We both knew this wasn't true. And we both knew the only reason she was allowing this to happen was to get me to help her in whatever way she could, but I guess that wasn't dignified enough for stuck up Rachel. She needed to believe she was doing this for something other than financial benefit, and I was fine playing along.

“So what are you waiting for,” She nudged my thigh with her toe. “Get it out of your system, pervert.” She giggled.

I nervously pushed a strand of my brown hair behind my ear, ignored her insult and looked down awkwardly at the pair of feet resting there beside me. An unfamiliar feeling hit me, like I was about to make love to someone for the first time and I hadn’t the first clue about how to do it. I didn’t know if she felt the same. But looking at her face, seeing her carious smile as she watched me, I’d say she was more amused than nervous. To her, she was just letting me indulge in my freaky fetish. I didn’t even want to think what she’d do if she knew how deep my fascination with her went, if she knew the effect her insults and obnoxious entitlement had on me. But those worries could wait. And I was tired, so I’d like to just have what I’d been waiting for for the past couple years.

My fingers shivered as I took them and wrapped them slowly around her ankle. I felt her ankle tense in my grip, but she just took a deep breath and made herself relax. I rose it up, propping her heel under my other hand as I brought it slowly to my face, feeling like I was handling a piece of jewelry.

My eyes met hers, as if to get some kind of permission from her. She gave me a knowing smile, before she rose her other foot to the level of my chin. “Hold them.” She nudged my chin lightly with her toe, and I complied, propping up both her heels on my palms.

After a while during which I spent there staring at the soles of her feet like, she snickered irritatingly. “What the hell are you waiting for?” She chuckled. “Here!”

She pushed both her feet up, then brought them down quickly but gently, and I flinched as both her cold soles made contact with my face. I guess that was what I was waiting for. I wanted her to do it, like she used to. Her arches moved gently on my cheeks and her toes wiggled on my forehead. I laid my palms on the tops of her feet lightly. My vision was completely blocked under her soles, but I could hear her giggling, which propelled my thighs to rub together.

“Are you smelling them?” She said.

That made me realize I’d been unconsciously holding my breath for the last twenty seconds.

“Go ahead.” She brought her foot down, pushing the grave of her toes straight against my nose. “Take a good sniff.” She chuckled.

I didn’t need to be told twice. I just wanted to be told. I closed my eyes and breathed in hard and deep, pushing my nose against her toes and hearing the loud intake of breath sound in my silent living room. She laughed harder hearing it.

“How does my foot smell?” She asked between giggles.

It had a very faint smell, a mixture of light sweat and soap. I nodded, and mumbled against her toes, “Good.”

“Good?” She widened her eyes at me, smiling in disbelief.

She probably didn't expect hearing that word. But I felt a cold chill run down my spine from seeing the shock on her face. "Yeah..." I cleared my throat. "Heavenly."

She rolled her back down as she cackled, making my gush. "You did not just say that." She took a deep breath as she controlled her laughter. "You're lucky I took a shower this morning. This would probably be a totally *hellish* experience otherwise."

I smiled awkwardly as I nodded. Her feet being clean was nothing but a disappointment to me. It would've been more humiliating if they were a bit smelly. But I decided to keep that brilliant piece of information for myself now.

"Or... Would you have liked that too?" She bit her lip, her eyes narrowing teasingly at me. "Would you be sitting here smelling them if they were all... grimy and sweaty?"

She was teasing, thinking she was getting under my skin. And I didn't know how to respond. She was joking, so I decided to joke back, and let her think what she wanted of it. "I'd sniff the stinkyness out of them."

She winced. "Gross! That's just gross. You're gross."

I passed my hand along her shin under her pajama pants affectionally. *Yes I'm fucking gross. I'm gross and disgusting. Keep going.* "I'll lap up the sweat from between your toes, princess."

"First, *Ewe*. Don't *princess* me." She recoiled, and shook her head. "Second, I know you're kidding, but not in your wildest dreams pervert."

"Why not?" I chuckled.

"Cause gross." She scoffed. "I'm not gonna let you *lick* me. That's so gay."

What? And this isn't? Get out of the fucking closet already! "It's your sweat; how gross can it be, princess?"

She gave me a long look and smiled at me knowingly, as her cheeks blushed. "Stop it." She rose a finger. "It's creeping me out. Enough with the ass-kissing."

I looked down innocently with fake guilt. "Whatever you want princess."

"Knock it off." She slapped my cheek lightly with the ball of her foot as she chuckled. "Damn *weirdo*."

My cheeks grew hot from her words and the light slap she gave me, and the throbbing in my crotch was making it hard for me to keep my hands away from my pants. Both of us went silent for a while. The moment just felt so peaceful for me to upset. I sat there while she kept one sole firmly planted on one half of my face, and with her toes resting lightly on my nose and upper lip as I kept it up with my hand. I took one slow breath, after another, keeping one eye meeting hers.

I knew she was enjoying this. Maybe she was finding it weird. But she was enjoying this, no matter how hard she wanted to deny it. She didn't just bully me back then to get her way. Part of

her enjoyed it just as much as I did. I didn't know what that said about us. She was working so hard to deny enjoying being pampered like a princess, while I made my peace with the fact that I loved pampering her. Sooner or later she'd make her peace with it too.

"So..." She cleared her throat. "You wanna keep doing this or... you wanna move on."

I couldn't help but smile at her subtleness. She couldn't say what she wanted. "Move on...?" I mumbled against her toes. "To what?"

"...I dunnoo." She shrugged. "... Kiss it?"

"..." I wasn't gonna make this easy for her. I wanted her to say it. "Do *you* want me to kiss it?"

She recoiled, her face suddenly turning to an angry frown. She snapped. "Of course I don't want you to! Why the hell would I want you to? You're the *foot-hungry lesbo* here Mandy!"

"Okay..." I rose my hands in defense and said weakly. "Just asking. No harm no foul."

"Jesus..." She puffed, running her fingers through her hair anxiously. "I mean let's get that straight right?" She shrugged.

"Loud and clear—"

"I just want you to get on with it so we could go to bed." She leaned back, seeming to relax. "So get on with it." She cleared her throat.

I took a deep breath. I decided against teasing her further.....then I couldn't help myself. "...Get on with what?"

She looked at me like I was stupid, then nudged my chin with her toes with a little too much force. "Kiss my foot you stupid pervert."

Yesssss princesssss. I groaned as I puckered my lips and pushed them against the top of her toes. This was new to me. I never did this before. So the moment I heard the smack of my lips against her skin ring through the apartment the throbbing in my crotch grew too hard to ignore.

My hand found its way down and unbuttoned my work pants. I looked at Rachel with my lips still an inch away from the top of her foot, as if asking permission to keep going. She winced at first, as if the sight of me repulsed her, my hand around my pants while I looked at her questionably. But then she took her foot from my hand and sat it on the couch beside the other one.

I didn't ask why she did that. But I guess she wanted to make it harder for me to look at her, which was, understandable, I guess. I tried bending forward, but realized it was so uncomfortable that way. So I slid to the ground.

I took a look up at her, and she seemed to appreciate me moving to the floor, as she extended her feet on the couch where I was sitting then nodded casually towards them. I leaned forward and rested my free hand on her leg while the other made its way to my unbuttoned pants and started stroking my panties gently. With my breathing quickening, I brought my lips closer to the tops of her foot and placed the first of many kisses.

I felt my fingers slightly growing wetter against my already moist fabric of my panties. With every kiss I left along the length of her foot the tingling in my crotch grew. Rachel mostly sat there, and every now and then moved her foot around without a word. She angled her foot for me to kiss the bottoms, offered me her toes, her heel, or withdrew her foot only to offer me the other one, silently commanding me on where I should lay my lips.

I looked at her. The look of absolute power in her green eyes was unmistakable. She could pretend as much as she liked. I recognized the look of pure pleasure in her eyes. Part of her enjoyed this. Her friend of 6+ years was kneeling in front of her, kissing her feet—begged her to do it, even. If Rachel couldn't enjoy this power trip, I didn't know who would.

Eventually our eyes met, and she shook her head, like she just realized I was looking at her and didn't like it. So she rose her left foot up and stepped on my head, pushing my face lightly into the top of her right. That subtle show of power sent a shiver down my spine and into my crotch, as I felt her toes wiggling against strands of my hair. I kissed quicker and rubbed harder.

"Doesn't it bother you?" I heard her say.

I took a deep breath as I suppressed a moan. "Why would it?"

"You're..." She gestured towards me with her hand. "Twenty-six years old. You're attractive, and intelligent—scratch that...you can't even get a burger right—but you're somewhat smart. Doesn't it bother you that you're attracted to other girls' feet? I mean... most girls I know want some stud to sweep them off the ground and spoil them. I know that's what I once wanted."

Yeah. Right. "It's not all feet for me." I said. "Only yours. I'm attracted to you."

"Yeah..." She snickered. "I think you made that quite clear. But that's what I mean. Doesn't it bother you that you're attracted to me...in this way?" She pressed on my head harder to emphasize her point. "Isn't it a bit... degrading?"

"..." I felt my lungs slowly running out of breath. I barely spoke. "It is...yeah... a little bit."

I twisted my head under her sole, and managed to take a glimpse at her from between the strands of my hair falling on my face. I didn't need her to say it. I saw it in her eyes. She saw me differently. I didn't know how much she liked me before, and she may have still did, but she certainly didn't respect me anymore. She looked really confused, but mostly repulsed. There was blame in her eyes, like she was blaming me. Like I took a trip to a store of weird shit and decided to buy the freakiest fetish they had for sale that night.

Could I find someone who didn't find who I was utterly repulsive? Maybe. Did I want to? No. I wasn't a foot freak. I was Rachel's foot freak. That was probably why I never felt that strong of a push to peruse a similar relationship with someone else. If it wasn't here doing that to me, it wouldn't be worth it. It wouldn't be the same. I didn't only need her body, I needed her whole. I wanted her to make fun of me for being the freak she turned me into. "But..." I breathed against her foot. "I don't mind that."

She said, "You're just fine with it being degrading?"

I shook my head, as much as I could with her foot on top of it.

“I don’t mean to be mean...but...” She snickered. “That just makes you sound prideless. You tolerate feeling like shit just to get your panties wet. Like you let your crotch do the thinking for you. This is so pathetic Mandy. You’re pathetic. I’m sorry but you are.”

My body went rigid trying to suppress the moan that was about to escape me. I decided against giving her any signs that I grew hot hearing what she said. I wasn’t prepared for her to know that I wasn’t tolerating the degradation, but begging for it. It wasn’t something I had to put up with, but the reward itself. I was pathetic. So I just kissed her on the foot again and thanked her silently for calling me that.

I lost track of time as I laid there laying kisses, feeling like I could keep doing this forever. Then out of nowhere I heard her yawn. I looked at her worryingly as she checked the clock on her phone. When Rachel got sleepy, there was really no prolonging her precious bedtime.

“K.” She suppressed another yawn. “I’m going to bed.”

I instinctively grabbed both her ankles as she tried pulling them. “What—why?” I shrieked. “Just a bit longer.”

She gave me a confused look. “We’ve been doing it for like ever. I’m tired.”

I was on the edge of the best orgasm of my life. She couldn’t. She just couldn’t leave me like this and go to sleep. This was just mean. Surprisingly, the last bit of dignity I still had forbade me from begging, verbally. But I did the best I could without using words. I slouched my shoulders and gave her the most helpless puppy eyes I could muster, and rested my palms on the tops of her foot pleadingly.

She was in the midst of a third yawn when she noticed my pleading and she burst out laughing. “God. Stop it.” She took a breath. “That’s just so heartbreaking.” She shook her head at me, embarrassed on my behalf. “Pitiful, but heartbreaking.”

Her insult wasn’t enough for me to cave. She sighed, then said, “Okay. But make it fast. You have like... two minutes. Then I’m off to bed.”

Two minutes. Giving me a time limit to take care of my throbbing crotch. If I needed a last slap to destroy my crumbling dignity, that was it.

“One minute and fifty seconds.” She nudged my chin with her toe as she chuckled. “Tick tock weirdo.”

She was having a blast out of this wasn’t she, all at my expense. I hadn’t got time to waste. I buried my face into her soles and breathed in, hugging them tight to my face with one hand and rubbing my crotch frantically with the other while I left rabid kisses up and down her smooth skin. If someone saw us, he’d think we were doing this under the threat of a bullet to our heads.

My desperate and frantic movement didn’t pass Rachel, as I heard her tormenting giggles above me ringing in the living room. I didn’t try to suppress my moans as my crotch grew wet and sensitive to my fingers’ touch.

“Less moaning please.” She slapped me with her sole playfully. “It’s creepy.”

I'm fucknig having an orgasm you bitch. I moan. "I'm sorry." I whined, the weakness in my tone torturing me as my breathing quickened. "I'm sorry I'm creeping you out."

My eyes met hers. She looked sleepy, and still managed to look excited as hell by what she saw. She saw power over me and she loved it. "That's right." She spoke so quietly, probably not intending for me to hear her, but I did. "Apologize, you *foot freak*."

I closed my eyes and buried my face in the cushion as electricity ran down my limbs and crotch, making me twitch with pleasure as I muffled my moans against the cushion under me. I slowly withdrew my now wet fingers out of my panties as I tried to regain control of my breath.

"And with 35 seconds to spare." She snickered.

This was something I never experienced before. I mustard my strength and looked up, greeted by the sight of the girl who made it possible. Words automatically flew out of my mouth. "Thank you."

A smile curled up her lips as she gazed down at me. "Yeah." She snickered. "You better thank me." We stayed in our places for a while, before she gave me a last fulfilled smile and getting up and walking to the bedroom. I stayed kneeling there, however, giving some time for my weak knees to regain their strength to carry me.

"FYI..." She turned.

"Yeah?"

She rose a finger. "I aint sleeping beside you while you're this...." She waved her hands around, gesturing towards me. "...Filthy. So if you wanna sleep in our bed tonight you better get your ass in the shower."

I nodded, and didn't comment as she walked into our bedroom and closed the door. With my crotch literally just having had its fill, her attitude was a bit less attractive. Of course I was gonna have a shower first. I didn't know if she was honestly worried about that, or if she just wanted to call it *our* bed, the bed that she could...apparently... kick me out of if she wanted. *This is off to a great start.*

I took a shower and got into my pajamas before going to bed. She was already sprawled over the bed snoring when I got to her, so I tip toed to my side of the bed and got under the covers.