

Chapter 11 A High-Definition Photo

Alicia chose to turn a blind eye to Caden's animosity.

She opened the door and left without another word.

No sooner had she stepped out than Hank appeared. "Mr. Ward, should I drive Ms. Bennett home?"

Caden's expression was colder than usual. "That won't be necessary. She might as well use her mouth to find her way home."

Hank blinked, not knowing how to respond to that.

Alicia didn't leave immediately. Instead, she headed downstairs to buy some desserts and a cup of coffee.

Then she went and knocked on the door of Hank's office.

"Ms. Bennett," Hank exclaimed in surprise. "May I help you with anything?"

Alicia placed the sweets and coffee on his desk with a gentle smile. "I'm afraid I'll have to trouble you, Mr. Ford. Please pass these on to Mr. Ward."

Hank was visibly taken aback.

What blatant ruthlessness!

What could she have possibly put in the coffee? Drugs? Bleach? Battery acid? Rat poison?

Or maybe a few bugs?

Hank didn't dare to take the coffee. "I'm sorry, Ms. Bennett," he said politely, "but Mr. Ward only drinks coffee brewed from the freshly ground beans stocked in the company pantry."



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Alicia lowered her eyes. "That's fine. If it's too much trouble, then let's just forget about it. I just wanted to apologize to Caden, is all."

As she withdrew her hand and straightened up, she accidentally knocked over the coffee cup, spilling its contents all over Hank's desk.

Startled, Alicia quickly grabbed the laptop and tried to pat it dry with her handkerchief.

Unlike her, Hank was calm. "It's quite all right, Ms. Bennett. My laptop is waterproof. Here, let me take care of that."

But Alicia continued to wipe it down, going so far as to check every cranny to make sure that it was all dry.

Hank wiped the rest of the coffee off his desk. When he turned to Alicia, he found her handling his laptop. "You don't really have to worry about it, Ms. Bennett. It's all good."

She heaved a long sigh. "Well, that's a relief. I'm really sorry, though. Why don't I go and buy a fresh new cup?"

"I assure you, Ms. Bennett, there is no need for that at all."

Alicia didn't insist any further. She said her goodbyes to Hank, gave him a sheepish smile, and finally left the building.

As he stood behind his desk and watched her go, Hank couldn't help but feel a sliver of unease.

Before he could dwell on the matter any further, he noticed that it was time for the meeting.

Inside the conference room, Caden was seated at the head of the long table, ever the picture of sophisticated authority.

He had always been serious when it came to work, and his presence was significantly more intimidating when he was dealing with business.

Hank brought his laptop up front to begin the presentation needed for the meeting. He plugged in his USB drive, and the large, white screen flickered for a few seconds before going black.

Puzzled, Hank was about to disconnect his drive when the screen suddenly lit up again.

The silence that fell in the room was deafening, and the air crackled with tension.

The screen did not display any charts or graphs, or even a small smattering of texts. Instead, it showed a high-definition photo of a male private part in all its naked glory.

Caden's face darkened ominously.

Terrified out of his wits, Hank rushed to turn off the laptop altogether, but the program seemed to have frozen, and the darn device wouldn't shut down.

Caden's Adam's apple bobbed once as he narrowed his eyes at the photo.

"Shut off the projector," he barked at Hank. "Your laptop is obviously infected with some kind of virus."

Hank practically lunged at the cable center to disconnect the projector from the screen. What followed was a more pregnant, almost eerie silence, likely brought about by that unexpected photo, but most definitely because of the forbidding energy coming off of Caden.

While his face remained blank on the surface, a storm of emotions was lurking beneath his icy eyes.

Hank opened his mouth to speak when Caden stood up and beat him to it. "Today's meeting is adjourned."

With that, he strode out of the room, Hank hurrying closely at his heels.

When they reached Caden's office, Hank darted forward to open the door for his boss, but the latter paused in his tracks.

"Care to explain yourself?" Caden asked, fixing his eyes on his hapless assistant.

Under normal circumstances, Hank would have scrambled to his desk to trace the source of the virus.



Today, however, not only did Hank refrain from such efforts, but he was also uncharacteristically quiet about the debacle.

Hank straightened his back, though he kept his eyes glued to the floor. "It was Ms. Bennett."

The hallway's temperature seemed to have dropped a few degrees. "I know it was Alicia, but how did she pull it off?"

Hank was a little surprised, and he whipped his head up before he could stop himself. "How did you know it was her, Mr. Ward?"

How else?

Because those were his crown jewels that had been paraded in front of his subordinates!

In his almost thirty years of existence, he had only ever slept with Alicia, and they just had an intimate encounter in his office earlier that day.

So, she hadn't blindfolded him for the sake of a fun and sexy romp, the minx had actually dared to take a photo of him when he was at his most vulnerable!

"Ms. Bennett brought coffee and pastries to my desk before she left. She asked me to give them to you to express her apology. The next thing I know, she spilled the coffee all over my desk, and she was wiping it off my computer. Everything happened so fast, and at the time, I was more concerned about the possibility that she might have tampered with the coffee or the sweets..."

For all of Hank's overthinking, he never imagined that Alicia would upload a vulgar photo to his computer and sabotage his presentation.

With a click of his tongue, Caden stormed into his office and grabbed a bottle of ice water from the coffee table.

Hank slowly followed him inside, his tone cautious as he asked, "Should I send for Ms. Bennett, Mr. Ward?"

Caden could feel the blood pumping in his temples as he gritted his teeth. "No need."

Hank studied his boss. Although Caden was still nursing his rage, it was clear that he had no intentions of pursuing the matter any further.

Hank breathed a sigh of relief. "Ms. Bennett is always so gentle and soft-spoken. I had no idea she had a hidden, wild streak."

Caden put the bottle of water down with more force than was necessary.

"Mr. Ward," Hank continued, his curiosity already piqued, "who do you think—uh... The man in that photo is?"

The corners of Caden's eyes twitched ever so slightly, but he said nothing.

It didn't escape Hank's notice, though. Shuddering with fright, he bravely forged ahead and asked, "Was it you, Mr. Ward?"

"No," Caden replied blandly. "It's not me."

Hank finally allowed himself to relax. "Of course not. It's just as I thought. You have issues in that regard, so you couldn't possibly achieve the alarming state that was depicted in that photo."

Just like that, Caden's fury flared back up again.

That moment was still vivid in his memory. They were in this very same office, and Alicia had merely brushed her delicate fingers against his member. Her touch had been so brief, it didn't even count as teasing in his books.

And yet, his body's reaction had been immediate and intense. Looking back at it now, he could only lament the utter disgrace he had felt.

