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Co-Workers

Every day, I have the *distinct pleasure* of stocking the supply cabinets with common items such as pens, pencils, reporter pads, rubber bands and whatever else will keep the reporters and producers ready to take the next story tip or draft a script at a moments notice. If I don't move fast enough, faces dangling over my cubicle wall inquiring besiege me: "Do we have anymore envelopes? Where can I get a red pen? So, do we have any more legal pads? Where can I get a clipboard?" The irritation in their voice becomes more evident as our assignment editors yell over the PA for them to meet their crew in front of the building. In a huff, they snatch the previously missing supply from my hand and hurry towards the passenger elevator on their way to the latest fire, police conference or crime scene. Usually, before the elevator door closes a faint, "I'm sorry. Thank you" trails through the air towards my desk. And briefly, a smile inches across my lips because I have sent another person on his or her way well equipped. Self-satisfaction quickly fades and I drift to an entranced position in front of my 17" computer monitor, viewing e-mails, letters, and wire copy and story ideas.

To avoid a barrage of hostile employees when I begin my day, I have become an expert on anticipating staff needs. I place new orders on line with Office Depot almost daily and check and re-check my in-house inventory so nothing is ever out of stock. I probably know the storage contents so well; if I closed my eyes at night I could visual it.

I frequently serve as *bartender*; becoming the person everyone shares his or her gripe, secret or rumor with. Seated right by the main entrance to the newsroom, I am the first face everyone sees and generally, I am the initial person at the station a new person meets since I give out the application forms to be completed before he or she is even interviewed. I am his or her best friend on their first day, instructing them on the newsroom personnel and insuring that they have a phone, mailbox, desk and computer log in. And, of course, because of my ability to give office tours, secure equipment and orient, I have become the answer lady for any and all questions

The only reason I look up from my computer before lunch at all is to answer questions, whether job related or not like, "Where is the closest shoe repair place? Where is a good Thai restaurant? Do we have any station umbrellas left because it is raining outside? How do I call to get tickets to the Rosie O'Donnell show?" In fact, for Christmas I threatened to request a sign for my cubicle saying, "STUFF" because of the ever-expanding scope of my job that the title Office Manager does not seem to cover.

When I can help it, I don't even let my eyes stray to answer the phone. Positioned within arm reach, I merely slide my left hand over, lift the receiver, place it against my ear and begin to talk, resting the handset on my shoulder with my eyes straight at my computer screen. I have been in my position so long I don't even have to see who is asking me a question to know who is speaking. The sound of everyone's voice is so recognizable I can exchange pleasantries, like "How are your kids? Did your wife have a nice birthday? Is your mother feeling better?" without seeing the person's face.

As the newsroom guru, there are very few things or people that get past me. Then, a few weeks ago, my routine changed.

My passion for him began with a simply question I have been asked innumerable times since I took this job.

"Excuse me, where can I get a pen?" His voice bellowed through the air with the forcefulness of the wind.

I turned my head and saw a 6'3", mahogany complexioned male I had never laid eyes on before. In television, black people are scarce so I was intrigued by his presence immediately. But, of course, it was my instant attraction to him that made me more curious about his personal life rather than professional purpose.

Dressed meticulously in Eddie Bauer casual from head to toe the visually twenty something man stood next to the open supply cabinet door. Invisible rimmed glasses sat firmly back on his broad, straight brimmed nose. The eyeglasses snuggled up next to his long, curly black eyelashes. His eyelashes, long enough to be on Kewpie doll, highlighted his soft, brown, wide and innocent eyes. His shoulders were as broad and defined as a football player and were angled towards me. Well-formed muscled nestled beneath the center of his relaxed button down shirt.

I muttered to myself, *who are you? And, why have I not seen you before?* I was now oblivious to what question he asked to draw my attention to him and away from my work.

I stared at his angular jaw line, which was lightly shadowed with stubble. The faint beard framed his face and led to his closely cropped scalp. His head, slightly large for his body, held a gentle, inquisitive face. My eyes lowered and reached his full lips, just as he stretched out his tongue and slid it across them. I watched intently as he used his tongue to wet his large, inviting mouth. Now moist, his lips parted and reveal a bright, white smile. Healthy, pink gums hung over his naturally bright smile. Enticing, his smile seemed to draw me to him as it illuminated his face.

Before he could open his mouth to speak again, I interrupted...

"I'm sorry, what was your question?"

"Where are the pens kept?" he asked, leaning against the clearly labeled cabinet.

“Sure. You’re standing right in front of them,” I said, consciously trying to hide the desire mounting inside me. “Inside to your right, there is a bucket that has pens and pencils.”

“Oh,” he said, staring directly at me while maneuvering his hand inside the bucket in the cabinet. His eyes studied my upper body, slowing just before my 34D chest. Teasingly, he licked his lips again and dropped his eyes to my breast. He smiled devilishly and then shut the cabinet, holding a couple of blue Bic pens.

When he turned his body away, I glanced down at the snug fitting khakis, which hugged his firm buttocks. His tall, lean legs carried him away from my area and back towards the rear of the newsroom. Then, he quickly shifted back towards me, approaching my cubical.

Startled but pleased, I let my eyes drift from his torso to his crotch. I had seen his large hands and wondered if his body held true to the myth that large hands may be a sign of something great below. Aware that he might be following my glances, I forced my eyes back to his face and smiled.

“I’m Marc,” he said, extending his hand to me.

“Marc, huh. Are you an intern?”

“No, I am a producer.”

“Really?”

“And, your name?”

“I’m sorry. I’m Alexia. It’s nice to meet you,” I responded, extending my hand and finally getting to touch his smooth, lightly lotioned flesh. His delicate hand caressed mine and then abruptly released it. “If you have any other questions, please let me know.”

“I will do that,” he said before turning once again and walking away.

I tried not to be obvious, but I found myself repeatedly glancing back to see where he was sitting and what he was doing. All morning I forced myself to face my computer screen, but I did little work. I fantasized about Marc.

An hour later, I found myself typing out my thoughts in a rough poem:

Lady Godiva

I couldn’t have done a better job
If I were a master chocolatier
Smooth and flawless your shell appears

Using my tongue for a taste

Leaves me only half satisfied
'Cause now I need you completely inside

Maybe if I opened you up
My chocolate covered cherry
I'd see what about you truly intoxicates me

I could get drunk off your syrup
And absorb your sweetness within
Then, I'd discover why I prefer you to other men

Now, every part of me wanted to feel him and touch him but I knew that the professional thing to do would be put to these thoughts out of my head.

I watched the Noon newscast on the television across from my desk and realized that I had wasted all morning daydreaming. *At least it was finally lunchtime*, I thought. Jennifer, our desk assistant, came bounding over to my cube and invited me to the company cafeteria with her.

"You know what, I will join you."

Jennifer was surprised I had accepted her invitation because I rarely, if ever, went to lunch. But, today, I was squirming in my seat, trying to regain composure so I knew the distraction would do me a world of good.

"Push the elevator. I got to get my purse then," she said, practically skipping back to her desk.

I walked with my head down over to the hallway and reached for the elevator button. I could feel the weight of a stare on the back of my neck. When I turned around, Marc stood behind me with his hands in his pocket.

"Did you meet Marc?" Jennifer asked, as she approached us standing at the elevator awkwardly silently. "I asked him to lunch with us. Is that okay?"

"Sure, no problem. Glad to see you are already getting out," I said sarcastically.

"You're funny too," he said in an arrogant tone.

Oddly enough, his edgy response only heightened my interest in him.

We all piled into the plain, steel elevator and my mind quickly wandered to the thought of Marc backing me into a corner where the two handrails meet. Despite Jennifer's presence, Marc would approach me and without a word, lift me by the buttocks onto one of the railings. As he tilts his head to kiss me, his other hand would frantically reach back to the elevator control panel and push the stop button.

Undoing the zipper on my slacks and unhooking the belt, he would slide his hand through the opening and down the front of my panties to my warm opening. Oblivious of the camera, he would step between my legs; kiss me deeply all the while sliding his fingertips up and down. As the elevator alarm rings wildly, he would tease me both with his tongue and his fingertips until Jennifer covers her ears from my panting. Leaning the back of my thighs fully on the rail to steady myself, I would lift my legs and wrap them around his waist.

“Are you getting off the elevator, girl or are you just going to stand there?” Jennifer asked, shaking her head at me as if to say shame on me.

“I’m coming. I was just thinking about something I had to do.” I was so involved in thought I could feel the moisture already gathering between my legs just at the thought of having Marc’s hands all over me.

The three of us, Marc, Jennifer and I, walked the 50 feet to the revolving door leading to the company cafeteria, talking about what brought us each to our present television station, where we each live and whether or not we liked our jobs. Causal conversation progressed while we waited at the grill counter for our turkey burgers and fries to be done. Jennifer then led the way to a booth in the rear of the cafeteria, so we could all sit down and get to know one of another better.

I listened intently as Marc reveled in his college football glory and discussed his life prior to coming to New York. Jennifer frequently interjected with stories of her childhood in Atlanta, while I chimed in with comments about my ten-year career in television. I studied Marc’s reactions to see if he seemed remotely interested in what I was saying, but mostly, I just watched him take every bite.

“Oh, it’s already 2:15. I got to go,” Jennifer exclaimed. “Is it cool that I leave you two here? I have to go and find some file tape before 2:30, so I should get going?”

“Go handle your business, girl. We’ll be fine here,” I said, waiting to see if Marc appeared to grimace. He looked at me intensely as I spoke, but he didn’t respond.

Once Jennifer cleared the exit, Marc picked up his tray and took the seat directly in front of me. At 5’10”, my legs extended more than half way across the cafeteria table so when he sat down our legs brushed one another. The feel of his warm limb against mine made me shift in my seat so my full calf was against his. I subtly ran my legs forward and back so I get a better feel for him.

“So, what’s your deal?” Marc asked, while reached his hand under the table and firmly placed it on my thigh to stop my fidgeting.

“What do you mean?”

“You’ve been checking me out all day. Now, you’re acting shy. So, what’s going on?”

“Checking you out? I was just trying to figure out who you were. I usually meet everyone when they’re new. But, you just kind of showed up.”

“Okay. That doesn’t explain why you were breaking your neck all day to see what I was doing.”

“Look, I was just trying to make sure you had everything you need.”

“And, what is it you think I need?”

I looked him up and down and thought, *you need me you’re just too stupid to know it*. But, I said, “you could’ve needed more supplies or to know how your phone works...”

“Can I ask you a question?” he interrupted.

“You can ask me anything. What is it that you want to know?”

“Are you attracted to me? Because, I am extremely attracted to you.”

Stunned and unable to speak for a few seconds, I thought, *yes, yes, I am attracted to you. If I could take you right now on this table I would*. I felt my hand wander from my lap to his inner thigh before I could answer.

“I guess I’m attracted to you.”

“So, what are we going to do about this situation?” he said, while guiding his hand from my knee, where it rested after stopping me from fidgeting to my inner thigh. Staring straight into my eyes, he moved his hand closer to my private spot without even blinking. Breathing deeply I welcomed the movement, wanting to slide forward to greet his forthcoming hand. Then, just as he extended his index finger and gently brushed against my crotch, he stopped himself and smiled.

“Not, here. Maybe, we should meet up after work this week and finish this...”

“We should definitely do that. What about Wednesday?”

“Wednesday, then. I got to get back to work, I don’t wanna be late coming back during my first month.”

First month? I thought. This was the first day I had ever seen him. How could I have missed *him* for an entire month?

“Well, let’s get back then. We’ll talk about Wednesday tomorrow at lunch.”

A smile lingered below the surface of my lips as I realized it would only be two days before I would have a man who had provoked such lust in me in just one day. To hide my excitement and glee, I walked with my hands clasped behind my back like a schoolgirl over to our office without

saying much. When the elevator reached our floor, we went in separate directions, him to his desk in the rear of the office and me to mine in the front.

The two days since our initial conversation, neither of us brought up meeting after work. At lunch on Friday of the week that was supposed to fulfil my fantasies, I finally snapped.

“So, were you just joking about us getting together on Wednesday?”

“No, sex is one of the two things I don’t joke about. I actually thought you’d changed your mind.”

“How would you know if I did or didn’t, if you didn’t ask?”

“Are you still down?”

I wanted to say yes fool. I am the one who brought it up again. Instead, I simply said, “Only if you still want to?”

“What are doing tonight?”

“Nothing.”

“I’m not either, so let’s get together. What time are you off?”

“I get off at 6:30, but I can get off at about 6. How ‘bout you?”

“5:00, but I can wait for you.”

Finally, I thought.

I bit my lip all afternoon as one fantasy after another came flooding to me. Finally 6 p.m. came and I shut my computer down so I could leave work early.

Marc and I met at the entrance to the garage where my car was parked and waited in silence for my car to be brought up by the attendant. Leisurely, we began to drive towards his home in New Jersey, which wasn’t far from a close friend of mine. In case he turned out to be a psycho, I had called my former roommate in the afternoon, once Marc and I had decided where we were going to have our tryst, to give her the low down on him. She had a complete description of him, street address and phone number. If I were in trouble, I would call her from my cell phone. And, if she didn’t hear from me by 11 o’clock she was instructed to call my cell phone, his house and then police, if there was no answer anywhere.

As we drove, I didn’t think about Marc harming me. In fact, I thought about how much pleasure I could garner from his large hands and hopefully matching crotch. I was getting so excited by the thought; I frequently ran my hand across my hair, trying to calm myself. I guess my building

craving was evident, because it didn't take long before Marc grabbed my hands and placed them on his lap.

From the driver's seat, I was able to manipulate Marc's manhood inside his pants until it stood at attention. The girth impressed me. Fully erect, I could barely get my hands fully around him.

On our approach to the Lincoln Tunnel, he frequently kissed my neck and pressed my hand on his well-endowed crotch. By this time, the seat of my underwear was completely wet.

In between his frequent, low moans, he would say, "Are you excited yet? Let me feel."

As we came to the entrance to the tunnel and at a point where I thought the driver in the next car couldn't see in, I lifted the tail end of my skirt and slid his hand underneath. From there, it was clear that Marc knew what to do.

"Take off your underwear," he said.

No, I can't, I thought. What would my parents think? What if someone saw us?

Tauntingly, he would slide my underwear to the side and tickle my clit, causing me to squirm, while I tried to hold onto the wheel.

What if we crash? The tunnel is too narrow but he feels too good. I can't keep the car steady while he does that, I thought.

"Just drive. You can keep the car straight," he said, as if he could read my mind. "Just relax and enjoy. Take them off..."

Before, he could finish asking me this time; I shimmed out of my underwear and left them dangling on the top of my shoes. When the traffic stopped again, I pulled the underwear from around my ankles, while he held the wheel. I took them and stuffed them in the compartment on the door and waited, anxiously, for him to continue. His long, broad fingers reached inside me, stroking me until he caused a river of delight to flow with them upon retreat.

I let out a huge sigh of relief when he removed his hand from my lap. And, we both sat quietly studying the road in front of us. Within fifteen minutes, we arrived at his apartment. He lived in a two family home with a dark exterior. As forbidding as the outside was, the inside was inviting. We climbed the carpeted stairs to his apartment and entered his foyer. Hardwood floors extended throughout his apartment, which was bright and sunny. A collection of African-American art by artists like BUA and Ernest Watson lined the walls. Classic wooden furniture was in every room of the house along with the light scent of vanilla.

I placed my shoulder bag against the wall near the kitchen and proceed to follow him to the kitchen table. He continued past me over to his caller id box and checked his messages before walking back over to me. Quietly, he approached me and scooped me up into his arms. He led

me back over to the kitchen counter and hoisted me up. As I sat with my feet dangling over the dishwasher my heart raced with anticipation.

Marc put his two hands under my dress and took off my underwear, which I put back on before exiting the car. I desperately reached out for him, but he backed away. He went into the bathroom and closed the door while I sat swinging my legs.

I wondered *has he changed his mind? Did I do something wrong? What's the matter?*

He emerged fully erect and wearing a condom. I gawked at his girth and length as he came towards me.

Would he fit? Would this hurt? I thought, as he placed both hands around my waist and drew me closer to the edge of the counter and to him.

A careful lover, who seemed aware that his size might pose a problem for me, Marc said, "slides forward. Closer, a little closer, now breathe."

He tickled me with the tip before slowly placing inch after inch inside me. Once completely inside, I placed my arms around his strong back and breathed heavier with each motion. His fullness inside me was unlike anything I had every experienced. He stretched his hand out to touch my face and bring me closer for a kiss. I removed his hand from my face and sucked on his fingers, one at a time, while he and I rose and fell in synch. We had a rhythm I had never known before and although we had just met, it felt as if we had been designed for each other. Then, my legs began to shutter and I felt a rush of satisfaction coming from me.

"Come with me," Marc said as he took my hand, leading me to his bedroom.

I squatted and sat on the bed, but he shook his head no. He placed his arms under mine and stood me up. We walk over in front of a large cherry stained mirror, which sat on top of his dresser.

"I want to see you," he said, as he bent me over, leaving my arms to lean on the top of the dresser.

Marc entered me from behind and I could feel him all around me. Continually, he would slap my buttocks, while motioning back and forth inside me. As he moved faster, he cupped my breasts and kissed my back repeatedly. The pleasure was overwhelming. I squealed with delight so loud I thought I would wake his neighbors. I watched his expressions in the mirror as I saw him watching mine. We pouted, purred and exclaimed in unison, fully enjoying one another.

When we were done, we took a shower together and kissed often like old lovers. We washed each other's back and helped to dry one another off. I stepped out of the shower expecting to leave, when Marc approached the bathroom and threw me a T-shirt.

"Why don't you stay? You can go to work from here in the morning?"

Exhausted but exhilarated from our evening's activities, I delightfully accepted his offer. I dragged my shoulder bag into his bathroom and quietly dialed my friend. The glee in my voice told her everything was okay.

Half dressed with a short black T-shirt brushing against my thighs, I entered the bedroom. Already in bed, Marc drew back the covers and watched me get in. He slid behind me, placing his around my waist and drifted off to sleep.

6:15 the next morning, I awoke to Marc placing his dirty breakfast dishes in the sink. After a crash course about where he keeps the food, towels and washcloths, he was ready to head off to work.

"You can stay here until you need to leave for work. I know you go in later than I do."

He trusts me enough to leave me in his place, I thought, as I happily climbed back into bed since I don't usually get up for work before 7:30.

"Thank you for letting me stay."

"You're very welcome. Just make sure you lock the door handle before you leave. I'll see you at work."

For the first time in three years, I sprang out of bed and raced to get dressed for work. I drove through the New York rush hour traffic with my memories of the previous evening to keep me company. I didn't even realize until I pulled into the parking garage I had never even locked my car door or turned on the radio.

As soon I got to my desk, I noticed a post-it, requesting all staff to the conference room. When I approached, I noticed people abruptly leaving.

"Girl, they have begun laying people off," Jennifer said.

"Anyone we are close to?"

"No, but you know the rule. 'The last one hired is the first one fired.'"

I looked around the conference room for Marc but he was nowhere to be found.

"Jenn, have you seen the new guy, Marc, today?"

"Girl, you ain't good at taking hints. He was laid off today."

"Do you know where he went?"

"Nope, he just bailed out of here when he heard."

All day I tried his home number from my desk, but there was no answer. I called repeatedly once I got home but still nothing. Day after day I tired, to no avail. I even drove by a couple of times, just to see if he was around. But, no one ever answered his bell.

A month later I received a postcard at work. It read:

“Hey, sweetie. I miss you. Sorry we never got a chance at a repeat performance but I was a little too embarrassed to stick around. I hooked with an old boss who got me a job in Cali. If you ever come out, look me up. Please!”

I’m planning to go to California someday to collect on his offer. I just haven’t made it yet.