

Lilith arrived at the office with an empty coffee mug and a new stain imprinted on her pastel pink blouse. She swiped her ID badge and headed up the elevator to her job as a graphic designer. When the doors opened, Lilith walked briskly to the bathroom to try and remove the stain that was already setting.

Her coworker and rival, Rowan walked in to find Lilith standing over a sink of running water in her bra and slacks. She was holding her coffee-stained blouse in one hand and a wad of paper towels in the other.

Rowan blinked, her face turned pink under her simple makeup, before helping Lilith. She dug through her purse and produced a Tide Pen.

“Thank twenty-first century inventions,” Lilith said as she took the pen and soaked the coffee stain in the cleaning solution. She rubbed the pen into the stain vigorously before handing it back and shaking out her blouse.

Lilith held her shirt under the hand dryer with Rowan’s help. “Thanks.”

“No problem.” Rowan said, focusing on Lilith’s hazel eyes. When the blouse was dry enough that the wet spot wasn’t as noticeable, Rowan turned around as Lilith put it back on. With her back still to Lilith, “Don’t think that this is a sign of good faith. I’m still going to win that Revlon deal today.” She turned her head to the side and watched Lilith out of the corner of her eye.

Lilith rolled her eyes, “Whatever you say, Rowan,” before collecting her things and leaving the harshly lit restroom.

What Rowan didn’t know was that Lilith had a trick up her sleeve, which was a sure-fire way to win her the deal.

...

There was a certain irony to the place they worked. The company Lilith worked for was a creative marketing agency located on the last dreary floor of an office building that had yet to be renovated. Everyone worked in cubicles with dull walls, under florescent lights, with a cramped break room that housed a broken vending machine. There was a lack of, what was the word, oh yeah, color.

The floor was full of creatives but lacked color. Lilith's only solace in her dull work environment was seeing Thatcher, her closest friend and only true companion in their lackluster world.

Thatcher walked down the row of cubicles with a long face until he saw Lilith sitting at her desk, smiling at him, and his face lit up. "Morning Lil, how's your day going?" He crossed arms on the wall of her cubicle.

"Oh, that good." Thatcher stood straight. "I'd offer you another cup but as we know—"

"—the coffee here is crap," they said in unison before chuckling at their predicament.

His laugh faded. "You ready for the presentation?"

"I got this deal in the bag." Lilith produced a manila folder, holding it just under her eyes, giving her face a mischievous look. She curled a finger, motioning Thatcher to come closer.

He entered her cubicle and knelt beside her chair as she opened the folder to reveal a copy of Rowan's presentation notes.

"Damn Lil!" Thatcher poked his head above the cubicle wall and made sure no one—especially Rowan—was around. He ducked back down and gave Lilith a bizarre look.

"What?" Lilith said, her brow creased before slanting back into mischief. "We are supposed to be creative, innovative, bold. Look at these two ideas Rowan has. One is vibrant with complimentary colors, and the other is muted and just... wrong. That's the one she's going

with, Thatcher. Would you buy clothes from an ad featuring a beige background, or would you fall asleep? We are supposed to grab attention, not lull people to sleep."

Thatcher let out a breath. "I'll just say this: Don't be surprised if Rowan tries to get you fired for this," Thatcher said before standing and exiting the cubicle.

...

When it was time for the presentations, everyone sat in the conference room with their boss, Silas, presiding at the head of the table. Lilith let Rowan go first, who gave her the side-eye as she passed.

Rowan's introduction to the ad caught everyone's attention, but one by one, everyone started pulling out their phones or doodling on their notepads. "The idea is to let the clothes speak for themselves. A muted background won't take away from them but enhance each piece."

At the end of Rowan's presentation, everyone came out of their stooper to give half-assed claps before she exchanged places with Lilith.

Instead of dull background colors, Lilith planned to use vibrant summery colors that complemented the clothing line's colors. "By showing off the clothes with background colors that compliment them, it subtly shows the customer what colors to pair with each outfit."

After both plans were presented, Silas mulled them over before choosing Lilith. "I won't let you down, sir."

Silas stood, "I have all the faith in you," before turning to Rowan and saying, "Rowan, you could learn a thing or two from Lilith here."

As everyone was filing out of the conference room, Thatcher gave Lilith a wary look as Rowan came up behind him, grabbed Lilith by the arm, and dragged her into a supply closet. The

air was thick with Clorox, and the room was made smaller by the overflowing shelves of Windex, rags, and used sponges growing mold.

“What the hell was that, Lilith?” Rowan yelled at her.

Lilith stood in the small space, letting Rowan vent before speaking. “I did what I had to do to get the job Rowan. You didn’t use your other, better ideas, so I did.” She crossed her arms. “You would have done the same.”

Their argument got more heated until they were mere inches apart, sharing the same air. Rowan pulled Lilith in by the shirt and kissed her. They separated as much as they could in stunned silence.

“Holy shit. You just kissed me.”

“Holy shit.”

They stood there a long moment before Lilith pulled Rowan in for another kiss.