

Not So Cocky Now

Alfred Gaunt, the new supervisor, sashayed towards the glass doors as the buxom secretary approached from the other side. He wiggled his hands at bosom-height as she pushed open the swing door. Her face reddened. Gaunt leered. Horrified, the other girls averted their gaze as he cast his eyes around the office looking for his next target.

I had worked at the insurance company for almost two years. When the senior actuary retired, all the other bosses moved up – the vacant position of our supervisor was filled by Mr Gaunt, fresh from Great Britain. He brought a salaciousness into the company which was out of step with management's culture – our former boss, Mr Ward, was the epitome of the English gentleman.

The following week, at the office Christmas party, I was chatting with my boyfriend when Gaunt slithered between us and monopolised my attention. Lest I be perceived as impolite, I included him in our conversation. Big mistake! He acted as though his presence was welcome, taking my sociability as a 'come-on'.

The day we broke-up for Christmas holidays, the girls in the office organised to go to the pub. I had work to finish, so stayed behind. 'I'll see you there, later,' I said. When I looked around, I saw Gaunt was the only other person left in the office. I drew a breath and buried my head in paperwork.

Gaunt swaggered over and sat on the edge of my desk. 'Looks like it's just you and me now, sexy,' the 'sleaze' said. 'Let's go for a drink.'

'I need to do these surrender-values, Mr Gaunt. Otherwise, all the rich kids won't be getting their yachts for Christmas.'

'I'm the boss, so I'm giving you permission to finish-up. Now!'

Shit! I was cornered. I swallowed the bile rising in my throat and said, 'Just give me a tick to freshen-up and grab my handbag.'

'I'm breathless with anticipation,' he said.

Fucking sicko.

When we arrived at the pub, the others weren't there.

'Looks as though the girls have gone to a different pub,' I said, turning for the door.

Gaunt blocked my exit. 'I've got you all to myself. How cosy,' he said, inching closer... 'What's your poison?'

'Southern Comfort on the rocks...thanks.' *Trapped!*

I watched him strut towards the bar and wondered how this married man with two young children had deluded himself into thinking I was ‘up-for-it’.

Returning with the drinks, he launched into a monologue, boasting about his accomplishments. I pretended to be enthralled.

After an hour, I said, ‘Oh, is that the time? Must catch the train before dark. Thanks for the drink. Have a great Christmas with your *wife* and kids.’

Back at work after the holiday break, I kept my head down and hoped that Gaunt’s interest in me had waned. But, no! Within minutes, he was at my desk. Leaning down, he breathed in my ear, ‘Lunch. Twelve.’ Chest out, he strode off.

Shit, shit, shit! Think, girl. How are you going to stop this once and for all? Then it came to me. *Bloody genius!*

At noon, Gaunt slunk up to my desk. ‘Ready, gorgeous?’ he said, smirking.

‘I’ll just get the others.’

‘What others?’

‘I thought you were inviting *all* the office girls. They were thrilled when I told them about your generous offer,’ I said, feigning innocence.

Gaunt’s smugness deserted him – he gasped for air, the vein in his temple throbbing. ‘You bitch,’ he said, as he stormed off.

I glanced around the office. The other girls were in hysterics and giving me the ‘thumbs up’.