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Mason campbell libro pdf

80%(172)80% acharam este documento útil (172 votos)131K visualizaçõesO documento descreve a ansiedade de Lauren antes de uma importante entrevista de emprego com Mason Campbell, um dos homens mais poderosos e temidos da Inglaterra. Ela precisa do emprego para...Título e descrição aprimorados por IASalvarSalvar Mason - 01 ao 50 - Forever Too Far (rev) para ler mais tarde80%80% acharam este documento útil, undefined 88%(98)88% encontró este documento útil (98 votos)67K vistasInformación del documentoMary Elena Llanos RamírezGuardarGuardar Mason - 01 Ao 40 - Forever Too Far (Rev)-1-200 para más tarde88%88% encontró este documento útil, undefined 90%(86)90% encontró este documento útil (86 votos)82K vistasEste documento presenta una sinopsis de la trama de una novela romántica. Introduce a Mason Campbell, un hombre poderoso y temido de Inglaterra que es el dueño de una gran empresa. La protag...Título y descripción mejorados con IAGuardarGuardar Mason Forever Too Far (Completo) by Zee-- para más tarde90%90% encontró este documento útil, undefined 0 ratings0% found this document useful (0 votes)3K viewsSaveSave Mason - Zainab Sambo For Later0%0% found this document useful, undefined Letra M - Pasta MasonSINOPSE Um dos homens mais poderosos da Inglaterra, Mason Campbell: frio, duro e sem remorsos. O vento carrega os sussurros de seu nome e faz qualquer um tremer de medo. Ele era conhecido por ser cruel, impiedoso, implacável. Lauren Hart tinha acabado de trabalhar para ele como sua assistente e se viu no limite de sua ira, sua raiva, seu ódio e sua arrogância. A vida teria sido melhor se ela não trabalhasse para Mason Campbell, invejado pelos homens e desejado pelas mulheres. Mas Mason não tinha olhos para ninguém além dela, especialmente depois de fazer um acordo que ela não podia recusar. 86%(65)86% found this document useful (65 votes)74K viewsMason Campbell billionaire love story with Lauren Hart.SaveSave Mason - Forever Too Far Ch40-70 For Later86%86% found this document useful, undefined 73%(22)73% found this document useful (22 votes)40K viewsThe document provides backstory on the main character Lauren Hart's first day working as an assistant for Mason Campbell at his company Campbell Industry. Some key details: 1) Lauren faces ...AI-enhanced title and descriptionSaveSave Mason- Forever too far- 01 a 31[021-040] 2 For Later73%73% found this document useful, undefined LAURENWould you run into a burning building to save the ones you love?It's a question we've all asked ourselves. But many of us never get to know for sure.We can only hope that we have what it takes to sacrifice ourselves for what matters.Ever since the fateful day when my father was first diagnosed, I mulled that question over and over in my mind. How far would I be willing to go to save him?He was the only family I had since my mother walked out on us. He was my entire world as far back as I could remember.And yet there was nothing I could do to save him from his deadly disease. At least not until I met... Him.Mason Campbell. The Devil in Armani.Wealthier than the Queen of England herself, and twice as powerful.Everybody knew Mason Campbell.From the women who swooned over him to the men who fought for a chance to sit at his conference table.They said he was more dangerous than any criminal.They said his fortune was acquired through blood, violence, and deals with devils the world over. I wasn't sure how many of the rumors to believe.I knew he sounded like the kind of person I should stay far, far away from.But he was the only one paying a high enough salary to pay my father's mounting medical bills.Which is how I came to be working for The Devil himself.Little did I know what would come to pass.That I would soon get the chance to know for sure... Would I sacrifice everything to save the ones I loved?***"Ms. Hart. You're late."I stood on the doorstep of the most prestigious hotel in London, staring into the deadly silver eyes of my boss, the mysterious billionaire Mason Campbell.Like always, he looked like an angel fallen to hell in his perfectly-trimmed designer suit, his bulging muscles threatening to tear through the fabric.Without so much as a hello, he turned and walked back inside, leaving me standing by the door with my heart threatening to explode.I followed him inside to the living room, which was luxuriously furnished and had a magnificent view from the balcony windows.I peered around the dark shadows of the room. In the month since I'd started working at Campbell Industry, I'd never been called to his private hotel room so late at night.I half expected some goons to be waiting in the corner to put a bullet in my head and throw me in the Thames. But it appeared we were alone.He turned to give me his signature icy, calculating stare. It was cold inside, but every part of me felt suddenly hot and sweaty."Sit down."I sat down reluctantly, perching on a sofa while Mr. Campbell stretched out with insolent ease in another chair.Crossing his legs, he stared at me, and his fingers slowly drumming on his thigh made my stomach tighten.I didn't know what I expected when I came here.It was bloody three in the morning!Normally, if my boss tried calling me that early, I would happily ignore it, no matter what he wanted.But my boss was Mason Campbell.And you didn't say no to Mason Campbell. Not if you wanted to live a long and happy life.I inspected his face, hoping to find some clue as to why he brought me here."Do you drink, Ms. Hart?"He stood up and poured himself a drink from a crystal tumbler."No," I said, my mouth dry. I would have loved a drink, but I had a weird feeling this was some kind of test. And if I failed, I would probably never see the light of day again.Despite my answer, he poured me one anyway.He brought it over to me and slammed it down on the table in front of me.Then, instead of returning to his chair, he sat down next to me on the couch.I grabbed my glass and stared directly into it. But I could feel his silver eyes staring hard at me. He held his glass, but he never took a drink."Why do you think I hired you, Ms. Hart?"I tried to think of the reason. Why did this man, who could have anyone he wanted, bother to hire me?My mind went crazy as the cold steel of his gaze penetrated me."I...I don't know, sir." I didn't want to bullshit an answer.Mason Campbell would see right through me.But being honest didn't exactly help me.This man was used to being at the top. He was so powerful no one would dare anger him in any way. That meant that he was used to having smart and intelligent people around him.I wasn't sure if Mason hated liars or stupid people more."Why did you hire me, sir?"He put his drink to the side, untouched, and leaned forward, his elbows on his knees.I tried to ignore the bulge of his biceps through his shirtI tried not to look at how it was unbuttoned, and it gave me a peek at his muscular chest."I'm asking the questions tonight," he said sternly.I took a sip and swallowed hard, choking on the bitterness of the alcohol."Do you have a husband, Ms. Hart?" he asked me.Why did he want to know that?"Answer me," he pressed. "I don't have all night.""No," I said, "I'm not married.""Do you have a boyfriend?" he asked.I could feel my heart racing faster and faster."No," I said again."How about a lover?" he asked."Mr. Campbell. This is...this is getting very personal," I stammered."Yes or no," he said, leaning closer to me until I could smell the alcohol on his breath."No," I finally said, my voice shaking."Very good," he said.Very good?!Why the hell did he care?"So I can assume that you are fully committed to your work," he continued."You've made sure of that," I shot back."Well, you're about to get a lot more committed," he said."What does that mean?"He stood suddenly, and as he walked away from me, I was finally able to breathe for the first time since I got to his room.After a long silence, he spoke."I have a proposition for you, Ms. Hart. One which you cannot refuse."***ONE MONTH EARLIER"Take me to Campbell Industry, please."The taxi driver's face went pale and he looked at me like I was a crazy person. What? Did I say something weird?"Are you sure you want to go there?""Yes...I work there." I looked at the clock. I didn't want to be late."You work there?" The taxi driver suddenly looked terrified, like he was regretting picking me up."Well, it's my first day." I looked at the clock again. "Is there a problem?""No! No problem." He looked pale. "I'll take you there right away ma'am." He hurried to pull onto the road, and I could see him trying to sneak glances at me in the rearview mirror. What, did I look weird?I fidgeted with my hair and tried to smooth out the creases in my skirt. I couldn't afford to look sloppy on my first day. Especially not at Campbell Industry. It was a miracle I even got the job. I just applied to any high paying job, hoping to get lucky. I barely felt qualified even for the low-level marketing position I had applied for.But I was desperate. I yawned, triple checking that my concealer was hiding the bags underneath my eyes. Having nightmares every night was normal for me now.My father's condition was worsening, and his medical bills were stacking up on my kitchen counter. I needed this job, even if it meant working for the most powerful and dangerous man in the UK.That was probably why my taxi driver was so nervous. Because we were driving to where he was.Mason Campbell.A shiver ran through me as I thought of my new boss. All I knew about him were the rumors. The most influential man in all of England. Some people say that it was really him, and not the prime minister that ran the country. That he was more powerful and rich than even the royal family.Well, I was just going to be working in marketing.Maybe I'd never see him."Here we are, ma'am," the taxi driver said.I looked out the window, confused. We were still a full two blocks away from the building."This is as close as I'm allowed to get ma'am, sorry."Seriously? I guess I would have to walk the rest of the way. I got out of the taxi and it immediately turned around, tires squealing on the road as it sped away.I gulped, my heart pounding in my chest. If I was smart I would probably do the same thing. Just run away from Campbell Industry and never look back.But I couldn't. Not when I was the only one my dad could rely on.I walked towards the massive office building, craning my neck up to see the top. I had an interview over the phone, so this was my first time here. The place looked like any other corporate skyscraper, but there was a strange, ominous feel to it. Like if I walked in through those doors I'd never come back out...Okay Lauren, calm down. You're letting the taxi driver spook you.It's just a normal building.Owned by the most dangerous man in the UK. The Devil of London.No biggie.I walked past a security checkpoint, stone-faced guards eyeing me as I walked past. The lady that interviewed me made sure that I knew to keep my company ID badge clearly visible around my neck. I suppressed a shiver at the thought of what those guards would have done to me if I forgot.I hesitated outside of the spinning doors to the building.Last chance, Lauren.I took a deep breath and walked in, to find...a normal looking office. The lobby was luxuriously decorated, and obviously no expense was spared to make the place look amazing. It belonged to the richest man in England, after all. But there were no torture racks, no screaming, bloody people, no group of goons waiting to kidnap me. Just a bunch of well-dressed business people going about their morning.I sighed with relief as I walked towards the receptionist.She was a redheaded woman, dressed elegantly in blue.Her hazel eyes sized me up, her expression filled with pure distaste."How did you get hired?" she asked."Excuse me?"She stared at me as if I were a dimwit. "Are you sure you didn't steal that ID badge from someone else?"Wow. What a bitch!She didn't think I belonged here. How dare she! I wanted to punch her in the face, but it probably wasn't a good idea to get into trouble on my first day."I'm Lauren Hart. A new hire," I said, plastering a fake smile to my face. "Marketing."She raised a perfect eyebrow, sizing me up again. "Twentieth floor. Good luck," she mocked."Thanks," I said drily, walking towards the elevators. What a twat.Looking around, I noticed something strange. My interviewer kept reminding me to keep my ID badge visible, but no one else in the building had one on them. When I got in the elevator I noticed some people even stopping and waiting for a different one when they saw me.Was this some kind of hazing ritual for new people?I hated this place already.I took the elevator up to the twentieth floor alone. I couldn't put my finger on it, but something was wrong.Was this such a good idea after all?I wanted to leave, but I knew I had to stay. This was the only job with a decent salary that I had been offered.I was doing this for dad. I shouldn't be thinking twice about working here.The elevator doors opened to the twentieth floor. But instead of the marketing department, it was just an empty floor. Completely empty. No people, no furniture, no nothing. Just some pillars and some lights.Did I press the wrong button? Nope, this was floor twenty. I tried pressing the button back down to the lobby, but it wouldn't work. None of the buttons worked. The elevator just...turned off.A cold sweat trailed down my neck. Something was very ~wrong."Um...hello?" I called out. My voice echoed out onto the empty floor. There was no response. "Anyone here?"I hesitantly stepped out of the elevator, looking to either side of me. Maybe there was a stairwell somewhere...The elevator doors suddenly closed behind me, leaving me stranded. My heart was pounding in my chest and my knees began to shake."This isn't funny!" I yelled out. "Hello? If you don't let me out I'm going to call the police!" Still no response.Forget this. I pulled out my phone, but there was no reception. Shit! What was going to happen to me? I gathered all of my courage and stepped out onto the empty floor, looking for a way down. My legs were shaking so badly I was sure I'd slip out of my heels and sprain an ankle.Before I could take a few steps I suddenly felt something cold press into the back of my head."On your knees," a deep voice from behind me barked out. I froze, terrified. "Now!"I practically collapsed onto the ground, scraping my knees against the concrete.A man circled around until he was in front of me. A massive, terrifying man I'd never seen before. And he was pointing a gun at me.Holy shit. Holy shit, holy shit, holy shit.Was I going to die?"I-I'm just here for my first day of work," I stammered. "This is some kind of mistake—""Shut up!" he yelled.I clamped my mouth shut, trying not to anger him. Tears blurred my vision, and the only thing I could think about was my dad, alone in the hospital room, his health getting worse and worse. He'd never know what happened to me.He'd think I abandoned him, just like mom..."Gideon, pick her up," a new voice said. Footsteps echoed through the air as the newcomer approached from behind me. The terrifying man named Gideon hoisted me up and spun me around roughly, almost causing me to lose balance.He pushed his gun to my temple, his finger on the trigger."Please," I whispered. "I'll do anything you want, just..." My voice faded away when I saw who was walking toward me.His powerful pose was enough to force me to my knees, even without a gun to my head.His broad, well-muscled chest rose and fell with his breath.He was dressed in black from head to toe, wearing a suit that could barely contain his powerful arms.His face was carved by the gods, with cheekbones that would make any man or woman jealous, a straight nose, and thick red lips.And his eyes.Oh, God, his eyes were pure silver.They were the most intense, yet cold eyes I had ever seen in my life.He raked his fingers through his dark hair, his silver eyes ready to devour any poor soul stupid enough to glance his way.His glare was fierce enough to wipe out the existence of mankind.It was him. Mason Campbell. The most vicious, sexiest man alive."You're a terrible spy," he said, his voice rumbling like thunder before a storm. "You have ten seconds to tell me who you work for. Or I'm going to be the last person you ever see."Page 2LAUREN"Ten..." Mason said, his eyes cold as ice."I'm not a spy!" I cried out.The man behind me pressed the gun closer into my head."Nine...""I swear! I was just hired for the marketing department!""Eight..."My knees gave out from panic, and the man behind me let me drop. He jammed his gun into the back of my head, the metal digging painfully into my skin."Seven..."I looked up at Mason, those silver eyes of his showing no emotion. I knew then that I could grovel and beg and tell him the truth all I wanted, but it wouldn't make a difference. I was already dead in his eyes."Six...""My dad," I whispered.That made him pause. "What?""My dad," I repeated. "He's sick. After...after you get rid of me, can you at least take care of him? Please?""Those are your last words?" he asked, his voice hard as steel. "You won't admit who you work for? Even to save yourself?""I'm not a spy," I said. "That's the truth."We locked gazes for a moment, those dangerous silver eyes penetrating into the core of my soul."Gideon," he said. The gun dug more painfully into my head.I squeezed my eyes shut, waiting for the end. Tears leaked down my cheeks.But nothing happened.The gun was taken away and I suddenly felt gentle fingers brushing away the tears on my cheeks. I opened my eyes and my breath caught in my throat to see Mason right in front of me, our faces only inches apart.He lifted me to my feet so easily it was like I weighed nothing to him."You can go," he said.Shaking with relief, I turned to walk back towards the elevator."Not you," he said, freezing me in place. "Him."Gideon nodded and walked away, disappearing down a half-hidden stairwell I didn't see earlier.Leaving me alone.With Mason Campbell.I stayed frozen to the spot, paralyzed."Congratulations," he said, his voice cold and deadly. "You've passed."I blinked, trying to make my brain work again."Passed? Like a test?""Not very bright, are you?" he said."What kind of insane test was that?" I demanded. "Who shoves a gun in their employee's faces on their first day?""Watch your tone," Mason snapped, his voice like the crack of a whip. "Remember who you're talking to."My mouth suddenly went dry. I wasn't out of danger yet. I never would be, as long as Mason Campbell was around."I have a lot of enemies," Mason said. He looked around the empty floor, his gaze far away. "They will do anything to destroy me. I had to make sure my new personal assistant was trustworthy.""P-personal—" My jaw dropped to the floor. "What about the marketing position I was hired for?""I've seen your resume. Passable grades. Only two jobs in the past. Zero skills to speak of. Did you seriously think you could work here with those credentials?" Mason said all this casually, like he was talking about the weather rather than insulting me."Why do you want someone like me as your assistant then?" I dared ask.He narrowed those deadly eyes on me. "I have my reasons, Lauren Hart. I don't need you to be smart. I need you to be loyal. And I needed to see what you were really like under pressure."Under pressure? Is that what he called shoving a gun against my head?"Do you want the job?"I opened my mouth, but no words came out. First he threatens to kill me then he offers me a job as his personal assistant? Did every employee here go through the same thing? I knew Mason Campbell was ruthless, but I didn't know he was insane.He stepped closer to me, and I couldn't help but take a half step back. He was just so...big. Not just his muscular frame, but his presence. You couldn't help but look at him, couldn't help but be drawn toward him like a magnet. He must have dominated whatever room he was in."I will only make this offer to you once." He checked his Rolex. "I don't have all day. Take it or leave it."What did I want to do? I needed the money. My dad needed the money. But if the devil himself was going to be my boss, there might be more at stake here than just my financial problems..."I'll take it! I'll take the job." Clamping my lips together, I swallowed the bitterness rising in my throat and instead eyed him with disdain.Mason was checking something on his phone. It was like he forgot I was even there."Mr. Campbell, are you listening? I said I'll take the job." My entire body thrumming with agitation, I clenched my hands to white-knuckled fists."I'll see you on Monday at eight o'clock," he said coolly, walking away from me without looking back. The elevator doors opened behind me. "Now get the fuck out of my building."I just stared at his massive back as he walked away, completely shocked. What had I just agreed to? But then a strange feeling floated into my mind, a distant memory of when I was a child that I could just barely remember.Something about all of this was weirdly familiar...I shook my head as the elevator doors behind me began to close, and I dashed towards them, afraid I'd be trapped on this floor.I had a new job. A job that could actually pay for my father's hospital bills.I couldn't afford to let myself be distracted...because if I did, my new boss would probably have me killed.Page 3LAURENEvery night, a new dream would visit me.Most of the time, it was some twisted fantasy involving me and Mr. Campbell, where he made my heart feel like it was about to burst.These dreams made the workday a bit more challenging, but also a bit more bearable.I'd take those dreams over the nightmares about my parents. More often than not, those would end with my dad dying and my mom laughing.All I wanted was a good night's sleep.But maybe that was too much to ask.A few days later, I broke one of the golden rules and was late delivering Mason Campbell his lunch.Stupid rules. Stupid Mason Campbell."Where have you been?" Jade snapped as I stepped out of the elevator.I breezed past her, retorting, "Why don't you ask me that in Mr. Campbell's office? I'm sure he'd love to hear you questioning his assistant's whereabouts."I didn't stick around for her response, knowing it would just be a glare.I knocked on the door gently."Come in."I entered, my legs and hands trembling. "Your lunch, sir." I forced a smile.He didn't respond, and I didn't move. I was afraid that if I did, I'd get scolded.After what felt like an eternity, Mr. Campbell finally looked up from his papers."Are you waiting for a round of applause for finally doing your job correctly?"I opened and closed my mouth, struggling to find a response. What was I supposed to say to that?"Just put it on the table and leave."I did as he said and quietly exited the room.I was swamped all day, but that didn't stop me from thinking about my boss. I was careful not to cross his path again or make any mistakes.I was doing my best to stay out of trouble, and it was getting easier when I focused on it.After leaving the office that night, I stopped at a nearby restaurant and picked up some Thai food.When I got home, I collapsed on the bed. I didn't realize how tired I was until I laid down.For three days, I managed to stay on Mr. Campbell's good side. He didn't stop being rude, but he did stop insulting me.It was progress.He was getting used to me, but he never missed an opportunity to remind me that my job was temporary. If I stepped out of line, I was done.He also made it clear that he owned me, that I was at his beck and call until the end of time.I was tired of his belittling comments. But he was right. I needed this job. Badly.And I was sure he could sense my desperation as my dad's health continued to decline.I was getting used to seeing Aaron and Athena, and being friends with them was nice.Jade hadn't stopped her verbal attacks, but all she got in return was a few eye rolls. She seemed to expect me to engage in a verbal battle with her.I was an adult. Clearly, she didn't get that.The job was frustrating, especially the file work Mr. Campbell had me doing.I'd been working on organizing the files alphabetically for two days, and the constant interruptions from the phone didn't help.The phone rang next to me, and I knew it wasn't a client or someone asking for Mr. Campbell.It was Mr. Campbell himself."Yes, sir?" I answered politely."I've emailed you some documents. Print them out now," he commanded before hanging up.I glared at the phone, muttering under my breath. What a jerk.Then I groaned, looking at the pile of files in front of me.After printing everything, I double-checked to make sure I hadn't missed anything before knocking on the door to the lion's den."Come in, Ms. Hart."I opened the door and closed it behind me.Mr. Campbell wasn't sitting at his desk like I expected. Instead, he was lounging on his sofa, his arms and legs crossed.He wasn't wearing his suit jacket. His white shirt clung to him, and his biceps looked like they were about to burst through the fabric.I swallowed hard and looked away from his biceps.Don't think about his biceps.He's your boss.He's a jerk.A jerk with an amazing body.Suddenly, my latest dream came rushing back.Mason Campbell. Shirtless.His sweaty body pressed against mine as he moved against me while I was bent over his desk.Damn it!"How did you know it was me?" I found myself asking after placing the papers on the table he'd pointed to.Mr. Campbell didn't open his eyes when he replied, "No one knocks more annoyingly than you."And that was that. I should've known better than to ask. Nothing good ever came from his mouth when I asked questions. My dream faded quickly."Oh, and Ms. Hart? Make a reservation at the best restaurant tonight. Seven o'clock. I have a business meeting."His eyes opened, but they didn't land on me. "And remember, the best restaurant. I'm sure you've never heard of one because of your status, so feel free to ask for help."I rolled my eyes, knowing he couldn't see me."Yes, sir. Anything else?""You'll be there."I opened my mouth to protest. "But..."His silver eyes shot a glance in my direction, locking onto mine."This is an order, Ms. Hart. Not a request."I felt like I could've stopped breathing right then."Anything to say, Ms. Hart? Got anything better to do?"Actually, yes.I was planning on visiting my dad in the hospital. I hadn't seen him in a while and I was worried. I needed to put my nightmares to rest. Desperately.I was too scared to argue, too entranced by those eyes that brooked no disagreement. I shook my head. "I don't have any plans. I'll do it."I wanted to scream, to tell him my dad was more important than his damn business meeting.He looked away, closing his eyes again."Don't slam the door on your way out. No need to take your anger out on it just because you didn't have the guts to say you had plans. I'll be waiting," he said dismissively.I wanted to tear him to shreds.I clenched my fists and returned to my desk, my heart aching.I fought back tears for two reasons. One, I wanted to prove to myself that I could be strong, and two, I didn't want to give Jade any ammunition for her gossip.I could feel her watching me all the time.I didn't want to give her anything to tease me about, anything she could gleefully share with everyone else.I didn't even think about what I was going to wear that night until I realized I had nothing suitable.I didn't have fancy clothes, and I certainly didn't have a dress that would be elegant enough for Seasons Restaurant or meet my boss's standards."Beth, I'm screwed!" I yelled, yanking out dress after dress and tossing them onto my bed."What am I going to wear?""Relax! You'll find something."I spun around and glared at her."You've been saying that for five minutes and we've gone through my dresses three times. And they're all crap." I kicked a dress in frustration."It's not my fault, Laurie, that you haven't been shopping in a year.""But you know why I don't spend my money. It all goes to my dad's medical bills. Ugh, I don't know what to do!" I groaned, flopping back onto the bed."Oh, I have a great idea!" she suddenly exclaimed, making me sit up."Let's go to Melt's and shop.""Are you kidding me? We can't afford Melt. We can't even afford a simple earring from there and you're talking about buying a dress? You've lost your mind."She swatted me on the head."I don't mean buy it. I mean, yes, we should buy it but you can return it afterward. You just have to make sure Mr. Campbell doesn't see the tag and have another reason to insult you."I imagined the look on his face when he saw it."You think that would work?"She nodded."I love the idea. Thank you so much, Beth. Let's go now before I change my mind."After we got back from Melt's, Beth offered to do my makeup.She didn't want to overdo it, so she gave me a more natural look. When she was done, I looked different—different in a good way, and I loved it.I decided to let my hair down but I curled it a bit.At exactly six fifty-five, I arrived at Seasons Restaurant. But I didn't go in.I waited for Mr. Campbell outside the restaurant.Don't ask me why I felt the need to do that when I could have just gone in and waited for him there. But my brain wasn't working right tonight.There was no way I was going inside without my boss.At seven o'five, a black Escalade pulled up next to me. The driver got out and opened the backseat door.A polished shoe appeared, followed by another, and I was hit with the most intoxicating scent ever.I can't even begin to describe how I felt when Mason Campbell stepped out of that car, a total alpha male who demanded attention.My mouth went dry despite having drunk water five minutes ago, but I couldn't help myself.Mason Campbell was beyond handsome. He was the kind of man you admired from a distance because he seemed untouchable, the kind who made your heart pound and your knees go weak.Was I feeling that?Hell yes.Why wouldn't I when Mason looked like a Greek god in his black Armani suit, his face perfectly shaven and his hair slicked back?Male models had nothing on Mason Campbell.He didn't just have the looks, the money, power, and everyone's adoration, but there was something mysterious about him. Something you couldn't help but want to poke at.Breathe in.Breathe out."What the hell are you wearing?"And just like that, I was yanked out of my fantasy by six simple words from his perfect, plump red lips. Did I just say perfect?I looked down at my dress, making sure I was still wearing it because I had no idea why he sounded both surprised and annoyed.My hand went to the back of my dress, making sure the tag was well hidden."Never mind that now."He looked toward the car. "Prince."Prince?Four tiny legs jumped out of the car and before I could realize what was happening, it launched itself at me and I shrieked."Prince, down, boy. She's harmless. Can't do a damn thing."The owner of the dog pulled him back before he could attack my face again. I held a hand to my chest, listening to the sound of my own frantic heartbeats.Mr. Campbell's mouth twitched a little bit, but I could have been imagining that.I finally found my voice. "Is that...is that a dog?"He rolled his eyes. "Five points to you.""But there's a policy that says no dogs or any animal allowed? Why are you bringing a dog?"He raised a brow at my tone.I gulped. "Sir.""That's why you're here, Ms. Hart. To walk my dog. Although, I would have recommended something a bit more...casual." He eyed me from head to toe.I was wearing a black strapless dress with a slit and Beth's heels."I'm walking your dog?" I asked in disbelief."Why, did you think you were doing something else?" he asked, his tone clearly mocking me. "I told you to not let this job get to your head, Ms. Hart."His eyes roamed over me again, taking in every detail of my figure. Then, without uttering another word, he was gone.Page 4LAURENTaking out your anger on a dog is never a good idea, especially when it's the dog's owner who's the real source of your frustration.I'd been walking Prince for about twenty minutes.The worst part of it was a five-minute phone call from Beth, who was laughing so hard she fell off her chair.Our conversation wasn't productive, and I didn't get to vent my frustration. She just kept laughing and talking nonsense.I hung up before I got even angrier.Prince was a cute dog. If I wasn't so busy, I'd have a dog of my own. But owning a dog means more responsibility and expenses.It's a lot to handle. I'm barely making ends meet as it is.I'd never met a dog as smart and cocky as Prince. He was just like his owner, bad temper and all.When we got to a nearby park, I found a dirty ball on the ground. I thought we could play catch, but Prince turned up his nose at the ball.I'm serious, he looked at the ball with pure disgust...so unlike a dog.We left the park, much to Prince's delight. I stopped to get hot dogs and saw a woman with her dog outside a store."Look, Prince, isn't that dog cute? Do you want to go play with her?"He gave me a look that said, "Are you kidding me?" I decided then that Prince was smarter than I'd given him credit for. Or maybe I was just imagining things."Come on, Prince, how often do you see a dog as cute as that one? Don't be so stuck-up."He huffed and looked away.I was starting to feel crazy, talking to a dog and thinking he was responding with his expressions. He started walking away from me in the opposite direction."Prince!" I grabbed his leash and he snapped at me."Geez, you're just like your owner. Did you pick up his personality, you poor dog?" I scratched behind his ear. "Must be tough living with a guy who's as cold as ice."He didn't respond."Can I tell you a secret? I think if he toned down his bad temper and started being nice to people, I might start to like him. He's really hot."Prince smirked. I swear he smirked!"All right, let's go." I tugged on his leash but he wouldn't move."Prince, come on, let's go."He stayed put."Prince!" I snapped, giving the leash a hard tug.He lunged at me and I heard a ripping sound.I looked down to see a large, noticeable tear in my dress, just below the knees."Fuck!" I cursed. "Oh my god, this isn't happening."I tried to calm down, but all I could think about was the price tag that read seven hundred pounds."No, no, no."I felt like I was going to hyperventilate right there on the street. What was I going to do? I couldn't afford to replace the dress.And I'd rather die than touch the money I was saving for my dad."Why the hell did you do that, Prince?"He looked unapologetic and I wanted to scream.What was I going to do? Sell my TV? But I didn't own one. It was all Beth's.What expensive thing did I own that I could sell? Nothing.My conscience told me to tell Mr. Campbell.After all, it was his damn dog and I deserved to be compensated for the damage to the dress.But my pride and ego wouldn't let me tell him.To hell with your pride and ego. Tell him. Let him pay for the dress.How else was I going to solve this problem?I made up my mind, grabbed Prince, and headed back to the restaurant.We waited for Mr. Campbell's meeting to end. When it was over, I saw him walking out with an Asian man with gray hair. They shook hands before the man left in his car.Then he turned to me.I looked down at the ground for a moment before lifting my head and handing him the leash."My dress is torn," I said, my voice filled with defeat.Inside, I was screaming, humiliated by the situation I'd gotten myself into."I see that. How does that concern me?"I bit my lower lip, holding back a scream."Prince tore my dress." I tried to avoid his intense, wild gray eyes."Are you asking for compensation, Ms. Hart?"His voice was devoid of emotion.Still avoiding his gaze, I fiddled with my hands. "Well, you see—"He cut me off. "Look at me."I turned to him and saw his hand reaching toward my face. My eyes widened. I thought he was going to slap me or touch my face.Instead, his hand went to the back of my neck, and he pulled out the price tag.I was mortified. I wanted the ground to open up and swallow me.This was the very thing I'd been trying to avoid all night."Quite unfortunate," he commented lazily. "Even if the dress is cheap."Cheap? He thought a seven-hundred-pound dress was cheap? I'd love to see what he considered expensive.But I couldn't look at him.I was never going to live this down. I was caught off guard when his warm hands grabbed mine and he placed some bills in my palm.I couldn't tell how much it was, but it was a lot.I'd never held so much money.He didn't say anything, and before I could react, he was already in his car, driving away.I stood there, rooted to the spot, staring at the bills in my hand.Why was I upset that he'd given me his money? Shouldn't I be happy that now I could pay for the dress?I wasn't comfortable with it. I didn't want his cash.I stashed it in my purse, planning to give it back to him at work the next day. If I knew where he lived, I would have returned it right then and there."You're doing what?" Beth questioned when I spilled the whole story."I'm giving back the money," I replied, slipping out of the dress."Why? It's yours. He gave it to you.""I just don't want it.""Are you nuts? How will you pay for the dress? His dog ruined it, so he should pay for it. Stop being so negative and look on the bright side. You get to keep the dress too."I tossed the dress onto the bed and stood with my hands on my hips, glaring at Beth."He gave me two thousand pounds. What am I supposed to do with the leftover cash, huh? I'm not a charity case, Beth."I have my dignity. I can't just take his money. It's insulting!"She rolled her eyes. "Insult my ass. You just don't want to."I snapped back, irritation clear in my voice, "Have you met the guy? He's a jerk! He'll never let me live it down. Do you think he won't tease me?"You have no idea." I was still nursing my wounded pride, still trying to make sense of what had happened.She wasn't there, she didn't see what I saw in Mason Campbell's eyes."Okay, why don't you take the seven hundred and give the rest back to him? And tell him you'll repay the seven hundred when you get your paycheck. Problem solved.""You're the one who caused this mess in the first place!"She wagged her finger at me."No, Laurie, you're the one who thought you were invited to dinner with them." She laughed lightly. "I wish I could have seen your face when he told you you were going to walk his dog.""I'm sure he found my embarrassment hilarious. Was it really that hard to tell me what I was supposed to do there?" I grumbled. "He could have just said, 'Miss Hart, you will walk my dog tonight' so I wouldn't have made a fool of myself."Even if we were in court in front of a judge, the one to blame was my boss for not being clear.I was innocent. I was the one who was humiliated and I was the one who lost a lot of money that night, enough to keep me awake.But I knew he'd be sleeping soundly with his billions in the bank.I groaned, rubbing my forehead. I could feel a headache coming on."I really hate him."Beth feigned shock."How can you hate the hottest man in England? You know, I'm so jealous of you. You get to check him out all day and admire every inch of his body that's calling my name."I smacked her."Shut up. I don't ogle him. I don't even pay attention to him."Liar."I only focus on my job."A master of deception. That's what you are.She looked skeptical."So you're immune to his good looks? You're not attracted to him? At all?""Sorry to disappoint you, sweetheart." You're such a liar, Lauren."I'm calling you out on your lies." She grinned."You just don't want to admit that you're attracted to your boss too.""I'm not attracted to my boss! He's my boss! It's strictly professional.""Where does it say you can't ogle your boss in your handbook, hmm?"I smirked."Rule number seventy-eight: No employee should engage in any physical action or form a relationship with a coworker." I mentally patted myself on the back for remembering some of the rules.Even though I hadn't read the entire handbook, I was glad I'd managed to read some and avoid breaking any rules."It doesn't say boss," she retorted."Really? That's your argument?" I asked, raising an eyebrow. She just shrugged. "Whatever, I'm going to bed."She got up from my bed."We're still on for this weekend, right?""The girls' night out? Sure. Can I invite my friend Athena?""Yeah. You can also invite your boss. The more the merrier." She winked."Fuck off, Bethany."***Dad had a doctor's appointment today. His nurse, Becky, promised to keep me updated. I took a moment to reassure myself that everything would be okay.He would endure his chemo like the brave man he was.He was going to be okay, and he was going to live long enough to see his grandkids.I was mostly worried that he was going through it alone, but Becky assured me she would be with him every step of the way.I was worried Dad would be upset that my job was keeping me from being there with him, but a text from him eased my worries.It was one of those days when I really resented the woman who gave birth to me.She should have been there with him, not his nurse. But who knows where she was right now, or if she even thought about him.Even though Dad said he didn't mind that I wasn't there, I still felt guilty. I was the only family he had left, and I was too busy running errands for Mason Campbell.I made my way through the bustling foot traffic to the nearest coffee shop two blocks away from the office. I grabbed a latte with extra foam before hurrying back to our building.The cold weather bit at my face and I burrowed deeper into my cardigan.The elevator was empty when I stepped inside and pressed the button for my floor. I was nervous, but mostly still embarrassed when I remembered what happened the previous night.My humiliation was still fresh in my mind, and I dreaded seeing Mr. Campbell.I found myself wishing it was the weekend already, just so I wouldn't have to see him again so soon. I couldn't help but wonder what he must have thought of me.Why is it that the one person you never want to make a fool of yourself in front of is always the one person you end up making a fool of yourself in front of?Just as the elevator doors were about to close, a hand shot through the gap, forcing them open again.My heart pounded in my chest as I saw the man I'd been thinking about just moments ago.Mr. Campbell stepped into the elevator, standing next to me. His hair was neatly trimmed in a stylish cut that suited him well, and he smelled amazing.I knew I shouldn't be thinking about him. He was someone I could never have.I was suddenly hit with a wave of memories from my first Mason Campbell nightmare.Being alone in the elevator with this powerful man, I could feel the tension building.Why am I freaking out so much about him? It's not like I've never talked to him before.But this was the first time we'd ever been alone in an elevator together.And the tension was so thick, you could cut it with a knife.He didn't say a word, and he didn't even glance my way. The elevator doors closed, and the doors of tension swung wide open.In my mind, I replayed the memory of him gripping my ass, pushing me against the wall with force, his beautiful red lips pressed against mine in the steamiest sex scene I'd ever imagined.I kept my head down, pretending to be engrossed in my latte when in reality I was trying my hardest not to look at him.I felt like I should say something. I should greet him. He was my boss, after all.That realization hit me like a slap in the face. I'd been so caught up in the fact that we were in a confined space together that I'd forgotten to even say hello."Good morning, sir."I got nothing in return.Well, I guess I couldn't really expect him to respond after it took me so long to acknowledge him.Despite my ridiculous sex dreams, I couldn't even get him to spare me a sideways glance in real life."So, you remember who the boss is. I was beginning to think you'd forgotten what an assistant is supposed to do when she sees her boss."I glanced his way quickly and saw him looking at his expensive watch."One minute, thirty seconds." He looked up from his watch to me, his eyes revealing nothing."That's how long it took your brain to start working properly."I stood there, clenching my jaw until I could muster up the composure and self-control needed to respond calmly."Why do you always insult my intelligence? I happen to be smart."He shifted and took his hands out of his pockets as I continued to stare at him while he continued to stare straight ahead. He clasped his hands in front of him."Smart people don't call themselves smart. When you're smart and you know it, you let people think you're not. You show it when they least expect it."I raised an eyebrow."Is that how you became one of the most powerful men in England? By pretending you're not smart?"So much for not asking questions that were none of my business and definitely above my pay grade.Dad always said I had a habit of being nosy and not knowing when to shut up."One? Ms. Hart, I'm the most powerful man in England. Something you've clearly failed to realize.""I haven't failed to realize anything. I'm just being rational here, sir. I'd agree with you being one of the most powerful men, but the most powerful in all of England?"Have you forgotten we have a queen and a prime minister?"The words slipped out of my mouth even as—nooooo remember who you're talking to—I tried to stop myself."My duty as a boss includes letting comments like that from my employees slide."His arrogant tone made me instantly regret my words.I stayed quiet, watching the red numbers climb, each one taking its sweet time until we reached our floor.A far cry from the scenario my brain had conjured up. Of course, I'd leave this elevator feeling flustered and regretful, but not for any sexy reason like a quick elevator hookup.Wishful thinking!Maybe I should have just kept my mouth shut.***Mr. Campbell was tied up for hours, so I didn't get a chance to talk to him and give him his money back. I was definitely trying to avoid him too, but I couldn't avoid seeing him at the meeting.When I walked into the conference room, I decided to sit where he'd told me to last time to avoid any complications, and by complications, I mean getting unnecessary and questionable looks.I settled into my seat, waiting for the meeting to start.The other employees, whom I hadn't yet had the pleasure of meeting because they either ignored me or went out of their way to avoid me, nodded in my direction.The meeting started right on time and Mr. Campbell focused his attention on everyone in the room.I noticed that when he spoke, everyone was quick to agree with him, and they all seemed to be hanging on his every word.But when another employee started to speak, they didn't put nearly as much effort into paying attention.When Mr. Campbell was talking, you couldn't help but listen.It wasn't just what he was saying. It was the authoritative tone he used and how sexy his voice was.Every eye in the room was on him, hanging on his every word.Cynthia, from marketing research, started her presentation, and I took notes as Mr. Campbell had asked.Over the next hour, I did my best to participate, even if all I did was nod in agreement with what I thought was good and jot down notes, never once opening my mouth.After they'd gone through everything for the day, Mr. Campbell stood. "Great work today. Keep it up."Everyone pushed away from their seats and filed out of the conference room.I noticed Mr. Campbell hadn't made any move to leave yet. Just as I was about to leave, he cleared his throat."Ms. Hart, a minute."I turned to him, struggling to breathe once again as I approached him for the second time.He was still standing, and I would have appreciated it if he would have just sat down.He was incredibly intimidating and towering when he was standing. I always felt like he could squash me under his expensive leather shoes."Is there something you'd like to say to me?"I swallowed nervously."Are you sure about that?" I asked, trying to keep my voice steady.Stupid, stupid, stupid. Just spit it out!"If there's something on your mind, now's the time to share it," he said, brushing off my question.Could this guy read minds? How on earth did he know I had something to say?Maybe because you've been avoiding him and acting all jittery."This is your moment," he added.You can do this, Lauren.I took a step forward, my nerves suddenly on edge. But I wasn't about to let my fear stop me from doing what needed to be done.And that was to salvage my dignity."I-I have something for you."He raised an eyebrow."Did I give you the impression that I wanted something from you?" he asked, his voice dripping with boredom.All I could do was grunt in response."It's in my bag. I'll be right back." I quickly left the conference room before he could stop me.When I returned, he was standing tall by the large windows, gazing out over the city.I knew he knew I was back, but he didn't turn around and I didn't know what to say, clutching his money in my hand that suddenly felt like a ton of bricks."I have it.""Do I need to tell you twice to come over here?""No, sir."I walked over until I was close enough to see his face clearly.He slowly turned around. His dark-lashed gray eyes held me captive, like I was in some kind of dream.He was unbelievably good-looking. How could someone be so physically perfect yet lack a decent personality?Because nobody can have it all, Lauren.His gaze dropped to my hand. I cleared my throat."Thanks for last night, but I—""Last night?" He tilted his head, looking confused. "Did something happen last night that I'm not aware of?"I frowned, disbelief etched on my face."Um, yes.""Do tell."Was he doing this on purpose? Trying to make me talk about last night when he knew I was already feeling humiliated?"I don't know why you gave me two thousand pounds when the dress only cost seven hundred. But anyway, I'm giving you the change back."I promise I'll pay you back the seven hundred when I get my paycheck, or you can just deduct it," I finished, panting slightly."Do I look like I'd lose sleep over two thousand pounds?""No, but—""You needed it, didn't you?" He paused. "Prince ruined your dress and I paid for it. I felt generous enough to double it. Why are you making a big deal out of it?""I'm not..." I stopped mid-sentence when I realized I was about to raise my voice. I took a deep breath before exhaling."I'm not making a big deal, sir. Thank you, but I don't want it.""Because you think you're too good for it?""That's not it," I said, frustration creeping into my voice. "I don't want your pity money.""Is that what it is? Pity money?""I don't like taking people's money without earning it. I feel uncomfortable knowing I owe you, so please, sir, just take it. I really don't want it.""Throw it away," he said flatly."What?""You heard me. Throw it away. Give it away. It's your call, Ms. Hart."He started to walk away, and I reached out to stop him.The moment my fingers brushed his arm, a shock ran through me and I quickly pulled my hand back.Mr. Campbell shot me a glare."Don't ever try to touch me again," he said coldly, his voice more icy than ever. "Have some respect for yourself. I'm your boss and we're at work. It's highly unprofessional to touch your boss. Do you understand, Ms. Hart?"Feeling rattled, I nodded and swallowed hard."Yes, sir, I'm sorry."His eyes narrowed before he spoke in a commanding tone."Get back to work."Page 5LAURENI let out a sigh of relief as I shut down my computer. Another grueling day at Campbell Industries was finally over. But today was different. Today, I had some time to visit my dad. I couldn't help the small smile that crept onto my face as I thought about it.I planned to stop by a flower shop and pick up some orchids, his favorite. I loved how his eyes would light up when he saw me. It made him seem more alive. Less...sick.I grabbed my purse and coat, ready to head for the elevator when I heard his voice."Ms. Hart."I froze, a shiver running down my spine as Mason stepped out of his office, his gaze piercing straight through me. Why did he have to be so attractive? It would be so much easier to despise him if his looks matched his unpleasant personality."Yes, sir?" I responded."Where do you think you're going?""My shift is over," I said, puzzled."It's only over when I say it is." He dumped a massive pile of paperwork on my desk. "I expect all of this to be sorted before you leave tonight." He turned to retreat back into his office, dismissing me as if I were his servant."A-actually, sir," I stuttered.Mason paused and turned around, a look of disbelief on his face as if he couldn't believe I'd actually spoken up. I was almost as shocked as he was. I recoiled from the anger in his eyes."What?""I actually had plans today..." I remembered the last time I didn't speak up and admit that I was going to see my dad, and it resulted in me humiliating myself and walking his dog. I didn't want that to happen again."What could possibly be more important than the job that's providing the roof over your head?" he asked, his voice frosty.I bit my lip. I wanted to keep my personal life as separate as possible from work. But it didn't seem like Mason was giving me a choice."I was going to see my father," I said, my voice barely above a whisper. "He's quite sick." I couldn't bring myself to meet Mason's gaze as I said it. I braced myself for him to reject my request and prepared for a long night at the office.But he didn't say anything. I looked up, confused.Mason's expression was unreadable. He looked as if he could've been carved from marble. Like one of those classical gods you'd find in a museum in Italy."Sir?" I asked, uncertain."If these aren't on my desk by the end of tomorrow there'll be hell to pay, Ms. Hart." And with that, he turned and disappeared back into his office.For a moment I just stood there, stunned. Mason Campbell, the cold, heartless monster, had actually let me go?I didn't waste any time and practically sprinted to the elevators. I wasn't going to stick around for him to change his mind.***The mix of stress and joy of seeing my dad when I reached the hospital was overwhelming. I had missed him so much.There weren't any orchids at the flower shop. It was a letdown, but at least I would get to see my dad.Dad was in bed, watching TV. All his hair had fallen out and he looked frail and pale. He didn't look like the man I knew.This person lying there looked like a shell of what he used to be.I wanted to cry. The tears were about to spill when I wiped them away. He wouldn't want to see them. If there was anything he hated, it was seeing me cry over him.I would put on the fake smile he wanted. I would be strong for him.For both of us."Hi, Daddy!""Laurie!" he said, a big smile spreading across his face.He stretched out his arms, and I came around to hug him. I rested my head on his chest and took a deep breath. I had missed hugging him. He felt so much like home.My dad was my anchor. Without him, I would be lost in a sea of loneliness and sadness."How are you doing today?" I asked."I'm wonderful now that you're here."The smile on my face faded and he took my hands."Don't look like that. You should always wear a beautiful smile on your face," he said."But Dad..."He smiled knowingly. "I know, darling. The job means a lot to you and you're doing it for both of us. I'm really proud of the person you've become, Lauren."I hugged him again, trying to look happy and cheerful."I'm happy you're at least enjoying your life," he added, "I wouldn't want you to be sad all the time.""Hey, you came." Becky walked in, holding a tray of food."Yeah, I did. How are you?"She smiled and pulled me into a hug. Becky was a warm person. I liked to think of her as a big sister and a second mother."I'm great. Hey, Vincent, I've got you some food."After Dad ate, he fell asleep.And then Becky said she needed to talk to me about something and I followed her out of his room. I knew from the look on her face that it wasn't going to be a pleasant conversation.I tried to look brave but when she started talking, I couldn't keep up the facade anymore."The chemo treatment didn't work," she said in a sad voice. "The doctor said if we try another treatment, his body might fail because of how weak it's getting.""So what does that mean?" I whispered, but it sounded so loud in my ears. "Becky, what does that mean?" I pressed again when she wouldn't speak."It means he doesn't have much time left. I'm so sorry, Lauren."Shock and horror hit me, washing over me in hot and cold waves as the deafening silence grew, drowning out all sound but a high-pitched ringing in my ears.I took a sharp intake of breath.My heart was on fire, my vision blurred until I couldn't make out anything in front of me.He's not going to make it.Oh, God.A sob shook me to my core.I felt arms encircle my neck, pulling me into a comforting embrace.I felt it. This indescribable pain. It pierced my heart, unlike anything I'd ever experienced.It felt like I'd already lost him.He was my only family and now he was slipping away. When my mom left us, I was devastated. I wept in Dad's arms for weeks on end.He held me, telling me that loss was a part of life. No matter how deeply we love someone, they can't stay with us forever.One night I asked him why she left without a word, and if she didn't love us. He told me that sometimes saying goodbye to someone you love is the hardest thing to do.And my mom did love us, but her love wasn't enough to keep her here. We should cherish the time she spent with us.I told him I despised her, that no mother who truly loved her family would ever abandon them.He smiled and said, "Someday I'm going to leave you too, Laurie. It won't be my choice, but it will happen. Will you hate me then?"I cried and clung to him, promising that nothing could ever separate us.Cancer proved me wrong.How was I supposed to live without the most important person in my life?How could I see the world the same way when it had taken away the one person who meant more to me than anyone else?How could I spend the last moments of Dad's life without feeling like my heart was being ripped apart?It was going to be unbearable to watch him die, to witness his last breath."Becky." I pulled back and looked at her through my tear-filled eyes."Is there no way..." I couldn't finish the sentence.She shook her head."Okay, does he know?" I asked."He knows. He's just so worried about how you'll handle it, but I knew I had to tell you. And there's one more thing."I looked up at her, my vision still blurred from my tears."I reached out to your mother," Becky said.Her words made me catch my breath."My mother?" I managed to say, barely hiding my shock and anger."I called her. He wanted me to. She has a right to know he's dying."I laughed bitterly."She has a right to know? She left us, Becky. So no, I don't think she has any rights here. What did she say?"Becky looked annoyed this time."She said she'll drop by when she has time."I laughed again, a hollow, empty sound.I wasn't surprised. "When she has time, huh? That's good to know."What else could I expect from the woman who abandoned us all those years ago?I left the hospital in a daze, unable to process the news. I asked the taxi to drop me off a couple of blocks from my apartment. The walk might help clear my head.I was so lost in my thoughts that I almost tripped over the package left on our front porch. It was a vase filled with orchids.I stared at it, confused. Who sent these? I picked them up, their familiar scent making me smile through my tears. Just a small, thoughtful gesture like this was exactly what I needed. Could these be from Beth?That's when I noticed the small envelope tucked among the flowers.I opened it, intrigued. The letter wasn't signed, and there was no return address. Inside, only three words were written in a bold, elegant script.For your Father.A warmth spread through me. I instantly knew who must've sent these. I'd recognize that handwriting anywhere.But it had to be a mistake. That rude, terrifying, bastard of a man couldn't have possibly sent this. He couldn't possibly have a kind side.Mason Campbell...Could he actually have a heart?Page 6LAURENMr. Campbell was a no-show at work in the morning, and his absence made it the best day I'd ever had at the office.But then, in the afternoon, he strolled in and asked to see me. When I walked into his office, he was sitting behind his desk.He looked up at me. I considered mentioning the flowers, but his expression told me that wouldn't be a good idea."You didn't keep me waiting.""You wanted to see me?" I asked, my voice cautious."Did John Holt's office leave any messages for me?""Yes. His assistant called earlier about the deal you made with him. Mr. Holt doesn't want to continue with the deal if your terms still stand.""Well, let's hope he has enough money to support his five kids," he said.He continued in the same casual tone. "When I buy his company and expose all his illegal activities, do you think he'll realize his mistake?"I couldn't hide the shock and anger that washed over my face. I was acutely aware of his gray eyes watching me, taking in every detail.I knew he didn't expect an answer, but I had to say something."Mr. Campbell, is that...is that really necessary?" I stuttered, annoyed at myself for not being able to keep my voice steady. "Do you really need to do that?""And when have I ever listened to you?"His voice held a hint of irony, and his eyes narrowed slightly. "This is business. You don't understand it."I knew that once Mr. Campbell made up his mind about something, nothing could change it. I should have known that by now, but I still tried to argue. He was a ruthless businessman."But, sir, he has a family.""Call his office and relay the message, Ms. Hart." His voice was calm and emotionless, but I could hear the underlying threat and it made me wince."If he doesn't agree to my terms, his fate is sealed."Barely managing to hide my frustration, I nodded slightly before leaving his office.The rest of the day was quiet. He stayed in his office for hours without taking a break. He was a workaholic, and I had a feeling his life outside of work was nonexistent.How could anyone live like this? I could easily picture him obsessing over making more money and staying on top, fearing that even a short break would cause him to lose everything.That's exactly how I felt when I watched an episode of The Walking Dead.I was working when I caught a whiff of an unfamiliar cologne. I looked up to see a man walking toward Mr. Campbell's office.He was casually dressed in a dark polo shirt, ripped jeans, and black sneakers.He stopped in front of me, flashing a charming smile and showing off his dimpled cheeks. His eyes were a vibrant hazel, seeming to sparkle every few seconds.In short, he was stunning."Hello, love." His voice was warm and friendly. "I'm Gale, and you are?""Lauren. Mr. Campbell's new assistant." I returned his smile, though I was a bit nervous.If Beth were here, she would have been all over this guy. He was exactly her type—handsome, hot, and wealthy.She wouldn't rest until she had him in her bed."Well, you certainly don't belong in this dull office. Someone as stunning as you should be in someone's arms, being shown off to the world. I, for one, would love to show you off."Before I could react, he took my hand and kissed the back of it.His eyes were closed, his long lashes brushing against my palm.He pulled away."Aren't you a charmer?" I grinned, already liking him. Not because he complimented me, but because he seemed to be the only rich guy who wasn't a jerk."What can I do for you?""I'm here to see Mason. This is an impromptu visit.""Oh, I'm sorry. Mr. Campbell is busy right now, but would you like to wait for him?"Instead of answering, Gale walked around me and sat in one of the chairs in front of my desk. He crossed his legs and draped his right arm over the back of the chair."Normally I wouldn't wait for him," he began, a teasing smile on his face. "But today seems to be an exception."It's been a while since I've been in the company of a beautiful woman like you."I snorted and shook my head, then quickly tried to change the subject. "What's your relationship with Mr. Campbell?"Suddenly, a shadow fell over me, and I looked up to see Mr. Campbell standing there, looking irritated."I don't pay you to sit around and ask about my personal life, Ms. Hart."I nearly choked. I lowered my head, feeling completely embarrassed."Of course, sir. I'm sorry." Now he would think I was a nosy bitch, and he already thought too much of me.They disappeared into his office. But fifteen minutes later, I heard a loud crash from behind the door. I jumped, my eyes glued to the door.What the hell is going on in there? Are they fighting? No, Mr. Campbell wouldn't get into a fistfight at the office.What should I do? Call security or go in there?I was standing up when the door opened ten minutes later, and Gale's head popped out. He looked the same as when he arrived. No bruises or blood. That was a good sign.I should say something, ask what happened, but how?"Lauren," Gale said, sounding almost cheerful. He grinned at me. "It was nice to meet you. I hope to see you again soon...somewhere else, I hope. Your boss will see you now."Without wasting a second, I rushed into the office.Everything on Mr. Campbell's desk was scattered on the floor, and a few things were broken. I let my eyes drift to him.Mr. Campbell was perched by the window, his face unreadable as he watched me."Sir, is everything okay?" I finally managed to ask, my voice barely above a whisper."Yes," he replied curtly, his gaze piercing through me, making my heart flutter."You need to clean this up," he said, his voice laced with dry humor as he headed for the door. "And don't tell anyone about this."About your little fit? I almost blurted out. His glare was so intense, it was as if he could read my thoughts.A slow smirk tugged at the corner of my mouth.He slammed the door behind him.***In the days that followed, Mr. Campbell's attitude took a turn for the worse. He was always a bit of a jerk, but now he was downright unbearable.He was short-tempered, constantly yelling at everyone.The tension was palpable. We were all walking on eggshells, afraid of making a mistake that could cost us our jobs.I knew something was bothering him, but I couldn't quite figure out what it was.One Friday night, I was jolted awake by my phone ringing at three in the morning. I glanced at the unknown number, contemplating whether to answer it or not. But then I thought it might be about my dad.With a knot in my stomach, I picked up the call."Hello?""Ms. Hart." The voice was deep and smooth, sending a shiver down my spine."Mr. Campbell?" I asked, rubbing my eyes in disbelief."Is everything okay? It's three in the morning.""Is it?" His voice was dripping with sarcasm."I want to see you. Now, Ms. Hart. Queens Hotel. Room number 205.""H-hotel?" I stuttered, my eyes wide with shock."I'll see you in ten."I was still trying to process what he had just said when the call ended."What the hell?" I muttered to myself.I didn't bother changing out of my shorts and vest, just threw on a hoodie over them.Beth was still asleep as I quietly slipped out of our apartment.As I arrived at the luxurious hotel in a taxi, a clerk took my name and made a call before directing me to the elevator that would take me to Mr. Campbell's suite on the top floor.I couldn't understand why he wanted to meet at a hotel when he could have just invited me to his house or chosen a less conspicuous location.The elevator doors slid open, and I stepped out, scanning the hallway for his room number.I took a deep breath before knocking on the door.A few minutes later, Mr. Campbell opened the door.He was wearing a polo shirt that accentuated his muscular build and gray sweatpants that clung to his thighs.His hair was tousled, and a hint of a smile played on his lips. He looked incredibly attractive.I blinked, taken aback.For a moment, he didn't seem like my boss. He seemed like someone I would meet at a bar and then gush about to my friends for the rest of the week.He was so breathtakingly handsome it was almost painful.I managed a small smile, but his gray eyes remained cold and unresponsive.My smile faded under his icy reception.Page 7Next Chapter inSkip the Wait (10 Points) 100%(18)100% encontró este documento útil (18 votos)13K vistasInformación del documentoGuardarGuardar -Mason-Forever-Too-Far-Ch29-39 ESPAÑOL para más tarde100%100% encontró este documento útil, undefined