

THE SCENT OF THEIR CRIMES

by

Jess Vaughn

I - Getting In

Her cell phone rang at the same moment Shay went reaching for it from the console behind the sofa. She turned and stood centered in front of the wide screen TV, waiting for the commercials to end so she could get back to the forecast. The photo-perfect week had begun with cartoon-like white clouds that did not look real against a blue backdrop, with daybreaks and dusks in hues next to impossible to recreate even for the most gifted artist. It was as if the Pixar color studio had exploded and stained the sky. It should have been the kind of days most made for playing hooky and escaping to the beach to take it all in.

“Hello?”

“Shaylee?”

“Yes, this is Shay.”

“Shaylee, it’s me. Momma.”

“Oh, Mom, I’m sorry. I can barely hear you. How’s it going?”

“We’re good here, honey. How are you? And what is all that racket in the background? Are you somewhere safe?”

“Yes, Mom. I hope so. I have the TV blasting for weather updates. We’re anticipating bad weather very soon.”

“Yes, I know. It’s all over the news. That’s why I’m calling. They say a hurricane is coming your way. It’s predicted to hit Florida, Georgia and the Carolinas. How far are you again from the ocean?”

“We’re a good two and a half hours away, Mom. But it’s not the brunt force of the hurricane that’s our first concern here. We get destructive winds even with a normal thunderstorm and

they say flood damage from this thing could be off the charts if it makes landfall at our coastlines.”

“So what do you want to do?”

“What do you mean?”

“I mean, are you going to come up here to Ohio? I can’t imagine you’d dare stay around there.”

“We haven’t gotten any evacuation instructions yet, not that I’d be waiting around for it. But that’s why I am being vigilant. If there’s a chance it will change direction and go back out into the Atlantic, it would be ideal. I’m just not mentally prepared for this. Not with everything going on right now at Décor.”

“Shaylee Irene Harris, let me tell you this: I don’t give a flying fig about that company right now. I’m worried about you. I don’t want you sitting back mulling over your obligations or commitments to the nut jobs in that office. You pack up your stuff and start driving up here immediately! You can leave the key under the doormat for Jacie. And quiet as it’s kept, that doesn’t even matter. It’s all going to blow away anyway if Hurricane Mark has his way.”

Jacie sighed in submission. “You’re right, Mom. I know it.”

“Ok, if I’m right, then take action. Start packing.”

“Mom, really? I’m already packed.”

“Really? Well, now you’re cooking with gas!”

“But it’s not about the hurricane. You were right about what you said about my attitude towards employers. I am always the one who is scared to let go. I hate to let people down. I always have to be the last one on board before the ship goes down.”

“Haven’t I told you that for years? Since your first job at that floral shop, you give them all of your time, energy and dedication, thinking it’s going to mean something. But, in the end, it’s still every man for himself. They never did pay you all that they owed you. Now here you are with this company. What have I always told you?”

“One, companies do not know loyalty. They know dollars. Two, no person is more important than the bottom line.” Shay could recite her mother’s words verbatim. And now she understood what it meant. “Mom, I truly believed all this time that I was right; that my loyalty and dependability were the right things to display. I never thought for a minute that they would go unrewarded. I never thought I’d ever regret having integrity.”

“Well, let’s not take it too far, baby. You should never regret being a person of integrity. That is your mark in this senseless world. Even if it’s not appreciated, you have to stand for something. Being that type of person makes this life bearable for the rest of us. You certainly make me glad to be here. You’re a natural born shining star. You inspire us to want to have that uninhibited spirit, to not care who’s looking when our tights fall down. Your confidence, humor, intelligence and love of people will land you in the right place at the right time for the next chapter of your life. And I just know it’s going to be the best story of all.”

Shay felt teary so she did not dare respond to that. She absorbed those words like an IV drip of megavitamins, infusing her to breathe deep and not give in to fear. She had begun her short career at Décor in a haze of indecision, on a quest to find the place where she belonged after jumping from pillar to post. She had found the international culture exciting, her work fulfilling and her core of coworkers unforgettable. Those were not things easy to give up and she did not take lightly having had the experience. Maybe, in fact, it had done its work in her. Because now, although trembling inside, she was ready to face the storm. Without having effectively

emerged from these recent, inconceivable events at Décor, she did not know if she would have had the spunk to take this new step. So, in some way, she was sincerely grateful for everything that happened because it had all led to this moment. The good times and bad had both mattered. But, wow, when it was good...

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The day Shaylee Harris got hired full-time was also the day she found out that the company CEO was the same guy she had, for months, been intermittently feeding breakfast sandwiches from McDonald's. Both were memorable because of how bizarre the circumstances became while she was just being Shay.

By admission she was a Yes girl. She aimed to please in her professional work and personal life for that matter. Shay wanted to be considered an asset to the company, a nonexpendable team player that they valued and wanted to keep on for the long haul. Even if she didn't know what she was in for. She had been a temp for five months and felt ready to make it permanent. So, she was motivated to let the office life consume her and without doubt she went overboard in her generosity.

That early September day had followed months of the same routine. She stopped for her regular order of egg and cheese bagel and a coffee at the Mickey D's on the ground floor of their corporate high-rise before heading up the elevator to the seventh floor where she sat. By the time she'd settled in at her desk, got the computer loaded and put on a fresh pot of coffee for the junior execs coming in thirty minutes after, the older white guy in the trench coat would come breezing down the hall. He wore distinctive cologne that lingered long after he'd passed by. Even if Shay hadn't seen him, she knew he'd been there by the scent wafting in the air.

That day, as normal, he paused at her desk to say hello and chat it up for a bit.

“Oh, no hot cakes today?” he asked. He was what her friends from Detroit would call ‘money’. You didn’t have to know him to know that. His mostly white hair was professionally cut. His nails were manicured and his hands were smooth, not stained or calloused like men who labored and sweated for a living. The fabric and cut of his suit made it something she estimated would not be found on the rack. He had to have a personal tailor, she just knew it. And though not disproportionately overweight, he was surely fond of a steady good meal. But apparently those fancy meals by his executive chefs couldn’t replace his love of a fast food burger now and then.

“No, it’s back to my usual. I really don’t need any of these carbs but I was just starving this morning and didn’t have time to cook anything at home. I only got those hotcakes last time because I saw someone else with them and they were just calling to me. I got your sausage biscuit though!” She handed him the extra bag on her desk.

“Mm, you’re too good to me, Shay. My wife won’t let me eat these!” His wink crinkled his eyes at the corners in a way Shay loved. It wasn’t the tired, dry, life-is-so-hard-but-I’m-smiling-through-the-pain look, but the crinkle that proved he was living the good life and his stresses were few. She appreciated the sincerity of it. She noticed that some execs would respond in a perfunctory way at a greeting, making her feel insignificant in their presence. It never diminished her positive attitude, but she definitely could see the difference. So it was easy to think of this guy when she was picking up breakfast.

He walked away after wishing her a great day. He’d finish the sausage as he walked down the hall. She never knew that he’d take his jacket off and get comfortable to eat the biscuit with jelly at his desk. It would have endeared him to her more if she had known. That was appreciation! On some occasions, he’d tell her she didn’t have to buy him anything or that he’d

eaten at home. It didn't matter either way. It was a simple kindness that she did when she could. The money wasn't always there. But if he didn't take the offer, someone else in the office would.

Shay didn't weigh if he was anyone of assumed import in the office. Not that he or his position were irrelevant. It was merely that her mind wasn't on station or corporate hierarchy. She didn't care. People were just people, not ranks. That's why she didn't jump to attention or hide her food when he came down the hall each morning. She presumed he was one of the salespeople down the hall. Their conversations were pleasant, but not overly personal. It was more like 'How was your weekend?' 'Great, and yours?' Not: 'So what did your doctor say about that infection?'

He had become her breakfast buddy of sorts; but in reality, she didn't know him from Adam. A short time later that morning, her boss called her into his office and she didn't have a chance to finish her sandwich. The bag was still sitting on her desk when Chris, the vice president's assistant came in. He occupied the cubicle next to her and being uptight as he was, immediately noted the aroma in the air.

"Ew, you are not eating that, are you? That is not food." He put his manicured index finger under his nose for effect.

"Millions of their customers would disagree with you."

"Well, there's no explaining bad taste. Anyway, you'd better put that away before Mr. Hamme sees you. There's no eating at the desk, you know."

Shay didn't have time to argue that she'd eaten at her desk the past five months and no one had said a word. She didn't explain that she'd been periodically buying lunch for that trendy

exec down the hall in the sexy, silk trench coat either. She was too busy grabbing a notepad and pen to go transcribe what she thought would be a letter for her boss, Sterling Reed.

Mr. Reed was true upper management. He was the Director of Product Development and was Interim Manager of Package Engineering 'until they could hire a replacement for the outgoing director retiring at the end of the month'. Even if she hadn't known his position, she could tell by the way he carried himself that, like silk trench coat guy, he also had prestige. He had excellent posture and walked with a spring in his step. He whistled down the hall as a signature announcement of his arrival and sported a proper English accent. Coming from a British background, he was the kind that played soccer and rugby and knew how to pull off a jumper with his suit instead of a blazer. He had a bit of an ego as someone with his education, background and experience naturally would. Undoubtedly his parents had expected great things from him and likely raised him to believe in it himself. But he was not overly-pompous with it. Quite the opposite, he was balanced and fair. He didn't hold himself as someone superior to the world, but in the same token, he had self-esteem in spades. He knew his business; he walked with confidence and topped it with a beautiful, young wife that he adored.

Shay considered him respectable among a generation of unrespectable men. She valued him most for knowing what was really important in life. He honored and dignified people, especially his wife. He rarely missed a chance to brag about her being a former ballerina. Shay loved that. He was thoughtful when it came to her, remembering all her special occasions; regularly gifting her with flowers, trinkets and treats - even if it was Shay that placed the orders. He was just a really decent guy. And it didn't hurt that he was lenient and generous when it came to Shay.

"So, Shay, what can I say?" When she came in, Sterling was seated with his legs crossed, feet up on the desk and his hands behind his head in that posture that many businessmen do

mostly subconsciously. She sat down in front of his desk for only a few seconds but he hadn't said another word – which made her nervous. What was going on? What was he thinking? Was this something good or bad?

“You've been a temp thus far so you're not required to set quarterly goals or receive an evaluation, but I was reflecting on your work here and you've really stepped up since the early receptionist days. You're quick and thorough with your work. I think you're great myself and I know the whole team feels the same. You've got a killer personality that everyone loves.”

“Oh yeah?”

“Yes.” He slid the folder containing a stack of documents across his desk to her. “It seems everyone is in agreement that we need to get you locked in here. So, we finally got approval to hire you. Your contract is right here in fact.”

“Oh, ok,” was all she could think of.

“I know, I know. It's about time. Right?”

“Well.... yeah! It's been a long two days, I keep saying. You know this started as a two day assignment that I accepted when I had just finished vocational school and needed some cash as well as experience? The temp agency gave me Ren's name as my point of contact here. I think you might have been out of the country at the time, for like, three weeks or so. And every evening he would ask: 'Ok, so we'll see you tomorrow right?' Or 'Ok, we'll see you next week then?' I don't remember how long it was before he stopped asking.”

“Crazy.”

“Yes, but he was cool though. I miss him asking me to buy donuts. He would lay a twenty on my desk and I knew he wanted them.”

Yes, Ren was ace like that.” Sterling’s former boss, Ren Lattimer, had been with the company for thirteen years when he died suddenly of a heart attack several months ago. The mood in the office had remained somber for weeks, but was slowly rebounding. News of Shay’s hiring would no doubt make many happy. She was queen of the office. She had vivacious character and just knew how to set everyone at ease. If not for her breaking down the barriers, it would probably remain the uptight corporate atmosphere that it once was before her arrival: library quiet and all employees in standard blues, greys and pinstriped suits.

Yet, within a few months of Shay’s sundresses and sandals, the culture began to change and people started their own wardrobe adjustments including the unspoken casual Friday jeans. She could somehow bend all the rules and still maintain professionalism at the right time.

Chris was the first to complain about her radio being disallowed, but if the phone rang while she was in the middle of her Flashdance rendition of What A Feeling, she would twirl around, catch her breath and answer with a husky, ‘Thank you for calling Parfum du Décor. I’m Shay Harris. How may I help you?’ She used to say ‘How may I direct your call?’ when she sat at the front desk, but now in this admin role, she had become more hands-on in resolving caller issues.

Sterling interrupted her dance-session reminiscing with an unexpected admission. “Greg Hamme gave you a smashing recommendation by the way. Now we must hire you!”

“What? Mr. Hamme? But, how? What does he know about me? I’ve never even met him personally.”

“Really? He says he meets you for breakfast nearly every morning.” Sterling looked curious, expecting her to elaborate.

“What?” she said again. “Oh! Oh my goodness, that’s him? I had no idea! Wow!” All this time, she had been joking around with the CEO when she’d thought he was just another

employee but with a good demeanor and great taste. She had even joked about getting him a weave when he had complimented her long braids. She'd said, unashamedly, 'They make weave for white people too!'

She was flabbergasted. "Wow! That was Mr. Hamme," she repeated, letting it sink in. Ok, well... At least now she knew.

"Yes, well, take some time to look over the contract and get it back to me once you've signed. We want to make it official October first, so you have a bit of time. I guess a little more than two weeks." Sterling sat up in his chair and rubbed his hands together as if he was either about to get seriously into his work or slice into a juicy steak.

"Ok, I'll start looking it over at lunch.," Shay said, while getting up to return to her own desk. She was still shocked about Mr. Hamme and wouldn't see the low starting salary on the contract until later. But once she considered the flexible hours, the excellent insurance Décor offered and this being her first stable corporate gig, it was an opportunity she could not pass up.

But why had Mr. Hamme not told her who he was?

"Maybe he didn't think it was necessary. Or maybe he was trying to check you out." Toni whispered in case someone in the cubes nearby the break room was listening. Amber Lewis was the front desk receptionist. She and Toni – Antoinette Brown - the mail clerk, were both chiming in when they met with Shay for lunch in the breakroom. Rounding out the seventh-floor lunchtime quartet would be Jessica Vegas, who was still out sick with the flu. She was really Shay's closest confidante in the office. But these other two were an absolute riot sometimes.

"Girl," Toni added, "don't be fooled by the suit or the country club address. Those dirty old white men love them some black women. Let me tell you, I know." Her New York Puerto Rican accent made her sound just like Rosie Perez.

“What?! Oh my god, Toni, for real? Just stop.” Amber begged. Amber was beautiful, five foot seven in heels and always perfectly polished. Shay envied her French manicured nails and wondered how she found the time to be fit and so put together when she had twin toddlers and a husband at home. Shay was solidly single and still couldn’t keep a nail, no less go to a salon every two weeks. Her brittle nails would grow and chip regularly. Since high school, she’d given up hope on ever growing them out.

“Really? Did she just take it there?” Shay responded.

“What? Ya’ll know it’s true. Look at all those actors and singers, and singers turned actors, and actors turned singers and all their daddies... Robert, Robin, even Harry over there, they all know they love them some chocolate! Dark chocolate, milk chocolate, almond butter, butter caramel - it’s a bunch of them out there. I could list them all day long.” The more she spoke, the more excited her voice got. It was like words were racing out of her mouth.

“Please don’t.”

“Yes, girl, please shut up.” Shay shrieked, joining Amber but still laughing. “Why do you have to be like that all the time. Black this, white that. You’re too old for that. We were just two co-workers having a bite of breakfast in the morning. It wasn’t as deep as all that.”

“Huh! That’s what you think.” Toni added. “See, they always come in nice and sweet to butter you up. He talking all about his wife and all that yang-yang just to try and throw you off. Just wait. He’s gonna corner you in the supply room back there near the copy paper-”

“Ok Toni, stop talking. Now.” Shay got stern to let her know she was serious. They knew she was not that kind of person and she wouldn’t sit and let Toni turn something innocent into a dirty conversation. Everyone knew Toni had a gutter mouth, but she was also a dependable

worker who had been with Décor for going on six years now. You just had to know when to shut her down.

“Ok, sorry, dang. I’m just saying…”

“Yes, we know. Now, just eat your lunch. How ‘bout that? Ok?”

It was strange though that in half a year almost, she had not known Mr. Hamme and the morning breakfast guy were one and the same. How was that even possible? Well, for one, every communication Shay had seen from him was a written one. She wasn’t privy to any of the corporate meetings. She’d missed the company lunch and the summer picnic, both occasions where Mr. Hamme had given a speech she was told. And he’d asked her name initially. Maybe he just assumed she knew his. Now she was the curious one.

The next morning she greeted him by name. “Good morning, Mr. Hamme.”

“Oh, so it’s Mr. Hamme now? Why the change?”

“No change. I didn’t know what your name was actually. Did we ever really discuss that? I don’t recall. But you do know my name at least. I guess you could say we’re beyond a first name basis!”

“Yes, and word on the street is you’ll be sticking around here awhile. That’s good news to be happy about.”

“Absolutely. I haven’t signed the contract yet, but I will look over it this weekend.”

“Ok, but don’t wait too long. We want to get you on our payroll by the beginning of the fiscal. If you have any problems or questions with it, ask Debbie in HR. She’ll handle it for you.”

“Thanks.”

“Good morning, Mr. Hamme. How was the drive in?” Chris came rushing in, dropping his backpack near his desk and folding his jacket across the back of his chair. He checked his watch and grimaced, it being twenty minutes till nine. He was properly dressed in a tight European suit with matching tie and vest. Why not go all the way suspenders and a timepiece on a chain? Shay wouldn’t be surprised if he did wear them one day. “I’m just going in the break room for a cup of coffee. Can I get you anything? We don’t want you to tire out with all your very important work still to do.” Chris’s attempts at brown-nosing made people uncomfortable because he was so blatant. He looked wretched.

“No. But thank you, Chris.”

“I’m good, too, thanks. I have my caramel mocha.” Chris gave her a tight smile. Shay knew he wasn’t asking her, but she answered nonetheless. He was such a suck up. He was the guy that would bend over backwards to help you only for personal gain or if there were cameras flashing. Then he’d complain every step of the way about how much work he was putting in. No sincerity. Yeah, he was that guy. The bare minimum guy.

As he walked away, Shay watched Mr. Hamme’s own forced smile quickly fade when Chris was out of sight. Shay handed him his sausage biscuit and saw his real smile return.

“And that is the reason I got to know you first. You’re sincere. We are a better company with employees like you here. And that’s not just a suck up to keep getting sausage biscuits!” He laughed as he walked down the hallway.

Shay gave him a head start before she crept down the hall after him. She wanted to see exactly where his office was. She had walked around the circular floor many times before but never saw where he sat. Mr. Hamme stopped to chat at another exec’s door so Shay kept walking as if she meant to go in his direction. It was an easy cover because she often walked the floor for

exercise following lunch. She'd heard that four or five times around was about a mile. It was a free workout anyway.

After passing the VP's suite, she came to another section of cubicles. Like her area, there were four desks in the cube and this area was fully occupied. She and Chris both had empty desks behind them. Hers was used for storage of copy paper, perfume bottles, boxes and other miscellaneous items that she didn't want to crowd her own desk.

"Hey Chantal. How are you this morning?" she asked the blonde admin checking her headset. Chantal had been a wallflower that suddenly exploded on the fashion scene. Since Shay had begun working at Décor, Chantal had sported a standard 1980s corporate bun in her hair and a long series of pale suits. Pink. Light green. Powder blue. Beige. Grey. Taupe. Mauve. It went on and on. Within the last month though, she had discovered bolder colors, fresh cuts and edgier styles. She wore more slacks with colorful camisoles and swanky jewelry. She even changed her makeup. For casual Friday last week, she'd worn a pant suit of blue jean material with a Minnie Mouse logo on the side. It was shockingly cool. Everybody noticed. It had Shay reevaluating her own style. Maybe she needed to step it up in the wardrobe department. Instead of being more casual, she wanted to be more fashionable. Sharp, but not wastefully expensive. That was something to work on now that she knew her employment was stabilizing.

"I'm doing great, Shay. How 'bout you?"

"Ah, it's been a good morning so far. The day is young."

"So true. Where are you off to this early? Speed walking?"

"No, just stretching my legs I guess. I've got a webinar this morning at nine."

"Oh, that's right. The Daily Management meeting for tooling? Yes, you were on the invite. I guess they want us to get this new product line launched by December. I'm just finishing

getting things set up. They've asked me to drive today. There's so much work to do. What will you be doing on the project?"

"I've already begun sending out specs to the vendors. And I've been asked to do some proofing on the packaging print work. That's super fun. And I have to update the fragrance spreadsheet every time I forward the drawings. I understand the need for the paperwork, but I just don't see the value in me joining these daily meetings. No offense."

"Well, you know how that goes. What would we do without our meetings all day."

"Maybe we'd actually get some work done."

"Ha! What a concept! Ok, wow, it's five minutes till start already. I'll see you online then."

"Yep, see you in a few." She reversed direction back at her desk. She neither saw nor heard Mr. Hamme on the return. Where had he disappeared to, she wondered? She'd have to break down and ask Chris perhaps.

Shay logged into the WebEx meeting and entered her credentials. The meeting had not yet started so she muted her screen and switched over to a different program while she waited. She had a long list of specs to pull from the Bills of Material site and it was more time-consuming than she initially imagined when she confirmed the deadline. She had only allotted herself two weeks to get it done and she was seriously behind schedule. All these meetings were meaningful and necessary to others, but they were killing her progress.

When Shay switched back to the call, a separate conversation was transpiring between one of the packaging engineers and a manager in production. Like a sidebar during a court trial, none of it made sense to Shay.

"Ok wait, I'm confused. Are you talking about the pack out instructions?" the engineer asked.

“Yes, because the bubble bag is different. Do you see what I’m saying?” responded the manager.

“Yes, I think so.”

“Ok, because if the bubble bag is meant to protect during shipping, then that really needs to go in the pack out instructions.”

“Oh, ok. I see what you’re saying.”

“You do understand?”

“Yes, I get it.”

“Great, if there are any questions about it, ask Paul H. He can walk you through it.”

“Ok. I’ll reach out if I need assistance.” Awkward silence followed for a few seconds.

“Perfect. Ok, so that’s all then, Chantal. Sorry for the interruption. Just wanted to get some things straight.”

“No problem,” Chantal replied. “It’s all necessary. Better to put it out there now than leave something undone later. Well, switching gears, let’s talk about the tooling list now. Can everyone hear me and see my screen? It looks like we have about twelve people online and a few on the phone. Maybe everyone can just sound off who you are and where you work.”

Afterwards, Chantal got down to business. “Ok, I want to start with the most critical items that we need the pucks for asap and then go down the list in order. So, let’s look at line seventeen first. I think we need to discuss getting the components for this fragrance fabricated inhouse instead of waiting for outsourcing from our usual vendors. For the sake of time, it’s better that we bear the expense now than risk not receiving everything on time that we need for production. If you notice column G, we’re already behind schedule. What I mean is we are behind on our deadline of when we need to be in receipt of all these highlighted components to

start production as scheduled. Shay has confirmed that specs have been sent for the first forty formats, but they also require the samples and they won't receive those in time because they are even now being sorted, then they need to be shipped to the Jersey office in order to get the documentation prepared to ship internationally. So we're already running behind on that. The consensus upstairs is that we should push production to January at best."

They went line by line discussing each fragrance format set to be produced in the next fiscal and what was required to get each one in line trials or directly to production. It was a detailed process of multi-level testing, branding, gathering components, organizing documents, proofing and verifying procedures to bring a perfume to the world market.

Shay tried hard to focus in case she was pulled into the conversation, but she was pressed to get the last specifications printed and scanned by the end of next week. Besides commenting that she would be entering 'Sent' dates once the formats listed also included identifying SKUs, she had nothing more to contribute for the next hour. The call finally ended twenty minutes over time.

Chris, who had been low-key at his desk for the duration, now had a barrage of questions.

"Who was that? Chantal?"

"Yes."

"What was that meeting about?"

"Prepping for the next few months of production into the next fiscal."

"Why were you included?"

"Why shouldn't I be?"

"I didn't mean like- I meant I thought you just worked admin for Mr. Reed."

“No, actually, my job is more involved than that now. My duties are evolving into more technical packaging and engineering. I just proofed the print work on Onye Eji’s new fragrance, Scent.”

“How is that?”

She wanted to ask, ‘Why are you so concerned? This isn’t about you.’ Instead she replied, “It’s complicated.”

“Are they going to ask you to move to Package Engineering then?” She was sure he would love that she moved so he could have the whole area to himself. King of the bullpen! Gee, how exciting. She didn’t know what was so prestigious about sitting out here anyway. There was no privacy and not much wall space to personalize the environment. By and large, no one had any more than photo prints or printer copies of their spouses, kids or pets stuck to the soft fabric walls with pushpins. Too much clutter was frowned upon because the cubicles were out in common space and within sight of any visitors. They had to keep their desk areas tidy and professional all the times. Shay still managed to have her radio on the down low and a few decorative items in her space to make it less drab.

“You don’t have anything to do, is that it Chris? Let me call your boss and tell him you’re bored. He needs to give you some more work apparently.” Shay picked up the phone and Chris laughed. So she literally dialed Miller Grant, the vice president. Chris saw the number light up on his phone and he quickly disconnected.

“No I’m good.” That shut him down. Good.