**The Resort Ambassador**

by ReaderMan

**Chapter 16 Halloween Surprises - Part 1**

Breakfast

Emi got down on her knees and started folding the futon while she waited for Ben to return with breakfast. She thought about last night with Ben and then looked up, noting that the dangling string was still there. She sat down on the stacked futon, relieved that the tape was still covering the security camera.

She felt the coarse texture of the futon with her hands and her bare ass. The futon was better than sleeping on a hard floor, but it was rough and not sanitary. Especially considering she was naked and had slept with Ben. If she had to sleep here five more nights, then she needed a clean sheet.

Five more nights… the thought was disturbing. A wave of fear swelled in her chest as she picked up the futon and threw it into the closet. Determined to not let this escalate any further, she sat down on the futon holding her head, racking her brain for answers. This situation was all because of her poor people skills. If she had not let Becca talk her into cleaning the beach, then she wouldn’t have been photographed and there would be no scandal threatening the resort. She also realized the mistake of telling Ho that she was going to get Su-Ning to fire her. Yes, being forced to fix the server ‘naked’ was way over the line, but Ho and Su-Ning were practically family and threatening to tear them apart was just throwing gas on the fire. Yes, Ho punished her with no clothing for a year, but in reality, Su-Ning will fix that shortly. She just needed to lie low and avoid people for a week.

Looking around, she saw the closet could be a great place to hide out during the party. The folded futon was comfortable to sit on. She leaned back on it until she was flat on her back. Her feet on the floor of the closet. This wasn’t so bad. She yawned, stretching up, feeling her head. Her hair felt messy, and she had to pee. She sat up, looking outside the closet she decided to make a run for the washroom before everyone arrived for work. Exiting the closet, she grabbed her face cloth and cracked the door to the hallway open. The coast was clear, and she half ran, half tippy-toed down the hall towards the stairs.

Taking the steps two at a time, she felt the texture of the stairs under her bare feet and noted her tits wobbled differently on the stairs. She was streaking an office building in the morning of a workday… and it was thrilling. It reminded her of experimenting at Lookout point.

The washroom on the second floor was across from an enormous office with an open door. Emi remembered the room where she had role played with Liz and Becca. It was mostly empty, but someone was sitting at a desk facing away from her – a man. She quickly darted into the female washroom.

Inside was a woman washing her hands. They surprised each other.

Emi’s smile melted. “Ah… hello.”

“Hi Emi. Nice to finally meet you,” said the woman. She was around Emi’s age, dressed in formal office wear with dark brown hair in a bun.

Emi stood there awkwardly. “Uh… finally met me?”

“Yes… Ruth sent out a company memo, telling everyone to be nice to you… or else,” she said, expressing that last part ominously.

“Sorry…” Emi said.

“That’s okay, you seem nice. I never met a real nudist before. I thought they rarely did this in public,” she said, drying her hands.

“I’m not…” Emi caught herself. “I’m not usually… I ahh.. had to fix the server and then um…”

“Then you decided to stay… for the party?”

“Hell no…” Emi blushed, trying hard to act like a proper Resort Ambassador and not cover herself. It was hard. She didn’t want to say too much. “You probably won’t see much of me. I won’t be here for long,” she added, hoping that saying the words out loud would help them come true.

“That’s too bad,” the woman said as she left the room.

Emi turned to the sink and looked at the mirror, taking in her whole nude form, seeing what that woman saw. Her nipples were hard, and her black runway was tidy. She touched herself and sniffed her hand, making sure there wasn’t a smell. Her hair was messy, but other than that she looked alright for a naked girl. She washed her hands and fixed her hair with her wet fingers. Then she quickly washed her cloth and scrubbed her face before deciding to get back downstairs before anyone else came. She managed to get back to the room unseen.

“Splendid news!” Ben said, returning from the cafeteria.

“Where’s the food?” Emi asked while putting her sunglasses up on the top of her head. It was still early, but she was starving and he had no food in his hands.

“I talked to the staff and let them know your situation,” he began.

“My situation? You mean… my naked situation?” She said, holding her arms out, daring him to look at her naughty bits.

He looked her over briefly. “Uhhh,” he said. “I didn’t say you were naked… but Ed said that it would honor them to serve the Resort Ambassador again. Apparently, you’ve ordered from there before?”

“Ahh… yes,” Emi admitted, looking awkward suddenly.

Ben looked confused. “What… you were naked?”

“Let’s not get into the details,” Emi said, wanting to forget that particular lunch meeting in Ruth’s office. “You said that you had splendid news?”

“Yes. So they agreed to my suggestion to make us an early lunch BEFORE opening time,” he grinned proudly.

“Oh…” Emi said, not entirely knowing what he was getting at. “That’s good I guess.”

“Tong agreed and Ed is setting up a table as we speak,”

“What? I don’t want to eat up there,” Emi blurted.

“It will be fine. Apparently, you have already met Ed, and I told him to set the table closest to the stairwell,” Ben explained.

“Can’t we just eat down here?”

“We could, but they went to all that effort… and get this… it’s all on the house! Ruth told Tong you are not to be charged,” he said, smiling.

“Oh… yes, that’s good…” Emi agreed, not wanting to go up there, regardless.

“Let’s go!” Ben said, grabbing Emi’s hand and dragging her along to the stairwell. “It’s perfect. Nobody is up there. It’s a half-hour before opening, and the longer we delay, the more chance others will come.”

Reluctantly, Emi let Ben pull her along. It wasn’t actually empty of people. The kitchen staff was there. But she was glad that it was free and didn’t want to offend the staff. Still, her legs didn’t seem to want to go up the stairs.

Ben stopped pulling and stepped behind her on the stairs and pushed her back.

Gradually Emi started moving again, but she made it hard on him by making herself heavy. She was starting to have fun making him work for it.

Ben struggled as Emi got harder and harder to push. He slapped her ass.

Emi gasped, looking back with an open mouth.

“Sorry,” he apologized. “I probably shouldn’t have done that.”

“That’s right!” Emi said, rubbing her ass in exaggerated mock pain. But she failed to hide her smile.

“Yes… I agree… because PINCHING a bare bum is much more effective!” he said, bringing his right hand up quickly.

Emi yelped and ran up the stairs, giggling.

Ben chased up after her.

She burst through the door and stopped suddenly, surprised. They had set a table for two and it had a candle burning in the middle with placemats. It almost looked romantic. There were two hot coffees, but no plates of food. Not a person was in sight.

“Sorry for being pushy, but I wanted to do this right,” he explained. “I asked Ed to stay behind the counter this morning… until you got used to eating up here. So you have NOTHING to worry about,” he added, proudly.

Emi glanced around and settled into her seat. She sat up elegantly and looked at Ben. “You may sit down now,” she welcomed him with a grand wave of her arm.

“Yes… your majesty!” He laughed, but then he got back up when he heard the order ring and headed over to the kitchen counter and picked up their breakfast.

Emi watched him as he came back, wearing just his swim trunks. “You should probably head home and wear some clothes before the day starts,” she laughed, looking at his bare chest.

“You’re one to talk,” he shot back.

Emi grinned. As scary as this was, he was making it fun for her.

“But yeah, I need to also pick up my costume,” he agreed.

“What is it?”

“It’s lame. It was Liz’s idea.”

A clink-like sound in the kitchen caused Emi to jump, briefly losing her smile.

“You’re a jumpy one… for a pretend nudist,” he mocked.

Emi appreciated his humor as she watched the kitchen, the elevator, and the doorway beside her. Knowing that at any moment people could come into this public place where people were normally dressed, she decided to hurry up and get the hell out of here. “This is great coffee,” she said, slurping, trying to drink it as fast as she could.

“So here we are, eating in a public cafeteria… how does it feel?”

Emi didn’t like being reminded of her nudity, but it was a fair question. “Scary,” she said with a mouth full of toast.

“But you’re trained as a Resort Ambassador… isn’t it getting easier?”

“Well, yes… it is. When I’m inside a NUDIST RESORT surrounded by naked people and that’s normal, then yes… it gradually becomes tolerable. If you compare it to the day before opening, then yes, you could even use the word ‘easier’. But THIS…” she said, taking a gulp of coffee after shoveling some egg in her mouth. “THIS is crazy… I’m miles away from the resort in an office building, naked. It’s not right.”

“But it’s sexy as hell,” he added, without smiling.

Emi could see that he was serious. She supposed that if she were in his shoes and someone trapped him naked in public, that… well… there would be some interest in seeing how he adjusts to that, but this wasn’t about him.

Ben set down his coffee. “I understand the reasoning about your decision to become a Resort Ambassador, and also how you got trapped here for a week. But why keep all this a secret? Ho is abusing her power. Wouldn’t it help to have more people on your side? Like Becca, she could probably help you at least wear clothing when you are off-site. This is sexy, but it’s also way over the line and I see it’s testing your sanity.”

“No, Becca and my team wouldn’t be of any help in this situation. Ho holds all the cards. If I piss her off in the slightest, she could legally have me stuck as a Resort Ambassador for another year. I’m not even sure Su-Ning has funds for another year. Ho’s hold over me is stupid, but it’s completely legal here in this strange little country. They designed the laws here to deal with hardened criminals. I’m just very unlucky. The smartest thing right now is to not let this escalate any further.”

“Yeah… but wouldn’t it still be easier to deal with if you had more people on your side? Knowing what you are going through.”

“In some ways, yes. I’ve thought about it. But in the end, it would just add risk and hassle. One of them might suddenly confront Ho, or just tease me. Becca would likely go ballistic.”

“I think you are underestimating your teammates.”

“Yeah, maybe… but they drink… they talk… they are not good with secrets. They all react differently to nudity. Plus I have the semi-respectful mantle of being a Resort Ambassador. I don’t want to shame or diminish that responsibility, it would hurt the resort and Su-Ning. I’ve caused enough damage… yeah.”

“Okay, but are you sure?”

“What do you think would happen, Ben? Hey everyone! I’m not really a Resort Ambassador. I’m just doing community service for a crime! Let’s all laugh at me because I desperately want to wear clothing but I’m not allowed to.”

“Hey… I didn’t mean…”

“It’s pretty simple Ben. I can be a victim or I can own this. Please don’t make this any harder on me. You promised to keep this to yourself.”

“Okay okay… but it hurts to see you being taken advantage of like this. It’s not right.”

“It’s not all bad. Sometimes it feels good to be thought of as brave and bold, being respected by the resort staff and helping Su-Ning achieve her dream. I like to tell myself if I just work really hard, maybe I can EARN that respect… not just for them, but also for myself. Remember, I’m also partially to blame here.”

“Don’t worry, I’ll take your secret to the grave. And for the record, I don’t consider what you did on that beach as… criminal. It was just bad luck and you made the best of it by helping your friend by assuming a brave leadership position.”

“Thank you,” she said, taking his hand, wondering if she told him too much. Now he knew everything.

“I know that look.”

“You wonder if you can trust me.”

“No, I’m… I just…”

“That’s fine… fair is fair… okay, ask me anything.”

Emi almost laughed. “Okay… tell me something deeply personal. Do you have any awkward humiliating secrets?”

“Like what? You mean like what ended my last relationship?”

“Oh, no… I don’t mean…”

“It’s fine.”

People’s relationships were their own business. It wasn’t right to pry. That was between the two of them, and it should stay that way. Still, she was curious now that he brought it up. “You don’t have to talk about that…. but… I want you to feel that you can tell me anything. So it’s your choice. Or you could just explain to me why you sometimes seem to enjoy my naked situation.”

“Ouch…” he said, taking a deep breath. “Okay…” He hesitated, taking another bite of his food.

Emi also ate, waiting patiently for him to level the playing field.

“Jewels… was umm…. more experienced than I was with um… life. She was always pushing for… shall we say… risky thrills and one day she finally gave up on my conservative resistance,” he said, looking down in shame.

“Oh…” Emi said, surprised at what he had said. “You’re conservative?” What he said made sense considering her previous perception of him, but it didn’t reflect her impressions of the man she’d slept with.

“Not anymore… I’m not,” he said, but his voice didn’t sound entirely confident.

Emi looked into Ben’s eyes, realizing that he was having his own struggles as well. She appreciated his confession. “Well yesterday, you knocked my socks off. I mean, if I had been wearing socks they would have shot… right off,” she added, smiling warmly. “You must be a changed man.”

He nodded awkwardly, taking another bite. Emi knew that was hard for him to admit, and she appreciated him for sharing this information. She sensed that she might be benefiting from his previous relationship trauma, but such was the process of life she mused. “Okay, back to me…” she said, changing the subject to something less awkward. “Why is my naked situation a turn-on?” She said, hoping to make him laugh and tease him at the same time.

He watched her carefully, looking somewhat confused.

She tried to resist smiling, knowing that she was fishing for sexy compliments.

“I know this is hard for you Emi… it’s obviously tearing you apart inside. But from what you have told me, based upon explorations at Lookout Point and what you think of Becca, you seem to have at least a mild interest in this direction. The only problem is this is all happening too fast for you to adjust.”

Emi blinked a few times, taking in what he just said. “Yeah, no… I do not intend to ‘adjust’ to this. The plan is to lay-low in the basement, in the far desk, away from prying eyes, for the rest of the week and then get back to the resort. I just have to survive his week and avoid getting photographed.” She was expecting compliments, but instead, he touched a nerve. “What is your costume?” she said, changing the subject again.

“It’s so lame. I want to wear something else, but I don’t want to hurt Liz’s feelings. I’m the ‘Dog whisperer’,” he laughed. “Just because I watch that show doesn’t mean I want to be the guy. She got me this lame t-shirt with his face on the front. On the back it says. Dog whisperer.”

“So I take it there is a show about a guy that…”

“He helps dogs with behavior problems. It’s really good actually.”

Emi laughed. “I’m sure it’s not that bad. Who cares about costumes anyway. It’s all about social interaction. So that’s it? Just a t-shirt? Do you have glasses, or a wig… a mustache?”

“No,” he laughed. “None of that… but she also got me a dog leash and a collar,” he admitted. “I’m supposed to wear them on my belt.”

Emi raised her eyebrows.

“Don’t worry… it’s just a prop, for dogs, not naked mailgirls,” he grinned.

Emi squinted her eyes.

“It’s just a prop…” his confidence and grin were fading.

“I’m just kidding. Wear your full costume,” she laughed.

“Okay.”

She liked him better when he was confident. “Thank you for last night,” she said, looking down.

“Last night?”

“You were amazing. I’ve never been so um… captivated and uhh… into that kind of stuff,” she dared to say.

“Really?” He asked. “What part exactly?”

Emi smiled. Now HE was fishing for compliments. On a whim, she decided to just be bold and tell him. “When you… kind of… ahh… just took me?”

“You mean… when I went down on you in the shower?”

Emi blushed, saying nothing, but shyly giving him body language signals that he was warm.

“When I picked you up suddenly and boldly carried your naked wet body with one hand on your ass and your pussy grinding into my shoulder?” He said with a low confident voice.

Emi shuddered, looking at him in surprise. She felt her nipples tighten. That voice, those words… they reverberated through her body in an unexpected manner.

“Oh my god…” he laughed. “You like being manhandled?”

“No… I mean…”

Ben grinned. “I love it. The possibilities…” he said looking up, stroking his chin in wonderment.

Emi pressed her lips together in annoyance, trying to force her embarrassment away.

“What about later in bed?”

“It was good, but normal… I mean…”

“But normal?” he asked, enjoying himself entirely too much. “So it’s suddenly grabbing you and having my way with you that gets you going?”

“You’re an idiot.”

“You like being manhandled by an idiot?”

“Just forget I said anything!”

“Especially, while you’re naked and in public?”

“Stop it.”

“Did you want me to do something right now?”

“Yeah, right.” It was one thing in the night, but this is daytime in a public building. “You don’t have the balls.” She looked away, putting her hands behind her head, stretching out her morning kinks, causing her tits to jut out.

He got up from his seat and walked around the table towards her.

This surprised Emi and she stood up, turning to face him. She glanced around the room to make sure they were still alone. What was he going to do? She decided this wasn’t the place to mess around and put her hands on her hips, projecting a strong confident look.

His stride didn’t break and he came right at her with a confident swagger.

She puffed her chest. He wouldn’t dare, especially not here.

He put his hand behind her head, and pulled her to him, tasting her lips.

Emi was stunned as he ravished her mouth as if he owned her.

She shuddered as his other hand moved down the side of her body, over her mons, and slipped across her slit.

Emi gasped, in shock. She fought the conflicting feelings of being turned on and also of wanting to berate him for doing this here, but she hesitated. “What are you doing?” She asked while he continued to kiss her face.

“Checking,” he replied.

“Checking what?” she gasped, pulling free of his grasp.

He let her go and put his finger into his mouth. “Yep… just as I thought.”

“What?” Emi asked, flabbergasted.

He walked back to his side of the table smiling.

“That doesn’t mean anything!” she yelled.

He grinned. “What doesn’t mean anything?”

“What you think you know!” She laughed. She really should be angry at him about that behavior. Now her libido was going nuts. He was like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde!

He sat down. “So about your aversion to the party tonight…”

That did it. The spell was broken. He overplayed his hand and lost his power. She tried to mask her disappointment. “What about it? I’m not going. Never planned to go. You can go. Everyone can go. Just not me. No Halloween party for me!” she said, speaking a little more forcefully than she had wanted to.

He winced.

The door beside Emi opened and in walked Sam followed by Becca and Hannah. Sam burped. “Whatcha mean you’re not going? It’s the perfect opportunity to show off your nipple set,” Sam groaned, making a zombie face.

Emi looked at the knife through Sam’s head. Her face was grey with green blotches. It wasn’t a bad zombie costume. “My nipple set?”

“Yes, of course. Your set of unusually hard nipples just above your harry little puss. What did you think I was talking about? Since you want everyone to see them, why on earth would you miss the party? Doesn’t make sense.”

“Hi Becca, hi Hannah,” Emi said, ignoring Sam’s comment. Becca was dressed as an over-the-top rockstar, with sparkly star-shaped sunglasses propped up on her head. Hannah was a fairy, but dressed like a sexy ballerina, with thin transparent wings on her back and two little insect-like antennae on her head. Most of her ass was showing.

Becca started to unroll a newspaper. “Hey Emi… Ruth said that you might be going to the party as a…” She plopped the paper in front of Emi dramatically. The front page said. “Mailgirl!”

Emi looked at the page in shock. It was a new image of her pulling the rickshaw, with various arrows on the page pointing to her nines. She noticed in dread that the pixelation was smaller in area and a bit more see-through than yesterday. They were obviously sensationalizing this fake story. Below the article, they excitedly went into details about how they figured out the big secret. And that likely the story behind this was a book on Amazon called, ‘Confessions of a Mailgirl’.

“It’s spreading too,” Becca said. “It’s even big news on the surrounding islands.”

Sam moved her face close to the paper, carefully examining pixelation over Emi’s pussy with her fingers. “You can totally see that she prefers a trimmed runway.”

“This is getting out of hand,” Emi said, as the depths of what happened started to sink in.

“It sure the hell is,” Sam agreed, still looking down at her picture. “Soon, this could be an entire jungle!”

Hannah laughed. “We should celebrate the free advertising for the resort,” the French blonde responded, pulling out her black marker and popping off the lid.

Emi got up and took a step back. “I’m not going to the party Hannah, you can put that away,” she didn’t understand why they weren’t taking this more seriously. The scandal was growing and the resort’s future was on the line. Most disturbingly, it was her naked body at the center of all this. And worse, the fake news was making it look like she was… a mailgirl? What is wrong with these people! There is no such thing as mailgirls!

“Oh come on Emi, the whole island has already seen you,” Hannah insisted.

“They have not, it’s pixelated!”

“Yes, but less so than yesterday,” she countered.

Emi hated that Hannah confirmed what she already knew. Was the newspaper planning on exposing her completely? “I’m done here. Thanks for breakfast Ben,” Emi added with a brief lock of their eyes.

Ben nodded, watching her closely. He had transformed back to his normal mild-mannered self.

Emi noticed Becca’s body language had changed. She had a smug smile after watching Ben. Nothing got past that woman. She probably suspected that she and Ben were sleeping together.

Hannah put the lid back on the felt pin. “Okay, but it’s your loss Emi.”

“Look, I have to go,” Emi said, as she walked to the stairwell. Glancing back as she shut the door, Emi saw that nobody had moved a muscle. They just silently watched her leave.

**Chapter 16 Halloween Surprises - Part 2**

Downstairs

Emi descended one step at a time, slowly, methodically, heavily. She felt every step reverberate up her body, shaking her breasts. Her mind was swirling out of control. She had to go slowly to keep from falling down. She tried to think of positive things. This mailgirl thing was going to blow over. Su-Ning was going to come back and everything was going to return to normal. The apps and the server were doing fine. Resort bookings were going to pick up.

She thought of Ben. How he kissed her as if he owned her body. And then he touched her. The memory electrified her. The cool air of the stairwell made her aware of her dampness as she took another step. She was getting horny. No, she didn’t want to work herself up. She was headed to a room full of guys. She needed to cool down.

The image of nines all over her body came to mind. The newspaper story was spreading to the other nearby islands. The story that Evan had asked her to read. Why was this happening to her? It wasn’t fair. She didn’t even read more than a third of it. She imagined seeing Evan again one day while wearing clothing. Lots of clothing. He says hello to her. She says, remember that story? He says what story? She kicks him in the balls.

She was angry and started moving faster. Here she was, descending the stairs, naked, in a public office building, just like a mailgirl. She didn’t have a choice, just like a mailgirl. She was beginning to feel thrilled, just like a mailgirl.

Entering the hallway, she ran into Leo and Raul. They were hanging posters.

She walked up to them and saw that Leo was adding one of his drawings to the wall. It was a grand image of himself. Raul was posting a newspaper clipping next to him. The newspaper clipping had a picture of Emi.

The two turned to look at Emi and then froze, gawking at her face for a change.

Emi frowned, they seemed oddly transfixed by her face.

Raul seemed to sense Emi’s dark mood. “Ahh… I thought it would be good to have you up here with the rest of us. Umm… is that okay?”

Emi slowly looked over the image of herself. It was the same as the one Becca had shown her upstairs. Not that big, but she was easily identifiable. Thankfully, she had her sunglasses on. Then she realized her sunglasses were up in her hair. She felt the guys watching her. She sensed them watching her face and turned to look them boldly in the eyes.

They took a step back, unable to maintain eye contact with her. She focused on Raul.

“Ahh… I can take it down. And burn it,” he stammered, unable to meet her naked gaze directly.

Emi resisted an urge to tell him off. Instead, she forced herself to pat him on the back. “Thank you, Raul, I’m honored,” she said. As much as she hated this, she knew it was illogical to fight it. The newspapers were everywhere, and it was possible that he just wanted her on the wall with everyone else on the team.

Raul looked relieved. “I… ahh… heard that you might go to the party as mailgirl nine?”

Emi’s face darkened.

“Ahh… I mean…” He looked like he was struggling to maintain eye contact.

She turned and walked away, lowering her sunglasses as she went. It was amusing to see Raul so flummoxed by her naked gaze.

Inside the dev room, Eddie was the only one programming. Everyone else seemed in full party mode. Asher had a beer and was watching Liz help Travis with his ghost costume. The tall, red-headed fellow was using a huge white sheet. Emi wanted that sheet – for her futon. She hated to see Liz pull a perfectly good bed sheet off him and start cutting out eye holes. Emi looked around at everyone and then to Asher in confusion. He was dressed as a pirate, Blackbeard she guessed. It matched well with his tightly curled short black hair.

“It’s our tradition here to not work on party days,” Asher said, explaining the lax mood.

Emi looked at Eddie.

“He is our one exception.”

“Our two exceptions,” Emi corrected, walking past everyone to join Eddie. She was glad that he was near the far wall. It was the furthest point from the door leading outside. There was a desk near him and she sat down. If someone came in, they would only see the top of her head. It was perfect.

Ben walked around and gathered everyone’s cell phones, putting them in a bag. He explained it was to help Emi relax. Ben also put a piece of tape over everyone’s laptop webcam. Emi was deeply touched. “Thank you,” she mouthed from across the room.

He smiled, accepting the gesture of appreciation with a nod.

“Emi…” Liz yelled, excitedly rushing over to her. “You will never guess my costume!”

“Slave Princess Leia?” Eddie mumbled without looking up from his screen.

Liz slapped him on the arm. “How do you know?”

He winced, turning to face the two girls.

It was comfortable talking with Eddie. His eyes rarely lingered on her body as much as the others. Even Liz seemed to get a kick out of looking her up and down whenever they met.

“Leo said that’s what you wear every year,” he huffed. “So where’s the costume?”

She pressed her lips together. “Ben and I usually head home around noon to grab our costumes.”

“You live near each other?” Emi asked.

“Neighbors,” she looked down at her feet. “Yeah… I’m Princess Leia… again,” she sighed.

“See… I told you! I heard that years ago she saw Ben’s browser history showing Princess Leia cosplay searches,” he laughed, shaking his head.

Liz blushed. “I did not!”

“Get this Emi… she also picks Ben’s costumes. Last year he was a cop. The year before, she had him as a cowboy with a lasso. But Liz… she always wears the same thing.”

“It’s not the same! I always wear a DIFFERENT version of Leia the slave girl!”

“You must want him to ‘capture’ you,” he laughed. “We have a desperate slave here,” Eddie said, pretending to whisper to Emi with his hand up to his face.

Liz froze.

“That’s it, isn’t it! haha… first you had him in that stupid cowboy suit, just to give him that lasso. Then a year later he failed to handcuff you. So now what did you have him wear this year, huh?” Eddie leered.

“Don’t Eddie… you’re not funny…” Liz stuttered.

Their antics were kind of soothing to Emi, gradually pulling her out of the mood that had been plaguing her all morning. She wondered if Eddie was right about Liz wanting Ben to capture her. Regardless, she didn’t like Eddie giving Liz a hard time. “What’s your costume?” she asked Eddie, changing the subject to give Liz a break.

“I’ll show you,” he said, taking a piece of masking tape and wrapping it between his dark-framed lenses. It sat over his nose as if tape held together his black-framed glasses. Then he grabbed something on his desk and put it in his shirt pocket. It was a pocket protector, full of pens.

“That’s so lame. You’re a nerd?” Liz said. “So unimaginative to come just as yourself.”

Ben came up to them holding an extra cooler drink. He handed it to Emi.

Liz looked surprised.

“What? I already got you a drink. Where is it?” Ben asked.

“I finished it… duh.”

Emi took a sip of her drink, feeling Liz’s eyes all over her – like as if she was trying to figure something out.

When Liz finally looked out the window for a moment, Emi glanced pointedly at Ben. Their eyes locked. She felt he understood. That they needed to tell Liz something before she found out and got hurt.

Liz stepped away to help Travis, who was having trouble with his costume. He couldn’t seem to find the eyeholes and was stumbling around.

Emi felt Ben needed to say something to Liz. It needed to be him. She opened her mouth – but stopped.

Ben looked uncomfortable.

Emi could understand his reluctance. He and Liz were best friends and had known each other for many years. She just wanted nothing bad to come between the three of them.

To forget her stress, Emi continued to work with Eddie, on and off, for a couple of hours, while the rest of the team was socializing or preparing their costumes.

Once in a while, Emi looked up to see jovial laughter. Everyone was happily preparing or just looking forward to the party. She was jealous. She wished she could enjoy this with everyone, but Ho ruined it for her. A lack of clothing excluded her from the event. The only silver lining with this whole naked nightmare was that it had brought her and Ben together, but even that was complicated because of Liz. Emi briefly wondered if she was selfishly risking Ben and Liz’s friendship, or worse, blocking them from becoming more. No, she needed to not think like that. She tried to dismiss the thought.

Emi felt restless, trapped in the room, her body was still buzzing from Ben’s touches in the cafeteria. And being around the guys wasn’t helping. She hated she couldn’t go for a run.

“You look flushed,” Asher said, coming up to her with a drink in his hand.

“Yeah… I’m ahh…” Across the room, she saw Ben and Liz laughing, as Liz slapped Ben’s arm as if what he said was hilarious. He pushed her back a step. They behaved like siblings… or a couple. “I’m feeling a bit exposed,” she finally replied. With her sunglasses on, she could hide that she was watching Ben while talking to Asher.

“I think that you are doing fine. No difference here or back at the resort.”

“I’m fine,” she lied, not wanting to get into a conversation about clothing.

“Are you cold? I could get you something.”

Emi pressed her lips together, looking at him. “You just said I look flushed,” she said.

He looked over to see Leo and Raul coming over. Ben and Liz joined them and they all gathered around Emi.

“How are you holding out Emi?” Raul asked.

Emi was surprised by his uncharacteristic straightforwardness. “I’m okay…” She lied again.

“You’re not going to the party, are you?” Raul asked. Some of the others stopped chatting and looked to Emi.

Emi shook her head.

“We can’t have a party without you!” Raul complained. “Oh, please come.”

“I have a prior engagement,” she said. With a closet and a futon, she thought bitterly.

Raul didn’t seem to know how to respond to that. So he didn’t.

Later, after a late lunch that Emi, Ben, and Eddie enjoyed eating downstairs, Liz came back from the cafeteria and changed the music.

Emi walked over to Liz. “Hey… how’s it going?”

“Hey…” Liz replied. “I’m fine.”

“Is it true? What Eddie was saying… about you wanting Ben to capture you?”

Liz blushed. “No, I mean… I know it’s stupid. But I’ve been waiting for years to be captured by that idiot. I know it’s nothing real, but it would be cool to be his slave girl just for one night.”

Emi looked stunned.

“I mean, at the party… fun… not sleeping with him or anything,” she explained.

Emi could tell that she was hiding something. She couldn’t blame her for having an attraction to Ben, she herself was caught up in his charms. Liz definitely had feelings and she has had them for quite some time. But wasn’t she and Ben both dating other people recently? Had Liz been thinking about Ben while dating someone else?

“Another drink?” Liz asked.

Emi nodded.

Liz went over to the punch bowl and started opening a new bag of plastic cups.

Ben walked up after laughing with Travis. “Hey Emi,” he said, casually touching Emi on the arm.

Emi saw Liz watching them from across the room. She shrugged his hand off. “We can’t do that… I mean, especially in front of Liz. Have you told her anything about us yet?”

“What about us?” he asked, looking at the arm that shrugged him off.

“I just don’t want to see her get hurt,” she said, wondering if she said something wrong.

He looked out the window. “She’s my best friend Emi… you know how she is. This is going to kill her. I need some time to think about this… how to break it to her.”

“Okay…” Emi said gently. She didn’t want to push him too hard on this. “Do whatever you think is best.”

He nodded, taking a step away from her. “You know… she really looks up to you…” he said, looking like someone was forcing him to hurt his best friend.

“What are you trying to say?” she asked, feeling confused and upset.

Liz showed up with two plastic cups of punch and a cheery smile.

Emi tried to smile back.

“Look… we have to get our costumes now,” he said, taking both cups and handing them to Emi.

Liz looked surprised as Ben pushed her along towards the exit.

Emi lifted one of her drinks up to her lips and took a long slow sip as she watched Liz and Ben disappear. Luckily, she had a second drink in her other hand.

A few minutes later, Becca, Sam, and Hannah checked in on Emi briefly, before returning back upstairs to help with the party prep. It was a short visit but did wonders on her mood. The alcohol was helping as well.

The guys were all taking turns going upstairs to help out but also coming back down to hangout with Emi.

Eddie finally stopped programming and walked up to Emi with a beer. “I hate parties too,” he said. Maybe I’ll just hang out with you down here.”

Raul perked up at that, spitting out some pretzels. “That’s a great idea. If Emi won’t go to the party. We bring the party to Emi!” Raul shouted. Everyone cheered and shortly thereafter, Raul led the guys upstairs. They returned with arms full of snacks, drinks, and even some Halloween decorations.

“See Emi, we don’t leave anyone behind!”

It was a corny thing to say, but it made her eyes water regardless. She was glad they were covered. “Thanks, guys… you didn’t have to.”

“You’ve been tense all day. Here, have another cooler, Emi,” Raul said happily.

She took it. Maybe this wasn’t going to be so bad after all. The music changed and there were always one or two people missing for brief visits upstairs to gather snacks and drinks, but then they returned to hang out. The girls also visited her a few times, but they preferred to not hang out with her ‘other team’ so they usually didn’t stay long.

Sam recklessly clinked her bottle hard with Emi’s bottle, almost breaking the glass, and then left with Becca, headed back upstairs.

Hannah stayed back this time, also tapping her drink with Emi. “Nice to see you finally loosen up.”

Emi nodded. She wasn’t really that loosened up, but the goodwill of her guys and the alcohol was certainly helping.

Ben and Liz returned, laughing. Liz’s slave costume looked expensive. Liz looked hot. Ben had his dog whisperer costume on, complete with his leash and collar hanging from his side. Emi wondered if he told her, but on second glance, it seemed unlikely. Ben was probably right. They didn’t have to deal with that right now.

Ben looked like he’d had a few. He wasn’t drunk, but he was certainly relaxed looking. He brought a drink for Emi and they clinked, but he didn’t say anything.

Emi sensed that he was worried she would complain because he hadn’t told Liz. He had a right to be irritated, she reasoned. Who was she to tell him what to say to his best friend?

Hannah pulled out her marker and waved it at Emi, enticingly. “It’s just us down here Emi, why don’t you costume up and join us properly.”

Emi shook her head. But her resistance was wavering, especially when she saw Raul nodding enthusiastically. She looked over to Ben, but he was again chatting with Liz.

Hannah asked again, waving the marker. “This is for whiteboards Emi. It should come off easily in the shower,” she cooed.

Emi considered her offer. Being washable was a big selling point.

“Say… where do you shower around here?” Hannah asked, looking around.

“Alright already, go ahead,” she said, not wanting to talk about showers in front of everyone. It was Halloween and down here it would be just fine she reasoned. She hated the idea of being a mailgirl, but there was really no other costume option for her. Plus Ben seemed to be spending most of his time with Liz so she needed something interesting to do.

“For tonight, just to shake things up, let’s change the number!” Hannah announced to everyone as they started to gather around. “But change that music, we need something more lively for this. After all… mailgirl THIRTEEN is about to enter the party!”

Everyone cheered. Even Ben and Liz turned to salute with their drinks at Emi’s new number.

Emi thought about the number. Thirteen. The bad luck number. It was perfect.

Hannah looked over at Ben and then back at Emi. “Trouble in paradise?” she whispered in Emi’s ear.

Emi was taken aback. Did Hannah know?

“Ben… excuse me, Ben!” Hannah yelled. “Can you come here for a moment?”

Emi stiffened and Ben came over, looking awkward with Emi.

They looked at each other. “You don’t have to say anything to Liz,” Emi said quietly to him, raising her glasses so that he could see the sincerity in her eyes.

The room reacted, some gasped. It was the first time most of them had seen Emi’s eyes in weeks. The first time while she was completely naked.

“That’s right, I don’t,” Ben said quietly, but his eyes softened and he gave her a warm smile.

She smiled back. Her heart warmed. She could breathe again.

Hannah shoved the marker in Ben’s hand. “Okay Ben, we need a ONE right here above her heart. Can you do that for me?”

He took it and slowly, confidently, drew a perfect one partially onto her left breast as Emi looked into his eyes. He looked back when he was done, but paused keeping the close proximity for a few extra seconds. Finally, he noticed everyone watching. He blushed, stepping back.

Hannah looked proud of her intervention.

“My turn,” Liz said, suddenly grabbing the marker from Ben’s hand. And before anyone could react she slopped out a lopsided THREE beside the perfect ONE. Her three was too big and didn’t match, covering half of Emi’s tit.

“Oh my God!” Leo yelped, grabbing the pen from Liz’s hand. “You ruined it!”

“That’s fine Leo,” Hannah said, “This is just a costume party. This year Emi can be Awkward Thirteen!”

Leo nodded. “Oh, right… I see. Yes, that can work…. may I?”

Emi heard the words but she was too busy feeling good with Ben. She glanced away, trying to avoid meeting Ben’s eyes, worried about blowing their cover with Liz.

Hannah looked at Emi and hesitated. “I… ahh… sure. Let’s make this a team bonding project!”

“Leo, please try to match the design on her ass.”

Emi laughed, confidently shifting her sunglasses higher up on her head, nodding for Leo to continue. She even poked out her ass a little for him, causing Ben and others to laugh.

“Don’t be a tease,” Ben said quietly so only Emi could hear.

Emi chuckled and took a swig of her drink as she felt Leo drawing a ONE on her ass. Then Raul was back there drawing the THREE. He took a long time, drawing it very carefully. Asher added the final THIRTEEN to her right arm. Travis and Eddie didn’t want to partake, but everyone booed them and they finally gave in to the peer pressure, and Emi received a fourth THIRTEEN on her other Arm. She was now completely covered with awkwardly drawn thirteens.

The party went on normally after that. Emi was feeling much more relaxed and was enjoying sharing her clear intimate gaze with everyone. She even danced with Leo and then Ben. Raul came between Emi and Ben. “May I? He asked, cutting in.

Ben laughed. “Be my guest.”

Emi was starting to feel the party and danced with Raul, giving him a real show, bouncing her breasts with the beat. He looked deliriously happy. Looking back she saw Ben with Liz and they were both watching her, laughing as well. She did some extra moves and the music kicked up a notch. Emi was ready for round two.

“I think that’s enough for Raul,” Ben said, from behind her.

Emi felt a collar clamp around her neck. “Now I’ve got you,” Ben said playfully.

Emi froze. “Oh crap… no!” she said firmly. Looking quickly back, she saw the blood drain from Liz’s horrified face. Liz turned and ran to the door, yanking it dramatically open… she ran outside.

“What?” Ben asked, genuinely confused.

“She has been waiting for you to capture her for the last three years. Why do you think she’s always the slave girl? She saw your browsing history!”

“Oh shit,” he said, as it slowly sank in.

“Go after her, stupid!” Emi yelled.

He hesitated, and then turned and ran out after her.

Emi followed, but just to the open door. She peered out at the beach, brightly lit by a big moon. Liz was running along by the lapping waves. Ben was slowly gaining on her.

“Go after her, stupid…” Emi muttered to herself mockingly. Had she really told Ben to do that? Was she glad that he was off alone with Liz? What if he said things and she said things? She would only have herself to blame if she ended up being the odd man out.

Ben finally caught up to Liz and grabbed her. They hugged. Liz struggled to get away but he kept hugging. Emi’s wiped her wet eyes as she stepped outside into the night air to get a better view. Her heart lunged at the sight of the two of them. She felt both relieved and scared. She didn’t know what to think.

A motion in the moonlight, caused her to glance right. A rickshaw was coming towards her. She jumped back into the room, hiding behind the door. Likely she had been seen, as she was illuminated by the light coming from the doorway.

She peeked out to see who was in the rickshaw.

“Hey Emi!” Bo said, cheerily. He was pulling Ho. She was dressed as a Japanese Geisha girl, her hair up with blades through it and her face powdered white. She was wearing a fancy kimono.

Emi stepped back as Ho walked past her into the room. She didn’t understand why she came in the side dev entrance. She’d never seen Ho do that before.

Ho was headed towards the stairs but stopped, turning to face her.

Emi felt stupid being seen like this. She was naked, covered with awkward thirteens with a leash dangling from her neck.

“I see you are starting to relax,” Ho said.

Emi wasn’t relaxed at all. This was the woman who was trying to destroy her.

Ho continued. “That’s good… look Emi, I’m sorry about the other day.”

Emi didn’t move a muscle.

“I’ve brought a package for you… some clothing.”

“She doesn’t like clothing!” Raul said, drunkenly.

Emi was glad to hear him say that. She folded her arms, watching Ho silently, expressionless.

Ho ignored Raul. “Take the package Emi.” Her expression was soft. Emi wondered if she was really trying to make amends. This was so unlike Ho.

Ho turned and walked to the elevator.

Ben hefted in a rather large package tied together with strings. The brown paper said ‘Lost and found’ on it.

Emi was annoyed. Why hadn’t she just brought her own clothes? What was this? A joke? It didn’t matter… she was more than ready to wear clothing. Even if she looked stupid.

Gradually everyone came up to say hi to the ever-friendly Bo. He said his hellos, but he was standing awkwardly with the heavy package, waiting for Emi to take it. “Look, I gotta go. Are you taking the package or not?”

Emi started to reach out for it when she stopped, looking back at the elevator. Ho was gone. Was this a trick? Was she trying to trick her into adding a year to her sentence?

“What’s in the package Bo?” Emi asked.

“Clothing I guess?” he said, waiting for her to take it.

Emi considered this. If she took the package of clothing, Ho could say she violated the agreement and give her another year. But she wasn’t going to fall for that. But what if the offer was genuine? Ho did seem like she was offering an olive branch.

“Just leave it on the ground, Bo,” Emi directed.

“No can do, babe. Strict orders. You either take it or I toss it in the clothing donation bin down the street.”

Emi was furious. That bitch! It WAS a setup. “Fine… donate it then.”

Bo shrugged and left, lumbering away into the darkness with the big package on his shoulder.

Everyone seemed confused about the exchange, but then they went back to enjoying the party.

Emi went to the door and peeked out. Ben was sitting with Liz on a bench. They were talking. Emi felt horrible about Liz but she didn’t want to lose Ben. But if that happened, well… she would not fight to get Ben back. He was free to choose. She walked back into the room in a daze.

Raul picked up her leash and tried to playfully pull her to the dance floor.

Emi didn’t feel like dancing. She was lost in her thoughts.

Raul raised his eyebrows, looking over Emi’s shoulder. He was still holding the leash as Emi turned to see what he was looking at.

Sarah was standing there. “Emi… you are needed upstairs in Ruth’s office,” she said, looking amused at Emi’s costume.

Emi shook her head as if breaking out of a trance. There she was, covered with awkward thirteens, Raul holding her leash. She was possibly losing Ben and now Sarah was trying to pull a fast one and make her go up to the party and expose herself to everyone. Could this day get any worse? Her number was certainly appropriate. “Nice try Sarah. I’m not going up to the party.”

Sarah frowned. “I’m not kidding around. We have two important visitors and you need to get your naked ass up there right away. This is a big deal, and not just for Su-Ning!”

Emi laughed bitterly. “That almost sounded convincing.”

Sarah turned to Asher. “Get her up there. This is important! Throw some clothing on her if you must.” And with that, she spun and left.

“I think she’s not kidding around Emi,” Asher said as they watched Sarah depart.

That didn’t help, Emi thought. She’s wasn’t going upstairs, meeting or not. She looked around at all the guys and plopped down her sunglasses, instantly darkening her world. She folded her arms.

Asher hung his head. “Oh no, not this again… Emi, don’t shut us out with the glasses. Just when we were making so much progress. Let’s just all think about this. There has to be a solution.”

“We will form a human wall!” Raul shouted.

“Through the middle of the cafeteria?” Asher asked. “That will block maybe 50%”

“We will form a human circle!” Raul answered.

“I don’t think that we have enough people, Raul,” Asher said, amused. “Especially with Ben and Liz missing.”

“We will form a very small human circle!” Raul announced. “Everyone meet me at the top of the stairs with Emi, we can do this!”

Emi hesitated. It might work. Disgusted that she had to do this, she took off her collar and dropped it on a nearby table. She walked to the stairs, the guys behind her. After a few steps, she looked down behind her to see all the guys and stopped, making a grand gesture for them to all go up before her. They went past her without much grumbling.

At the top, the door was all that separated her from over a hundred people. The muffled music could be heard through the door, a hypnotic base beat. Emi felt her pulse quicken.

“Don’t worry Emi we got this,” Asher reassured.

Raul opened the door and stepped inside. Beside him, a giant ghost held its arms out, wide. It was a great white barrier.

The loud music blasted over Emi, followed by the dull roar of human chatter.

Emi moved close to Raul and Travis. Asher came up behind her, with Leo and Eddie. It was just the four of them making a semi-circle around Travis, the great wide ghost.

“Shove yourself against Travis, Emi,” Raul ordered. “It’s the only way this is going to work!”

Emi complied, feeling Travis’s back against her chest. It wasn’t a big deal she told herself, it was like a hug. But Travis was only wearing a t-shirt, as were all the guys, and the sheet was thin as well. “Okay… ready,” she said. She wondered if he could feel her hard nipples.

“Okay…” Raul said. “Ahh… now everybody close in tight on Emi. Really tight. We don’t want the pervs on this floor looking at her!”

They moved in. Tight. Emi felt pants press against her and felt some hands nervously touch her back and half of her ass. Someone was dangerously close to some sideboob. “Ahh… let’s keep hands on my shoulders guys.”

The hands all moved up to her shoulders, some of them slid loosely up her back, giving her a sudden case of goose pimples. But she still felt a few pants pressed against her ass. “Guys, I can’t move a muscle. We can’t walk like this. Back off a bit,” she laughed, feeling a bit naughty with the close proximity and all the hot breaths.

They moved back. “Okay, let’s start moving,” Asher said and they took their first awkward steps forward. Emi stepped back from Travis so that she could walk properly.

Emi was worried someone was going to step on her bare feet. She took quick little steps and felt a constant barrage of little taps and kicks. “Guys!… We need some kind of cadence for our feet!”

Raul started chanting ‘Hoo… hoo… hoo… like as if they were riot-police or Roman troops pressing into battle. Travis joined him by yelling the Hoos as well. After they stopped laughing, Leo, Asher, and Eddie also joined the chorus.

Emi cracked a smile imagining the goofy spectacle. They must have been a sight. This great big white ghost with outstretched arms and a pack of guys tight on its ass, walking haltingly, rocking back and forth, in little measured steps across the cafeteria yelling ‘Hoo! Hoo! Hoo!” In perfect cadence with each step. If the goal was to not attract attention, it was a spectacular fail. At least her ass was not visible, and she was grateful. She joined the chorus. “Hoo!…. Hoo!…. Hoo!”

The roar of chatter across the room gradually subsided and then disappeared. Now there was just the sound of their chants and the music. Emi was sure the entire floor was watching them.

They continued the march with Travis leading. Only Travis could see where they were going. Everyone else was blind. Emi prayed that he wouldn’t screw up.

Slowly they wound their way around a few tables, like a parade float.

People started to gather behind them as they walked past. Emi noticed that some might be able to see parts of her ass. “Guys, bring your hands down to your sides. I think they can see me.”

The hands left her shoulders and she felt the occasional knuckle glance her hips or ass. Why didn’t they put their hands on their sides, they were supposed to close to the gaps, not feel her ass. “Guys…”

“We are almost there!” Travis announced excitedly.

Emi felt a few more accidental touches. Combined with the heat, the room full of people, and her nakedness, she was buzzing and her nipples had never been harder. She knew that from the constant teasing her nips were getting from the sheet on Travis’s back.

Travis stopped.

Emi was suddenly sandwiched between the five guys and many hands were crushed up against her thighs and ass. Everyone was hot and sweaty. “Guys! That’s probably enough ass play for now.”

They all stepped back a bit, gradually disengaging their hands and Emi was again untouched but dripping in sweat. She was trembling with excitement.

“Are we at the door Travis?” Emi asked.

“Uhh, yeah,” he answered.

“Then what are you doing? Go behind me.”

He lowered his arms and went behind her.

Emi saw that the move exposed her to three people. Better than a hundred, she thought bitterly. “Travis, open your arms. They can see.”

He quickly complied while Emi knocked on the door.

“Don’t worry Emi! We will be waiting.” Raul said.

Emi was moved. Her guys really had her back.

“Come in!” Ruth said loudly.

Emi ducked into the room and closed the door.

**Chapter 16 Halloween Surprises - Part 3**

The Proposal

Emi closed the door and leaned back against it, looking down, her warm ass against the cool surface. Glancing up briefly, she saw four people in the room. Ruth and Sarah, along with a well-dressed man in a suit and a short brunette in a tight-fitting Armani suit that was struggling to keep her breasts contained.

“Oh my…” said the brunette with a slight smile on her face.

Emi needed a moment, a few seconds, before looking into everyone’s eyes. However, looking down at her feet didn’t help. She could see that her skin was flushed and her nipples were sticking out as far as they could go. Her breathing was erratic and her black runway stood out in sharp contrast to her white skin. Emi realized that she probably looked more than just nude. Given that she’d been drinking and partying, she probably looked ready for some action. That was not good. They were all probably still looking at her.

Ruth stepped forward to break the awkward moment. “This… my friends, is Emi Yoshida, our Director of Software and Su-Ning’s Lead Resort Ambassador. As you well know, Su-Ning has just opened a 5-star nudist resort with all the bells and whistles.”

“I’m Jake Hanover,” the man said, extending his hand. It looked muscular, which was impressive for an older man, likely in his 60s. His fingers were clean with freshly clipped nails and his hand was unwavering.

Emi leaned forward, un-sticking her ass from the door. She took his hand. He was tall with white hair and had a well-defined jawline. He had a cheerful expression on his face. It was embarrassing meeting people like this, especially when they were dressed up. She wondered what this meeting was all about and when she could leave and find out what’s happening between Ben and Liz.

The brunette stepped forward. “I’m Brandy Lipple… it’s very nice to finally meet you Emi,” she emphasized, also taking Emi’s hand firmly after Jake stepped back. She was a large-breasted, red-lipped brunette who was likely 5 feet tall. However, Emi sensed there was nothing small about this woman.

Ruth clapped her hands. “So let’s get started. Sarah, go get Ho and Wang.”

“Yes ma’am,” she said, stepping out of the room.

Ruth stepped beside Jake, facing Emi. “Emi, I’ve brought together two individuals who have the potential to effect huge disruption in a market that is brimming with potential.”

Emi was unimpressed. It sounded like hollow marketing hype to her. Plus, it was hard to concentrate as she was still flustered, having just learned that Wang, of all people, was going to be present. That bitch was publishing naked pictures of her daily and trying to undermine Su-Ning’s business.

“Emi, Jake represents a resort booking conglomerate, and he owns several cruise ships.”

Emi nodded, still not sure why she was here. Did they need some software? He was obviously involved in whatever Ruth was planning.

“I’m also the proud owner of a nice Hawaiian shirt. This… is my Halloween costume,” he winked, gesturing to his suit. “a.k.a: the sucker of another of Ruth’s crazy ideas.”

Brandy horsed a full-throated laugh that filled the room. The others couldn’t help but laugh with her, partly laughing at her. Emi just watched them all.

“How many cruise ships did my last ‘crazy idea’ net you, Jake?” Ruth countered.

Jake chuckled, reaching back on Ruth’s desk to pull out a Corona from a big ice bucket. “Just a couple puny ones.”

Emi realized that whatever they were talking about was probably something big. Ruth must be cashing in a favor from Jake. It was unlikely she would do so without a solid plan.

“And Brandy here is a superhero. In her day job, she’s a lawyer specializing in fetish. But for relaxation, she’s a business trend analyst and a marketing genius with a keen eye on particular sectors. She makes so much money, making people like Jake richer, that I can’t understand why she doesn’t quit her day job.”

“True, but quit it Ruth… you’re embarrassing me,” she said, obviously loving her introduction.

“As if we could embarrass you,” Ruth said with a knowing smile.

Brandy did another of her full-throated laughs, filling the room.

Emi admired Brandy’s laugh. It felt confident, genuine. The woman was easily amused. Emi couldn’t help but join in the chorus of smiles.

The door opened, and Wang strutted in, looking like an empress. Emi wondered if it was a costume. One glance at Emi broke her stoic demeanor. Upon noticing Emi’s costume, a smug little grin broadened across her face.

Emi felt bitterness, wondering if it made the woman happy to see herself here… degraded in public… baring her body without choice.

The older woman found a chair and sat down, looking at Emi. She seemed pleased with herself.

Ho had followed her in, still wearing her kimono and white face. She settled into her seat, looking at Emi with surprise.

Emi couldn’t understand what was up with Ho. The woman’s white powdered face shifted from surprised to disappointed.

“Ho, Wang, Brandy, and I have spent some time working out a kick-ass proposal to help escalate Jake’s fortune and keep his competitors at bay,” Ruth said.

Jake laughed and turned to Emi. “We should sit. Knowing Ruth, this could take a while,” he mock-whispered, grabbing a seat for both of them. He pulled an apple cider out of the ice bucket, opened it, and passed it to Emi without looking at her.

Wondering how he knew what she liked, Emi sat down. Jake seemed kind of cool. She glanced at Ho and Wang. The twin towers of evil incarnate. Ho was speaking to Wang in Mandarin. Emi wondered if Ho was translating or mouthing her off. They certainly weren’t acting like friends.

“First some background,” Ruth said. “Brandy has been tracking two different communities for some time now. The cosplay crowd and nudists basically… tracking how these communities attend events and go to resorts. Looking for ways to bring them together.”

Emi looked at her watch. Still no message from Ben.

“She identified a smaller niche, a community of ‘adult cosplayers,’ with some potential,” Ruth added.

“Look, hun… you’re putting them to sleep with that monotone voice. I’ll take it from here,” Bandy said, standing up.

Ruth smirked as Jake faked a yawn.

Emi guessed where this was going. It didn’t feel ‘disruptive.’ She began wondering about what software changes might be needed when Brandy cleared her throat.

Jake made a show of sitting up suddenly, tapping Emi’s arm with his elbow.

Emi smiled, taking a sip of her apple cider while watching Brandy get set up with some papers.

“First… I would like to apologize to Emi if any of what I am about to say, seems in any way… shocking to her,” Brandy said with a sincere expression on her face.

Emi’s curiosity caused her to sit up, but being conscious that the new position had her tits jutting out, she slumped back.

“We discovered a way to bring these communities together. Costumes, but really just eye masks. This was especially effective in Europe, Germany especially.”

Emi was still waiting to find out what she was talking about.

“We found naturists were not at all offended by the adult costumes. Likewise, adult cosplayers appreciated having a larger audience. The naturists partook in my ever-popular and ever-growing Adult Costume Events, ACE for short, usually hosted at nudist resorts. The two groups mixed very well. Most were just costume nerds that seemed to be nudists as well. Or artistic nudists with costume skills. The rest of the naturists, simple eye masks helped to make them feel part of the festivities.”

Ho still seemed to be busy translating for Wang.

“My ACE events continued to grow and draw more attention. Some within the BDSM realm joined in as well, with sexy costumes. We were also attracting some mainstream interest. Normal vacationers join the exotic events wearing modest but sexy costumes. Some would later dare themselves to go further. It’s an outstanding place to lose one’s inhibitions. Nudists sites all around the world were attracting a wide range of different people, thanks to my events. They were often the most exciting event in any city, even beating out Raves and concerts sometimes.”

“Tell them about the seismic event,” Ruth chuckled, grabbing a drink for herself.

“I was getting to that… babe,” Brandy laughed again at herself. Not at all fazed that nobody else laughed. “The last six months have seen growth in bookings for nudist resorts before ACE events. It’s been spreading to the Asian market as well. So there was steady growth that looked good but probably not enough to interest Jake here. Almost perhaps, but not quite.”

“Here’s to hoping that they get to the good part soon,” Jake said to Emi as he clinked her bottle.

Emi smiled politely while sipping her cider, realizing that she’d probably had enough for the night.

Ruth laughed, shaking her head.

Brandy continued. “The seismic event… occurred a couple of weeks ago when someone uploaded some images taken outside a resort. A nude woman with nines on her body.”

Everyone turned to look at Emi.

Jake looked confused and followed everyone’s gaze.

Emi’s heart fluttered. “Ahh… you mean images of me?”

“Yes. They went viral. You can find them under #mail-gyrl9,” Brandy said.

Emi was angry and frightened. That photographer’s son seriously messed with her life. That meant those pictures that were taken of her were used within a day. She memorized the hashtag, hoping that it wasn’t as bad as it might be. At least she’d had her sunglasses on at the time.

“What was special with the images, was that for the last few months I have been monitoring a new growing group, within my ACE events – namely, ‘Mailgirl Cosplayers’. The images charged up that entire community. Got everyone talking. A big buzz. Had the world’s first mailgirl finally appeared? Others suggested it was just a hoax or a fetish. I think part of the excitement was that for the first time ever, one of their own appeared… but not from an ACE event, but instead a naturally occurring mailgirl! It was driving them wild!

Jake put his hand up. “A mailgirl? I don’t get it.”

Brandy laughed, the loudest so far. After she got a hold of herself, she wiped her eyes. “There’s one right beside you,” she said.

Emi didn’t like them referring to her as a mailgirl.

Ruth looked to Sarah. “Tell him.”

Sarah sat up. “It’s a fictional nude female office worker that delivers messages all day. Hence, mailgirl. They don’t have names, they have numbers. Emi for example is mailgirl 13. It’s her costume today.

“So fictional, like from an Anime?” Jake asked.

“No, a line of written stories about a particular nudity fetish,” Sarah explained.

Emi started to sweat, wondering where this was headed. So there was a community of cosplay mailgirls that got excited about her images. Why? Because she got exposed to the world?

“Thanks, Sarah,” Brandy said. “So recently, mailgirls have been the default nudist costume at all my ACE events. They are cheap costumes to make, trendy and a lot more compatible for the nudist crowd who were not receptive to covering their faces all the time.”

Emi listened to the details carefully, unhappy that naked images of herself were having such a big impact. In a normal world, everyone in the room here would be trying to make her feel better about the exposure. Was her nudity now so commonplace that nobody realized that this was in fact a big deal?

“The interesting development was that AFTER my ACE events, these ‘nudists’ have been opting to keep their mailgirl numbers on, for days! They’ve continued role-playing… forming groups, having parties. Nude resort bookings have continued to go up. Likewise, the cosplay community, not wanting to be left out, has been seeing converts. People leaving their cosplay costumes home and coming with just numbers, wanting to partake in the newly forming groups and activities. We have even seen non-nudists, fans of mailgirl stories, showing up at my events.”

Brandy cleared her throat and continued. “These ‘after parties’ have even been attracting mainstreamers. Regular women deciding it could be fun to go as a mailgirl, or the ever-popular topless ‘mailgirl in training’ costume. The ‘in training’ mailgirls are always marked up with zeros.”

Becca and Hannah would love this mailgirl in training costume, Emi thought. Hell, some of Su-Ning’s staff was already compatible with this concept.

“So yeah, it’s been growing. Sometimes they would have story reading parties, sharing the best mailgirl stories with wine and laughter. Or office role-playing parties, or mailgirl training sessions. This has become a real fad!”

“I guess I can see the attraction,” Jake said, nudging Emi.

Emi was too tense to laugh, so she smiled to be polite. She was waiting to see what her part was going to be. Did they just invite her here to tell her about the images? She wondered if she could leave.

Jake kept looking at Emi. “Look, sorry… I guess this is a lot to take in?”

Emi nodded, trying to keep her feelings in check. She needed to get through this meeting.

Jake nodded back. “Well… you look pretty confident in your skin, but I guess those images online didn’t make your day?”

Emi nodded meekly at the understatement of the year.

Brandy continued. “Even couples are becoming common at these events, with the females being a leashed mailgirl, the guy typically wearing a mask or a sexy costume, sometimes less. The bookings at nudist resorts before and after ACE events have been off the charts… selling out. Apparently a huge pent-up demand. Look at these numbers, Jake,” she said, passing him a sheet of paper.

“That is impressive, for this segment of vacationers, but is this just a fad?”

“That’s exactly what it is… I mean, if we don’t jump in and turn it into something more. Jake… I turn fads into trends… for a living!”

“Is that so?” He replied, not looking that impressed. “So what’s this ‘big plan’ of yours? I can see that you’re all dying to tell me.”

“The plan… is to milk this fad, to turn it into a trend.”

“Yes. Obviously, but how might that be done?”

“In a nutshell, we picture ourselves supplying an accessory for this huge influx of cosplay mailgirls. The big ‘must-have’ item that any mailgirl cosplayer wouldn’t be caught dead without. An item that will also inform them of upcoming events and also let them role play deliveries. Something to help them message each other, growing the community. Something to make it all feel… authentic and more real. Something to help with deliveries and demerits.”

Emi couldn’t believe what she was hearing. Do they want a mailgirl app? She laughed out loud.

Everyone turned to look at her.

“Ahh… sorry, please continue,” she said, trying to suppress her amusement.

Brandy gave Emi some side-eye. “It will be the single most exciting and important accessory item for literally thousands of cosplayer mailgirls. What we want, Jake. Is for Emi to create the world’s first REAL mailgirl app.”

Emi stayed quiet, still resisting the urge to laugh her head off. At least they were veering into her territory. “Yes, but a ‘real’ mailgirl app?” she asked.

“Yes Emi,” Brandy confirmed.

Emi couldn’t believe these people. She decided to give them a dose of reality. “You mentioned event notifications and socializing. I don’t think real mailgirl apps do that. Also, why would you need it to be real at all? Cosplayers just want to pretend… to get demerits or deliver something. A real mailgirl app would require a server and an admin web portal, with an account for each company it represented… basically, a dispatcher software manned by someone monitoring the deliveries, with each mailgirl having a dedicated account under one of those companies. Is that really what you want? How would that be useful to ACE events?” Emi asked, glad to finally be part of the meeting in a meaningful way. But still stunned that she was even talking about this. This was borderline surreal.

“Oh yes…” Brandy purred. “You were right Ruth. This one IS the real deal!”

“Uhh huh… I told you. She isn’t just a… umm… eye candy.”

“I’ll drink to that,” Jake piped in.

“To answer your questions, Emi.

“First… it’s MORE than just a mailgirl app. It’s an ACE mailgirl app!

“Second… as to all that server mumble jumbo stuff, well… we need to do it because we want to label this as ‘real’ and ‘authentic’. That’s what gets people excited.

“Finally… we can have an ACE demo mode just for resort gatherings, to get the girls moving about. They can turn on fun mode and they will begin getting auto-generated delivery requests. No actual messages to deliver, mind you, but they still need to arrive in time or they get demerits. Someone nearby with a companion app will get prompted that a delivery is on the way. I expect there will be strong demand for the companion app, with others loving to receive delivery requests. Who doesn’t like random mailgirls showing up? Especially if they are out of breath!”

Emi was concerned. “Ahh… it sounds like the scope is growing. What’s the timeline?” she asked, wondering if Brandy even knew what she was asking for? It’s not a trivial amount of work. They needed a companion app as well for people to request and receive deliveries.

“Two months, but we could extend that,” Brandy said.

Two months? That would be an intense two months, Emi thought. She put her hand on her chin, thinking about the architecture and graphic designs that would be needed. Not to mention the UI work. So much work… and then all the testing.

“Besides Emi… the JOURNEY with making the app is equal to… if not more important than… the actual end product here,” Brandy stated, looking at her nails.

“Ahh… pardon?” Emi asked. She had no idea what the woman was talking about.

“I mean… we are planning to publish a daily developer and testing journal about the app. Announcing the great ACE mailgirl app project and letting mailgirls salivate about it as early as possible, with daily teases of features and testing details.”

“I see…” Emi said, acknowledging the marketing talk. She wanted to get back to negotiating what was possible within two months. “Does it need to have the ‘real’ features? I mean, we could probably release it in better shape with just the ‘required’ features, mainly for your events.”

“No Emi… the attraction of this app will be the looming REAL aspect with a serious industrial-strength looking design. That’s what’s going to make the girls wet. That’s what will have them dishing out monthly for this baby. Remember… just the IDEA of this app as being in development… a real mailgirl app being developed! That piece of news is almost as big as the actual end product release.”

“Right… I’m just saying that you need to prioritize what you want to be ready for the two-month launch date. I suggest breaking the feature sets into two pieces. The ‘real’ aspect and the bonus ACE features like messaging, demo mode, and auto-randomly-generating deliveries for events. You might launch with one of those, but not both.”

“Okay, Emi. In that case, we will start with the ACE features. The REAL features can be a later release,” Brandy said.

“Great,” Emi said, glad to finally make some progress. “You mentioned users would dish out monthly. So you already have a subscription model in mind?”

“The app is free, but it won’t generate deliveries or assign a number until the user subscribes to a $99 dollar monthly subscription. Each delivery successfully delivered gives the mailgirl a $10 dollar credit. Just 10 deliveries a month and the cosplayer can have the app for free. In the absence of users with companion apps, mailgirls themselves can also use the companion app to generate delivery requests for themselves or others.”

Emi nodded. Thinking about the technical details.

“The companion app is similar, a $99 monthly subscription and for each valid delivery request entered into the system that results in a successful mailgirl delivery, the user gets a $10 credit as well. Both mailgirls and companions rise in rank each month and if they break off the subscription they have to start from the beginning, losing out on high-level perks and features.”

Emi wished she had a notepad, trying to keep up with the details.

“Finally, the authentic two-year, premium ACE mailgirl plan. It requires at least 5 companion-wielding hosts and 2 mailgirls to qualify. That’s seven people minimum. Everyone pays for two years in advance and receives a number of premium perks, and $15 off for successful deliveries. So it’s basically free as well, as long as each month the minimum number of requests and deliveries are made.”

Emi saw what Brandy was trying to do. She was cleverly seducing exhibitionists. They could try this alone, like herself at Lookout Point. She could have been earning credits for her little naked adventures. It was indeed a devious plan, giving the girls a little prod or reason to make the deliveries. The two-year plan to lock them in would also be exciting. Likewise the incentive to get a small group of people involved. This was clearly designed with growth in mind.

“What do you think, Emi?” Brandy said, with a knowing smirk.

That smirk got under Emi’s skin, but she didn’t show it. “It seems feasible. I like the concept of user-generated deliveries. Letting first-time experimenters keep it all to themselves and generate their own delivery paths.”

“Yes. I knew that you would like that,” Brandy purred.

Emi ignored the comment. “It’s multiple apps with a lot of server dependency. A smartphone app for requesting and receiving deliveries and an apple watch app. Likely you will want a phone version of the mailgirl app as well, for those that don’t want or have apple watches. The two phone apps will need to support both platforms. So that balloons the work to five apps in total. It’s a LOT of work. Realistically, we will probably just have a bare-bones system ready in two months. Maybe supporting just one platform. Is there a market for this? I mean, mailgirls are fictional, you know.”

Brandy smiled, looking Emi over. “Fictional? I’m not sure I agree with that.”

“This is a Halloween costume,” Emi emphasized with her arms. Does this woman not understand the concept of costumes?

“Well, I love your costume. Can you come up here for a moment?”

“Ahh… umm… okay?” Emi got up and faced her.

Brandy guided Emi to turn and face everyone. “This is exactly what I am talking about. Look at Emi, she’s the perfect cosplaying mailgirl, right down to the smartwatch accessory that we will sell this app for. THIS is what I am talking about!”

Emi hated being the center of attention. She tried to keep her eyes on the far wall, fighting her instinctive desire to cover herself.

“Slowly turn for us Thirteen, so we can see your full costume. Where your numbers are,” Brandy purred.

Emi complied, blushing. She hated being called thirteen but slowly started turning, hoping that they couldn’t see that she was trembling.

“The app might pay for the cost of development, but that’s not the point. The actual value is the STORY of its creation.”

Emi stopped briefly, showing a side profile, conscious of just how tight and pointy her nipples were. Was this turning her on?

“A big announcement of this app, along with a daily testing journal… will simply blow away our ACE mailgirl community. It will also excite the cosplayers to see more than just numbers drawn on the nudists.”

Emi resumed turning and faced away from everyone. Dread filled her mind as she felt her body starting to respond. Please… not here, not now.

“Remember, the larger goal is to not let this sudden fad, composed of thousands of mailgirls… fade away.”

Emi tried to stop trembling, imagining them all looking at her ass. She wondered what they could see. She started to turn again.

“We want to GROW this segment and for that, we need the combined effort of a massive marketing program interwoven with the production and testing of the app.”

Emi turned, profiling a side view again, trying to draw eyes away from her pussy. She lifted her rib cage casually pulling her shoulders back. She didn’t want it to look too obvious, but doing so raised her breasts. She didn’t want them to think she was trying to show off her tits, and she imagined she wasn’t. She only wanted to be displaying good posture. Her nipples were probably super obvious from this angle.

“Altogether, a perfect storm of frantic activity to smack them right smack in the pussy! That’s more important than even the money from this app. This is all psychological Emi, you have no idea how heady this will all be,” Brandy said, looking like a madwoman in ecstasy.

Emi quietly panicked, why did she have to say pussy? She turned to face them all again, angling her gaze towards the ceiling, avoiding all eye contact. A cooling draft on her inner thighs told her that she was moist. She tried to draw their attention away from her body. “So this is mostly about marketing? But… the scandal?” Emi began… wincing as soon as she said it. She didn’t want to lose this deal. Ruth likely didn’t have Jake on a leash. This might be a one-time favor between the two of them.

“The scandal helped us locate you, Emi,” Brandy said. “If we nail this opportunity, the scandal will have been the catalyst, the single best thing that ever happened to Su-Ning’s resort and this island.”

“I don’t follow,” Emi said.

“That makes two of us,” Jake added.

Brandy shook her head. “Alright, here’s the proposal everyone. Something to make EVERYONE happy and just possibly rich, and that includes Wang, Emi, and Su-Ning and Jake.”

Emi quickly sat down, glad to no longer be the center of attention.

“Emi will create the app and as she’s making and testing it, we will hype the shit out of it by sharing the developer and testing journals daily. I’ll write them up myself after Emi finishes her daily tests. The key here is an ‘authentic’ experience and why the REAL feature is so important. It’s a novelty fetish item, after all. It’s the details that’ll get these people going,” Brandy said, seemingly enjoying all eyes back on herself.

Emi glanced at Wang, wondering what the woman was thinking about all this. Ho was still translating for her.

“So we will build this app for a couple of months, marketing the crap out of it. And if by the new year, after journaling a realistic trial run for a couple of weeks… if the average ACE resort bookings (which are currently off the charts) haven’t at least doubled. Then Jake doesn’t have to build a new cruise ship port of call, to dock his ships here.

Emi saw Jake smile. She wasn’t sure if he was buying it.

“So the key here is to use the scandal to kick-start the launch. Wang is going to only post positive articles from now on if she hopes for a chance of a cruise ship docking port on the island. Such a thing would benefit Wang considerably. Also, since her resort is clothing optional on the beach, she might help with the backlog of bookings,” Brandy said, looking at Wang.

Ater Ho translated, Wang looked pleased.

“Around the world, new nudist resorts are being built as we speak… just to help capture some of this specific new demand,” she said, looking at Jake.

Jake didn’t have any reaction.

Brandy turned to Ho. “And Su-Ning is in a massively advantageous position. First, she has the legendary mailgirl 9 herself. Second, she has just opened a 5-star nudist resort. And third, her mailgirl is a software-making genius. We would have to be stupider than a bucket of nails to let this opportunity pass us by. So Jake is going to contribute a million dollars to Su-Ning’s resort to motivate and stimulate this app development which will include me on the marketing side.”

Ho was watching closely as she translated to Wang out of the side of her mouth.

“Remember, this is a marketing stunt, but with teeth as in… a real mailgirl app as the end goal. The mailgirl app will be serious and tested authentically. This could blow the current fad out of the water and move us towards that long-lasting trend that we all want to see,” Brandy concluded, looking around the room excitedly.

“So all you want from me is a million bucks for Su-Ning to build this app. And a couple of months later, if demand is still insane, I create a cruise-ship port here on this island. Is that right?”

“In a nutshell.”

“Sounds good. I’m in!” He said happily, looking at Emi.

Emi was feeling the pressure. This whole thing depended upon her delivering the app. Worse, she was getting a sinking feeling in her gut. “What… is this mailgirl app testing component supposed to look like?” she asked, looking around suspiciously.

“Ahh… yeah. What does she have to do,” Jake asked. “I’m in… if Emi’s in. I mean… you guys didn’t even discuss this with her beforehand?”

Brandy looked to Ruth. Neither smiled and finally, Brandy nodded.

Ruth sighed. “Well… now we get to the tricky part. You see, we anticipated some resistance from Emi on the testing component. Which is critical, mind you. But yeah, this all comes down to Emi. We thought it might be wiser to begin with the positive sides of the deal and get your buy-in first, Jake.”

“You mean you want me to help pressure her,” Jake reasoned, looking disappointed.

Emi had been expecting pressure. She could handle it. But this testing aspect had her concerned. The pictures all over the internet had her freaking out inside. Ben still hadn’t messaged her and now it felt like they were setting her up to be a mailgirl. The stakes were huge, not just for her, but for the resort, for the entire island. But there was no way she was going to sacrifice her freedom and dignity for this project. Not for all the money in the world.

Ho was watching her.

Emi’s gut lurched as she wondered if Ho was going to try to force her. Emi felt everyone watching her as she stared deeply into the opening of her apple cider. She turned the bottle, feeling the cool base twist atop her pubic hair. “May I ask a few questions?”

“Yes of course Emi,” Brandy and Ruth both replied at the same time.

Emi looked around the room. Ho and Wang looked concerned. Emi saw they wanted this deal to succeed. Ruth and Brandy were also paying close attention. “Tell me about the testing component. How… exactly… do we test the app?”

“Well… we thought… you are already naked. And in an office building… so a few numbers, like you have now, and you’re good to go. Test the app by making some deliveries around the building. I mean… does anyone here think that sounds unreasonable?”

Emi knew it! She fucking knew it. They were going to try to do this to her. Make it like it’s no big deal. The problem was, it probably seemed like a reasonable request from their point of view. They wouldn’t be able to get her to do that, would they? She realized she was already in a position that she never imagined she’d be in. So how did she get here? And if sitting in an office (the only one naked during a meeting) was possible, then the next step to REAL mailgirl must be imaginable too. She shuddered.

“Emi… are you okay?” Ruth asked, taking her hand.

“W… why me?”

“The community loves you Emi. You are their freaking hero, and they don’t even know you yet. Thanks to Ho and her Scandal, you nine, have become famous!” Brandy said, waving her arms. “What they want is a champion. A real mailgirl to look up to. They need you Emi.”

“What?… But I’m not a mailgirl!”

“Emi, Emi, Emi… you practically already are. You just don’t know it yet. The fact is, you are not just going to lead the mailgirl cosplay movement, you are going to transform it!”

Emi marveled at the lunatic. Was she trying to make mailgirls real? She didn’t want to be near any part of this woman’s scheme. She wasn’t some bimbo. She had the power to stop this. They all depended upon her agreement. There was no way Su-Ning would force her, and Jake was unlikely to be part of this if Wang or Ho tried anything underhanded. She shook her head.

Everyone was watching her.

“No, sorry. Get someone else to test the app. Also, I will not develop the app if my name is associated with it. Those are my hard red lines,” Emi said. “Plus, about positive articles about me? Wang will not be posting ANY new articles about me and will not reveal my identity. Not now, not ever. Also note, we can’t fit everything into the first two months. Plus keep in mind that setting a hard time limit dramatically affects quality. Are there any questions so far?”

Wang snorted after Ho translated.

Brandy looked shocked. “There is no point to any of this Emi if you don’t test the app yourself. We can keep your identity a secret, but that is our minimum requirement. We are only here because of the scandal. Wang needs to keep hyping you, that’s key to the marketing plan.”

Emi watched Brandy closely, struggling to keep her wits about herself.

“Su-Ning’s resort is a side bonus. Again the goal here is less about the app but more to excite the new mailgirl cosplay community and let them know that real things are happening in the mailgirl world. That there is a champion amongst them. So as you see Emi, we need you. Having you test the app personally is OUR hard red line Emi,” Brandy said confidently but gently.

“Then we are at an impasse,” Emi said, getting up to leave. She didn’t have to act brave or anything. There was no way this was going to happen. It was ridiculous. Even if Ho threatened another year, that would be preferable to being a real mailgirl. There was nothing further to discuss.

Ruth put her drink down. “Look… wait Emi. Let’s all take a breather. Go out into the party and have something to eat, go to the washroom, enjoy the party. We will resume in 15 minutes.”

Jake, Ho, Wang, and Sarah left the room. Emi stayed, sitting in her seat. She had no desire to go out to the party.

As Ruth was leaving she paused and turned to face Emi. “I’ll leave you two here,” she said, nodding to her open laptop on her desk. “You might as well say hello.” And with that, she left, closing the door behind her.

Emi got up and went to stand next to Ruth’s chair behind her desk. Facing her, in Zoom, was Su-Ning!

“Hi Emi, I hope you don’t mind that I have been eavesdropping,” Su-Ning said.

Emi sat down, full of emotion. Finally, she could tell Su-Ning what was happening. What Ho had done to her. What was going on… But did she already know?