

Business is a journey

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I'm Eve, the daughter of a Protestant pastor from New York. I received a very strict education and I've always known that my work ethic would have allowed me to succeed in any field. It might have surprised many when I decided to choose the fashion world for my career but I didn't disappoint anybody. I started my own company as a freshly graduate from an Ivy League university and quickly succeeded with my company. We decided to focus on environmentally-friendly products and we promote a modern, rather androgynous style for women's clothes. I've never been a big fan of traditionally feminine dresses since my teenage years to be honest.

My cold personality never made my dating life better, on the other hand. I was always told I wasn't a passionate lover and I never really focused on dating anyway. I knew that I'd eventually meet Mr. Right, there was no question about that, it was only a matter of time.

Recently, my business had been struggling to succeed in this economy, mostly due to the skyrocketing energy prices. Also, the competition from cheaper brands manufacturing their products in Asia made life a lot harder for smaller firms like us who couldn't afford to delocalise like us.

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When we received an offer from one of our bigger national competitors, I had to seriously consider it, despite how much I hated the idea. They were a rather low quality, cheap and popular brand, which however had suffered less than us from the current economic downturn. They were pretty much our only option to avoid bankruptcy but I still demanded to discuss their conditions personally. It was about my employees as much as my dignity and pride.

Frank DeMarco, the CEO of our future parent company, was a wealthy Italian American man, with a blue-collar family background. I hated that kind of people, so “nouveau riche”, but I had little choice. He proposed me the following deal: they would absorb our company, hiring every single one of our employees, rebranding our products as theirs and slightly changing the target of those clothes. I would be hired in a position to be defined later, implying that I would have some sort of managerial role, probably something like a glorified spokesperson. I didn’t like these terms and tried to negotiate better ones but it was pretty clear that I had very little space for manoeuvre. Eventually, I accepted the conditions imposed by Frank and signed the lengthy contract, already prepared by his lawyers.

A few days later, more details were disclosed to me, and it appeared that I would be hired by Frank’s company as a fashion model. Shocked and offended by that, I complained to his office but in vain. When he finally got back to me he told me that the contract I had signed gave them carte blanche about my future role in the company and that the whole merger was subordinate to me fulfilling whatever role I had been assigned to.

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Basically he was telling me I had to do whatever they told me to do if I wanted to save my former employees from joblessness. Also, a bankruptcy could result in legal consequences I really wanted to avoid. I was told that I needed a makeover before starting my new career so I was escorted to an unknown location where they'd work on my appearance. It seemed a bit too large and complex for a hair salon, and it was surprisingly empty but I didn't think much of it. A couple of brunette teenagers began working on my hair, applying extensions and dying it. After they applied dye patches on my blonde hair they left me alone for a while, sipping my tea. I soon dozed off and soon later they restarted working on my appearance. Unbeknownst to me, they had something more in mind than a simple makeover.

When I regained consciousness, I found myself unrecognisable, with cascading black, wavy hair, olive skin and brown eyes. My nose looked different, more pronounced, and my lips were thick and sensual, giving my face a foreign look, and even my flat chest had been surgically replaced by a fake pair of breasts, a B-cups probably. My phone showed a completely different date to the day of my scheduled makeover.

I couldn't believe what that bastard had done to me, lowering my position to that of fashion model was demeaning enough, but changing my appearance to make it match his Italian-American heritage was an absolute outrage.

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I contacted Frank as soon as I could, only to get a pre-recorded message from him:

“Hey my dear, I see you’re getting accustomed to your new you! Let me explain you what’s going to happen to you. Forget the old Joan you’ll go by Giovanna now, a proud Italian-American girl working as a fashion model for our brand. If things go smoothly between us we’ll seal the deal and complete the merger, otherwise I’ll just let your former company to go out of business and I’ll buy the spoils for a loaf of bread!”

I contacted my lawyer, who confirmed me that the contract I had signed was binding in that regard. Breaking it would mean condemning my former company to bankruptcy without doing anything to restore my former appearance, so I had no choice but to show up on time for my first shooting session the following day.

I was forced to wear the sort of cheap, trashy outfit Frank’s company sold the most. I always wondered what sort of women would ever wear such outfits, well now I was wearing one of them and I felt as trashy as I would have imagined. To make things worse, I had to pose in the sluttiest possible way...

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The following day, they told me the pictures were pretty good but unfortunately my skin appeared a bit too pale so that had to photoshop it later. To improve things for the following time I was recommended to tan. I was speechless, these fuckers had drastically altered my looks as if I was a white canvas and now they weren't satisfied with my skin color and wanted me to get more tan? I was just about to call Frank and tell him to go to hell when a notification popped up on my smartphone. It was a reservation for a three-weeks stay luxurious hotel in Florida I had received via e-mail.

At first I thought it was going to be a trap, and that they would trick me into further body modifications, but then I shrugged my shoulders and thought "Well, you know what, at this point my life is ruined anyway, I might as well enjoy this vacation. At least I won't be forced to pose for a photoshoot again soon!"

I used the complementary flight ticket included in the reservation to reach my destination and started looking around me. The place was filled with shallow models and influencers, exactly the sort of people I used to look down to. Well, now I wasn't any different from them, so I set my pride aside and tried to make friends with them and surprisingly found them to be really nice! I eventually made friends with them and we went shopping together and taught each other new makeup styles!

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Whatever they did to my skin, it was clearly reacting differently to the sun compared to my usual. Instead of the usual red skin and sunburn, my olive skin was gaining more color as the days progressed. I bought a few bikini sets and I began wearing them during my tanning sessions, my only job during those strange weeks.

This new lifestyle was clearly growing on me. Never having to worry about anything, enjoying life to the fullest was a new experience to me. To make this even better, I noticed the effect my new body had on men. I'm not proud of admitting this but I barely spent a single night in my hotel room during those weeks, busy as I was sleeping with all the handsome men who showed interest in me. I started to realise how much I had been missing out before and I became determined to make the most out of my current situation.

When my luxurious vacation was over, I was left with a great tan, a large network of fellow models and influencers and a good amount of lovers, scattered all over the country and abroad. Having wealthy men ready to host me on their yachts or in their villas anytime I wanted was something I never expected to experience in my life.

When I was back in New York I felt ok with my new role in life, modelling became second nature to me and I never questioned again the style of the outfits I had to wear.

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When Frank finally let me know he had an opening in his busy schedule, I opted for an elegant black outfit, with a short skirt and dark stockings, a good combination of my old self and my new, more flirtatious personality.

"Looking good, Gio! How was your vacation?"

"Well, I cannot complain. Actually, I loved every minute of it! And I took my mission very seriously, as you see I'm nicely toasted now."

"I can see that! To be honest, I still can't believe how well you've adjusted to these changes! Seriously though, aren't you mad at me?"

"At the beginning, sure, I was, but then..." - I hesitated, still uncomfortable about my quick change in personality. Had those traits always been hidden deep inside me, masked by my frigid persona? "I guess I've matured." - I ended with a flirtatious smile.

Frank smiled too. "Why don't we seal the deal with a dinner at my place? I have a nice penthouse in downtown Manhattan".

I suddenly noticed how attractive he looked in his business suit, with his toned physique, tanned skin and salt-and-pepper hair.

"I thought we already sealed it but sure, why not? Whatever you want, boss!" - I answered, conscious of my new role in society.