

The Turn

"You did what?" Bridget stared at the phone as if it had sprouted cactus spines.

Janet, her coworker, cleared her throat nervously "You just seemed really lonely."

"So you made my personal life fodder for a bunch of old men!" Bridget scratched at the poison ivy underneath her turtleneck. Hiking was not going to be a personal favorite.

Janet paused to think for a moment, "These were age-appropriate, cultured men-"

"You can't know that through the internet!" Bridget hissed so loudly and vehemently that fellow Starbuck patrons were casting her startled glances. Bridget was too steamed to care.

"I've been getting emails from elderly men for months asking me on dates!" An older gentleman sitting behind her coughed and looked at her with interest. Bridget just covered her face with her hands and leaned against the table, hoping the turtleneck didn't make him think she was hiding a different kind of redness.

"Do you know how humiliating this is?"

Janet paused again on the other side of the connection. "More embarrassing than being stuck holding the old maid card at the end of the game?" She asked pointedly.

Bridget bit her tongue to keep it from turning into a whip. The swirling, gray skies outside the window reflected her emotional state like a weathered mirror.

"It's not like I've never been married, Janet."

"Let's leave ancient history in the museum, Bridget, I'm thinking about what you need now."

"Those men belonged in a museum! I could've blown an inch of dust off their faces!"

"Maybe I *should* update your picture to a more flattering one," Janet pondered aloud.

"Maybe *you* should-" Bridget stopped herself just in time from the remark that was breakdancing on her tongue. A siren went off in the background. She shifted so uncomfortably at the itching on her neck, she was considering removing a layer of skin.

“Look, I know you meant well, but some things need to stay personal and separate from my work life.”

“Are we still friends?” Janet asked with a hint of vulnerability in her voice.

“I-” Bridget stared as people started running to the women’s restroom. Even men were crowding into the tiny room. The sound of thunder shook the building as darkness started to shadow in through the windows. The wind blew the door open like a petulant child. Bang! Her purse fell to the floor as she frantically grasped at the contents spilling out around her. *When had it even started raining?* And then she heard it.