

It was very hard for Sam to keep from screaming at the unfairness of it all.

She had been working at the newspaper for years. She wasn't always the best writer and she certainly could have been a bit more social with the rest office staff, but she was good at her job and she had become invaluable to the editor. Derek had always valued her opinion for what it was, and he trusted her more than anyone else at the paper.

But that was before Christine.

Christine slammed into the newsroom like a category 5 hurricane. She tore down everything Sam had worked so hard to build and left a trail of destruction in her wake. Within her first work she'd managed to get four good reporters fired, and at least a few other were on the chopping block.

And Derek seemed to love her immediately.

It did not matter to him that Sam had given the paper everything or that he used to trust her implicitly. When Christine winked, complimented him, and broke things off with her fiancé to "get to know him better," all of that went out of the window. It was like Caesar and Cleopatra all over again.

She demanded Sam's resignation two weeks later.

It was sheer luck that Christine wasn't in a position to influence hiring. No matter how much she complained about Sam's work, she couldn't get her way.

And then came the last straw. Derek promoted Christine to the job Sam had been promised, and that was it. A carefully crafted letter of resignation made its way to her direct supervisor's desk.

Truth be told. Sam still wasn't sure whether it was the right decision. But she'd given her two weeks' notice, and her desk would have to be cleared out by then. She had focus on that.

When she walked back into the office that Wednesday night, there he was. She had hoped that Today would be the day he'd decide he didn't have to work until all hours and let her clear out Her desk in peace. But Derek who always seemed to have a sixth sense about her, picked his head up on the second she made it across the room.

This was not going to end well, and she knew it.

"Are you Okey? He asked ones she was settled into uncomfortable chair across from him. She noted mutely, and he cleared his throat.

Good. I, uh...you'll have to forgive the lack of professionalism here, but..."

She tilted her head." But what?" she asked graciously, wondering briefly if he knew how thin a line he was treading. His eyes fixed on her, and it was like she was seeing the Derek of three monthes ago.She couldn't breathe.