



Daddy's Girl Jean

Jean Kurtz sat down at the metal desk in her Harvard dorm room. Posters of Celine Dion and Whitney Houston faced her, and they looked down as she took her physics and biology text books out from the drawer. As she removed them, they uncovered a photo of her Daddy in a gold frame.

Her roommate had gone to a party, so she put the frame next to the textbooks. Only when alone would she willingly take it out. In spite of all the good her Daddy had done, her roommate openly despised him. Whenever she saw the photo or heard his name, they would end up having bitter political rows. During these, Jean's roommate would refuse to concede that she was wrong.

Luckily, Jean's roommate often went to parties without her. She gazed at the photo. Her Daddy stood proud in a pin stripe suit; his large girth disguised by the darkness of the cloth. In the background, the Whitehouse dome was clearly visible.

One day you'll get there, she thought. You deserve to get there.

Each step of her life so far, Jean's father had been there for her. Thanks to him she had been accepted at Sidwell Friends School when she was six years old. He had guided her through lower school, supported her in middle school and encouraged her through upper school. Without him, she would never have achieved over two thousand three hundred in her SATs.

Harvard accepted her without reservation. She liked to think it was due to her high SAT scores but she knew, and was proud, that her family connections had helped to oil the admission's machinery. After three and half years of study, she was convinced that she had proven her worth on the programme. Every assignment and every semester she had aced and the lecturers were already encouraging to stay in academia and study on a doctoral program.

A ringing broke the silence, and she found her mobile phone amongst the clutter in her expensive handbag. She sat down on the bed and answered.

"Hi peanut," greeted a man with a warm, deep voice.

"Daddy, how are you?" she asked and smiled broadly.

"I'm good. How are you?"

"Good. I'm still on track for top grades."

"That's what I want to talk to you about," his voice wavered slightly and he sounded unsure as he continued to speak. "An opportunity has arisen that I wanted to pass your way. It's a Science post in an organisation that is at the cutting edge of technology. I have to say that this has literally fallen into my lap this morning, and I wanted to run it by you first."

"My tutors want me to go on and do a post grad."

"I can see that, and I'm proud of you pumpkin, but this is a once in a lifetime offer. You will be taken places that we never dreamed of."

"What's the company, Daddy?"

"I'm afraid that I can't tell you that."

"Where is it then?"

"I can't tell you that either."

"Could you tell me what my role would be?"

"Sorry, peanut. It is all classified but if I tell you this could benefit us, would you believe me?"

Jean had never had any reason not to trust her Daddy, and if he thought it would be good for her then there was no reason to doubt him. Her fellow undergraduates were struggling to get on to schemes in large firms, so if she could do it the easy way then maybe she should.

"Okay, Daddy. My exams are soon and I need to graduate first."

Jean heard her Daddy take a long breath.



“The thing is pumpkin that the post is available now, today, and if you don’t accept it the window will close. I wish I could tell you more, but this is more top secret than top secret.”

“What about all my education?” moaned Jean. “All that will go to waste.”

“No, it won’t. I’m sure that we arrange something with the university.”

“Maybe I could finish it long distance?” she asked hopefully.

“I don’t think that would be possible. It might be, but I doubt it.”

“It’s a big ask. I know that peanut. Sleep on it and I’ll phone you tomorrow morning. Okay?”

Giving up her education disturbed Jean but the thought of working for an organisation that was ‘beyond top secret’ had an unimaginable allure.

“Okay, love you Daddy.”

“I love you too.”

The call ended and Jean put her phone on the table.

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