

YourEssence

Chapter 7 - David Struggles



When waking up in the morning, David was beyond excited to return to his original body. The curves of his wife had been excellent for an evening of lovemaking, but that was the last time he wanted to have them himself. Diana didn't leap out of bed in excitement like David had. That said, she was content to be back to her usual self. The married couple resumed their standard routines, preparing for their jobs like nothing had happened. Diana tried to probe a few times with David if he had enjoyed himself last night, but he just gave a quick response that he had but that he was glad to be back in his body. From Diana's perspective, she was feeling a tremendous increase in her connection with David. She understood his feelings and his behavior from the last few months so much more deeply. Being a man had been eye-opening.

Diana kept looking to see if she could detect any signs of change in her husband.

Did he understand her better now? Would he be more thoughtful as a partner and as a lover? Would he value things differently now? It was a rushed morning, so there weren't many opportunities to pry and go deep like she wanted to, but she wanted to give David the benefit of the doubt. Being a man had been intoxicating, the power, the strength, the dominance. So Diana could understand that David might be experiencing a bit of a high being back in his male body. She was willing to wait until the evening to dig in further and see if their accident had created a similar empathy in her husband as it had in her.

With barely a peck on the cheek, David rushed out the door to the office. Diana took her time finishing getting ready to return to her classroom. Being a professor had always been a rewarding experience for her, so she could at least look forward to that. However, she had to admit she was jealous of David getting to return to the high-energy, high-risk office environment. It had been a rush dealing with problems and coordinating across a large group. She had felt so mature, so confident, so in control. Teaching at university offered many valuable feelings, but it fostered none of those feelings she had experienced as David.

David returned late from the office. Diana had already been home for over an hour. The two were usually home around the same time.

"Late day at the office. Everything ok? Brad didn't give you a hard time about the collaboration tax slide, did he? I told him it was handled, and he needed to let it go..."

"No..." David came in, and his voice sounded dejected, and his posture looked like he felt defeated.

"Oh sweetie, come sit down," Diana escorted David to the dining table and removed his coat. "Tell me, what's up? Did something happen?"

"Yes, something happened. You did."

"Huh? What do you mean? I didn't do anything. I was at the university all day."

"No, yesterday, you changed the presentation so much I could barely keep up today. Everyone thought I was coming down with something since I was different today. You changed the presentation and excited everyone; I can't keep up with it now. What does 'ingenuity planning and execution' even mean?"

Diana tried to answer David's questions, but as they continued to work through the presentation, it became more apparent that David was out of his depth. "You were

just too good at this. I don't think I can keep it up. I'm going to crash and burn. I'll probably be out of a job by the end of the week."

"No, I'm sure you can get it. We need to keep practicing, and I'll answer your questions."

"No! I am not going to get it. We've been at this for hours. I'm no better off than I was when we started. I might be worse. I'm more confused than I was before!"

"Well, what should we do then? You're just going to give up?"

"Yes... I mean, no...," David said as his head hung low. He was deep in thought, but Diana assumed he was thinking of how he would lose his job. Instead, David was trying to come to terms with something extreme. Something that Diana would never have guessed. Building up the conviction to say it, he raised his head and looked his wife in the eyes. "It's a lot to ask, but... you do it. You give the presentation."

"I don't think they'd listen to a professor, David. I don't have any credibility in your sector."

"Give the presentation as me," David said again, hanging his head. His ego was deflated as he had to ask for this huge favor. "I'll lose my job if it doesn't go perfectly. The client is too valuable to the company, and I blew it today. You can save it, however. You have a PhD in cognitive psychology. You can give the presentation, and I will jump back in on the next client."

"How long would that be for?"

"Shouldn't be any more than three weeks. The presentation is in two weeks, and the final phase is closing the deal. During the last week, the account lead must clarify the proposal and contract with clients."

"And you're sure you want me to do this? You want me to 'be' you for that long?"

"It will be weird having two of me walking around, but I'll just hide out here until this all ends."

"Two of you?"

"Yeah, there's no need for me to change. I need you to look like me so you can close this deal."

"I can't be off from my job for three weeks! You will have to cover my job, but don't

worry; I have a clear syllabus and schedule already planned."

"You want me to do your job?"

"Well, yeah. Is it that big a stretch to ask you to do the same for me as you are asking?"

David hung his head. He knew the correct answer to the question. He didn't like it at all. He wanted to yell and get mad but knew that wouldn't improve things. "No... of course not," David responded through his gritted teeth.

"Thank you. I'm glad you agree. We should probably switch gears, then. I need to teach you a few things about my coworkers. Also, I need to get you up to speed about being a woman in a professional setting."

"Ok..." David was contrite in his response. He knew he was in for a rude awakening. He had it easy with the prior accident, getting the day off. Now, he was about to be thrust into the spotlight with a group of college-aged kids, a dozen other professors, and, heaven forbid, the student's parents.

Diana returned to the room with two pills. One in each hand. She deliberately held her left hand at an entire arm's length. She resolutely said, handing David the pill with her left hand, "Down the hatch!"

David swallowed his pride and swallowed the pill. "All right... where do we begin?"