

# Chapter 1

Summer sat on the log exactly where she'd been dumped unceremoniously and tried not to breath. She wasn't sure what to do, but she knew that her best chance of survival was to do as little as possible and not make eye contact. Wasn't that what the rules said? That and definitely don't smile. No fear of that. There was absolutely nothing funny about this. How in the hell had she landed herself in this mess? He was staring at her. She wanted to run, to escape somehow, but she knew that running would only put her in even more danger. His head tilted as his hard and piercing eyes held her in her place. At this stage she wasn't sure what he wanted to do with her, she wasn't sure that he was either. Why the hell had she been late? Again. If only she could turn back the clock...

*Summer jumped out of bed. How the hell had she slept in again? Ben was going to be rope-able. He'd torn strips off her on Monday when she'd been late and she'd vowed that it would never happen again. Right. It wasn't her fault was it? Maybe just a little.*

*Summer knew she shouldn't have gone clubbing last night, but her friend had made her feel terrible. Polly had gone on and on about her ruining their summer with this stupid internship thingy as she called it. She didn't have even a summer job and she didn't understand that Summer HAD to do this. She needed to bank up some volunteer hours for her classes. So she'd gone out and now she was going to cop it from Ben, the supervisor in charge of the summer volunteers program. Ben had told her in no uncertain terms, no excuses. He said she was lazy and easily distracted, that she didn't appreciate the position that lots of college students would have gladly had. He said that she was spoiled and in need of a damn good spanking to wake her up, not just in the morning, but to the realities of life.*

*Once out of the shower, she'd torn up the street to the bus stop only to see the bus driving away.*

*"Fuck," she said to no one. "Could this morning get any worse?"*

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*After waiting for the next bus, Summer finally got to her job an hour late. She stood outside Ben's office in the main admin building panting. The door was locked. There was a post-it stuck on there with her name on the top. Summer held her breath while she read it, half expecting it to be a note saying her services would no longer be needed. Thankfully that wasn't the case.*

*Summer,*

*You're late! Again! I didn't have time to wait around so I've left you a list of things to start on at the front desk. Please don't deviate from this list.*

*Ben*

*PS. we are going to talk about this young lady.*

*Summer was breathing a little easier when she knew she didn't have to have him yell at her just yet. She could do a list. No problem.*

*She winced as collected the list from the front office. All the shit jobs. Great. Oh, well, someone had to do it.*

*\* \* \**

*By the time she got to the last job on the list, Summer had had it. She was tired and cranky. This was so unfair. How was any of this menial work supposed to help her learn anything anyway? Shouldn't she be seeing hands on what it would be like to do this job for real? Summer knew she was no idiot. She'd read all the stuff they gave her when she started. She knew all the right and wrong ways of doing all this stuff. Dammit, she was going to get a closer look at this place and all that went on here.*

*She looked through the pane of thick wide glass. Excellent, it was empty. That would give her time to explore. To see how these creatures spent their days. How their minds ticked. Their minds weren't the only things ticking though, time was ticking and she had to hurry if she was going to have enough time to explore. Ben would, no doubt, be looking for her before long.*

*The nineteen-year-old coed could hear sounds far to the left of her. Yes. Now or never. She clicked open the heavy door and stepped tentatively into the wide space. It was fascinating. Much larger than she had first suspected. It was so real...*

*Just as she was adjusting to her surroundings she heard a sound. No more than a crackle like a small stick snapping. She screamed as her feet left the ground. Only briefly. She realized the dire straits she was in and jammed her mouth shut so tight she almost put her teeth through her lip. Inside she was quaking, terrified. There was a heart beating loudly, its rhythmic thump making it difficult for her to think. Was it hers or his? She tried to remember what she'd been taught, but her mind wasn't cooperating with her. All her senses were on hyper alert, crowding what was left of her thinking process.*

*Flashes of green and brown sparked across her line of vision. Longish soft black hair brushed against her hot skin as a strong arm held her in a carry stance under his arm. There were rustling and cracking noises and the smell was bad...wafting up through her nostrils and burning her sinuses. Oh, God, she was going to sneeze. It took everything in her to control her sneeze, that and the scream that was dying to escape. Tears coursed down her cheeks and her mouth opened in a desperate hunt for air. She could taste the saltiness of her own blood on the edge of her tongue.*

*Her eyes opened wide as she was swung around and then plunked onto a large log.*

Summer held her breath. Think, think, she demanded. Her useless brain gave her nothing. Her eyes were trained to the ground, but she could feel the hot breath of the large male gorilla as he circled her, sniffing her, every now and then poking her before pacing away and roaring, thumping his chest. She had a feeling it wasn't just for dramatic effect.

Her breath was loud in her ears, even though she was only allowing it to filter through her lips in short whispery spurts. Was that a noise? Char obviously heard it too, because he turned suspiciously and eyed the door of his inside enclosure. He sniffed and then trudged towards it excitedly. When Char's back was completely facing her, she dared to look. Ben was in the doorway holding up one of the large frozen fruit treats they'd made the day before. Thank God. He wasn't going to be happy with her, but at least she'd live to hear the lecture. Ben moved outside the doorway now and as Char got closer he threw the treat inside. The gorilla glared at him, unimpressed that he was being forced to go inside to get the cold delicacy, but he went; it

was, after all, food and yummy food at that.

Ben slid the gates down, locked them and then turned around slowly fixing her with a glare that made her squirm.

Summer tried to let out the breath she felt like she'd been holding for hours, but it caught in her throat. There was another predator on the loose and this one had fire in his eyes and steam coming out of his ears.

"I know this looks really bad."

"Bad? It looks insane," he yelled loudly as he got closer. "Of all the stupid, hair-brained schemes..."

"I'm ok," Summer tried to say feebly. Even she could recognize that he hadn't said a word that wasn't true. For some reason her ridiculous mouth had its own ideas. "I didn't know he was in here." She tried to pull out of his firm grasp as he bent over and took her arm.

"Seriously? You think that makes it ok? You could have been killed!"

"I was just figuring out a plan to get out." She squealed as he threw her over his shoulder about as gently as Char had tucked her under his arm. Not very.

"Oh, for the love of God, I don't think I've ever met a more irritating brat!" He slapped her bottom hard and ducked in through the entrance she'd used to get into the enclosure in the first place, leaving the sprinkling of spectators that had just arrived, cheering. They weren't gorillas, but they were entertaining.

Ben continued to lecture her all the way back to his office, every now and then slapping her bottom as punctuation when he'd made a particularly important point.

"Put me down Ben!" she hissed. "People are watching."

"You want to be put down?" he asked. "I'll put you down all right, but you have to pick the place. If I put you down in my office you're going over my knee for spanking."

"You can't spank me! That's archaic! This is a zoo not a museum!"

"Fine. Your choice. I'll put you down outside the gate and you can go on your merry way, but you won't be coming back. I won't be responsible for your antics anymore." He changed directions and marched towards the employees exit.

"Wait! I can't afford to leave here. I need these hours."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, I need them before school goes back in the fall."

"Ok. My office it is. The private one."

"Wait! Can't we just work something out?"

"We just did."

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Ben dropped her to her feet. "Take off your coveralls," he said.

Summer's eyes widened. "I only have my T-shirt under here and my panties."

"More than you're going to need." He locked the door.

Summer undid the buttons, fumbling in her embarrassment as her skimpy T-shirt came into view. If she'd known how the day was going to unfold, she would have chosen a longer one. She wriggled out of her clothes and dropped them over the chair, tugging at her t-shirt to try and cover herself.

Ben sat on the edge of his desk. "I'm disappointed in you, Summer."

It felt worse to hear those words in a calmer tone than when he was shouting them at her. "I didn't mean for it to all go wrong."

"I know that, but you don't listen. You think that the rules don't apply to you or you think you know better."

"I was just..."

"Nope," he said putting his hand up. "No more of that. Absolutely no more excuses. You're on notice. If you're late, if you don't follow instructions, if you go anywhere near the animals when I'm not with you or if you speak back, if you make any silly decisions that can affect your job...I will spank you and I will spank you hard. Do you understand?"

She nodded, wide-eyed and nervous as she listened to his serious tone.

"Good. Now we're getting somewhere." He tugged her arm hard, effectively toppling her over his knee.

"Ow!" she squeaked as he spanked her already tender flesh through her lacy panties. "I'm sore! I was dropped on a log and then you kept smacking me!"

He ignored her complaints and continued to warm her wriggling bottom. "You are a very intelligent girl," he said punctuating each word with a hard spank. "One of the best I've ever had sent to me."

"Your reward system sucks!" she shouted, immediately regretting her words as a cool breeze floated across her now totally naked cheeks. "I didn't.... Ow...mean it!"

"I want you to apply yourself as hard as I'm applying my hand!" He spanked her bottom up and down and all over, concentrating low down where she would be sitting on it on the ride home.

She would be feeling this for a while.

"Ok, ok."

"Got it?"

"I got it."

"Good." He let her up.

"I'm sorry," Summer whispered as, with great embarrassment, she stood before her boss and mentor with her hand clasped over her sex. She did her best to pull up her panties with one hand to prevent putting on a show, but they wouldn't move upwards on both sides. That meant letting go of her modesty for a moment while she replaced her clothes. Ben didn't even seem to notice; if he did he hid it well.

"About?"

"About, you know...the gorilla enclosure and the being late again thing. I missed my bus."

"Your bus?"

"Um yes, my bus."

"Summer when you were accepted into this program, you signed a contract."

"I know." Oh, geez, she knew where this was going. "I remember and I know what you're going to say. I said that I had my own transport."

"It also specified that you needed to have a driver's license and a car."

"I did have a driver's license and a car. I still do."

"I think the idea was that you were meant to use it and get to work on time."

"I got that."

"Why didn't you drive in? I've seen you in a car. So if you understand the rule and you own a car and a license, why didn't you use it to get here on time?"

"I couldn't drive, just today. Well, today and last Monday. Then I couldn't drive either."

"Is your car in working order?"

"Yes."

"Well why weren't you in it today?" Ben asked with increasing frustration.

Summer chewed her lip. He wasn't going to like the explanation for her not driving, but then she had a feeling he would react even worse to a lie from the way his eyes were boring through her.

"Summer," he prodded, looking at his watch.

"Okay, look. It's like this. My folks are allowing me to stay at the apartment that I share with my friend and flat mate, even though there are no classes for the summer. If they got wind I'd been in trouble I'd have to go home."

"I see, sort of." He pondered her answer for a moment. "No I don't. Not really."

"I may have gone out the night before," she said sheepishly. "If I got pulled over by the police..."

"You went out where?"

"Does that matter?" Summer shifted from one foot to another. She felt like this man was reading her mind.

"Where did you go?"

"A club."

Ben frowned, but said nothing for a few minutes.

Summer picked up her bag; it was time to get out of there. The look that Ben gave her rattled her equilibrium.

"Not yet." He narrowed his eyes at her. "How old do you have to be to get into this club you went to, Summer?"

"Twenty-one."

"How old are you?"

"Almost twenty."

"Where is it?"

"Where's what?"

"The fake ID."

It was on the tip of her tongue to say that she didn't have it or she didn't have it on her, but a glance towards her backpack gave the game away. "What fake ID?" she asked lamely.

"I'd like to see it please."

"I...don't..."

"You won't finish that sentence if you know what's good for you. Now I'd like to see the ID you used to get into a club where you had no place being."

Their eyes met for a split second before Summer caved and produced what Ben wanted to see.

He took it from her and stared at it for a minute before opening his top desk drawer. Before Summer realized what had happened, Ben had snipped the phony card into three pieces. "I trust you won't have any trouble getting up on time or driving to work in the future."

"You can't do that!" Summer said, horrified. "I paid a lot of money for that ID!"

"Then it was a silly investment. I'm giving you a chance to invest in your future. I told you were on notice. I won't sit by and watch you fritter away a golden opportunity, one that you have taken away from someone else, I might add. Not for a few drunken nights with your friends."

Summer's eyes filled with tears. Polly was never going to forgive her for this. There was no way she could afford to replace what had just been destroyed before her very eyes. Her partying days were over, at least for the time being. "Can I go now?" she asked snatching up her bag and slinging it over her arm.

"Yes. Let's go. I'll drive you."

"It's ok, I'll get the bus."

"I don't think you'll be very popular on the bus."

"Why not?"

"You smell a bit like you've been sitting in a gorilla enclosure."

Summer clutched her clothes and sniffed. Oh, lord he was right. With all the excitement she hadn't even noticed. She was used to the smell of animal dung. She just wasn't used to wearing it. "Okay, thanks. You're not worried I might stink out your car?"

"You can sit on a towel."

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"Address?" Ben asked when they were sitting in the car.

Summer rattled it off and then sunk back in her seat doing her best impression of the



invisible girl.

"I don't have to be your enemy, you know, Summer."

"If you say so."

"You can can the attitude. I was being civil. Nice even."

"It's a bit hard to talk to you like some kind of normal person when you just saw my naked butt, spanked it and then told me I smell. I'm feeling just a little bit humiliated here."

"You shouldn't be humiliated about the smell. The smell doesn't worry me at all, I'm used to it. I was actually trying to save you the embarrassment that you would have felt on a crowded bus when you realized or someone else pointed it out to you."

"Oh." That made her feel a little better.

"As for the spanking, you should be more embarrassed about what landed you in that position in the first place."

"So I was stupid, you pointed that out already." Back to feeling silly again.

"I actually think you're very intelligent. I never would have chosen you for my program otherwise. You're a very lucky girl."

Summer kept her mouth shut, but she was feeling anything but lucky at that point. Her ass hurt, her feelings were hurt and her head hurt. She'd eaten nothing all day and she still had a hangover. Maybe this was what was meant by a world of hurt.

As if he read her mind, Ben glanced at her sideways. "You're very pale. Did you eat lunch?"

"I didn't have time."

"Breakfast?"

"I'd already missed one bus, if I stopped to eat a bowl of cereal I would have been even later."

"Did you even eat anything last night?" he asked, his voice rising.

"My friend and I split a burger."

"You don't just need rules, you need a keeper."

"I'm not one of your gorillas," she spat.

"No, you're not. You're a naughty monkey that needs someone to look after her."

Summer's belly flipped with a sudden rush of pleasure that shocked her. What titillated her about being called a monkey? Or was it the looking after her thing? His tone of voice maybe?

She knew one thing, she needed to get out of that car and eat something before she lost her mind altogether. She closed her eyes and leaned against the seat.

"Summer... Summer."

Summer opened her eyes and Ben's face was close to hers. He was holding a drink cup in front of her. "Huh?" she said, wiping the drool from the side of her mouth. Honestly, was there anything else she could do to make a fool of herself?

"I went through a drive-thru. Got us some food."

"You didn't have to do that. I could have waited until I got home." Her mouth was protesting, but her eyes were staring hungrily at the burger Ben was holding out to her.

"Luckily you don't have to. Now eat."

"Why is the car not moving?"

"Because I parked it so we could eat."

"You really want to eat in a car that smells like someone died in it?"

"Like I said, I'm used to it. Does it bother you that much?"

"Not really." That wasn't what was bothering her.

"Good, so be a good girl for once and eat."

"Anyone ever tell you that you have a bossy streak?"

"No, not really. Not everyone brings out this side of me."

"Lucky me."

"I think so," Ben said with a grin, popping some French fries in his mouth.

"You know, I could be a vegetarian."

"But you're not," he said, noticing she now had a death grip on the burger even though she hadn't unwrapped it. "Just eat the burger, Summer, and stop being such a contrary brat."

Summer's face flushed. "Sorry," she said finally, allowing herself to give in and unwrap the burger. "It's been a very long day."

"Tomorrow can be better," Ben said. "That would be up to you though, wouldn't it?"

"I guess so," she said, tucking into her hamburger with gusto.

"You will have had your dinner, so I would suggest when you get home, a hot shower, an hour of TV or reading and then set your alarm and get a goodnight sleep."

"What am I, eight?"

"An eight-year-old probably would have had the sense to stay out of a gorilla's

enclosure."

"I thought it was empty!"

"How did that work out for you?"

Summer almost thought she saw a hint of a smile. "Not great."

"My point exactly. Try to follow the rules; they're there for a reason. To keep you safe."

"I get the point. I'll be more careful before I do anything silly like that again."

"No you won't need to be careful before doing the wrong thing, just don't do it at all."

Summer rolled her eyes. "Now you're just twisting my words. I won't go into an enclosure again without permission."

"Without my express permission. You answer to me."

She couldn't help it, his words made her shiver, but still she nodded. What else could she do? He held all the cards. "I'm tired. Can you take me home now please?"

"Of course." He started the car immediately.

Summer found that she was more comfortable than she probably should have been. Her bottom wasn't hurting at all, really. It was a weird feeling, not quite normal, but it would be exaggerating to say that it hurt. She sank into the deep comfortable leather seat. Whether she fell asleep straight away or just blinked and then didn't manage to get her eyes open wasn't clear; but it wasn't until Ben shook her softly, that they sprang open again and she realized there was a line of drool sliding out of the corner of her mouth.

"Fuck," she said, sitting bolt upright and trying to get her bearings. "Oh, sorry. I got a fright. I wasn't quite sure where I was."

"I'm sorry I frightened you," he said dabbing at the corner of her lips with a tissue.

Oh, God. He actually had to wipe off her drool, perfect. "I'm ok. Sorry. I'll see you tomorrow," she said turning slightly and reaching for the door.

"Wait right there," he said opening his own door and getting out. He was at the passenger side within seconds and opened her door. He held out his arm for her to take.

She was grubby and smelly and she didn't want to have any part of touching his clean shirt. "I can manage," she tried to say.

"I'm sure you can, but you don't have to. Allow me?" he said with a smile that melted her heart.

It was funny, but in all the weeks she'd been working for this man she'd not really seen

him smile. He had nice teeth, straight and white. But his gaze and the accompanying smile were fixed and she had a feeling neither the grin nor in fact, the body of this man, were moving until she did as he asked and took his arm. "Thank you," she said finally doing what he expected and linked her arm through his.

"I'll walk you to the door." He gave her another glimpse of his white teeth.

She opened her mouth to tell him that she never had anyone to walk her to the door, that she always managed to get there just fine; but she closed it again, following behind him to the door. He was only trying to be nice and she had to admit it felt good for someone to treat her like a lady.