



STIFF COMPETITION

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STIFF COMPETITION

BY

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AMBER QUILL PRESS, LLC

<http://www.amberquill.com>

STIFF COMPETITION
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ISBN 1-59279-360-6
Cover Art © 2005 Trace Edward Zaber

Layout and Formatting provided by: ElementalAlchemy.com

PUBLISHED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

For Jim...

STIFF COMPETITION

Monday, 9:07 AM

“Ah, John,” Dennis Halloran greeted someone entering the office behind her, “there you are.”

It was him. Frances Wallace knew before he stopped by her chair in front of her supervisor’s desk, before she smelled the spicy cologne he always wore, that it was John Woods. Frances picked an imaginary piece of lint from the skirt of her suit, trying to appear nonchalant when inside she was anything but.

Why was John Woods here? Did they mean to give him the vice president’s job that she’d been anticipating would be hers for the last year? That she’d worked so hard for?

John Woods looked as wonderful as ever in his immaculate black suit and not a sandy hair out of place on his head as he shook hands with Dennis. His tie was deep blue and had silver accents, brought out

STIFF COMPETITION

the amazing blue of his eyes as his gaze met hers.

"I believe you know Frances." Dennis motioned to her.

Oh, yes. Very well in fact.

"Hello, Frankie." It had always irritated her when he called her that.

John's smile was wide, his teeth straight and white. That smile had every nerve ending in her body on red alert.

"Hello, John," Frances held out a hand to him and did her best to look bored.

Dennis smiled at each of them in turn as John sat in the chair next to her. *Here it comes.*

"Frankie and Johnny." Dennis snorted in laughter. "Like the old song. You know?"

Oh, she knew. And it was pretty fricking old.

Frankie and Johnny were lovers all right. *Had been lovers anyway.* Until John decided he needed to spend more time banging away on his computer keyboard and stealing the Mortensen account from her than he spent banging her.

Seeing that his comment had gone over like a lead balloon, Dennis cleared his throat and walked around to the other side of his desk. The older man settled into his large leather chair, his expression serious now.

"Okay, I've brought you both here to talk about our newest client, Invigra," Dennis began. "As you know, they've taken the male performance drug market by storm. Their earnings doubled that of Inflatrix in their second quarter."

Dennis had called them *both* here to talk about the new super-big client? Brought John here from Seattle? Oh, yeah. There was a plot in place. Well, Frances would be damned before she would just meekly step aside and let them give John Woods *her* promotion!

Frances had done everything expected and then some in anticipation of getting the promotion to vice president. She'd put in ungodly hours,

STIFF COMPETITION

took on accounts no one else wanted and marketed the hell out of them. *That job was hers!*

“They are looking for a killer ad campaign,” Dennis explained. “You two are our best and I’d like you to work together to give them what they want.”

Frances glanced at John, found him eyeing her with about as much skepticism as she felt about the entire situation. What did *he* have to feel skeptical about? God knew what they’d promised him...

“This is a big account, sure, Dennis,” John jumped in before she could. “But it’s certainly not more than either of us individually could handle. Both of us have good teams.”

Dennis smiled at John and it deepened the lines on his face. “There is a method to my madness, I assure you. Both of you are very good ad execs, John. Else you wouldn’t be here. But I’ve been at this game a little longer. You two haven’t learned all this old dog’s tricks just yet.”

When Dennis turned to Frances, he said, “I want a perspective from both genders on this product. We want men to buy it to improve their confidence and sex drive and we want women to encourage them. The female audience is just as important here.”

Neither Frances nor John said much else while Dennis finished discussing their new client, their current marketing practices, the normal spiel. But she could tell it irritated the shit out of John to be in this situation with her. She could tell from the wooden way he sat in the chair next to her.

Good! Frances was glad he was irritated, because she was. What choice did she have really but to do this? If she decided to be a bitch about it, they would have the perfect excuse not to give her the promotion. Maybe they were counting on the fact that she would refuse to work with him. Hoping on it.

No, she had to play along. Take the lead away from John on this. It wasn’t going to be easy.

STIFF COMPETITION

“Okay.” Dennis clapped his hands together as he always did to signal the end of a meeting. “Any questions?”

“Yes, what’s the time frame?” Frances wanted to know.

Dennis smirked at her in the way that always meant she wouldn’t like the answer.

“By week’s end.”

* * *

Monday, 11:17 AM

John Woods idly tapped his pen on the shiny surface of the desk in Dennis’s conference room as Frances walked in. They’d agreed to take a break after the meeting with Dennis on Invigra. A *break*. A break usually meant that you had time to check your voice mail, check your email, and maybe run downstairs for a cup of coffee. And John had missed the good coffee in the year since he’d transferred to Seattle from the Chicago branch.

But that was an hour and a half ago.

Still, John had forgotten how desirable she was. Oh, Frances Wallace always looked the professional with her blonde hair swept up and the trendy suits she wore. But she wore stockings under those suits, he remembered, stockings with lace tops that ended high on her creamy thighs. Frances wore lacy bras with matching thongs...

“Did you get lost?” he snapped when her green eyes met his.

“Did you miss me?” France’s tone was sarcastic.

There was a loaded question. No, he didn’t miss the professional, go-getting, super-bitch side of Frances. But did he miss the fiery vixen in his bed. As he watched her place her notepad and pen on the table and take a seat, a memory of Frances with her blonde hair spread across his pillows and her body spread beneath him flashed in his mind. Her skin was white, her breasts full and high...

“Okay,” Frances said after a long sigh. Her expression told him

STIFF COMPETITION

she'd rather be anywhere in the world except in the conference room with him. "Let's get started on this thing."

What's her problem? Had they not brought him here to be her underling when she got the promotion to Vice President? It had probably been *her* idea.

Well, this scene wouldn't play as far as John was concerned. He'd been in the company every bit as long as Frances and he'd worked hard for his director's job in Seattle. It wasn't Vice President, but he didn't need that status. John was happy right where he was.

But if he didn't do the best he could with this assignment, what he feared might just happen. They would have the perfect excuse to force him back to Chicago and make Frances his supervisor. And if there was one thing he'd learned during their relationship, it was the he couldn't work with her. Period. He liked her, he admired her. Hell, he wanted her. But have Francis as his supervisor every day in the workplace? No.

John had to take the lead on this assignment away from Frances, pure and simple.

"Well, I'm sure you've read the current marketing campaign," John deliberately goaded her. "I know I have. I've had plenty of time."

Her full lips puckered in annoyance.

"I've taken a look," her tone was defensive.

Had she? "What do you think of their current campaign?" John wanted to know.

Flipping through the pages of her notepad she stopped to read the notes she'd apparently made there. "It's pretty bland actually. It amazes me that they have enjoyed the success they have with pictures of nice older couples cuddling in front of cheery fireplaces. That could turn off a huge group of potential buyers right there."

"I agree."

"Okay, first a schedule," Frances neatly steered the conversation back in the direction she wanted it to go. "We have until close of

STIFF COMPETITION

business Friday. Not a lot of time.”

A schedule. John knew that was coming. Frances did almost everything on a schedule. Except for sex. His gaze dropped momentarily to the generous swell of her breasts beneath the white blouse she wore. *Damn, he missed the sex.*

“No, it isn’t a lot of time,” John pointed out. “We’re going to have to come up with this on the fly.”

John knew she’d hate that idea and the glare she shot across the table at him confirmed it.

“On the fly?” her voice was low.

“Yes, on the fly,” he repeated. “We don’t have time to pin down consumers who’ve used the product and conduct interviews with only four and a half days to do it.”

John never had a problem coming up with a sexy pitch for any product or business going on very little information. Sure, any ad exec wanted to do some homework first, but you didn’t always have that luxury.

“This is potentially this biggest client either you or I have ever dealt with, and you think we are going to come up with something blind?” Frances demanded.

Oh, he loved the way her little nostrils flared when she was mad.

“Do you have a better idea?” John asked.

“I think we could get at least a handful of consumer opinions in four and a half days,” she countered.

“No way. It would take that long for the company to answer your phone call. And we have to have time to come up with the campaign, you know?”

Frances continued to glare at him as an idea for how he might win this particular battle formed in his head. She’d never agree to work with him on a campaign with no consumer feedback and they didn’t have time to get it. At least not the conventional way.

STIFF COMPETITION

"I refuse to come up with an ad campaign for the biggest client our company has ever handled on the fly. There is too much riding on this."

Like your promotion? Pushing that aside, John pondered the situation.

"Well, that leaves only two options," John pointed out. "We find our own consumers very quickly or we try it ourselves."

John was hard put not to laugh at the way her little jaw dropped.

"Excuse me?" Frances asked sharply.

"You heard me," John continued. "We ask our buddies, preferably our married buddies, to give it a try for us or we play guinea pig."

Frances shook her head as she stared at him incredulously.

"Uh-huh. No way. Ask my friends or acquaintances to try out a male performance drug? No!"

Neither would he, but he didn't say as much. His plan was working.

"So we play guinea pig." John closed his portfolio. "Or rather *I* play guinea pig since it is a *male* performance drug. I'll try it out tonight and let you know how it works."

With that, John rose from his chair, watching her expression as he did. Her eyes narrowed as shock quickly turned into suspicion.

It wasn't fair and he knew it. But his job in Seattle was at stake. He was happy there with the new house he'd just bought, his Mercedes.

But something tightened in his chest as he watched Frances rise from her chair and step in his path. It wasn't guilt. Even flushed with anxious color her face was so lovely. It was too damned easy to remember how much he missed her face, missed *her*...

Frances's eyes locked with his. "Not so fast, John. Dennis wants a male *and* a female perspective on this product. Taking Invigra and trying it out with a porno tape doesn't qualify."

Her insinuation that he couldn't find anyone with whom to try the drug stung his pride. Probably deserved it for being so high-handed with her, but still it stung.

STIFF COMPETITION

“I didn’t have any intention of doing that,” he said sharply.

“Then who are you going to try it with?”

The truth of the matter was that he’d dated no one since he’d stopped seeing Frances. No one had even remotely interested him.

John sensed her interest was more than protecting her promotion on this assignment. Interesting.

Taking a couple of steps closer, he forced her to look up at him. Frances didn’t back away. The sweet smell of her perfume combined with the warm scent of her body, had him hard as a rock.

“What about *you*?” John leaned in closer.

The color in her face deepened, her eyes darkened.

“Excuse me?” her voice was low.

John leaned a little closer, dropped his voice to a whisper. “You heard me. What better consumer opinion to have than our own? And it gives Dennis his male and female perspective.”

Frances’s breath quickened and her lips were so close it was all he could do not to claim them for a kiss. John knew just how they tasted, how sweet...

Planting a hand on his chest and shoving him back, Frances’s glare returned. “Asshole! You’re trying to use this assignment as a sleazy excuse to get me in bed?”

John grinned. So their reunion was working on her, too. The desire in her eyes was all too familiar. She wanted him, too, and it had his libido growing fangs.

The only problem was getting her to admit it. Frances was nothing if not stubborn.

“Not at all.” John watched her calmly. “Just trying to give you what you want. You want to have a consumer opinion. You want to make sure your female perspective is protected.”

“What are *you* after, John?” Frances planted her hands on her hips.

“I want you, Frances,” John admitted. “Is that what you want to

STIFF COMPETITION

hear? Working on this assignment with you here in Chicago, back in Seattle...makes no difference. I've missed you in my bed. I didn't realize how much until seeing you today."

That stopped her cold. And rendering Frances speechless for any length of time wasn't an easy task.

"It's not happening." Even though she shook her head in denial, she sounded like she'd just been running. "I said I'd work with you, not sleep with you. I could nail you for sexual harassment you know."

John shrugged, though he knew good and damned well she *could* do just that. It had probably been a damned stupid idea to carry it this far, but he'd already said it so...

"You could." John took a step towards the door. "Or you could meet me tonight. I'm staying at the Sheraton a block over. Room 214."

Since he'd said quite enough already, John made his exit and he could feel her eyes on him until he closed the door behind him. John didn't know if she'd show up. But, damn it, he could hope.

* * *

Monday, 8:52 PM

"Frances," John greeted her with a manufactured note of surprise in his voice when he opened the door of his hotel room. But there was a knowing glint in his blue eyes as he stepped back and allowed her entrance. "Come in."

Arrogant man.

All the way over Frances had told herself she was just going to John's hotel room to work on the assignment. *That was all.* Once he understood she was not there to fuck him they would be able to get some work done, because time was short. Having to come up with an ad campaign in four days for the biggest client she'd ever had, *with* her former lover was her biggest challenge to date. That was why she was there.

STIFF COMPETITION

Wasn't it?

Ah, who was she kidding? Heading for the small round table by the hotel room's window, she purposefully avoided looking at him and placed her briefcase in one of the two wooden chairs there. Frances had wanted to jump John's bones the minute she'd walked into the conference room earlier that day. Now she was alone with him in his hotel room and she was *just* there to work. Yeah, right!

When she did look up, she saw him walk slowly towards the table with his hands shoved into the pockets of his slacks. He'd taken off his tie and his white shirt was unbuttoned to midway down his chest, just a hint of the muscled wall that used to be her favorite snuggling place showing. His sandy hair was a little disheveled and a light shadow of beard darkened his face.

But it was the predatory quality in John's eyes that made her breath catch. He looked as if he wanted to throw her down, push her ankles behind her ears, and fuck her until the cows came home.

God, I wish he would.

"I'm glad you're here," John said quietly.

Frances nodded. "We have a lot of work to do."

His sexy mouth curved up into a smile. "Yes, we do."

"John," Frances wanted to stop heading in the direction they were going in. *Now*. "I thought we could use the time to work on Invigra since we've been given such a tight deadline. That's the *only* reason I'm here."

Hoisting her briefcase up from the chair, she placed it on the table and opened it up. Frances had to focus on the campaign and as much as she hated to admit it, on outdoing John's contribution. She had to remember the promotion she wanted, that she'd worked so hard for.

But that was hard to do with wetness seeping into her thong. John came to a stop just behind her shoulder and a thrill of excitement raced through her body at his close proximity. Trying to ignore him, she

STIFF COMPETITION

started pulling out all of the files she created on Invigra, the reports—

Frances froze at the pleasurable feeling of John's hot breath pelting the side of her throat. When his lips and tongue began teasing the sensitive flesh there, she let the files she'd been gathering spill from her hands and didn't give a damn about the sheets of paper floating to the floor in disarray. No, John's teasing mouth and his strong arms closing about her from behind were all encompassing, intoxicating. His hard body pressed against her back, the hot insistent length of his erection nudging against her ass.

How had she ever been able to give him up?

Her breasts tingled with excitement as John filled his large hands with them. Her nipples became painful little points, straining beneath her clothing for his palms. Frances, moaned, wanting his hands on her flesh, everywhere.

As if he could read her thoughts, his fingers started plucking at the buttons of her suit jacket. Frances pulled off her jacket for him and let it drop to the floor as his busy fingers undid the buttons of her blouse in record time. His hands were warm and slightly rough as they slid into her blouse, beneath the lacy cups of her bra.

"I've missed you, Frances," his breath teased her inner ear as his lips and tongue teased the lobe. "I haven't been able to think of anything else all day but loving you."

The pads of his fingers were exquisite torture on the tips of her breasts, teasing the aching nubs with relentless soft strokes. In abandon Frances pushed herself farther into his hands, ground her ass against the hard cock taunting it.

"Let's go to the bed," she whispered, turning her head until their lips met.

John took her lips in a searing kiss that made her knees shake and had her hanging onto the back of the chair before her for balance. Her tongue met his as he explored her mouth. Oh, how she had missed his

STIFF COMPETITION

kiss, the taste of him...

"No," John whispered in her mouth. His mouth left hers and he sank onto his heels behind her.

Roughly he pushed the slim, straight skirt of her suit up to her waist. John moaned his approval behind her as she felt the cool air caress her thighs and her ass. While Frances still wore the same suit she'd worn all day, she'd changed her underwear, selecting a peach-colored thong and stockings topped with white lace because she knew he liked that. Frances felt John hook her thong with his finger, her fingers gripping the chair at the ecstasy that shot through her pussy with each pull.

John's warm lips pressed to her cheek, lingered there as the tip of his tongue teased her skin. Frances gasped as his mouth teased and licked its way down towards her aching wet center where she needed it the most. Anticipation blended with pleasure as he pulled the thong down her body and she waited for what she hoped would happen.

"Put your mouth on me," Frances whispered, squirming in pleasure as he traced the top of her stocking with his tongue.

"Spread your legs." John's voice was low and rough.

Frances did as he wanted, felt John take her cheeks in his hands and gently spread them apart. Glancing back over shoulder, she watched as John dove for her with his mouth.

France cried out in pleasure as John's mouth closed over her secret opening, his tongue penetrating the seam of her nether lips and zeroing in on her clit. Hanging onto the chair for dear life, she moaned and writhed above him as he relentlessly teased the hard little nub with quick lashes of his tongue. John teased her, tasted her. Desire raced through her body like electrical currents, fire racing through her blood toward the pool of sensation low in her belly. When his tongue slid back and began to enter her passage with quick, stiff thrusts, Frances called out his name, her need to have him inside her quickly becoming

STIFF COMPETITION

unbearable.

“What do you want?” John asked before his mouth resumed its claim on her pussy.

“I want you inside me. Now!”

John rose to his feet behind her, his hands frantically working at the fastenings of his slacks. Frances held her breath until she felt the hot, smooth head of his cock pressing against the back of her thigh. Glancing back over her shoulder she saw him pull a condom from the pocket of his slacks, watched him pull it from the package and smooth it on. She spread her thighs further apart as one of his hands slid around her body, cupping her mons. John’s fingers searched through her curls to find her clit as his cock eased between her thighs and slid deliciously into her wet body.

“Ah, Frances,” John groaned behind her, holding still as his length filled her body. “You feel so good. So damned good.”

About as good as you feel inside me. But Frances was beyond words as John began a driving rhythm within her body. One hand gripped her hip to hold her in place for his loving, but the other hand drove her mad, teasing her clit with unbearably light strokes as his cock filled her again and again. John was hard and impressively long, stretching her pleasurably with each powerful thrust. Frances’s thighs trembled as tension gathered in her body. She didn’t know how long her legs would hold her up. Leaning forward on the chair, she placed more of her weight on it.

The slight shift in position gave him a better angle. John pushed impossibly deeper into her body and Frances screamed in ecstasy, her body convulsing around him as she came. He drove on all the harder, prolonging her release, intensifying it with his body and his fingers. Frances tried weakly to push his hand away, her clit nearly too sensitive now to bear his touch, but he was unrelenting, unyielding.

John leaned forward to tease her ear with his tongue, his voice low.

STIFF COMPETITION

“It’s been too long, Frances. Let me play with you. Let me push you.”

Frances’s release of breath was a helpless sigh of passion as his body slid out of hers and he turned her to face him. John’s mouth claimed hers with a need that had her clawing at his shirt, running her hands wildly through his hair.

With a great sweep of his arm, he sent her briefcase and its contents flying off the table. Pushing the chair aside, he ended the kiss and pushed Frances back onto the table. Hooking his hands under her knees, he spread her legs wide so that her sex was open to him, to whatever he wanted. His cock was gorgeous as she remembered, long and proud as he pushed its shiny head towards the apex of her thighs and back into her aching channel.

Once he was back inside her, John teased her with slow, gentle nudges. Frances bucked on the table, crying out her frustration. She wanted him wild because she felt wild, wanted him driving into her with abandon. Giving her what she wanted, John’s thrusts gained strength, quickened in her body. Frances reached for his waist with her ankles, wanting to wrap her legs around him and he relented, releasing her legs and letting her do just that. Leaning towards her, he unhooked her bra in the front, flinging the cups away to reveal her breasts. Her nipples turned hard as rocks under his gaze.

John’s mouth captured one, began laving her nipple with his tongue. Frances moaned at the gentle assault and the way the movement brought him deeper inside her. He suckled her, teased her with nibbling bites as he continued to fill her and drive into her pussy as if he would never stop. Her thighs closed around him tightly as another orgasm came on and she clutched at his back with her hands.

“Come for me again, Frances,” John whispered around the stiff peak in his mouth. “I want you to come again.”

Reaching between their bodies his fingers again found her clit and it undid her. Frances cried out as her climax shook her. Riding the waves

STIFF COMPETITION

of intense pleasure, she hung onto him as he pushed into her again and again. His mouth moved to the other breast as she came down, teasing the other nipple with light kisses and so quickly her senses began to soar again.

“I-I can’t.” Frances’ voice was as ragged as her breath. “I can’t come again.”

His restless fingers stimulated her sensitive nub all the more. John lifted his head from her breast, his breath coming fast. “You’re going to.”

John kissed her mouth as his thrusts gained speed. His weight on her grew heavier, the muscles of his back taut under her hands as he slid in and out of her slick flesh. Frances knew he was about to come, but she couldn’t outlast him as the devilish pads of his fingers combined with his loving to push her over the edge. John took her cries into his mouth as her body went up in flames, convulsing helplessly around him as he lifted his head and moaned out in his own release.

* * *

Monday, 9:37 PM

“John?” Frances’s voice was little more than a whisper.

Remembering that he was probably heavy and the table probably wasn’t very comfortable, John lifted his head and his weight from her. Damn but she looked beautiful lying there with her hair messed up and her face all flushed.

“Hmm?”

“Did you take the Invigra?” she asked, still trying to catch her breath as he was.

Something shifted in his chest at the way she smiled at him. It was the first time she’d smiled at him since he’d first seen her that morning. It would have made him all hard again except that he was already from the drug.

STIFF COMPETITION

“Yes, I did,” John answered, smiling back. “I knew you wanted to work on the assignment.”

Pushing himself up from the table, John reached out his hand to her to help her sit up. Her eyes immediately darted to his cock which he knew without looking was just as tall and proud as it had been when she walked in the room. And it was a little uncomfortable.

Self-consciously he pulled the used condom off and left her to toss it into the wastebasket by the window.

Frances blew out an exhale behind him. “My God, that stuff really works. That was incredible. And here you are ready to go again.”

Fastening his slacks, he turned back to where she was climbing unsteadily off the table. “What are you trying to say about the way things were before?” he asked, only half-joking.

Her chuckle was deep and throaty. “Nothing, it’s just that... I thought I was going to pass out towards the end.”

John had wondered. His pride swelled. Male performance drug or not, what guy didn’t want to hear that? “Yeah?”

“Yeah.” Frances walked up to him on wobbly legs, wrapped her arms around him. She smiled up into his face. “While it was chemically enhanced, John, it doesn’t take anything away from your lovemaking now or as I remember it. I didn’t realize how much I missed you.”

Pulling her into his arms, he held her close to his heart. “I missed you, too. Even though I was pretty pissed at you at first about being brought back here from Seattle.”

That had her pulling back from him, an inkling of mistrust in her clear green eyes.

“I had nothing to do with that, John.” Her voice was stronger now. “I didn’t know about it until you walked into Dennis’s office this morning. I assumed you were brought here for the vice president’s job.”

“What?” John asked in amazement. “Everyone knows that job is

STIFF COMPETITION

yours, Frances. I'm happy where I am. I have no interest in that job and no one has ever approached me about it."

That took some of the wind out of her sails. Her eyes searched his and he knew she was wondering if he was telling her the truth. But as sure as he was that she would continue to question him on it, she went in an unexpected direction.

"You're happy in Seattle?"

"I was," he admitted. "I don't see how I will be now with you here in Chicago."

The green of her eyes deepened as she stretched up to lightly kiss his lips, gently coaxing them into play with hers. John was only too happy to comply. He took her sweet mouth as he held her, sliding his hands down to the soft swell of her ass beneath the skirt. But he wanted to touch *her*, wanted her clothes off. John worked at the zipper of her skirt until he had it undone, and pushed the garment off her body.

Frances broke the kiss to look up him, her eyes clouded by a crazy mix of wariness and desire.

"What are you doing?" she asked.

Even then he was working at the buttons of her blouse, pushing the filmy fabric off her shoulders. So far she was letting him.

"Undressing you," John stated the obvious.

He'd whisked her bra off in instant and scooped her up into his arms. Frances let him carry her to the bed, but the wariness in her eyes wasn't backing off.

"Right now?" she asked as he laid her on the enormous mattress.

John would've ditched his own clothes, but he didn't want to give her more time to think. He was hurting and he needed her again.

"Now," he said as he took her mouth in another kiss. A kiss meant to entice, to seduce. And he knew he was doing a good job because her little hands were already sliding up into his hair. He'd always loved that.

STIFF COMPETITION

Running his hand along the baby soft flesh of her hip and thigh until his fingers met the lacy top of her stocking, he felt her shudder beneath him.

“I want to, John,” she whispered, watching him move down the bed toward her feet. “But can’t we rest a minute?”

No, he couldn’t and since she’d probably read about Invigra at least a dozen times for the assignment, she should know why.

John took one of her little feet in his hand, undoing the strap of the high-heeled sandal and pulling it away. She moaned in delight as he gently massaged her foot and moved on to give the other foot the same treatment.

“Nice,” Frances whispered.

The view certainly was. With her foot in his hands and her legs open, he had a wonderful view of her—*all* of her, including her sex was there for him to gaze on. His eyes were riveted to the blonde curls of her sex, the dark pink flesh within. John took a deep breath and caught the scent of her. It made him harder...if that were possible.

Lifting her foot to his mouth, John pressed a kiss into her instep, then another to her ankle. Frances’s eyes slid closed and she relaxed against the pillows as he continued to trail kisses up her calf, over her inner thigh. Her pussy was a delicacy he couldn’t resist and when her stocking ended, he let his tongue slide over her skin and up to the weeping center of her, burying his mouth there.

Frances went wild above him as he teased her clit, lapped it with his tongue. Her hands clutched in his hair, her legs tight about his ribs. The smell of her, the taste of her drove him on, drove him wild. John gave her more, tonguing her, teasing her until her breathy little cries were coming in a familiar rhythm.

“Yes,” she whispered as he pulled up to unfasten his slacks. Her mouth gaped open as he fished out another condom, struggled to pull it on and positioned himself at her opening, his cock parting her lips.

STIFF COMPETITION

John couldn't wait to push into her any longer and he lowered himself over her, spreading her thighs wider with his own. And when he did, she was hot and wet, her slick channel gripping him with each thrust. Sighing in pleasure, he loved her with one stroke after another, claiming her mouth too with long, drugging kisses. Frances's hands slid into his shirt and her touch was heaven to him. Her legs were wrapped about his waist, her little heels digging into his lower back in an effort to control his movements within her, to hurry him.

But he wouldn't be hurried. John felt as if he could love her for hours and wanted to see how long he could last, how many times he could make her explode for him. Dipping his head, he planted an open mouthed kiss on her shoulder as he deliberately slowed his movements down, stroked her slowly.

"John!" she cried out in frustration.

She's always liked for him to tease her shoulder that way, and his slow movements putting more pressure on her clit had her body gripping him greedily now. She began to quiver inside and her body tightening around him, her fingers digging into his ribs. When she came, she cried out in his ear, her hands wild on him as her body pulsed around his cock. John held there beneath him, reveling in her release and her pleasure.

Frances gasped when he pulled out of her, but let him roll her onto her stomach. He kissed each white globe of her beautiful backside before lowering his weight onto her and entering her from behind. Frances felt so good beneath him, inside as he resumed his rhythm in her body.

Brushing her hair back from her ear, he treated the little shell with kisses as he reached beneath her for to find the tight little bud at her center. "You're so beautiful," he whispered. "I've missed you so much."

But Frances only gasped sharply as he began to play with her clit

STIFF COMPETITION

again, her little hands twisting in the bed sheets as her mouth gaped open. Her body squeezed around his cock and he knew she was close, wanted her to come again. John thrust harder and faster until Frances yelled his name, her head thrown back as the orgasm took her.

Stopping as she recovered, John brushed her shoulder with a kiss.

Damp strands of Frances's blonde hair, tousled about her head and shoulders now, clung to her forehead and neck.

"I've missed you, too, John," she whispered. "That was incredible."

John pushed in and out of her slowly, still hard as a rock.

"Was?"

Frances groaned as John resumed sliding in and out of her, but he didn't miss the little smile on her face before she turned her head on the pillow.

* * *

Tuesday, 1:17 AM

"Frances?"

"No!" Frances hadn't been asleep long, but she instantly remembered that John was there and that she'd just had the best sex of her life, many times over. "Absolutely not. I won't be able to walk tomorrow as it is."

"Frances, I—"

"When did you take that thing?"

Pulling the covers up to her breasts, she sat up. John was already sitting up and the look on his face was anxious.

"Do you want to go to the emergency room?" she asked. Was he okay?

"What?"

"The product specs said that if the results lasted longer than four hours to seek medical attention," Frances reminded him.

Shaking his head, John sighed.

STIFF COMPETITION

“Yes, that means they would be dead.” John laughed. “Probably from a heart attack or something.”

Frances smiled at him, but the anxiety was still on his face for her to see.

“I couldn’t sleep,” he said finally.

“Why?”

John waved his hand. “Because of all this. Because of you.”

Her heartbeat perked up at that. It had been hard for her to get to sleep thinking about it all. But she’d finally slept from sheer exhaustion.

John’s deep blue eyes met hers. “Frances, I’m not sure I can give you up again. I was in love with you, you know. Before you accused me of stealing the Mortensen account and kicking me out. I knew you didn’t want to hear it because love would only get in the way of your career, but I did.”

Frances stared at him, shocked by his words. “What?”

“You heard me.” Running his hand back through the short sandy locks of his hair, he watched for her reaction, trying to read her. “Did you feel anything at all for me?”

“Of course, I did. Do.” Frances couldn’t believe he’d asked her that. “How can you say that I didn’t want you to love me?”

“You’re so damned ambitious,” John muttered.

“*I’m* ambitious?” Frances wanted to know, remembering the betrayal she’d felt when they parted ways. “We went to the party at Benny’s house and you met Ivan Mortensen there and started talking about football. The next thing I know you’re taking over the account. And you think I’m ambitious?”

“Hey, hey,” John placed a gentle hand on her shoulder. “I know. You’re right. I am, too. I know I gave you that bullshit about how he and I meshed and all, but I guess I did steal the account from you. I didn’t set out to.”

STIFF COMPETITION

His admission should have made her feel victorious, self-righteous. Any other time it would have. But something about the way he said it had her heart doing flip-flops.

"And I really paid for it, Frances." His finger traced a circle on her shoulder, his touch so feather light that she shivered from it. "I lost you. And I don't think I've really been happy since that day."

"John, I—"

"I'm thinking," he cut her off, "that maybe coming back to Chicago wouldn't be a bad thing. I don't think I could work for you though."

He stopped and laughed at that. Frances laughed right along with him. No she couldn't see that arrangement working out.

"But I would love another chance with you."

His eyes were deep blue pools of emotion as they searched her face.

"I love you, John," Frances admitted. "I always did. I guess I never told you for the same reason you never told me. We worked together and if you hadn't felt the same it would have been so uncomfortable."

"Or ended as it did anyway?" John leaned forward and brushed a light kiss on her mouth. "I love you. Will you give us another chance?"

Frances nodded before she leaned forward to wrap her arms about his neck and pull him close for a deep kiss and she poured all of her feelings into it. John held her to him in his strong arms, kissing her back with a passion that made her lightheaded.

Both them had been the biggest fools. But Frances had no intention of ever letting him get away from her again.

John pulled away to gaze into her eyes, his expression stilled and serious.

"Say the word and I'll come back to Chicago, Frances," he whispered. "I'll do it."

That he would give up a job and a city that he obviously enjoyed for her moved her more than she could say. She knew then that promotion, ad campaigns—none of it was as important as him and her feelings for

STIFF COMPETITION

him. But it was late, the time not right for that sort of decision. When he started to say something else, she pressed her fingers to his lips.

“It’s too late to think about that right now,” she whispered. “Let’s get some rest, get through the Invigra campaign.”

After a moment, he nodded. A smile formed on his face. “Okay.”

Settling back into the bed, Frances curled on her side and smiled as John curled up behind her, the warmth of his big body comforting and familiar. Snuggling back against him, she felt the heat of his erection at the back of her thigh.

“We’re just sleeping right?” she was only half-teasing.

His laughter was a deep rumble behind her. “Anything else would be impossible for me right now. I couldn’t fuck like I did earlier when I was seventeen.”

Frances giggled at that and pulled his arm around her as she drifted off to sleep.

* * *

Friday, 6:07 PM

“I’m delighted that you like our ad campaign for Invigra, Mr. Taft.” Dennis grinned from ear to ear as he spoke into the receiver. “My two best execs worked on it and I agree with you that they knocked the hell out of it. We’ll get started on Monday.”

Mr. Taft again told Dennis how delighted he was with their work and ended the conversation. Dennis hung up the phone, extremely proud of himself.

He’d had a feeling that if he put both Frances and John on the assignment he’d have the best product to offer, and they didn’t let him down. The entire concept of putting the steam back in couples’ relationships as a selling point was just right, would be universal across all age groups and maybe include an audience outside those with the dreaded erectile dysfunction. They suggested using a little racy,

STIFF COMPETITION

suggestive material but hell, with the prime time television today it would fit right in.

Still, there'd been a price for Dennis. It had been a gamble and he'd known that when he'd put his plan in motion. But as he walked to the doorway and watched John and Francis standing arm in arm talking to their coworkers, he decided that things had worked out just fine.

Frances had turned in her resignation with the ad campaign. She was moving to Seattle to find another position in another company. He hated to lose her, but as he watched her glance at John now and again, her green eyes all shiny, he knew it was the best thing for her. It was the happiest he'd ever seen her. And darned if John weren't glancing at her like a love-struck teenager.

Winking at Frances when he caught her eye, Dennis turned and walked back into his office.

ISABELLA JORDAN

Isabella Jordan is the author of several published short stories and articles. By day Isabella is an instructor at a university in her native Virginia. By night she writes erotic tales and fantasies—and eats chocolate! In her spare time she enjoys life. While Isabella enjoys spending quiet time with her family and reading, she also enjoys bungee jumping, hiking, walking in the rain, rock 'n' roll and volunteering at her local women's shelter.

Isabella would love to hear from readers. Please visit her web site at www.isabellajordan.com or write to her at isa@isabellajordan.com.

* * *

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