

an Important Man and me

by

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**INT. COFFEE SHOP - PRIVATE ROOM - MORNING.**

CARDIN (17) steps through a curtain into a small private room. Holding coffee in his right hand and folder held under the same arm.

In the middle of the room is a table which sits JOHN (35) with a clear appearance of both success and ego.

JOHN  
Cardin. Take a seat.

Cardin responds by reaching out his left hand followed by Matts right.

CARDIN  
Oh sorry, that is correct.

He retracts and sets down his coffee, shakes his hand properly and sits down.

CARDIN (CONT'D)  
Great to get to meet you Sir.

JOHN  
Great to meet you. You know, it's great to see someone so young like you already taking initiative.

CARDIN  
Thank you. Yeah, I care a lot about architecture.

JOHN  
(friendly smile)  
So. do. I...

CARDIN  
Can I ask?

JOHN  
Ask away.

CARDIN  
What's a day in the life for you?  
As an architect.

John looks at his folder.

JOHN  
Well actually today is a little bit different for me. I am pitching a building actually in a few hours.

John motions towards folder.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
That's all in here.

CARDIN  
Oh wow... Can I see it?

JOHN  
Oh, well no, I'm sorry I can't actually show it until the deal is made. Especially to another architect.

WE PAN TO A CU of Cardin.

**TITLE:**

the Important Man and i

**PRIVATE ROOM**

We see a blank green wall.

We PAN back towards John.

JOHN  
So, I've really enjoyed getting coffee with you, it's clear you really know what you are talking about when it comes to architecture, but... why did you want to meet me?

CARDIN, young and nervous, takes a sip of his coffee and looks up at John.

CARDIN  
Well... I--

JOHN  
--Not in a rude way, I've enjoyed this, but is there something...

John slightly pulls his head right as he waits for an answer.

CARDIN  
Sorry. Here it is...

CARDIN finds the words he is going to use.

CARDIN (CONT'D)

You can totally say no to this, well of course you know that, well. But as I told you, I want to be an architect, like you. I have been pursuing this for a number of years now and I think I know my stuff.

JOHN

You do.

CARDIN

And in order for me to become an architect, like you.

JOHN

Like me.

CARDIN

I need experience, experience that puts me ahead of my peers. College is great, but formal educa... I need... I want to see if you would let me work for you. I think I could actually be of value to you, despite my age.

Blank face from John.

JOHN

Okay. So you want to shadow me?

CARDIN

Well yes. I want to see if you would be interested in getting some free helping hands over the next few months.

John continues to look blankly at Cardin.

CARDIN (CONT'D)

And it's not just me wanting a mentor, which I do want that, but I believe I could be of benefit to you.

John looks down at his coffee.

CARDIN (CONT'D)

I think I have good--

JOHN

--Hold that thought. I'm going to go get more coffee and I'll give you more time to make your case.

John leaves through the curtain to get more coffee. Cardin sits alone. He puts his folder on the table and plans out the words he will use.

WE SWITCH SIDES. Cardin is now looking left.

John comes back in with his coffee and a pastry.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Alright.

CARDIN

(hands on his folder)

Can I show you--

JOHN

--First I need to say, I don't need help. But I would like to help a young man who may be like myself.

CARDIN

Yes.

JOHN

So allow me to dig in a little more.

CARDIN

Okay.

JOHN

--What is your personal ambition?

Cardin pauses. Doesn't know what to say.

CARDIN

Well... I want... I want to design a skyscraper.

JOHN

Come on say it confidently.

CARDIN

I want to design a skyscraper.

JOHN

Well. I have good news.  
(subtle arrogant laugh)  
You can do that now.

CARDIN

And I have, sorry. I want to be credited with the design of a *built* skyscraper.

JOHN

There we go. And how would you describe yourself?

CARDIN

I am--

JOHN

--Give me three adjectives.

CARDIN

Okay. Determined, Creative and easy to work with.

JOHN

(disappointed)

Hmmm. Okay, that's all I need to hear.

CARDIN

Well wait up, what did I say wrong.

JOHN

It's the equation. You got the equation wrong.

CARDIN

Well, what equation?

JOHN

You want to be credited with designing a skyscraper and you said you are determined, creative and easy to work with. Those aren't the three that lead to a skyscraper.

CARDIN

Well how so?

JOHN

Building a skyscraper is all an illusion until it's built.

CARDIN

What do you mean?

JOHN

Everyone pretends it's going to be built until it actually does. You can't pull that off being easy going.

CARDIN

I never said I was easy going, I said I was easy to work with.

JOHN

Well that's not part of the equation.

CARDIN

Well hold up John. I came here to admire your work, hopefully learn from you, you came here to tell me everything I've spent my life working on is going to fail?

JOHN

Well, judging by your age you haven't wasted a lot of time. And yes, because the world has been telling you a lie.

Cardin stares blankly as John.

JOHN (CONT'D)

That lie is to follow your dreams.

CARDIN

Well fuck, that's what you did isn't it?

JOHN

America has enough architects, but not enough people to build and maintain the fucking building.

CARDIN

Well with or with out you I'm still going to pursue this full force. And you can go fuck yourself because here is the truth... I will be successful and when I do I'm going to build a skyscraper just a tad taller than yours for no other reason to shit all over your arrogance.

John is smiling.

Carding looks back his anger slowly shifts to confusion.

JOHN  
That's it. That's what you missed.

CARDIN  
What is?

JOHN  
Ruthlessness. That's the missing ingredient to the equation.

John looks at Cardin's folder.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
(laughing)  
Show me your design.

CARDIN  
Wait. Oh shit. Shoot. I am sorry about that.

JOHN  
Get back to the ruthless you I am trying to train you.

CARDIN  
Oh.

Cardin pulls his design out of his folder and hands it to John. John looks at the design in amazement.

JOHN  
Shit.

Tension rises in John as he feels a teenager may match his own talent.

Cardin stares at him seriously, anticipating his thoughts.

CARDIN  
Do you mean *shit* in a good way or a bad way? It's just a work in progress.

John looks up at Cardin.

JOHN  
Well... You see...

John takes a bite of his food and begins to choke.

CARDIN  
Are you alright John?



John stands up choking. He then falls to the ground. Cardin is sitting across the table in shock.

Cardin looks at John lying on the floor and then at Johns folder.

Moment of decision.

Cardin grabs the folder. Takes documents and puts them in his own folder.

Note reads "Meeting at 2:30". Cardin looks at his watch.

Heads to the door then pauses. Turns around to call 911.

END