

MM-EE

He didn't know what to say. Not only had Nicholas failed to gain control of her own classroom, but a parent had to do his job for him.

Way to go, Nicholas.

"Um, officer, I'm ... I didn't know," Nicholas said.

Goodness this man was hot, though. That five o'clock shadow, those dark eyebrows that framed his impossible-to-look-away-from crystal blue eyes.

And a cop? Those biceps busting out of his rolled up sleeves, those muscular thighs fitted in his tight pants.

Nicholas had to admit to himself, he'd taken a quick look at his rear end too, and it was worth the risk of getting caught.

Manly perfection, just the way he liked it.

Nicholas didn't know where to put his hands. He'd never been this nervous around a man before. His stomach was in knots.

Should he put his hands on his side, crossed or perhaps wrapped around the gorgeous handsome police officer like his daughter had done?

Nicholas cleared her throat. He had to pull it together. "Mr. O'Brian, I presume?" he said, trying to remain professional. What a stupid thing to say. He already knew his name.

The officer flashed Nicholas a toothy smile, calm, cool, collected. Completely comfortable in his own skin.

"Dean, and you presumed right," he said, swinging his daughter back and forth. His voice was deep and smooth. Nicholas imagined him rumbling in his ear.

The officer must have been a little older than Nicholas, late 20s. The perfect age. He could see traces of salt and pepper hair. Just his type.

He fanned himself and cleared his throat once again.

“Chloe was jumping off the chair over and over again. I... Well, he wouldn’t listen. I turned my back only for a second and—”

He stared at the floor. Why couldn’t he look him in the eye? Maybe he was ashamed of his lack of child care skills, maybe he was disoriented.

Then again, maybe he worried he’d get lost in his eyes.

“Hey,” he said, not saying a word until Nicholas’s eyes met his.

“Yes?” he said, his voice going up a pitch.

He grinned at Nicholas, and suddenly he was at ease. “It’s no big deal. She knows better than that. Don’t you, darling?”

“Uh-huh,” Chloe said, biting her lip and batting her eyelashes at her daddy. The girl was a natural.

“You’re not going to do that again, are you?” he asked, his voice lowering into discipline-mode.

Nicholas had to pull himself away from his mesmerizing crystal blue eyes. He looked across the way through the hall’s floor-to-ceiling windows.

Great. At the other end of the school, his fellow teachers ogled the hunk through the window too.

He was embarrassed and yet oddly jealous, as if he’d found him first and wanted no one else to have him.

Then again, why would someone like the officer be interested in someone like him? Nicholas wasn’t the buff guy he used to

be.

He hadn't gone on a date since he ran away from his abusive boyfriend. He wasn't rich. He wasn't from a high class family.

And he was broken, living in a protective shell, and suffering from heartbreak.

The officer chuckled. " You all right, Mr. Vega?"

"Uh, yeah. I ... once again, I'm so sorry for ..." Nicholas said.

"No, I'm sorry. I should have introduced myself. What do you say I make it up to you?" asked the officer.

Nicholas eyebrows furrowed in concern. "Make it up to me?"

He gave Nicholas a wink that made him weak in the knees. "I'll take you to coffee where I can continue insinuating and sticking my foot in my mouth. "

Nicholas blushed. My God, was this hot man flirting with him or was it just wishful thinking?

Nicholas re-organized the chairs, which were perfectly fine before; anything but look this man in the eye. "We are not allowed to fraternize with parents."

"Whoa, whoa, whoa. Who said anything about fraternizing? You're moving too fast for me, babe," he said, cracking a smile.

Nicholas laughed. My God, he was flirting.

[SHOULD YOU SAY YES AND HAVE COFFEE WITH HIM?](#)

[SHOULD YOU SAY NO. YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO HAVE YOUR HEART HURT AGAIN.](#)