

Vanille found herself toiling away at yet another job. *Ugh*, she wanted to quit already.

This week, before she would inevitably quit like all of her other jobs, her job was at Bunbucks, the trendiest and busiest coffee chain in the heart of Burrowgatory. The scent of freshly brewed coffee wafted through the air, mixing with the scent of freshly baked pastries, like scones and croissants.

Vanille, dressed in the uniform of a perky pink apron and a matching visor, stood behind the bustling counter with a rather rotten expression.

She was in charge of taking orders, preparing lattes, and serving customers with a smile—something she found increasingly challenging as the day went on. Her naturally sultry look wasn't ideal for a job that required bubbly enthusiasm, but earning carats was a top priority. She needed to fund her habits; she'd be completely miserable otherwise.

The line of customers stretched out the door, and she felt like she was in a never-ending stream of caramel macchiatos and cinnamon swirls. Vanille's forked demon's tail, usually swaying seductively, now twitched impatiently.

She couldn't help but grumble, "Ugh, what is it with these people and their caffeine cravings..."

Hops had come in for a coffee break from her usual job at the Rabbit Hole, a well-known establishment where spirits and merriment flowed freely.

She overheard Vanille's complaint and said happily, "You know, I'm taking a break from alcohol today, and coffee seemed like the right choice. But I didn't expect to walk into a caffeine war zone."

Vanille sighed, rubbing her paw against the tuft of hair on her face. "Carats are the name of the game. Unfortunately... what's next on the list? Please be nice, Hops."

Hops grinned.

She was so not gonna be nice.

"Let's see, a venti vanilla latte with an extra shot of espresso, almond milk, and a sprinkle of cinnamon. A blueberry scone, but only if it's been baked this morning. And a frosted donut with precisely twenty-four, not twenty-three, rainbow sprinkles."

Vanille arched an eyebrow. "Seriously? Are you fucking with me?"

Hops smiled brightly. "Yes, of course I am. Please, Vanille, just a venti vanilla latte, with the almond milk and cinnamon. The scone, I don't care when it's been made. And you can scrap the frosted donut I made up!"

"We don't even serve donuts here..." Vanille grumbled.

Hops giggled. "I know! But c'mon, that's the spirit! Make that drink! Keep it up, and you'll be rolling in carats in no time."

As Vanille tried to put together the complicated order, she found herself muttering under her breath, "Here's your caffeine bomb, almond latte, baked-since-dawn scone."

Hops took a sip of the coffee and beamed. "You're a lifesaver! I can actually face the day now."

Vanille couldn't help but smile. "Well, I aim to please," she said, sparing her smile only for her dear friend. "Have a good day, Hops."

"I'll try not to be piss drunk by 1pm!" Hops said before bounding out the door.

Vanille wished she was piss drunk...

The morning rush continued, each customer testing her patience with their unique demands. But as the hours ticked by, Vanille's mood started to sour. She began to mutter underneath her breath, "I can't believe how people turn into monsters over their coffee..."

Suddenly, a customer approached the counter, looking entitled as ever. "I need an iced chai latte, extra spicy, with exactly seven ice cubes, stirred clockwise, not counterclockwise."

Vanille stared at the customer, disbelief written all over her face. She couldn't help it; her customer service face would simply not come to her. "You've got to be kidding me," she all but spat her words, even if it meant she'd be fired. "Seven ice cubes, clockwise, and no counterclockwise stirring? Is this a secret ritual or something?"

The customer shrugged. "I just like it that way."

Vanille, growing increasingly impatient, grabbed the order slip and muttered, "Alright, alright. Clockwise, it is."

As she served the peculiar iced chai latte, Vanille couldn't help but roll her eyes. "You'd think people were summoning ancient coffee deities with these requests."

By the time her shift was coming to an end, Vanille had served hundreds of drinks and smiled through countless absurd orders. She couldn't help but feel a sense of accomplishment... kinda.

Texting Hops, Vanille said:

I ACTUALLY FUCKING DID IT

Hops immediately texted back:

LET'S GO GIRLS YOU MADE IT THROUGH THAT SHIFT!!!!  
UNFORTUNATELY AM PISS DRUNK THO.

Smiling to herself as she clocked out and thought of how many carats she'd have soon, she couldn't help but hype herself up to return to Bunbucks the next day. Yup, super hype. Even if her co-workers and customers were shit and the pay actually wasn't all that good... it would be fine! Probably. She totally wouldn't quit this time!