

Congress Duty – Max Stewart

Taylor Su-Chong heard her alarm and groaned. She knew that she would have to get out of bed and turn off the thing at some point, but this had taken a distant place in her mind behind the fact that she did not want to get out of bed. Eventually a combination of the ever growing sound, and the fact that she would have to get up and go to work over took her and she woke up.

She had put the speaker for her implant on the other side of the room so she would have to get up for it in order to turn the thing off. This necessitated her to actually get up and walk over there instead of just putting it back in its place and going back to sleep. Even still her falling back asleep had gotten her late to work several times. Fortunately this was not one of those days as she was able to get up, put the small black button in its slot next to her ear, and started getting ready.

It was starting to become apparent that waking up a half hour before she had to leave was not conducive for a comfortable morning but this was something she was determined not to face this particular morning. So she brushed her teeth while checking for messages and calls on the Implant attached to her forearm. Once this was done she grabbed a protein bar from her cabinet and walked through the dressing hall that put on some clean clothes for her work day. She ignored the notice that told her that she barely had any clean clothes left. The system was set to just take the first pair of dirty clothes she had made and put them on her the next day. However because the system could not be programmed not to mix dirty clothes with clean ones she was wearing a bright purple pair of exercise pants. It didn't really matter, the dress code wasn't really enforced at work and she had been there for three years now.

As she got on one of the elevators that would take her underground to the office columns she started to space out. She was checking the clock that told her whether she would be late when a large red notice took up almost all of her implant. It read simply “NOTICE: URGENT MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT ATTORNIERS OFFICE OF NEW TORONTO.”

Well this couldn't be good. What could it possibly be? A fine of some kind? She decided that she wasn't going to wait for it to become more of an issue and just opened up the message. There was a bombardment of miniscule text, but at the top of the message was “CONGRESS SUMMONS” in big fancy text.

“Oh Come On!” Taylor said as she tilted her head back and spoke a little louder than she probably should have while in public transportation. At some point in the day she would have to report to the congressional hall and tomorrow she would start to serve as a legislator for the next year, it would be even worse if she got elected for a second term.

She'd have to quit her job, or at least go on some kind of hiatus, but she doubted that her boss would go for that, she had not been quite a good enough of worker to justify that, not to mention that she had been late several times in the past few weeks.

She kept reading the document, and the only options for not serving in congress appeared to be either serving in the military or over 90 years old. She had laughed at the thought of joining the military and was also barely out of her 20s. She kept thinking of a way to fight this as the elevator stopped and all the people started moving.

On the plus side she wouldn't have to pay for food or rent for about a year, which was nice enough. But she would be receiving an abysmally low salary, and she had no interest in

sitting for hours listening to the pros and cons of various laws that may or may not be put into effect.

When she showed up at her office it was nothing special. She saw one of the new hires walk away from her boss, Ahmed Javier, with tears on her face. The new worker slunk back to her cubicle and Ahmed walked back into his office and slammed the door. Taylor considered just letting him know tomorrow but figured that waiting would only make things even worse in the long run. She walked up to the door of his office and knocked on the door. She heard him scream “NOT NOW”. Apparently he was having a bad day as well.

When she looked through the window she saw him screaming at nothing, presumably he was yelling at someone on the other side of his implant. She waited for him to push the button on his forearm firmly. Everyone was waiting for him to crack the thing.

She stepped into his office. “What is it Su-Chong?” he asked as he rubbed his finger, apparently he had come closer to breaking his finger than he had the implant.

“Umm, sir, I’ve been summoned for congress. So I was wondering if I could get...”

He cut her off by throwing a cup of coffee at the wall and screaming several obscenities. “This is just what we need Su-Chong! Just what we need! Get out! You are fired!”

Taylor ran out to avoid his rage, thinking that at least she got a day off out of this. She stepped out and walked to the Elevator to go back home. Floating above it was a notice that there was some kind of a delay and there wouldn’t be another elevator to her level until noon.

Well, no job, and congress duty starting tomorrow she had nothing to do but go to the hall and register. It was a short walk to the Office Level Center and the elevators to Congressional hall were probably still working.

The walk was depressingly dull. Just a lot of metal and fluorescent lights everywhere. But eventually she made it to the center and found that the elevator was indeed working and she could take her to the hall.

It being peak work hours no one was on the elevator except a few laborers, so it took a bit of a wait but she still got there fairly quickly. Congressional hall was the one place in the city that was above ground, so she got to see the dark grey skies for a change. At least actually being outside for a change would be nice once she was a congresswoman.

She walked through the courtyard and into the hall. The Building was mostly white and had several columns, with several digital panels on several walls and columns. As soon as she walked past one to find someone to talk to about registering one of the panels lit up “I see you have been selected to serve in congress. Would you like some help?”

She walked over to the panel and saw a friendly looking man wearing glasses on the screen. “Um Hi, It says I can register here?”

The man floated to the corner and said “Fill this form out here!” In an enthusiastic voice.

Taylor stared for a moment. “I don’t suppose there is any way to get out of congress duty?” she said half-jokingly.

“Nice Try.” Said the man on the terminal with a smile.