

Short Story – Monsters Now Hiring

“Three job interviews today! Wish me luck! <3,” tweeted a prepared and eager young Leya.

9:03 a.m. – Feratu Consulting Firm – “Pleasure to finally meet you!” the firm’s interviewer said with a thick, Eastern-European accent as he pulled out the chair opposite his desk. As Leya sat, she could feel the interviewer lean in close to her neck. “You’re the kind of new blood we need around here.” Leya fidgeted uncomfortably.

10:19 a.m. – Lurchington Bank – “Your resume shows you have brains,” uttered the bank’s gaunt and ashen interviewer as a fly buzzed about him, entering one ear and exiting the other. Leya held down her breakfast. The smell of decaying flesh wasn’t helping matters as the interviewer continued, “Brains good.”

11:27 a.m. – Fullmoon.com – “No doubt. More than qualified to help us rip the competition right to shreds!” growled the startup’s interviewer with an unkempt mane of hair. His blood-shot eyes, densely hairy knuckles and generally aggressive, uncontained demeanor unnerved Leya.

As she drove back to her home, Leya was disappointed over the morning’s series of interviews. None of the companies seemed the right fit. She sighed as she longed for employment at Conquest Enterprises, a mighty corporation perched within one of those mile-high skyscrapers that glimmer brightly in the sun at the heart of downtown, but where she didn’t have any connections and that had unsurprisingly not contacted her for an interview. She’d heard they had a particularly exclusive hiring process. Regardless, the company had a peculiar appeal to Leya that came to her in her very dreams.

Suddenly, Leya made a rapid U-turn to furious honks of incoming traffic! The day wasn’t over.

1:05 p.m. – Conquest Enterprises – Leya stormed into the cavernous, marble lobby. Her rash, desperate plan was to present herself as a viable candidate to anyone who would listen and hopefully land an interview or, at the very least, effectively put her foot in the door.

As she rode the elevator skyward, Leya took in a deep, confident breath as she mentally reviewed her ample qualifications: summa cum laude MBA graduate, recipient of four prestigious scholarships, active member of numerous business clubs and organizations, and leader of countless projects as an extensively experienced intern. “I’ve got this,” she mused.

The elevator made a stop prior to reaching her desired floor. A man entered and gave an oddly knowing smile to Leya as if they’d met before. After the elevator doors closed, the man asked, “88th floor?” without looking at the floor access panel. Leya was surprised and curtly affirmed. “Hi, I’m Conq’s VP,” the man said, extending his hand. Leya instantly met it with hers and lit up, “Oh, wow! I’m Leya and I’m really interested in working for your company. I just got my MBA but I have *so much* experience and-“ The VP was amused and interrupted, “Your experience is irrelevant, Leya. I’ll introduce you to our president for a quick one-on-one.” Leya nervously beamed as the elevator doors opened to the 88th floor.

“Why do you want to work for us?” asked Conquest’s president frankly.

“I believe in Conquest and I feel I am eminently qualified to-“

“Why do you *really* want to work for us?” restated the president.

Leya continued with her same polite affect, “I’ve had a great deal of experience as-“

The president groaned loudly. And growing impatient, went for the jugular. “You’re not fooling us, ya know. Even with that unusually convincing skin job.”

Leya’s eyes widened in surprise. “He knows,” she thought.

“Times are most dire for our proud and ancient race. Our Grand Empress is in grief over our lack of advancement in this crucial quadrant of the galaxy and needs all of her precious, scattered brood to unite and assist with the subjugation of her rightful worlds,” the president stated with a calm urgency.

Leya looked downcast, absorbing the president’s revelatory words.

“So, what say you? Are you ready to join us and serve our desperate cause?” the president posed.

Leya looked up with a tear in her eye, “All hail Our Grand Empress of the Twin Moons!”