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The Divorced Woman

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5.2 The Divorced Woman

In the early 1980s, my immediate supervisor was a woman. She was divorced from a previous marriage and was living alone, somewhere in Accra.

The nature of our job schedule, as Inspectors, required regular morning briefing at the woman's office during which we brainstormed on issues relating to our work. Sometimes, the discussions spilled over to personal issues which were treated frankly and in detail.

I noticed a particular affection on the part of my boss for me; and being relatively young and still adventurous, I gradually warmed myself in response to her advances. It started with my being summoned, almost daily, to her office for discussion of my reports. Almost invariably, the discussions centred around my relationship with the female staff in the office, and what I thought about her (my boss) as a woman. I detected a trace of jealousy in her admonition to me to be careful about my interactions with "those girls."

These "love discussions" continued for some time with each of us testing whether the response from the other person was the right signal to proceed further. Even though she knew I was married, she started to accelerate the pace of our amorous discussions by getting direct into "things." She started "playing romance" with me anytime I had a chance to be with her alone in her office. I must here confess that I participated fully in the said "love plays".

Then, one day she asked me to have sex with her in her office. That was after everyone had closed from the office. She had, for reasons best known to her, accompanied me, that afternoon, to some organisations (under my supervision) which had persistently refused to comply with regulations. I had not suspected any sinister motive as this was a normal inspection, periodically undertaken by my boss to all the organisations under our jurisdiction. The two of us had arrived back at the office well after closing time, and there was only the watchman at the entrance.

The request for sex at the office initially jolted me but I immediately regained my composure and started with the initial "love play". After fondling her for sometime, I told her I was going to wait outside the door while she removed her underwear. However, outside the room, I became fully aware of the gravity of the situation. I thought about my faithfulness to my wife and also about the whole love affair with my supervisor, *vis-a-vis* its effect on my job performance at the office. I was really in a "dilemma." With these thoughts and fears in my mind, I descended the stairs from the office, bade good night to the watchman and went home. I never told my wife, nor discussed the incident with anybody. As if by design, none of us revisited the issue even though we still continued with the daily morning briefings. I must, however, say that until she was moved to another department, I always carried a heavy feeling of "trust betrayed", as regards our brief relationship.

Questions which may be useful for discussion

1. What experiences from life came to mind as you read this case?
2. At the moment of truth did the man "chicken out" or did he behave sensibly? If you found yourself in a similar situation what would you do?
3. What factors seem to sustain and encourage office romance? When
4. entangled in office romance would you discuss the matter with your spouse — why or why not? What title would you give to
5. this case?