

THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA

Chapter 1 The interview



I stood in the lobby of the Elias-Clark building. Beautiful women and men went in and out of the lifts. They had perfect hair and perfect bodies, and wore fabulous clothes. This world was new to me and I knew nothing about it.

I come from a small town in Connecticut. I studied English at Brown University, in Providence. At Brown we wore jeans and jumpers. We went walking in the country and wrote about English books and plays. We never thought about fashion.

I was just back from travelling for three months in Europe and Asia with my boyfriend, Alex. I was sleeping

on the floor of my best friend Lily's flat. And I was looking for a job.

I wanted to be a magazine writer. I really wanted to work for *The New Yorker*. So I wrote letters to all the New York magazine publishers and asked for a job – any job. I had one answer – from Elias-Clark. They published lots of magazines – from serious to film to fashion.

'It's difficult to get into magazines right after university,' said Sharon. Sharon was the girl who met me in the lobby at Elias-Clark. 'There are very few jobs ... and the pay isn't great! We have one fantastic job right now, but it's going to go fast.'

We sat down.

'Do you know who the editor of *Runway* magazine is, Andrea?'

I didn't.

'Her name is Miranda Priestly,' she said quietly. 'She is *the* most important woman in fashion ... in the world! Emily is her first assistant. And we are looking for someone to be her second assistant!'

So here I was. In a lift in the Elias-Clark building, heading for *Runway* magazine on the seventeenth floor. I looked down at my cheap suit and my flat shoes.

Maybe I'll just go home now.

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Emily met me. She looked fabulous but she didn't smile.

'It's a hard job,' she said. 'Some days you have to work fourteen hours. And there is *no* editorial work – *no* writing. As Miranda's second assistant, your job is to look after her. You help her to live her life and do her job. It's great. Just great. You spend every day with this fantastic woman. A million girls out there would love this job.'

'Sounds great,' I said and I wasn't lying.

'Miranda fired the last two girls after only a few weeks,' said Emily. 'But work one year for Miranda, and you can get a job on any magazine in New York.'

And then I met Miranda.



'What brings you to *Runway*, Ahn-dre-ah?' she asked. She was English and spoke in a very British way.

'I know that you're looking for an assistant,' I said. 'I've talked to Sharon and Emily ... and I think I'm perfect for the job.'

I was so wrong for this job. It wasn't just my hair and clothes. My attitude was even more wrong. I knew nothing

about fashion and I didn't *care*! So why did I suddenly want the job so much? Maybe because a million other girls wanted it, too?

She asked me lots of questions about myself.

'So you want to be a writer,' she said. 'Does that mean you're not interested in fashion?'

'Oh no, I love fashion,' I lied. 'And I want to learn more about it. I would love to write about fashion one day.'

Where did that come from?

'Which magazines do you read?' she asked.

'Well, I get *The New Yorker* and *Newsweek* every week. And then I read *Time* magazine sometimes. And I read all the travel magazines ...'

'And do you read *Runway*, Ahn-dre-ah?'

'No.'

She looked at me for ten seconds without speaking. The interview was over.

Chapter 2 My first week

The next morning the phone rang. I opened my eyes and looked at my watch. It was seven o'clock! *Who calls at seven in the morning?*

'Andrea, good morning,' Sharon sang. 'I have very good news. Miranda liked you and she wants to work with you. Isn't that wonderful? Can you start on Monday? Miranda's on holiday, so that's a great time to start. Andrea? Are you there ... ?'

I didn't even live in New York yet. I needed a few days to find a room and get some furniture.

In the end we agreed – I could start a week later.
