

Sophia wakes with the sun. She stretches and offers gratitude to the universe for such a beautiful morning. Sophia nudges Hamish with her foot and he gives a soft meow before he slinks off the bed. Hamish has his own bed but prefers to sneak into Sophia's space during the night. He receives a telling off every morning. It's their routine.

The kitchen walls are painted with golden morning light as Sophia lays her yoga mat on the vinyl floor. Some people need caffeine to wake up, Sophia prefers vinyasana. She connects her mind and breath and channels her anticipation into the postures. Today is the day.

Sophia takes a quick snap of her hot water and lemon to share with her followers, updating them on the progress of her morning. She scrolls through the Twittersphere, scattering stars and likes over everything. Sophia drags to refresh, drags to refresh and drags to refresh, ignoring the 'no new media' notification. Bored with the lack of online content, Sophia heads back upstairs to begin getting ready for the interview. She selects a safe black dress and pairs it with red ankle boots, which in turn she pairs with red lipstick. Following an online tutorial video, Sophia pulls her hair into a French-twist and douses it with hairspray. As a second thought Sophia gives her nails a quick coat with scarlet varnish and then realises they won't be dry in time to get the bus. Sophia orders an Uber to take her into town. "Hamish, NO!" Sophia yells as her fat, ginger cat rubs affectionately against her legs. He deposits a selection of orange and white hairs onto Sophia's tights. Attempting to brush them off causes the hairs to glue themselves to her fresh nail polish giving a whiskered claw effect- like the Grinch. Sophia swears loudly at Hamish who takes no notice. Wishing she had eight arms, Sophia scrambles about trying to gather her things together. Her Uber is outside.

In the car Sophia fiddles with the air conditioning and uses the hot air to finish drying her nails. Having removed the cat hairs she is left with cheap looking scratched lacquer. The journey takes around fifteen minutes and Sophia has the driver drop her off round the corner so she has a chance to compose herself before making an entrance. "Namaste." Sophia nods to the driver as she steps out of the car. He looks confused but returns the nod. Sophia walks on the opposite side of the street and takes a peek inside the store. Honey & Copper is a luxury outlet specialising in bespoke jewellery and tailored clothes. The rails are exquisitely filled with silk, fur and tweed. Sophia looks at her reflection in the store as a vision of herself working inside. She feels a sense of connectedness. Giving the door a shove, Sophia finds it is not open. A small, gold sign suggests she ought to ring for assistance. Sophia rings the bell. After explaining herself over a video intercom, Sophia is allowed inside.

The olfactory experience makes Sophia's heart leap. Rich, cherry mahogany mixes with a musky, vanilla based perfume. Sophia does not know where to turn but is quickly rescued by an immaculately presented sales assistant. Sophia is shown swiftly round the store and advised to sit on a crimson pouffe outside a door with gold leaf detailing. The sales girl assures Sophia that they will call for her when they are ready. The girl's departing expression was one of familiarity which confused Sophia; she's never been to this store before. Chalking it up to good training, Sophia takes a moment to ground herself. She feels

the velvet pouffe, breathes in the myriad of luxury smells and exhales the butterflies right out of her stomach. With no warning the door opens.

“Ms Goldbrooke?” an older gentleman with a Dali moustache offers his hand to shake. The rings on his fingers hurt Sophia’s skinny fingers. She winces internally. He gestures for her to precede him into the room. An older lady rises to meet Sophia, also offering a heavily adorned hand to shake.

“Welcome, Ms. Goldbrooke. I must ask you to take a seat.” The lady gestures to a comfortable looking leather chair. The couple introduce themselves as Mr and Mrs Cooper, the founders of Honey & Copper. The interview begins.

None of the questions have phased Sophia so far. She has experience from an astonishing record of employment and has spoken with great passion and strength. Mr and Mrs Cooper are impressed and relieved to have found such a strong candidate to be the manager of the store along with other future boutiques. A momentary interruption from the sales assistant who had shown Sophia around brings the interview to a pause while Mr and Mrs Cooper excuse themselves from the room. Sophia takes this time to release the tension from her body and admire the furnishings of the room.

When the older couple return they are clutching a stack of papers. Sophia wonders if this is her new contract and cannot stop the happy somersault in her chest.

“This is the stage where we offer you the opportunity to present us with any questions you may have, Ms. Goldbrooke?” Mrs Cooper speaks with a posh, middle England accent. Sophia struggles to deduce how the interview is going from Mrs Coopers tone. Sophia politely declines, wanting to ask when she can start but not intending to be presumptuous. The Coopers don’t look like they are in the business for laughter.

“Are you familiar with the word ‘ahimsa’, Ms Goldbrooke?” Mr Cooper asks. Sophia’s face lights up.

“Yes, I qualified as a yoga teacher while travelling through India and Thailand. Ahimsa is a Buddhist term for respect for all living things and...” Sophia does not get to finish her explanation as Mr Cooper holds a hand up to silence her.

“Are you also familiar with any of the following statements?” He hands Sophia the bundle of papers. Sophia starts to read, scanning the words in front of her. Post after post from her own twitter account, @ahimsababy. Not only peppered with violent language but a torrent of abuse against the government, her family, her neighbours, meat eaters and personal attacks at business empires shaming them for lack of tax, empathy and humility. Sophia reads misinformed political arguments embellished with foul language which could make a seasoned thug wince. Interspersed between the microaggressions are pictures of Sophia herself, drunk, middle fingers up or posing suggestively with a found object- occasionally topless. Out in the public domain for everyone to see. Sophia’s humiliation swings between her and the Coopers as though on a taunting pendulum of shame. The words barely slip as a whisper from her mouth.

“Thank you for your time.” Sophia shows herself to the door. She does not make eye contact with the sales girl, whose smile drips with salty smugness.

At home Sophia slumps onto her bed and feels around for Hamish. He has gone out. She allows her reality to sink in. Sophia has no job, no cat and one less follower on Twitter.