

# Oliver Pratt

*by* Coe Douglas

My job interview didn't go well. The woman behind the big desk spent the first five minutes looking at my resume and the second five telling me her husband was a cock sucker.

Then she said, "I had a busboy tell me I was a cougar once. What do you think?"

I asked her if this was still part of the interview.

"You're cute," she said. "You look like one of those character actors I always love to see in a film but who's name I can never recall."

"Like Oliver Platt?"

"Is he young and strong and cute and funny?" she asked.

"He's kind of fat, but pretty likeable."

"Is that some kind of joke," she asked. "Do I look like I'd be into some old fat guy?"

"No. He's just a familiar character actor," I said, stammering.

"You must not want this job very bad," she said. Then she repeated, kind of like a mantra, just barely audible, "Oliver Pratt, Oliver Pratt, Oliver Pratt."

"It's Platt, actually. Oliver...Platt."

She stopped, stood up and walked over to where I was sitting on the other side of her big Mahogany desk. Her shoes were off and she put her left foot on the chair, her toes on the edge, resting between my legs. "Pity. I would have liked to know you." She leaned in close. Her breath smelled of mint masking coffee. She whispered in my ear, "I'm a pretty hot fuck. I have a shirt I wear that reads MYLF. It means mom you'd like to fuck. But you'll never, ever, ever know." She let the word know trail off into a little puff of air.

Then, she sucked on my ear lobe—the wetness tickled—and went back to her desk. She sat and closed her eyes, then shivered like she was shaking me off and refocused on the task at hand. She smiled, exhaled and said, "Well, this didn't go well did it?"

"No, not well."

"No," she said. "I think we're done."

We lingered there in that room for a few moments, stuck in the awkward goo of rejection and regret. At some point, I'm not sure when, I left, found a bathroom down the hall and washed my ear.

