

The president had his own vices on the job, if I could put it that way. When I was press secretary, I began to notice that he was taking an unusual interest in a young, highly attractive press wrangler on my team. Yes, the same job I'd once had, which now seemed a lifetime ago. Let me be clear before I start: I do not know if and am not alleging that anything happened between the president and that woman. It would have been pretty hard for him to pull that off even if he'd wanted to. What I do know is that he behaved inappropriately. And since the woman worked for me, I tried to protect her and keep his unusual interest in her under wraps.

As I mentioned earlier, the press wranglers are in charge of escorting reporters into and out of the Oval Office and events and generally trying to keep them in line. Trump noticed some of those people, as he had me all those years ago. But that particular young woman he noticed way more than the others. If the president didn't see her with the press corps, he would ask me where she was. He would ask me if she were coming with us on foreign trips. When she did come along on trips, he often asked me to bring her to his office cabin in the aircraft, which he'd rarely done with anyone else. Sometimes I would make an excuse, but on the occasions when I couldn't find a way out of it, I always accompanied her and stayed in the cabin the whole time. My instincts were on full alert. The whole thing never felt quite right.

On Air Force One, I was in constant fear that the press would start to notice how often that Trump requested she come up. Usually press wranglers stay in the back with the press. When I accompanied her to the office cabin, I never said much other than he had requested to see her. I didn't actually know her that well, nor was I sure that she even sensed that Trump's attention was unusual. I certainly didn't want to freak her out or have her start talking about it with the press. "Put her on TV. Keep her happy, promote her" Trump would tell me. He even said that to her. "Do you want to be on TV? You'd be great on TV, a real star," which of course is the highest compliment in the Trump universe.

On one trip that my deputy went on in my absence, Trump asked how the woman was doing before instructing them to bring her to his office cabin. I got a call afterward relaying that the president had said, "Let's bring her up here and look at her ass." After that, I tried to keep her off trips. I didn't want to punish her for something that as far as I knew she had no part in. But I also knew I needed to protect her and, frankly, the president as well. There was one other option I considered. A couple of times I came close to telling Mrs. Trump about the president's behavior. I thought that if she would say one little word to him about it, she could make it stop. But I could never bring myself to say anything. Maybe I just didn't want her to have to go through all the shit I was going through. Maybe she wouldn't believe me. Maybe she would believe me but blame me for telling her or think I was overreacting. Maybe I was too chickenshit. Maybe it wasn't my place or any of my business. I don't know. Mrs. Trump still may not know