

Chapter 3

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Leon

I lay awake with my hands behind my head and stared at the vaulted ceiling of my room when the sun came up. I sensed movement and looked down to see the woman I picked up at the club last night nuzzling further and further into my chest. She was the rst woman I had been with since my divorce a year ago. My eyes narrowed as I thought of my ex-wife, Sadie Galloway, the gold-digging little tramp who took a good chunk of my fortune through the divorce settlement, even though she was the one who cheated.

The problem was it was my word against hers, and given our age difference, the courts sided with her. That and she used my business ventures, where I often met with female CEOs, as evidence of my indelity. And the prenup we signed came into play. It didn't matter in the long run, because all she got was some cash while I kept everything else—the cars, the mansion, and my dignity.

Unlike Sadie, my getting divorced only made things easier for me. As I mentioned, many of my active business ventures were with female CEOs. Most of them were in the cosmetic or fashion industry, and all of them made it big. The money I got from the commercial real estate would make up for what Sadie took in the divorce.

I gured it was time to get up and head to the oce, so I put my ex-wife on the back burner, since I had more pressing matters at hand.

"Hey. Get up," I told the woman draped over me.

"Mmmm ... but it's so comfy," she whined and rubbed my chest with her hand.

"I don't give a f**k if you're comfortable. Unlike you, I have a f*****g business to run. So, get up, get dressed, and get out," I said sharply. The ustered woman raised her head and glared at me. "Are you f*****g deaf? Out!" I roughly nudged her off of me, and she fell off the bed.

"What the f**k is your problem? You're the one that invited me over!"

"I asked you over so I could f**k you. Never gave you permission to stay the night. But you were so f*****g drunk that you fell asleep after one orgasm. Now that you're sober and awake, get your s**t and get out."

"f*****g prick." She grabbed her things and rushed out of my room. I texted my butler to make sure she left the premises and made arrangements for the woman to have a ride back into the city. I doubt that she knew where she even was. After Ainsley let me know she was gone, I headed for the shower and hit the button to turn on the water before walking in.

I put one hand on the shower wall as the water cascaded down and hung my head. Images of the night I caught Sadie with her legs open for the city's new district attorney came ooding back into my mind. Sadie was a slut, and everyone knew that, but the s**t I saw her doing to him, and vice versa, made me want to vomit. I submitted divorce papers the very next day.

We had only been married for nine months, and I realized she had been the biggest mistake of my life. I married her because she was humble and kind, but no sooner did we say "I do," the kind and loving Sadie disappeared, and the greedy, self-entitled, good-for-nothing, money-hungry b***h came out. I couldn't get divorced from her fast enough. Unfortunately, Sadie, being the selsh cunt that she is, told the press about our divorce, which made headlines. And why I ultimately looked like the bad guy.

I honestly had to thank her, though, because I got an inux of calls from everywhere and not just for business but for marriage. I hate to toot my own horn, but before Sadie, I was one of the richest and most eligible bachelors. Now that I'm divorced, more calls are coming in. I've kept tabs on Sadie and found that she's still seeing the D.A.

I know what you're thinking; why the f**k would I keep tabs on my gold-digging ex-wife when I'm better off without her? Simple. I'm hoping to catch her in the act of admitting she was seeing the D.A. while we were still married. That way, I could take her back to court, sue her for defamation and slander, and get back triple what she took from me. It's not about the money; it's about the principle. She humiliated me and almost ruined my business with her lies. What goes around comes around. I'm going to humiliate her, the D.A., and her family. I will take everything away from the Galloways, and nothing would give me greater satisfaction than watching them crumble to nothing.

As I entered the midtown area and made my way to the oce, I got a call from the private investigator I had hired to look into Sadie.

"Hello?"

"Mr. Von Doren?"

"What can I do for you, Jorge?"

"Well, I just received a call from Hunter Malloy, a well-known divorce attorney in the city."

"Okay. What about him?"

"Well, something rather interesting has come up. The counselor asked me to look into a woman, and at rst, I gured it would be a simple case for a client. But, when I saw the picture of the subject, he hired me for, I was surprised."

"And what does this have to do with me, Jorge?"

"Mr. Von Doren, the subject of the counselor's investigation is your ex-wife." I sat there in stunned silence when I heard this. Who else would be looking into Sadie? And why? "Hello? Mr. Von Doren? Are you still there?"

"Yes, I'm still here. Any chance you could tell me why the counselor is having you investigate her?"

"Unfortunately, I cannot. I signed a Mutual Non-Disclosure Agreement with his oce. However, the only time the counselor calls for my services is if his client needs the information. So, I can only assume that the ex-Mrs. Von Doren is up to her old ways."

"Tell me, is Sadie sleeping with anyone other than D.A. Hollands?"

"Not that I have seen, but I can denitely look into it."

"Unless D.A. Hollands has another girlfriend we don't know about."

"Doubtful, Mr. Von Doren. The D.A. is a private man, but he is most denitely single. Well, not single other than, well, you know what I mean, sir." I cleared my throat before I said something after an awkward pause.

"In any case, thank you for the information. I may have to pay a visit to this divorce attorney. What did you say his name was again?"

"Hunter Malloy, sir."

"Thanks, Jorge."

I hung up the phone and scratched my chin. Why would this attorney need to look into Sadie? Was she stepping out on the D.A.? It wouldn't be surprising if she were. I looked up this Hunter Malloy character on my phone and saw that he worked in the building directly across the street from mine. He must be really good at what he does, I thought to myself. I told my driver to drop me off there instead of my building and made my way to reception to see if I could have a sit down with him privately.

"Oh, Mr. Von Doren. What a surprise!" the receptionist said as she noticeably perked up. She knew me. But then again, almost everyone did. "How may I be of assistance?"

"Hello, beautiful. I was looking for Hunter Malloy. Is he in?"

"I'm sorry, but Mr. Malloy is meeting with a client at the moment and asks not to be disturbed," she said apologetically.

"Not a problem, I can wait," I replied and went to sit down in the waiting area.

"Mr. Von Doren, it may be a while ..."

"I'm ne, thank you, though. Could I bother you for a bottle of cold water?"

"Of course, I will get that for you right away," she replied excitedly and ran to get it. I mean, she literally ran. When she returned, I took the water and winked at her, making her blush before she went back to her station.

I waited for almost two hours before seeing the elevator door open, and the attorney walked out. He was consoling a young woman in her twenties. He was saying something to her, and all she was doing was crying and nodding. After a few minutes, I watched them hug, and he put his hands on her shoulders; it looked like he was telling her something encouraging. She nodded again and quietly left.

Even with a tear-stained face, I had to admit this girl was pretty—denitely prettier than Sadie. I don't have time for this. I grumbled to myself before turning my attention back to Counselor Malloy, who went to reception to check his appointment list. I assumed he saw my name when his eyes widened, and he looked directly at me. He c****d his head but made his way over.

"Mr. Von Doren, this is quite unexpected. What can I do for you?" he asked as he shook my hand rmly.

"Counselor Malloy, something has been brought to my attention, and I would like to speak to you about it privately," I replied.

"Of course, please follow me to my oce."

After getting to his oce and his assistant getting us some fresh coffee, we got straight down to business.

"So, Mr. Von Doren, what can I do for you?"

"Counselor, I'll be frank and get straight to the point. Why are you having my ex-wife followed?"

"I'm sorry?" he asked, confused.

"The private investigator you hired, Jorge, called me today and told me you hired him for an assignment and that the subject of the investigation is my ex-wife." He blinked a few times and lifted a brow at me.

"I'm sorry but are you telling me that this young woman is your ex-wife!?" he asked, pushing her photo towards me. I cringed at the picture once I recognized Sadie with that punk D.A.

"Is there a reason you have a compromising picture of her with the D.A.?" I asked him.

"I can't answer that due to attorney-client confidentiality," he said sternly.

"So, it is, in fact, your client that wants you to look into Sadie?"

"I cannot answer that."

"Counselor, Sadie is off-limits. Call off your investigation."

"I'm afraid I cannot do that, Mr. Von Doren."

"Excuse me!?" Did he just tell me "No?"

"Mr. Von Doren, though I understand this is your ex-wife, I need you to understand that my case work has nothing to do with your personal issues. You are not my client, and I am not your attorney. Your ex-wife is the subject of an ongoing investigation with my oce."

"Now, you listen to me!"

"No! You listen!" he shouted right back. "I don't care how much money or power you have. You cannot hang that over my head and try to intimidate me from doing the right thing for my client. If you interfere with my investigation in any way, I will le a civil suit against you. Unlike you, my client doesn't have the money or resources to hire a P.I. herself and has enlisted the help of my oce. And with the recent negative press you sustained after your divorce with said ex-wife, I doubt being caught in a civil suit with my oce will look particularly good right now." I glared at him, and my jaw was ticking. "Now, if you will excuse me, I have work to do." He got up and opened the door to his oce, gesturing for me to take my leave. I shot up from my seat, buttoned my jacket, and walked out. Just as I was about to turn around, he slammed the door in my face.

I had never once been so disrespected before. Well, other than Sadie cheating on me. But this guy was nothing but a small-time divorce lawyer, and my legal team would sweep him under the rug if he ever took us to court. He should know that. What was it about this client that he would risk everything and threaten me? I thought about what he said and realized he said his client was a woman. Could it have been the young girl who was crying to him?

I decided to nd out who this young girl was and why she was waving Sadie followed. I called a friend who works in surveillance and had him hack into this building's security footage to nd the girl. I gave him the time frame to search for her and told him to get back to me when he found her. I was going to get answers one way or another.