

Chapter 5

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Leon

After my impromptu meeting with the divorce attorney ended with a door slammed in my face, I went to my oce to consider my next move. As I sat at my desk staring off into space, I couldn't get that young brunette he met with earlier out of my head. She was a looker—that I couldn't deny. But it was the sadness and anger I saw in her eyes when she was speaking to him that really caught my attention. You couldn't fake that. My assumption was that she's in the middle of a nasty divorce or is about to be. I know that feeling all too well. I honestly wondered who she was and if she had anything to do with Counselor Malloy looking into Sadie.

I sat up straight in my chair and scratched the back of my head. It seemed too conspicuous to be a coincidence that Malloy would be looking into Sadie using a P.I. and representing a new client at the same time. I c****d an eyebrow. I gured that looking into this young brunette wouldn't be a bad idea, so I called up Jorge and had him hack into the cameras at the law oce of Hunter Malloy. I wanted to know anything and everything about this young woman and whether she had anything to do with Malloy doing a background check on Sadie.

"Jorge, change of plans," I told him.

"Sir?"

"Earlier today, Counselor Malloy was with a young woman. Small stature, short bob hairstyle, brunette, exotic-looking, and pretty. I want you to prepare a full dossier on her for me."

"May I ask why?"

"I need to know if she's the reason Malloy is looking into Sadie."

"I see. Do you want me to add this to my list of things to do, or would you like me to drop everything?"

"Malloy is paying you to look into Sadie, so there's no longer a reason for you to do it for me anymore. Concentrate on this brunette. I want to know everything. Name, age, what she does for work."

"I understand, Mr. Von Doren. Let me see what I can do. Allow me 48 hours to get you some information."

"Very good," I replied and hung up the phone.

Annika

"I don't get you, Annika," Kenzie said to me, frowning while we were drinking at our favorite café after work.

"What?" I replied, playing stupid to her implications.

"Anni, you come from one of the richest families on the country's Eastern side. You hid your background because you wanted to be with Jeff, and now, you're just letting him walk all over your heart while he goes and f***s that Barbie wannabe."

"Kenz, it's not that simple. I can't use my background to get back at him. Not yet, at least. He took eleven years of my life and threw it away like yesterday's garbage. I gave him my everything, and he just tossed it aside as if the last decade of our lives didn't happen. He left me for some trust fund baby, according to Hunter."

"EXACTLY! She's a trust fund baby. You're a f*****g heiress!" she whispered the last part so that people passing by wouldn't hear us. "Imagine if Jeff found out that he left you for that hussy, who has nothing to her name. It would totally ruin his self-esteem!"

"I don't want to just ruin his self-esteem!" I shouted while slamming my coffee cup on the table. "I want to take everything from him. His pride, his dignity, his job, and his money. Without any of that, Jeff is f*****g worthless. I'm not going to let him get the best of me, Kenz." I paused to puff the hair out of my face as tears welled up in my eyes. "16 months."

"What?"

"It's been 16 months since Jeff, and I have been intimate. And from what Hunter gathered from the P.I., that's also how long Jeff has been seeing this woman. All those late nights at the oce, last-minute weekend trips to see clients, and endless nights of waiting for him to come home for dinner, only for him to never show up. A year and four months, Kenzie. The fact that I just found out a month ago, and all of this was happening right under my nose! And only because you and Hunter happened to catch him in the act. If that didn't happen, I would still be the stupid and naïve i***t I am. How could I have not known that he was having an affair!?" I cried out and buried my hands in my hands, sobbing uncontrollably.

"Oh, Anni," Kenzie immediately stood from her seat and came to hug me. She kept me in her embrace until I calmed down. She returned to her seat and waited a bit before speaking. "Anni, Hunter will do whatever it takes to help you take Jeff down. You don't deserve this. You've been nothing but faithful to him, and if he thinks that he has the right to trample all over you, well, he has another thing coming." I nodded my head and snied again. Kenzie gave me a quick side-eye before asking me her next question. "Did the P.I. nd out this woman's identity?"

"Yeah. Hunter gave me the report with pictures and everything, at least of what he has right now," I answered. I picked up my bag and dug through the never-ending mess of les until I found the report from the private investigator. I handed the le over to Kenzie, and she wasted no time snatching it from my hand and reading it over. After watching her eyes dart back and forth, I saw her pupils dilate, and then her eyeballs bulged out of their sockets.

"Hold the f**k up. Is this really her!?" Kenzie asked, pointing at the picture of the woman and showing it to me. I nodded in cnrmation. Her eyes grew even wider, and her mouth hung open as she gaped at me.

"What? What's wrong?"

"Anni, I know this woman!" she exclaimed as though she had just seen a ghost.

"YOU DO!?"

"Anni, she's one of my new OB patients!"

"What?" My brain couldn't even process what I heard Kenzie say. She glanced around and bit her bottom lip, and it was obvious she was debating whether or not she should tell me.

"Ah, f**k it. We work in the same facility, so technically, I'm not breaking any HIPAA laws if I tell you since you own the place anyway," she said and scooted forward, which made me do the same. "Anni, she's six weeks pregnant," Kenzie whispered in my ear. I pulled back from her and furrowed my brows in horror.

"Wh-Wha ... What did you say?"

"She's pregnant, and there's a high probability that it's Jeff's."

"He's ... having a baby with this woman?" I questioned as my complexion drastically paled. I couldn't believe what I was hearing. Jeff blatantly refused to have a child with me for so long, and it nally registered why. Before, it was out of mutual compromise with each other. We were young and weren't ready, but over the last 16 months, it was because he was putting his d**k inside of this woman. Now, they were pregnant. The tears ooded my eyes of their own accord and fell like a waterfall.

"Oh, Anni. I'm so sorry," Kenzie whispered and took my hand in hers. It really was over between Jeff and me. "I should drop her as a patient."

"No."

"What? Why not?"

"I want you to keep seeing her. I want you to spy on her for me."

"Annika, I could lose my license," Kenzie scolded me, her voice full of concern.

"No, you won't. I'll take the fall if we get investigated," I replied while wiping my tears for the hundredth time in the last month. "I need evidence to hold against them. For over a year, the man I loved, the man I gave my entire being to, has played me for a fool. And I already know that this skank knows about me, his current legal wife. Her getting pregnant while we're still married will be a blow to Jeff's career and her reputation. I'm going to make it so that she can't have that baby with pride. I'm going to put her and that two-timing jackass to utter shame. She will forever be dubbed the mistress that ruined Annika Silverton's marriage. I said I wasn't going to use my family's background to get back at them, but I've changed my mind."

"What are you going to do?" Kenzie asked, her eyes twinkling with excitement.

"I'm not sure yet, but I won't let them get away with this. Jeff and his shameless skank are both going to pay dearly. By the time I'm done with them, Jeff will have lost everything, and that b***h will be groveling on her knees for mercy. Her and her family."

"I got you. I'll let Hunter know to keep using his P.I. buddy. This is juicy stuff, and the more we get on them, the more we can throw at them when the time comes." I nodded my head in agreement. I refused to cry and silently vowed not to waste any more tears over this. My love for Jeff was dissipating in rapid succession, and my hatred for him and his mistress was exponentially rising. "Are you going to come out after you divorce his sorry ass?"

"I should, shouldn't I?" I asked in return. Kenzie only nodded and gleamed excitedly about the idea of dropping that bomb on Jeff when this was all over. Don't worry, dear Jeffrey. You and that w***e of yours will get your comeuppance in due time. Just wait and see.