

## Chapter 2

Adam, Fiona, my father, Alan Fredericks, and his second wife, Lydia, had absolutely no idea of who I really am, or the extent of my business holdings. When my mother rst found out about my father's mistress and their child, she immediately moved to protect and secure her wealth. I was eight when she sent me to live with her parents. I hadn't seen my father again until my mother died in an accident when I was twenty, and in my third year of university.

Now hearing it was a planned accident set my mind off into overdrive. Even though four years have passed since the accident, I was condent my security rm's investigators could nd proof of my father's involvement. And by the sounds of it, Fiona and Lydia were also involved to some extent.

My father had approached me at mom's funeral, expressing a wish to reconnect. He changed his tune when the will was read, nding out that the only thing he was entitled to was the house he was living in, and a stipend of \$250,000 per year as a board member of the company that I used as a 'front' to hide the true source of my wealth.

The will was clear, if he contested it in any way, he would be left nothing. Not the house, not the seat on the Board of Directors, and not the \$250,000 per year stipend. He decided a million-dollar house and an annual stipend was better than nothing, so he shut his mouth and remained civil. And since Fiona was already working at the rm, thanks to dear old dad, she, too, knew how to keep her mouth shut and her opinions to herself.

Over the past four years, neither my father, his wife, or my half-sister made any attempt to get to know me, or build any type of relationship with me outside the business. That never bothered me, as I really wanted nothing to do with any of them. The adage 'when people show you who they are, believe them', was etched rmly in my mind. They all showed me they couldn't be trusted, and that was very evident after the conversation I just overheard. Now that Adam had shown his true colors, he too, was now on my s\*\*t list.

The four of them thought my net worth was only twenty million. To them, it seemed like wealth beyond their wildest dreams. Thank God they knew nothing of my true nancial standing. Based on Fiona's earlier words about Dad arranging the accident that killed my mother, I wouldn't have stood a chance.

I was surprised I wasn't more upset at Adam's cheating, and Fiona's betrayal. But maybe, some part of me always suspected something was off. Adam and Fiona worked together in the marketing department. They always seemed to have 'meetings' to discuss new concepts. He was always quick to praise her work, and often suggested I give her a substantial raise in pay.

I would always remind him that she was at the top of her pay grade, and if I increased her salary midway through the year, I would have to do the same for everyone else in the department. Not that I was stingy regarding the amount I paid my staff. Far from that. My employees enjoyed some of the highest salaries and benets in the industry. But salary and bonuses were reviewed once per year. No exceptions.

I sat in my penthouse living room, staring out the window at the skyline, and planned. I was generally a very kind, generous, loving, and trusting person. I gave people the benet of the doubt, allowing them to show me, by their actions, their true character. I trusted you until you gave me a reason not to. And when that happened, I was done with you. No second chances. No accepting apologies. I was just done.

And that's the point I am at now. With Adam. With Fiona. With my father. With my father's wife.

I walked to my home oce and turned on my computer. Though only 24, I currently own a total of ten international companies, all of which were left to me by my grandparents when they died a year ago. Frederick's Design Co., the company in which Adam and Fiona work, and my father sits on the Board of Directors, was the company I inherited from my mother.

Frederick's Design Co. was an interior design rm that had been established by my mother thirty years ago. At the time, she was newly married, and still wore the blinders of love. She thought she would do a wonderful thing by naming the company with her new last name. She was a talented and creative interior designer. Her reputation was huge as a much sought after designer for the rich and famous.

When I took over, I expanded our client base to multinational corporations seeking to make a statement with their clientele.

All my other companies were under the name of Graystone International. It was my maternal grandmother's birth name, which effectively hides my connection as the owner, as my last name is Fredericks. But not for long. One of the rst orders of business was to legally change my last name to Graystone.

One of the companies I owned was a security rm that specialized in cybersecurity and the installation of security systems in commercial buildings, and for myself, in all the buildings I owned, including the house intended as my marital home.

I brought up the computer program that stored all the video recordings by exact location. The rst location I accessed was my house. I could no longer think of it as my home. Adam and Fiona had made sure of that.

I didn't need to look at every minute of footage. I just focused on the recordings of the times I had been away on business trips. And since I had just given Adam the keypad entry code four months ago, I looked at those dates. Twelve trips in those four months. I had been away as much as I had been home. No wonder I was tired.

Adam and Fiona had used my house as a love nest on each of those twelve trips, entering only once Adam received my text stating I was boarding the plane. The day before my trip ended, a professional cleaning crew entered and cleaned until no trace could be found of their indelity. I saved copies of those audio/video les in a separate folder I would be sending to my lawyers.

Next, I accessed the video les for Frederick's Design Co's oce building. Specially, Adam's private oce. He had claimed to work a lot of evenings and weekends. Let's see what kind of work he was doing.

I only went back to the date he and I supposedly became 'exclusive', which was a year ago. He had asked me to marry him six months into our exclusive relationship. He had been so loving and attentive, and like a person dying of thirst, I lapped it up.

Fiona was right about one thing. I did want to be loved. I felt lost and totally alone after my grandparents passed away. And because of that, I ignored countless red ags. That was on me. But the blinders were off. Watching the videos, listening to their plans, listening to their utter disdain for me, stripped away all the illusions I had about their characters.

But Fiona was going to be in for a surprise too. Adam was working late, all right. Working at banging at least three other women in his department. Their post-coital discussions were as harsh and critical of Fiona, as they were of me. I smirked to myself thinking of Fiona's reaction to her lover boy, once she saw those videos. Serves her right.

And since company policy had been violated by their s\*\*\*\*I activity at the oce, those three women would all be looking for new jobs. As would Adam and Fiona. But I have a special hell planned for them. As the saying goes, f\*\*k Around, and Find Out. Well, they f\*\*\*\*d around. Now was the time to nd out.

All those videos got moved to the same le for my lawyers. What Adam told Fiona was a 'marriage contract' was a part of the prenuptial agreement. When I accepted Adam's proposal, I had decided to make him a partner in Frederick's Design Co. However, that was contingent on us getting married. No marriage, no partnership.

The indelity clause was added because I was taking a page out of my mother's book, so to speak. That was part of her prenup agreement with my father. In the end, it was one of the smartest things she did. Not only did it provide for an uncontested divorce, but it also protected her wealth.

I was a fool no more. They would pay for their actions.