

Chapter 45

Alexander's POV

Yesterday, I came to work with a terrible hangover and wasn't in the mood for anything. Mariana, Alan, Patrick, and Rick spent the day defending Catherine, saying they couldn't believe she would send those emails and betray me like that. They reprimanded me for not listening to her and were now waiting for the audit results to see what they would uncover.

Mariana had gone to the finance department to get the documents that were supposedly being verified. When she got there, Johnson called me, outraged, spewing nonsense in my ears, but I was too tired to care. I just told him to hand everything over to Mariana if he didn't want to lose his job.

Mariana collected the documents and took them to the auditors. I told Alan it was pointless since the documents were there and Johnson handed them over, Celeste hadn't leaked the information. Alan warned me that since he already had copies of everything, it would be best to compare them, and he would tell me today if everything matched up. But he hadn't said anything yet.

Celeste spent the day hovering around me, bringing coffee, snacks because I didn't go to lunch, always finding an excuse. She seemed worried about me.

Marcus Paul, the hacker Alan hired, was still trying to recover any footage from the damaged camera in my advisory office, but he hadn't reported back either.

I was going crazy with all this! I was going crazy without her!



In the middle of the afternoon, Mari came into my office, closed the door, and came very close to me, speaking softly:

"You're coming with me for coffee now. Everyone's waiting for us."

I looked at her, surprised. If they wanted to see me outside the company, they must have discovered something, and it wasn't against Catherine. I got up quickly, and we left. I told Celeste I was stepping out with Mari but wouldn't be long.

When we arrived at the coffee shop, the others were already waiting. I sat down and ordered a coffee.

"So, what's going on?" I asked grumpily.

Alan looked at everyone and took the lead:

"Alexander, you made a terrible mistake. Catherine didn't leak any information. Here's my report. The documents Mari got from Johnson were forged; they don't match the copies we made on Saturday. And just from these documents, we could understand how the embezzlement is happening. It will still take time to check everything, but it's substantial. And I can guarantee that whoever forged these documents did it after Mariana and Patrick set the trap because after Mari told me about their idea, I asked our floor's 'coffee lady' to check, and she made some copies when they weren't yet altered."

I took the folder he handed me and saw the report and various document comparisons. I was shocked. My secretary, who had been with the company for fifteen years, had betrayed me in such a sordid way. I barely had time to think when Marcus spoke up:

"Mr. Miller, I managed to recover a detail from the camera footage in



Miss Vergara's office. It's a single frame that passes so quickly it's almost impossible to notice normally, but I put the video in slow motion and isolated the frame," he said, turning the computer toward me. "The security team has already replaced the equipment. But I'd like you to verify if you recognize the shoe that appears in the image; it's the only thing visible in last Monday's footage. Remember that the week before, the cameras weren't installed yet."

I looked at that image and knew immediately. They were low, thick heels, not Catherine's shoes. Then I asked Marcus if he could pull up the footage from my secretary's office at the same time, and he did. It was clear: Celeste was entering Catherine's office, looking around as if she didn't want to be seen. I asked him to zoom in on the shoe, and it was hers. Then I remembered - at that time, Catherine was in my office, and I was kissing her. 1

I was a complete idiot. I had humiliated the woman of my life and been played for a fool by my secretary. My head was spinning, my eyes were burning, my throat was dry. Catherine would never forgive me!

I looked at everyone seated at the table, all of them waiting for me to speak. I cleared my throat and said:

"I was definitely a complete jerk!"

"Yeah, my friend, you were," Patrick said bluntly.

"Well, we haven't been able to identify who's receiving the messages yet. But you already know where they're coming from. If you want my opinion, keep your enemies close. It's not time to unmask your secretary," Alan advised. "The new coffee lady on the floor has been instructed to get close to her, try to become friendly. Maybe that way we'll get the information we need." 1

"You're right, Alan. Firing Celeste now would alert her accomplice," Mariana reinforced.

"So you're suggesting I go in there and pretend nothing happened? And how can I bring Catherine back without clearing things up?" I asked, feeling completely lost.

"Bro, Cat is working with Martin now. She started today. And I doubt she'll come back that easily," Patrick said, throwing cold water on my hopes. "Especially since she's more hurt than we thought." Patrick handed me a folder.

"What's this?" I took the folder and looked inside. Damn it, Catherine! "She signed the resignation papers and refused to take the check?"

"According to the employee who went to her building, while she was signing, she said she didn't want a cent from this company," Patrick informed me with concern.

"What the hell is this? Doesn't she think about her son? Doesn't she think she might need the money?" I wasn't expecting this. "Man, if she refused payment for her work, getting her forgiveness will be impossible," I said, feeling defeated.

"Alexander, Catherine is a woman of great value. You'll have to work hard if you want her forgiveness. She won't make it easy for you," Alan told me seriously.

"So what do I do?" I didn't know what to do and was terrified that Catherine would never forgive me.

"Keep things as they are, go after Catherine and beg for her forgiveness. When possible, we'll fire Celeste and bring Cat back," Mariana said with



certainty.

I agreed, they were right, but I wouldn't waste a minute. I would go after Catherine today and have a very serious conversation with Martin to make sure he wouldn't even dream of getting fresh with her.

"Meanwhile, Alexander, we'll test the loyalty of the other presidential staff," Alan said.

"But it's just the coffee lady and the cleaning lady, Alan," I said, not understanding the need to test their loyalty.

"Remember, they see and hear everything. It doesn't hurt to be cautious," Alan said, making it clear he was looking at everything in detail.

"Right," I replied, running my hands over my face. I was tired, wasn't sleeping well, and now I felt like a jerk for what I did to Catherine. "What about the employees who were to be infiltrated?" I asked, realizing I hadn't kept up with the audit issues since Monday.

"We've already hired a janitor and a coffee server for each floor. It's been great because the janitor takes all the office trash to the audit and we've been finding things," Rick said with a mysterious tone. "We've infiltrated other employees and by Friday they'll all be working in every department. Don't worry, Nestor is being cooperative and hasn't asked questions, he's placing all employees discreetly, kind of casually," Rick assured us.

"Great. Anything else I need to know right now?" I asked, and everyone shook their heads. "Then let's head back, Mari. I don't want my efficient secretary to suspect anything," I concluded with a cold smile. 1

