

Chapter 44

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Seeing the surprise still in Duncan's face, she went on to clarify about herself.

"I am Rose Morgan, Ms, Karla's caretaker."

"Oh. I see. Well, I had no idea you were Inside."

"Sorry if I scared you. I was up, dressing her bed before cleaning the bathroom. I had to do those chores this time because I came in late."

"I understand. Karla is drunk and..."

Before Duncan could finish talking, Karla jerked, screaming, "No!" They were almost startled. Karla tilted her head and taking a glimpse of Rose's appalled expression, she laughed and said, "Hey, Rose, did you just see a ghost? You look funny with that expression." She giggled and grabbed Duncan's hand. "Jerk, you're still here. Thanks for not leaving me, I will make sure I reduce my frequency of calling you a jerk."

"Really?" Duncan muttered, pressing his lips tightly to prevent himself from laughing.

"Yes, I promise. But you should do this, Duncan, stop underrating me and overrating Abigail Waclaw. Nothing special about her." She frowned. "You know, I personally went through the history of Gu firm, I knew what they wanted and got those papers ready all through the night despite you telling me you don't need my help. You're such a grumpy fellow and I don't know why I find you more handsome when you act cold towards me."

Rose's eyes widened and Duncan gulped, processing Karla's compliment.



"I guess she's so drunk," he told Rose and chuckled, getting uncomfortable by her presence.

"Please don't leave me, Duncan. I think I have fallen in..." Before she could finish talking, her grip on Duncan loosened and she laid back on the couch, drifting to sleep.

"I guess you've become endearing to her," Rose muttered, staring at Karla's face as a smile parted her lips.

"Um, I'll leave now." Duncan scratched the back of his head and motioned at Karla. "Do take care of her."

"Sure, I will. Have a safe return and a good night's rest."

"You too. Bye."

Duncan stepped out of Karla's penthouse, his heart racing and his mind filled with a mix of nervousness and excitement. The encounter with Karla had left him feeling both exhilarated and apprehensive. He couldn't call Jack to come pick him so he hailed an Uber, hoping the ride home would provide him with a chance to collect his thoughts.

As he settled into the backseat of the car, Duncan's mind wandered back to the pivotal moment when he almost kissed Karla. She had been drunk, her inhibitions lowered, and he had been caught up in the intensity of the moment. The memory of the near kiss played vividly in his mind, his imagination filling in the details of how her lips might have tasted, how they would have felt against his own.

However, a pang of guilt washed over Duncan as he considered his actions. He knew it was wrong to take advantage of someone in such a vulnerable state, regardless of the connection they shared. He scolded

himself for not being more thoughtful and cautious, promising to be more mindful of the consequences of his actions in the future.

Despite his self-admonishment, a soft smile tugged at the corners of Duncan's lips as he recalled Karla's beautiful and humorous drunk face. Her infectious laughter echoed in his ears, reminding him of the genuine and carefree moments they had shared together. It was a reminder of the deep connection they had formed and the undeniable chemistry that had sparked between them, but he thought of nothing more about Karla or the moment other than a rare good moment.

Realizing he needed to shift his focus, Duncan consciously redirected his thoughts towards his accomplishments. He reminded himself of the goals he had set for himself, the hard work he had put in to achieve them, and the bright future that awaited him. With every passing mile, he regained a sense of clarity and determination, setting aside the whirlwind emotions that had consumed him moments ago. He couldn't wait to see his wife's sad face. He has gotten the deal and he knows that she must have known that the deal was given to someone else. He couldn't wait to taunt her haughtiness the last couple of days.

By the time the Uber pulled up to his destination, Duncan had found a sense of calm within himself. He thanked the driver, stepped out of the car after paying the fare, and made his way towards the front door of the Lennart mansion. As he opened the door and entered the house, he resolved to learn from the experience with Karla, to tread more carefully with their relationship, and to prioritize his revenge and not ponder on irrelevant things.

When he entered Zinnia's room, he found her staring darkly at the reflection of her face in the mirror. Becoming aware of his presence, Zinnia arose from her dressing seat and turned, her jaw stiffened and indignation seeped into her as she saw Frazier smiling broadly. 2

"What is wrong with you?!" She barked, taking a step toward him.

"What?"

"What's with the smile on your ugly face?"

"Nothing, my lovely wife."

"Don't address me as such," She scoffed as she headed to the bed.

Duncan sniffed, forcing her to glance at him. "Why do I smell anger in this beautiful room? Are you upset, my wife?" He asked, feigning obliviousness.

"You know my mood instantly gets ruined every time I see you. Drop the act and get out of my sight."

"Woah, take it easy. Anyway, what was the result of your presentation? You know, I thought of wishing you good luck this morning but you were fast asleep. I left quite earlier than usual because I wanted to go job hunting."

"I fucking don't give a damn about what you have intended to do today or how your day went. And I know you're happy that my day ended on a bad note."

"What?" Duncan lifted his brows. "Your day went bad? What happened? I guess you got the deal or...was it someone else better than you?"

"Shut up because no one can be better than me. I remain the best in decades to come."

"Oh, I see you've started talking like your grandmother. But if you are the best then why didn't you get the deal?" Duncan asked, unleashing his

demon self. "You lost it. It was over the news this night and tomorrow morning, it's going to blast."

"Someone screwed me and I am sure I gave the best presentation."

"I don't think so. Well, maybe someone with a higher power than you snatched the deal from you."

"I can't think of anyone but I know you prayed so hard for this to happen. She took a step forward to climb on the bed but stopped when Duncan started circling her. His words got her thinking.

"Your time is over, Zinnia. You will never reign onwards. Nothing will go your way. That's one thing I will assure you of."

What? Did you just challenge me?"

"I don't know."

"I guess you're intoxicated, but listen carefully to me, Duncan. I am Zinnia Lennart and I won't be taken down. You're a worthless person who can't even fend for himself let alone live well for a day without depending on me. And when the time comes, I will get rid of you because you're a leech."

"Alright then, you didn't get the deal and my life won't be any worse other than yours. I hope you've not forgotten about the deal between us this morning?"

"What the hell are you talking about? Get out." Zinnia knew what Duncan meant but not wanting to acknowledge it, she turned around and climbed on the bed, feigning to drift into sleep. She opened an eye after Duncan entered the bathroom and cursed him. "You damn douchebag." She pulled the bed cover to her chin and went to sleep.

The following morning, the Lennart family assembled in the dining room to have their breakfast. While Duncan served breakfast, Zinnia avoided the stinging gaze of Lisa and her brother and fixed her eyes on Ma'am Luna who was ignoring him and had not answered her greetings earlier. She thought of what she was going to do to gain her trust again but no idea popped up in her head.

"Lisa, you can return to working in the company today and you'll be taking Zinnia's place in the company."

Zinnia almost choked on the tea she was sipping when she heard that and dropped her cup, asking, "What do you mean, grandmother?"

"You will no longer be the CIO of the company, it will be Lisa. You're demoted, Zinnia.

"Thank you so much, grandmother," Lisa said, overwhelmed.

Ma'am Luna's breaking news of Zinnia's demotion in the company hit her like a sudden blow, leaving her devastated and unable to comprehend what she had just heard. Her eyes widened, and her mouth fell open as she stared at her Grandmother who sat confidently at the head of the table.

Her mind raced, trying to make sense of the situation. She couldn't fathom why her grandmother would choose her cousin sister, of all people, to be the new Chief Information Officer while demoting her. Questions swirled in her head, wondering if it was because she lost the deal or if there were other factors at play that she was unaware of.

As Zinnia glanced at Lisa, she noticed the smile on her face. It added to her bewilderment, leaving her to wonder if Lisa had played a role in her demotion. The tension at the table was palpable, with her mother sitting

beside her, shooting disapproving glares at Lisa.

Finally finding her voice, Zinnia mustered the strength to speak up. Her tone was firm, reflecting her determination and refusal to accept the situation as it was.

"I won't take this, grandmother," she declared, her voice laced with a mix of shock, disappointment, and defiance. Her words echoed through the room, breaking the silence that had settled over the table.

Zinnia's statement hung in the air, awaiting her grandmother's response. She knew she had to fight for her position, make her voice heard, and reclaim the respect she felt she deserved. While uncertainty filled her heart, she was resolute in her decision to challenge the decision and seek an explanation for the sudden turn of events that had left her feeling betrayed and undervalued.

Giving Zinnia a stern look, ma'am Luna uttered with a domineering tone, "That is my decision and there's nothing you can do about it."

"But, mother, you..." Laila went silent as she suddenly remembered the slap she had received from her mother last night and it sent chills down her body.

Seeing the moment as a good time, Duncan smiled as he stared at Zinnia and cleared his throat to add to her shock.

"Zinnia, we made a deal yesterday morning. You said you were going to clean for a week if you didn't get the deal, remember?"

Zinnia eyed him, clenching her fists under the table. If eyes could kill, Duncan knew well that he would have been six feet below already. But her reaction motivated him as he noticed that he had piqued Ma'am Luna's curiosity.

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"Zinnia, now you have to clean the whole house for one week, my wife."

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