

## Chapter 16 – Justice For Juniper Novel Free

“Maybe,” her mother leaned her hip against the counter.

“Mom’s don’t usually share their sexual pasts with their daughters but in this case, I know what it means to leave, and I can guide you through it.”

“The guy you were engaged to with the whack-a-doodle mom, you lived with him?”

“Yes. He actually lived in his own apartment, and I moved in with him. What he didn’t tell me was how his lease was coming to an end within weeks of the wedding and how he and his mother discussed in great length how he and I should move back home to help her take care of the house. She went on and on about how she was going to be the best grandma because she was going to be there all the time and forget a super close bond with her babies. Her babies. I’d stopped taking my birth control ahead of the wedding because we’d been talking about starting a family as soon as we were married. Then I found out he basically wanted to give the kids to his mother to raise. Man, I dodged a bullet.”

“You really dodged a bullet.” She giggled as she continued eating her breakfast. “You stopped the pill and got pregnant with me.”

“Yup. No regrets. Not a single one.”

“I love you, Mama.”

“I know, sweetheart. So, let’s get our things together. We’re going to go take all of your clothes. All of your toiletries. All of your shoes and things which you want. The rest you leave for him to deal with. He is the one who ruined everything so he can sort through the memories. You get to start fresh with a clean slate. He can be the one to take the photos off the wall, figure out what to do with the wedding rings, sort out what to do with the Hers hand towels. He fucked up. He can clean it up. You take the things most important to you. That’s it. That’s all. The rest you can buy again, considering you’re a millionaire now.”

She looked at mother wide-eyed, “can you imagine?”

“Yes. His parents have a lot of money as well and they’re exceedingly kind to me. They wanted a live-in housekeeper because there are times they come home at two in the morning from a gala or something and want snacks and I do it because they are so good to me. The bonuses they give me for craziness like this makes it worth it. I have no complaints. Sandra is really good to me, and Mr. Perez is as well.”

“You don’t call him by his first name?”

“I wouldn’t disrespect her this way. I live in their home. I would hate to make things informal or casual with her husband. It seems wrong.”

“You’re a good woman, Mama.”

“I know. Unlike your husband’s mistress, I don’t screw over or stab other women in the back.” going to go take all of your clothes. All of your toiletries. All of your shoes and things which you want. The rest you leave for him to deal with. He is the one who ruined everything so he can sort through the memories. You get to start fresh with a clean slate. He can be the one to take the photos off the wall, figure out what to do with the wedding rings, sort out what to do with the Hers hand towels. He fucked up. He can clean it up. You take the things most important to you. That’s it. That’s all. The rest you can buy again, considering you’re a millionaire now.”

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“I know. Unlike your husband’s mistress, I don’t screw over or stab other women in the back.”

“Ouch,” she rose from her feet and then froze when there was a knock on the door.

Both she and her mother looked at each other nervously and her mother tiptoed to the door. Nobody should know where she was. Her mother looked through the peep hole and then a smile flitted over her face, and she pulled it open, “good morning, Benicio.”

“Good morning, Maeve. I’m here to drive Juniper and yourself to the other apartment.” He smiled at Juniper over her mother’s shoulder, “good morning Juniper. How are you feeling this morning?” Concern tinged the question.

“Better than I expected I would but still pretty cru

“Well, let’s fix that then.”

“Don’t you need to be at work?”

“We figure with all of us there it will take an hour, ninety minutes maximum to throw everything into totes and bring it back here. Plenty of time for my other activities.” He held out his hand to Juniper. “Come on, sunshine. Let’s go bring your grandmother’s throw blanket where it belongs.”

“Thanks Benicio.”

“My friends call me Beni,” he winked at her as she took his hand.

It was a lot harder than she'd thought it would be. Despite her mother, Beni and Adil, keeping her on task and forcing her to keep going, every single thing she touched seemed to hold a memory connected to it.

"Your bathrobe?" her mother held it up.

"No. I don't want it." Too many memories of Kyst pulling the tie at the waist to get her naked and plunging into her no matter what room of their apartment they were in, tainted the garment.

When her mother reached for a drawer, Juniper slapped her hand over it and pushed it shut again.

"We don't need anything from that drawer, Mama."

The words made two male heads turn in her direction and her mother's eyebrows raise.

"As you said, there are things in this house he can deal with and part of it, is that drawer." She looked at her mom, "why don't you get all my stuff out of the bathroom. I'll handle the bedroom."

"Good idea." Her mother made a face and disappeared quickly.

She went to the nightstand and pulled out a novel she'd been reading and closed it shut before turning to find Adil trying to open the drawer her mother touched earlier while Beni was holding it shut.

"What are you doing?"

"I want to know what's in here. Is it the role-playing stuff?" Adil asked with his eyes bright with delight. "You should take one thing from here. Like his favorite one thing and so when he's forced to go through it, he'll realize it's missing, and you'll be using it with someone new."

"That's the dumbest idea I ever heard," Beni grumbled. "All it's going to do is remind her of him when she has to deal with it later."

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"Unless" she held up a finger, kind of liking where Adil's head was at, "we get rid of it. He doesn't need to know I didn't use it. He only needs to know he never gets to use it with me again." She moved to kneel in front of the door, "move out of the way. I don't want your eyes in here."

"Yes you do," Adil nodded vigorously. He yanked the drawer before she could stop him and his eyes widened incredulously. "Holy shit! You dress up in corsets for the bastard and he cheated?" he pulled her favorite velvet bustier with the cinched waists and the black and gold inlay. "Is this," he pulled out a small flogger, "no." His eyes were rounded and his tongue darted to his lips, "the man is fucking stupid."

"Just pick something and close the drawer." Beni whispered angrily. "Before Maeve comes back and sees her daughter is far kinkier than any of us were led to believe." His eyes drifted to a white hat, "is that a slutty nurse's uniform?"

She grabbed a pair of leather wrists restraints and shoved them into her pocket and slammed the door shut. “Stay out of it.”

Adil stared hungrily at the door, “but there’s so much I want to know.”

“It’s none of your business.” She pushed him and he fell backwards on his ass. “Can we stop talking about my sex life now?”

“Yes.” Benicio uttered emphatically. “Let’s go.”

She dumped a bunch of her work clothes into a tote and then motioned at Adil, “grab all the shoes please and dump them in.”

Adil reached into the far back of the closet and pulled out a pair of thigh-high black latex boots and was salivating, “tell me you aren’t leaving these for that fucker. He’ll whack off into them.”

“He’s already whacked off all over them, more than once,” she shot back. “Leave them. I don’t want his cum stained boots in my new life.”

Adil dropped them and ran to the bathroom to wash his hands and then came out a few minutes later after a quiet conversation with her mother.

“There’s a bunch of tracking kits for ovulation and a handful of pregnancy tests in the closet,” he said softly. “Your mom isn’t sure what to do with them.”

“Leave them for him to deal with. I won’t be needing one for a long time and if I ever decide to have a family, I’ll buy new tests.”

“Toss them Maeve,” he yelled in the direction of the other room.

Her mother’s “thank goodness” made her smile.

Several minutes later she stood up and then the movers were grabbing her boxes and taking them away. The kitchen and living room were already sorted and this was the last of it. Returning to the kitchen she looked around at the photos on the walls and the little odds and ends they’d purchased together over the years. A thought occurred to her, “Benicio, Beni,” she corrected herself, “in the guest bedroom under the bed are a box of Christmas decorations. Can you grab the whole box. I’ll go through them but some of them were my grandmother’s, and I don’t want to leave them behind, but I don’t want to go through them right now.”

“On it.”

She exhaled sharply and then her eyes caught the cutlery drawer. “I’m entitled to half of the contents of the apartment, right?”

My Half-Part

Her mother nodded, “yes, It’s what Benicio put in the papers.”

“tin, if I take half of the cutlery, it’s okay?”

“Of course, but why would you? You have a fully killed out kitchen,” her mother was frowning,

“I men, we have twenty pieces of cutlery in the set we bought, four of ench piece, If I wanted to take ten, meaning, all the spoons and two knives, it would be okay?”

“You want the spoons?”

“Yes, I also want the top row of those sharp knives in the cutting block, I mean, there are eight. I will take these four,” she took The four knives which he used most and left him the tiny paring knife, scissors, a serrated knife meant for bread and a giant elenver,

Adil immediately was all in on her plan, “oh, you are also entitled to half of the instant coffee machine. If you say take this part,” he held up the water dispenser, “then I think it’s fair.”

Her mother giggled, “what about half of the pots and pans? The top halves?” she lifted two lids.

“I don’t actually think it’s how the division of marital assets is supposed to go,” Benicio laughed as he came out carrying the box of Christmas ornaments, “but as your legal representative, I say, go for it and we can argue about it in court. Each time his lawyer brings up a spoon I’ll bring up the still imagery in my possession of him ejaculating on a dress another woman was wearing.”

His words stung and she took the smarting feeling and flung open the cabinet to where Kyst kept all of his travel mugs. The man loved to bring his coffee too work with him. She began unscrewing every single lid of the travel cups.

An alarm sounded on Adil’s watch, “we’re at ninety minutes. Any other last halves you want to take? Beni needs to go serve Denise and then Kyst. Let’s get these things all back to your new place.”

“Wait,” she took a breath, “there is one thing I want, half of.”

“What?”

She pointed to the giant wedding portrait hanging in the living room. “I never wanted it, but his mother paid for this huge photo package, and this picture came in and he loved it. I need to clean the glass all the time because his fingerprints are always on it. How fast can we take it down, tear out the half of me in it and then hang it back up.” As her mother stared at her incredulously, she shrugged, “it’s my half.”

“Hey, am I too late? I was delivering the good news to my grandfather with an audio clip of Denise bragging about banging your husband in your bed.” Phineas’ voice cut in as he entered the apartment. He gave a whistle, “I said it before and I’ll say it again, you made this little place a home, Juniper. I can’t wait to see what you do to your new place. It’s very peaceful in here.” He watched his friends taking down the wedding photo, “what’s happening?”

“She’s taking her half of things. Half the cutlery, half the pots and pans, half the photo.”

“Adil started it when he told me to take Kyst’s favorite thing from our tickle trunk.”

“Tickle trunk?”

“He named it.”

“Oh, a sex box. What did you take?” Phineas asked curiously.

“My mother is in the room.”

“She took leather wrists restraints.” Adil called out loudly. “Sorry Mama.” rab

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“At least it wasn’t anal beads or a ball gag.” Her mother scoffed.

Her mouth was open as she stared at her mother who walked by her and tipped Juniper’s bottom jaw upwards, “Mr. Perez, could you help me put these things into a tote to take with us?”

“Mama is that?” she tried to figure out the word for the collection her mother held in her hand.

“I took all the straw things from inside all your spray cleaner bottles. He will squeeze that trigger all he wants but it’s not going to suck up a damn ounce of cleaning solution. Sucks to suck motherfucker.”

“Mama!” her mother’s foul language was shocking, and she couldn’t stop the giggle erupting from her chest at it.

“Your mom is cool,” Phineas whispered to her.

“She really is.” Juniper agreed as she took a deep breath as she watched as Adil used a blade he pulled from off his keychain and sliced down the middle of her wedding portrait and then held out her half.

Phineas took it when her hand didn’t move. He examined the photo, and a glint was in his eye, “the photo looks better like this. No evidence of a parasite attached to you on it.”

“Burn it.” she muttered angrily.

“It’s beautiful,” Phineas shot her a sideways glance.

“You can’t have it to go with your granny’s quilt,” she ripped it from his hands and crumpled it up in a ball.

“Ouch!” he mocked her. “What did I do?”

“You showed up when all the hard stuff is over.”

“Nah, there is one more hard thing actually, I came right in time to be here for. I’m your ride back to the condo. You can cry in my car in your mama’s arms the whole way and I won’t even judge.” His eyes darted to the rings on her finger. “Are you keeping them?”

She realized what he was talking about as the hard thing, and she sighed. The only time she’d ever taken her rings off in the last eight years was to get them cleaned. Other than this, she’d worn them continuously.

“You don’t have to.” Phineas said seriously. “Keep them if you want. Melt them down and make a new independence ring or something.”

“As neat as the idea is,” she whispered as she tugged them off and set them on the counter, “I think it’s best if it’s one more thing he gets to take care of.”

“We should go.” Adil said while Benicio finished rehanging the frame with only Kyst in the picture.

They quickly made their way out of the apartment, and she paused to lock it up. She looked at Benicio, “you’re serving him in person.”

“I am.”

“Give him these when you do or put them in the envelope or something?”

“Sure.” He took the keys from her.

She looked at Adil, “you got your cameras out?”

“I did.”

“Thank you. I don’t know where all of this is going but I do know I’m grateful for the three of you. This has been the shittiest couple of days of my life but the support,” she looked at Phineas, “and the money and place to live, has made it bearable.”

“And your mama,” her mother tugged her ponytail.

“And definitely my mama.”

“Well, let’s keep that supportive feeling going.” Phineas smiled at her. “I booked you both a spa package tomorrow. Massages. Seaweed wraps. Facials. Manicures and pedicures.”

“You did that for me?”

“Yes. It’s the least I can do.” He gave a sad smile, “while this is the happiest day of my fucking life, to be finally rid of her, I know it’s the opposite for you. If there is anything I can do to make any of this easier for you, I’m doing it. You want a massage. I’ll book it. You want therapy? I’ll cover it. You want to something crazy like go skydiving? I’ll set it up with Adil. I mean I’ll drive you there, but I won’t jump out of the plane with you. Whatever you need, I’ll do. I feel this is my responsibility.”

“It’s not your fault. It’s his.”

“Perhaps but let me do this, if for no other reason than to ease my guilty conscience.”

“Don’t say no.” Benicio added as the elevators doors opened. “I agree with him. It’s the least we can do.”

“Okay. Spa day it is tomorrow.”

Her mother pushed her hip into hers, “don’t say it like it’s a punishment. You deserve this. Take it.”

“Yes Mama.”

She took a breath and told herself she shouldn’t be the one who was miserable with the pain of the failure of this marriage. If it took a spa package to make it better, then so be it. She was going to embrace all the ways to make it better, including making new friends who wanted to spoil her.

One Served – part I

“Stop calling me Mr. Perez, Maeve. I feel we’re family now.” Phineas was directing the movers with Maeve while Juniper sat on a sofa with her feet up.

“I still work for your family.”

“Do you like working for them?”

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“I really do. I love a clean house. The smell of disinfectant and cleaners and the joy of getting a stain out of something is a buzz for me. They are so good to work for, as well. I worked for one couple several years ago, when Juni was in middle school I think, and the old bastard chased me around the house. Every time I bent down with my dustbin, he was behind me putting his hands on my ass. Honestly,” she grinned at Phineas, “the way your father is with your mother was why I took the job as a live-in. He didn’t even notice me in the room. Came in asking about a tie and noticed she was wearing his favorite top, and he beelined for her. It was adorable. I knew then this was a man who would never cross boundaries. I’ve seen lots of people in and out of their home and not once has he even looked at another one in a way which would be disrespectful to his wife.”

Phineas nodded, “it’s adorable alright unless you’re a teenage boy walking into the pool house with friends to find them shagging right there on the floor. Ick.” He winked at Juniper when she giggled at his story. He liked her laugh, “how are you feeling beautiful?”

“Tired mostly.”

He rifled around a few boxes and then found what he was looking for. “Here it is!” he pulled her grandmother’s throw out of the box and tucked it around her feet and hips. “Try to rest. We’ll get all of this sorted for you in no time.”

“You’re joking right? Don’t you have a billion-dollar company to run?”

“I do but I also delegate very well, I have an incredible PA who earns her keep and an administrative assistant at the office.” He frowned looking down at her and without even thinking of his actions, stroked her cheek with the back of his knuckles, “you’re very pale, sweetheart. Is this normal to be nearly translucent?”

“It is when my heart is broken, and my body is weak.” She sighed sadly.

He shook his head, “I read an article last night about nutrition for your body when you’re going through this. You should really eat something.”

“I had oatmeal and berries earlier. I’m not hungry yet.”

“I’ll get lunch started, Phineas,” Maeve said seriously. “I agree, she needs to keep her energy up.”

A ding on his phone notified him of an incoming text and he pulled it from his pocket. “It’s Adil. I want to watch what happens. I’ll go over to Beni’s.”

“Can I watch with you?”

“You want to watch?”

“She fucked my husband. I want to see her reap the benefits of her actions. I don’t blame her entirely, but she knew what she was doing.”

“It’s not going to be pretty.”

“I saw her vagina. I don’t think it’s going to get uglier.”

He leaned closer, “you talk pretty freely in front of your mother.”

“She’s my mom.

“Sit up then.”

“Why?”

“I’m going to sit behind you. You can cuddle into me, and we can watch it on my phone. It’s the best way.” He wasn’t going to tell her the night before he’d tossed and turned all night long remembering how soft she’d felt in his arms when he’d held her while she fell apart. His friends knew what he was. He was a dominating man, who took immense pleasure in being the man in his relationship. He knew it sounded bad when he said it out loud, but there was something in his DNA hardwired to be the caveman. He wanted to be the breadwinner. He wanted to be the provider. He wanted to be the disciplinarian. He also wanted to be the one who took care of everything. He liked being the strong man who kept his woman safe and secure.

His friends always laughed at him because he tended to be so domineering, the women he attracted always fell in one of two categories. The first, they were submissive but to the point of subservient

and he loathed it. He liked a woman who could stand on her own feet. He wanted for her to rely on him out of want, not out of need. The second category were the women who were like him and saw him as a challenge and he found he treated them the same way. Arguing over who was going to be on top was not sport for him.

He bit back a smile when Juniper simply leaned forward and when he sat down, nestled right into his arms. He had a feeling she suffered with just enough Daddy issues to make her feisty yet longed to be taken care of.

“There we go,” he put his arms around her middle and shifted his leg lengthwise down the sofa behind her. He propped up his phone on a cushion on her lap.

An invite from Adil popped up and he grinned and accepted it. Adil’s eyeballs bulged in his head when he saw the way Phineas was curled around Juniper on the screen.

“Hi Juniper. Comfy?”

“Kind of. I have my throw blanket and Phineas tucked me in but then you called to say we’re about ready for show time so we’re making adjustments, so I don’t need to get unwrapped again. I can’t wait to see what happens.”

The slightest hint of pink stained her cheeks as Phineas rested his chin on her shoulder and grinned at Adil. “Her mom is making lunch for us.”

Adil frowned at him with an indecipherable expression. Phineas simply smiled back.

“Beni is here.” Adil said seriously and Benicio’s face came onto the screen. He too frowned at the position he was seeing.

“How are you feeling, sunshine?”

“Is it wrong if I say excited?”

“Not wrong in the least.” Beni shoved his glasses up his nose, a telltale sign he was irritated. “Let’s do this.”

Adil positioned his camera in his coat, “can you guys see clearly?”

“Yes.” Phineas hugged Juniper to his chest and rocked her a bit, “it’s so exciting.”

“Glad to entertain you,” Adil said with a sigh. “Muting you now!”

Phineas watched with his heart pounding. This was it. He was finally getting rid of the gold-digging bitch. From the moment he caught her stealing from his wallet, he knew he needed to get rid of her.

“What is she wearing?” Juniper asked suddenly as the mother daughter duo came into view. “Does she have friends? Like ones who actually care and would tell her she looks ridiculous? She looks like the eighties called and they want their shoulder pads back.”

“Juni, it’s not nice to judge a woman’s appearance.”

“Seriously, Mama. One of her shoulder pads could have managed all of my problems yesterday.”

Phineas snickered, “sassy,” he whispered in her ear.

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She turned her head a fraction, “I don’t like her. I can’t help it.”

“I don’t like her either. We’re in the same boat, sweetheart.”

“Denise Perez. Sign here please?” She signed on the paper in confusion, “You’ve been served.” Beni’s voice interrupted Phineas’ conversation with Juniper.

“Served? For what?” Denise looked up and then saw Beni and Adil standing there. “What are you talking about?” she frantically pulled open the envelope.

Beni snorted at her trembling fingers, “he could have divorced you at any time, but he really didn’t want to give you the villa in Spain. It was left to him by his maternal grandmother and the thought of you spraying your perfume all over it made him wait until the perfect moment.”

“What is going on, Denise?” Denise’s mother frowned. She looked at Beni and Adil, “I know you two. Where from?”

Beni’s voice was clear as he bluntly stated, “I represent the interests of Phineas Perez. Denise, you were caught having intercourse with Kyst Kennedy. We have it on video. We also still have evidence. We have it all. Your prenup is null and void. You will leave this marriage with exactly what you went into it with, minus the one-million-dollar payout and the car you were provided. Everything else is off the table. There is no room for negotiation. If you choose to contest the prenup or the divorce, I promise you, on behalf of my best friend, I will play the video of you in court, in front of a judge and as many witnesses as I can get in the room. Try me, Denise.”

“You cheated on Phineas?”

“It’s lies, Mom. They have no proof of such things because it never happened.”

“Bitch,” Phineas gritted out as he watched her bluster. He rested his cheek to Juniper’s, “she’s in for a rude awakening.”

“Maybe, Denise,” Beni spoke up, “don’t spray so much perfume when you cheat on your next husband. You transferred it to your lover’s clothing, and his wife smelled it on him. She let us put cameras up in her own home, in their shared communal areas of their home and guess what we found yesterday from nine-twenty-six until after lunch?”

Phineas chortled with glee as Denise blanched.

“Do you know where I’m going next, Denise? I’m going to go serve him papers too. Oh, and before we forget, Phineas’ father is meeting with yours right now and he is holding a voice clip from yesterday where you admit out loud you knew the man you were having sex with, is married.”

“Where is Phineas? I need to see him. I can explain.”

“He is taking care of a friend. He sent me because he never wants to see you again. In fact, he won’t. He will never acknowledge you again. He told me bluntly, even if he got subpoenaed to court, he’d pay the fine or demand you be removed because he doesn’t ever want to see you again.”

“Our fathers are best friends!”

“You should have thought of that before you considered him your cash cow and treated him like an ATM instead of a person. You threw more of his money away on wasteful shit than should be allotted and you stole from him, and he caught you red handed. You’re not a good person, Denise.”

A photograph slid from the envelope and landed on the table between Denise and her mother. Her mother’s intake of breath as she noted the contents of the photograph made Phineas laugh out loud.

“Looks like her mother is being faced with the evidence we have. How are you going to get out of this now, Denise?”

“What the hell is wrong with you?” her mother shot to her feet. “You cheated on your husband with another woman’s husband?”

“It was just sex, Mom.” Denise wailed as her mother slapped her hands against the tabletop sending water glasses shaking. or ab

“Just sex? You wrecked two marriages for just sex?”

“He started out as a really nice guy who helped me when Phineas yelled at me in his office for spending too much money. He bought me a tea at the café across the street while I got myself together. He told me marriage is hard work and how he was with his wife for fourteen years and they have ups and downs, but they put in the effort. He told me to keep trying. I meet with him a bunch of times after and he was really nice but then I kissed him, and he got nasty with me. The nastier he got, but I the more I liked it. He’s mean, Mom. He’s so mean to me, can’t stop going back because he wants me and my own husband doesn’t and he’s so good at it.”

“So, you initiated it? You kissed him first?” Her mother accused her.

“Is that all you heard out of this? I turned to him because Phineas was cruel and it turned out he is crueler, if not worse than Phineas. Mom! Where are you going?”

“As far the fuck away from you as I can. I need to find your father before he goes off the fucking deep end.”

Adil pulled the camera out as he and Beni walked away.

Phineas looked at Juniper curiously, “how did that feel?”

Adil looked at Beni and sighed, “dude what is your problem?”

“He had her on his lap.”

“I saw it too.”

“Why is he so damn hands on all the time? He just scoops her up like she’s weightless.” Beni grunted angrily.

“I could do it, but he beat me to the punch.” Adil flexed his muscles.

“He’s a very take-charge individual but I’m worried he’s going to make her uncomfortable. Her heart is broken right now. She doesn’t need Daddy Dominant spanking her ass while she’s recovering from a miscarriage and a cheating ex she’s been with since she was a kid.”

“You’re very protective of her,” Adil accused quietly. “You’ve been protective of her since I pulled the file.

“I watched her.” Beni admitted. “The day you pointed her out two weeks ago, I kept watching her after. I’ve been following her, trying to get a read on her. I wanted something, anything, which told me she deserved the shit we were going to end up bringing to her table. Instead, I saw this funny, insightful, sweet woman who overtips the barista at the coffee shop, smiles at everyone she comes across and is well-respected and liked in her department. She’s genuinely a nice person and the guilt I feel for ruining her life is killing me.”

“Is it only guilt for ruining her life?”

“What do you mean?”

“I mean if you watched her for two weeks and you think she’s all this, then is it guilt for ruining her life or guilt because you’re glad you ruined it so you can swoop in and make her tea and rub her back.”

“Adil.”

“Don’t Adil, me, Beni. I’ve known you far too long to pull this bullshit with me.”