

Chapter 3 – Justice For Juniper Novel Free

“The minute the bitch knew what my grandfather was plotting she saw dollar signs. Because her grandfather was such a hardworking man, he believed his children needed to work for themselves. He left most of his money to charity. Her father is the same way. They don’t give to her needlessly. She needs to work. She’s an interior designer. Decent at her job. She found out though that she was going to be hitched to a billionaire, and she was really excited. I, fool that I was, didn’t think she was such a money-grubbing bitch at first and believed she was as good of a human being as her grandfather and father. I thought I could do my grandfather proud; despite the fact I wasn’t attracted to her at all. Family and all that. Then the day of the wedding rolls around and I see her true colors.”

A giggle from Adil made her frown. What was this guy’s problem? He looked like he’d spent all night dumpster diving from the mess of his hair and the ratty jeans he wore and yet his devil may care attitude and wide smile was charming. She could understand why he was a PI because she bet he disarmed a lot of people with his easygoing personality.

Her eyes were drawn back to Phineas in his no-nonsense suit and tie and worse attitude when he continued his story. “The one and only thing I’d insisted on for the wedding reception was a catering company. It was all I asked. The caterer is the wife of a friend who was starting her own business after being a chef in restaurants for years. This big event would put her on the map. I caught Denise berating her and then,” he clenched his jaw, “she fucking hit her. Denise slapped her, pushed her to the floor, and said once she was Mrs. Perez, she would make sure nobody would ever hire her again and she would ruin her name in catering. Do you know why she did this? Over gouda. She hit and berated a woman over fucking gouda being used instead of cheese with holes in it. I dragged her out of there and put her in her place.”

“She beat a woman up over cheese?”

“Gouda!” Adil said with a laugh.

“I took a moment during the reception to toast the caterer and hired her on the spot as the exclusive and only caterer I would use for all Perez Industries functions.”

“But his bride wasn’t done,” Benicio snorted. “Tell her about the morning after.”

“The wedding night was shit. I slept in a guest bedroom because her perfume was making me want to puke after all the booze I drank. Honestly, I know we fucked, but I still contend I didn’t come, and I was still wearing my suit entirely

in the morning. I'd only unzipped and pulled it out," he smirked, "technically I pulled out twice."

"Too much information!" she held her hand up disgustedly. "You do know I work in your HR department!"

"Fine," he rolled his eyes, "anyway, next morning I'm sleeping off my hangover in the guest bedroom and I hear her on the phone in my room where I was sleeping. She's literally in my room and talking on the phone. She says, I'm still passed-out cold from all the fun. I lay there listening to her telling one of her friends how it was the best sex of her life, she couldn't wait to get pregnant and already made plans to get her IUD out. Then," he made a face as Benicio snickered, "she stole my wallet."

"I'm sorry what?"

"She stole my wallet from my jacket. I watched her do it. She thought I was sleeping. She literally opened my suit jacket, took my wallet, and started flipping through it. When I asked her what the fuck she was doing, she said she needed a credit card for one of the wedding staffers. Lying bitch."

"You're saying you hate her because she's mean to service workers, is a gold digger, lied about you being decent in bed and removed her IUD without talking to you about it?"

"I'm good in bed!"

"Says the guy who didn't even get naked on his wedding night and now won't sleep with his own wife and thinks she is screwing around with my husband. I'm thinking this is a you-problem." She wasn't sure where this level of sass was coming from but the fact the three of them were being so incredibly inappropriate in her workplace was annoying.

"Look, you asked why I hated her, it's because I don't like snobs. I have money. I have tons of money, but I worked my ass off to get where I am, and I would never look down on anyone because of their social circumstances. My mother taught me better. The fact my grandfather put in the cheating clause keeps me from divorcing her and giving her money she doesn't deserve. I am trapped in my own house because my grandfather insists she lives with me. I sleep there," he pointed to a sofa, "most nights. I don't trust her not to drug my food she wants that baby so bad." He gave an exaggerated shudder.

"All of this, at the risk of repeating myself, is your problem. I trust my husband." Her eyes flicked to the phone's image. "If my husband saw her six months ago and felt sorry for her, I believe it's nothing more than this. He wouldn't betray me. He took our vows seriously. Our sex life is damn good. I think you're grasping at straws."

"Then prove she's doing nothing with him. If you trust him, putting the camera in there to vindicate him, isn't going to cause any harm then. Prove me wrong." Adil wiggled the phone, "maybe this is simply her asking an attorney

who deals with real estate law, to get her contacts with the realtors he works with to hook her up for work, though, she hasn't taken a single interior design job since her engagement. She does nothing at all and she's bored. Seducing your husband and hiding it from hers would be a piece of cake for her."

"She doesn't work?"

"No. She just goes to coffee shops with other women's husbands and drinks lattes." Adil shrugged, "it's only three cameras. I can turn them on and off remotely, so I won't even turn them on until you leave the apartment to come to work in the morning."

She took the phone in her hand again and then something caught her eye. It was glaringly obvious and caused a feeling akin to a boulder being dropped into her stomach. More than the couple, the coffee, the shop, and the surroundings there was one teeny, tiny piece of critical information which suddenly struck her like a semi-truck taking out a fly with its windshield at high speed. The tiniest detail. The timestamp.

Eleven-fifteen. It matched the time she was waiting for him to show up at her appointment with the gynecologist to go over the results of her most recent fertility tests and to talk about why they were having trouble conceiving. He didn't show up. When he'd met her at the door to this building apologizing for missing her appointment, he'd almost been in tears over missing something so vitally important. His excuse? His boss gave him an impromptu file and kept him in his office to discuss the importance of it and by the time he realized the time he was late. He'd run all the way from the law firm to his office building.

He'd lied to her. At eleven-fifteen he was in a coffee shop drinking coffee with her boss's wife while she'd been getting life-changing information from the doctor all on her own. He told her he was at work, in his boss's office, in an emergency meeting which went on too long.

If it was innocent. If it was truly innocent and it was simply him being a nice person to a woman in need, why lie? If he met this woman six months ago, why was he still meeting with her now? All of the possibilities were running through her mind and yet, she wanted to trust him. She wanted to believe this was some huge misunderstanding yet, that boulder sitting in her stomach felt heavier with each passing moment.

She stared at the timestamp and then looked up at Phineas and nodded.

"Fine. I'll do it."

Adil reached out and took his phone from her hands and put it away. "You're making the right decision."

"I feel sick."

"Look, maybe I'm wrong," Phineas shrugged. "Maybe for the first time in my life, I'm wrong about something."

“Are you always this cocky and arrogant?”

“Yeah, he is,” Benicio grunted. “He’s a giant twat wrapped up in a cunt.”

She blinked at the lawyer with surprise, “huh.”

“Don’t mind him.” Phineas shrugged, “he lost a lot of money to me at poker last night and he’s still mad at me.”

Benicio sighed and then turned his chair entirely face to her, “look, at the end of the day, this is going to make or break your relationship. Whatever you do, whatever you decide, my job is to make sure I’m protecting both of you legally. I begged him for hours last night, today and this morning.” His hazel eyes were soft and kind as he stared at her, “I wanted Adil to find another way, but he wants to get this done before the one-year anniversary which is in two weeks. This is the most effective and efficient method, but I don’t necessarily agree this is the kindest method to you. This is going to sting.”

“Isn’t there a waiting period? Why rush?”

“For a contested divorce, absolutely there is but she won’t contest,” Phineas folded his arms over his chest clearly annoyed by his friend. “My grandfather has a birthday party coming up in under two weeks. It’s a milestone one. He’ll be eighty. I want this handled beforehand, so his day isn’t ruined.”

Adil patted her hand softly, “we’ll be there every step of the way, but this is the fastest way. Don’t you want to know, for sure?”

She wanted to scream no, but instead she nodded and pinched herself hoping it was all a bad dream, and feeling the burn of her own touch screaming at her it wasn’t.

Juniper watched her husband preparing dinner for her and wondered if she was losing her mind.

From the minute she’d left the office of the Phineas Perez, she’d been conflicted, wavering back and forth between guilt and anger. He’d lied to her about where he was on Friday. She could be a client he needed to respect privacy laws for. He was having an affair. It could have been innocent. Back and forth.

Yet for the first time, she was watching his movement carefully, suspiciously. Every step past her, his fingers brushed against her, making sure they always touched her. Each time he set something on the table, he kissed her cheek. Each touch she cringed internally, unsure whether it was him or her she hated more.

“You went through a lot of trouble to make dinner.”