

DEAN: Marla Grayson? Pleasure to meet you. Dean Erickson. I need five minutes of your time. It's very important.

MARLA: You can have two minutes.

DEAN: This is a beautiful office. Very stylish. These all your wards?

MARLA: What can I do for you, Mr. Erickson?

DEAN: That must be a hell of a responsibility, all these people. I imagine the paperwork is brutal.

MARLA: Take a seat, get to the point.

DEAN: I'm a lawyer.

MARLA: I don't need a lawyer.

DEAN: I represent Jennifer Peterson.

MARLA: Really?

DEAN: Yes. And I think there's been a mistake. You see, my client is very capable of taking care of herself. She has no need for the care of a guardian like yourself. Of course, this is no reflection on you. I'm sure you're providing

absolutely stellar care for Miss Peterson. But the fact of the matter is she does not need nor want your care. She was perfectly fine on her own.

MARLA: She called you?

DEAN: What?

MARLA: Jennifer called you from the facility?

DEAN: She did.

MARLA: Hmm. When did you last see Jennifer?

DEAN: Not long ago.

MARLA: How long ago?

DEAN: Just a few weeks.

MARLA: A few? Two, three, four?

DEAN: Three, maybe four... Three. And she was fine, more than fine. She was fitter and more focused than I am most of the time.

MARLA: I'm afraid that explains it. Two weeks ago Jennifer's health took a severe downwards turn. She has memory loss indicative of dementia. And her

doctor was so worried about her, she referred her to the courts for emergency help.

DEAN: That's simply not true, Miss Grayson. You know it, I know it. If the doctor wrote a note, he knows it too.

MARLA: She.

DEAN: What?

MARLA: She. The doctor, she's a she.

DEAN: Of course. Now, I know what you do here. I know your game, your hustle.

MARLA: You do?

DEAN: I do, and honestly, it's a good one. You saw an opportunity and you grabbed it. Look at all these cash cows on your wall just leaking money into your account one overpriced hour at a time. Good for you. I'm not here to ruin your business. I'm happy for you to keep milking these poor vulnerable people for as long as you damn well please. Hell, if your whole enterprise isn't the perfect example of the American dream, I don't know what is. But not Jennifer Peterson. She's off-limits. And I understand why you targeted her.

MARLA: I just responded to a call from a doctor.

DEAN: Right, sure, let's stick with that. But her doctor is mistaken. Understand? He... Sorry, she fucked up. Jennifer needs to be released from your care ASAP and you need to get that she-doctor to write another letter saying Jennifer has made a full recovery and no longer needs to be in the care of a guardian.

MARLA: Now, why the fuck would I do that?

DEAN: Well, I can think of two reasons. One, it is the right thing to do, but I doubt that means anything to you. And two, because she has very powerful... friends who can make life uncomfortable for you, extremely unpleasant and uncomfortable.

MARLA: Is that a threat?

DEAN: No. No, that's just data for you to... collate.

MARLA: How uncomfortable are we talking?

DEAN: Uh, you know, aggressively and excessively uncomfortable and then eventually, well... uh... let's just say you'll not be comfortable or uncomfortable ever again.

MARLA: Because I'll be dead?

DEAN: Well, I didn't say that. But we all die, right? Some of us die sooner in a more horribly protracted and painful way.

MARLA: Who do you work for?

DEAN: Jennifer Peterson.

MARLA: Liar.

DEAN: Excuse me?

MARLA: Liar. Jennifer did not call you from the facility. You think I'm stupid enough to let new wards anywhere near a working phone? And I know from her paperwork her lawyer is a local guy who deals in family law. And that's not you. You're a shark, which intrigues me, and I wanna know who hired you.

DEAN: Release her from your care.

MARLA: No, Dean. I don't think I will.

DEAN: I didn't wanna have to do this. It's \$150,000 in cash.

MARLA: Well, that's very pretty.

DEAN: It's yours when you release her.

MARLA: You know what I think, Dean? I think if your opening gambit is 150 grand, then Jennifer Peterson must be worth a lot more than that to whoever it is who sent you here.

DEAN: I can go to 250.

MARLA: How about... five million?

DEAN: Three hundred.

MARLA: Million?

DEAN: Thousand. Final offer.

MARLA: Dean, I have a legal duty. Jennifer Peterson is in need of my protection. How can I just abandon her?

DEAN: Are you saying no?

MARLA: I'm saying no. I'm saying, "No, thank you."

DEAN: In the days to come, you'll replay this conversation in your head over and over, and you're gonna wish you played it differently. Right now look at what you have. A thriving business, employees... a nice face, unbroken bones, a life. When this is through, you're not gonna have any of those things. None of them. Last chance.

MARLA: Goodbye, Dean. Curtis will validate your parking on the way out.