The Wreckers: "Old Money" Book #5

by Brent Clark Palmer

The Wreckers, Book 5

Chapter 1: Old Money

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The late afternoon sun poured through the massive floor-to-ceiling windows of the ski lodge, casting long golden streaks across the polished wood floors and the deep leather armchairs. Outside, the jagged peaks of the Swiss Alps rose like ancient sentinels against a sky so blue it almost hurt to look at. Fresh powder from the morning's snowfall still clung to the pine trees, and the air — even inside the lodge — carried that crisp, clean scent of mountain winter that money couldn't buy, though plenty of people in this room had certainly tried.

St. Moritz had always felt like a secret the rest of the world wasn't invited to. The kind of place where old money didn't just vacation — it *belonged*. The kind of place where people spoke in hushed tones about which royal family was staying at which chalet, and where the champagne was always the good kind, even when no one was watching.

Vanessa Smart and Jordan Harlan sat in a quiet corner of the lodge's main lounge, two untouched glasses of red wine on the low table between them. They had only been in St. Moritz for two days, but already the place felt like it was wrapping itself around them like a familiar, expensive coat.

Vanessa looked effortlessly elegant, as always. She wore a soft cream cashmere sweater that hugged her figure without trying too hard, paired with tailored black ski pants and boots that had clearly never seen actual snow. Her dark hair was pulled back into a loose, sophisticated knot, and a delicate gold necklace rested against her collarbone. Even relaxed, she carried herself like someone who knew exactly how much power she held — and how little most people could do about it.

Jordan sat beside her, long legs stretched out, looking every bit the predator in repose. He wore a fitted charcoal turtleneck that emphasized his broad shoulders and lean frame, with dark wool trousers and expensive boots. His dark hair was slightly tousled, and there was a faint shadow of stubble along his jaw that somehow made him look even more dangerous. Those sharp, intelligent eyes missed nothing.

They made a striking pair — beautiful, composed, and quietly lethal.

Vanessa took a slow sip of her wine, her dark eyes drifting across the room. Most of the guests were the usual St. Moritz crowd: old European money, a few Hollywood types trying too hard to fit in, and the occasional new-money billionaire who still hadn't learned how to blend. Then her gaze landed on a table near the center of the room.

A man in his early forties was holding court, speaking loudly enough for half the lounge to hear. He had the kind of polished, entitled look that came from never having to question his place in the world. Beside him sat a stunning woman — easily ten years younger — with sleek blonde hair, perfect posture, and the kind of effortless beauty that came from good genes and expensive maintenance. She smiled politely at whatever the man was saying, but her eyes held a quiet, almost weary intelligence.

The man's voice carried across the room.

"…and of course, my grandfather was the one who actually invented the Brillo Pad," he said with a self-satisfied chuckle. "Can you imagine? Something so simple, and yet it made the family fortune. People still use them every day. Every single day."

Vanessa's lips curved into a small, private smile. She leaned slightly toward Jordan, her voice low enough that only he could hear.

"Brillo Pads?" she murmured, amusement flickering in her eyes. "You'd think he had been to the moon."

Jordan's mouth twitched, but he kept his expression neutral as he took a sip of his wine. "Old money," he said quietly. "They love reminding everyone where it came from." Vanessa's gaze lingered on the couple for another moment before she looked away, her expression thoughtful.

They had rules. Simple ones. Unbreakable.

They never fell in love with their targets.

They never kept them.

And when the job was done, they rewarded themselves the only way that ever truly felt right — by fucking each other like the world was ending.

They had been doing this for years now. Destroying marriages. Shattering illusions. Tearing down carefully constructed lives. And they were very, very good at it.

Vanessa glanced back at the couple near the center of the room. The man was still talking. The woman — Tatum Angstrom, if the overheard introductions earlier were correct — was listening with that same polite, slightly distant smile. She looked like a model, but there was something sharper behind her eyes. Something almost… normal. Like she had gone to an Ivy League school and still remembered how to think for herself, even if she rarely got the chance anymore.

Vanessa took another sip of her wine, her mind already turning.

This was going to be interesting.

“Are you thinking what I’m thinking?” she asked Jordan quietly.

Jordan’s eyes met hers, and a slow, dangerous smile spread across his face.

“I think we just found our next project.”

Vanessa smiled back, her voice soft but certain.

“Now that’s brilliant.”

--**End of Chapter 1**

Chapter 2: The Fall

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Vanessa tightened the straps on her ski boots with deliberate precision, her breath fogging slightly in the crisp morning air. The sun had only been up for an hour, but the slopes of St. Moritz were already alive with activity. The snow sparkled like crushed diamonds under the bright alpine light, and the distant sound of skis carving through fresh powder mixed with the occasional burst of laughter from early risers.

She adjusted her goggles, pulled her helmet on, and gave herself one last look in the reflection of the lodge's glass doors. Even in full ski gear, she looked effortlessly elegant — sleek black ski pants, a fitted white jacket, and a pair of designer skis that had cost more than most people's cars. Her dark hair was tucked neatly beneath the helmet, and there was a calm, focused intensity in her eyes that only appeared when she was working.

This wasn't just a ski run.

This was the beginning of the end for someone.

She pushed off from the lodge and glided smoothly onto the main slope, her movements fluid and confident. She had spent the last hour studying the mountain's layout and the husband's habits. From what she'd overheard the day before, he liked to take the same intermediate run every morning — the one with just enough challenge to make him feel athletic, but not enough to actually risk anything.

Perfect.

Vanessa spotted him almost immediately.

He was about thirty yards ahead of her, moving at a steady, self-satisfied pace in his expensive red jacket and matching helmet. Even from a distance, he carried himself like a man who had never once had to question his place in the world. The heir to the Brillo Pad fortune. A man who had inherited wealth, status, and the unshakable belief that the universe existed to serve him.

Vanessa smiled beneath her goggles.

Time to change that.

She increased her speed, carving clean, precise lines through the snow as she closed the distance between them. When she was close enough, she called out, her voice bright and friendly.

"Excuse me! Sir?"

The husband slowed slightly and glanced over his shoulder. When he saw her, his expression shifted from mild annoyance to something much more appreciative.

“Well, hello there,” he said, slowing to a stop and turning to face her. Even through his goggles, Vanessa could see the way his eyes lingered on her figure. “I don’t think we’ve met.”

Vanessa came to a graceful stop beside him, flashing a warm, disarming smile.

“Vanessa Smart,” she said, extending a gloved hand. “I believe we were at the same table yesterday evening. I overheard you talking about your family’s legacy. Very impressive.” The husband’s chest puffed out slightly.

“Ah, yes. The Brillo Pad. My grandfather’s greatest achievement. Something so simple, yet it changed the world.”

Vanessa kept her smile perfectly in place.

“Indeed. I was hoping I might catch you on the slopes this morning. I’d love to pick your brain about a few things — if you have the time, of course.”

The husband grinned, clearly flattered.

“Well, I suppose I could spare a few minutes. What did you have in mind?”

Vanessa gestured down the slope with her ski pole.

“Race you to the bottom? Loser buys the winner a drink at the lodge.”

The husband laughed, already turning his skis downhill.

“You’re on.”

He pushed off first, clearly trying to show off. Vanessa waited a beat, then followed, keeping just enough distance to make it look like she was chasing him while actually controlling the pace.

They flew down the mountain together, the wind whipping past them as they carved through the fresh powder. The husband was good — better than she had expected — but Vanessa was better. She stayed just behind him, close enough to keep him engaged, but never quite overtaking him. She could feel his ego inflating with every turn.

Halfway down the slope, she made her move.

She increased her speed, cutting sharply to the left as if she were trying to pass him on the inside. The husband glanced over, his competitive streak kicking in, and leaned into the turn to block her.

That was exactly what she wanted.

Vanessa shifted her weight at the last second, deliberately catching her edge on a hidden patch of ice. Her body jerked violently as she lost control, and for one

terrifying second, she was airborne. Then gravity took over.

She hit the snow hard.

Pain exploded through her left knee like a gunshot. She heard the sickening pop even through the rush of blood in her ears. The world spun as she tumbled down the slope, skis flying off, arms flailing, until she finally came to a stop in a crumpled heap.

For a moment, everything was silent except for the sound of her own ragged breathing. Then the pain hit.

White-hot. Blinding. All-consuming.

Vanessa clenched her teeth and forced herself to stay still, her gloved hands gripping the snow as she tried to breathe through it. She could already feel the swelling starting beneath her ski pants. Torn ACL. She knew the feeling well enough from years of watching athletes destroy their knees.

Perfect.

The husband skidded to a stop beside her, his face pale with shock.

“Oh my god! Are you okay? Jesus, that was a bad fall!”

Vanessa looked up at him, her voice tight with pain but still managing to sound grateful. “I think… I think I tore something,” she gasped. “My knee… it popped.”

The husband looked genuinely distressed as he knelt beside her.

“Don’t move. I’ll call for help. Just stay still.”

He pulled out his phone and made the call, his voice urgent as he described the accident. Vanessa closed her eyes and let the pain wash over her, using it to fuel the performance. When the ski patrol finally arrived and loaded her onto a stretcher, she made sure to look as vulnerable and grateful as possible.

The husband stayed with her the entire way down, holding her hand and murmuring

reassurances.

By the time they reached the lodge, a small crowd had gathered. Vanessa played her part beautifully — wincing at the right moments, thanking everyone profusely, and making sure the husband felt like a hero for staying with her.

Jordan was waiting inside when they brought her in. His expression was perfectly composed, but Vanessa could see the flicker of concern in his eyes as the paramedics helped her onto a couch near the fireplace.

The husband hovered awkwardly for a few more minutes before finally excusing himself, clearly shaken by the whole ordeal.

The second he was gone, Jordan crouched down beside her, his voice low.

“How bad is it?”

Vanessa met his gaze, her voice calm despite the pain radiating through her leg. “Torn ACL. Maybe worse. I’ll need surgery.”

Jordan’s jaw tightened.

“Shit.”

Vanessa reached out and took his hand, squeezing it gently.

“Oh no no no…” she said, her voice suddenly filled with dramatic urgency. “We have to finish this job.”

Jordan stared at her for a long moment, clearly torn between concern for her and the reality of what she was saying.

“You can’t ski,” he said quietly. “You can barely walk. How the hell are we supposed to finish this?”

Vanessa’s eyes were sharp and determined despite the pain.

“We finish it because we have to. This couple is perfect. Old money. Fragile marriage. Easy target. We’re not walking away from this just because I had a little accident.”

Jordan ran a hand through his hair, clearly frustrated.

“I can’t do this alone, Vanessa. Not with a target like this. It’s too delicate.” Vanessa squeezed his hand again, her voice softening.

“I know. That’s why I already took care of it.”

Jordan frowned.

“What do you mean?”

Vanessa smiled, slow and confident.

“I called in backup.”

--**End of Chapter 2**

Chapter 3: The Pink Menace Arrihves

Chapter 3: The Pink Menace Arrives

“Well, this is certainly… festive,” Jordan muttered under his breath as he adjusted his cufflinks.

Vanessa smiled into her wine glass, her dark eyes sparkling with quiet amusement. She was seated gracefully in her chair, her left leg extended and resting on a small velvet footstool. A sleek black cast ran from just below her knee down to her foot, the only visible reminder of the skiing accident two days earlier. Even with the cast, she looked effortlessly elegant in a floor-length black gown that hugged her figure, the slit up one leg revealing just enough skin to draw attention without trying too hard. Her dark hair was swept up into a loose, sophisticated knot, and a delicate gold necklace rested against her collarbone.

“St. Moritz does love its formal dinners,” she said softly. “It’s their way of reminding everyone that old money still exists, even in the age of crypto billionaires and reality television stars.”

Jordan looked devastating in a perfectly fitted black tuxedo, the top button of his shirt left casually undone. He took a slow sip of his whiskey, his sharp eyes scanning the room. Vanessa took a delicate sip of her wine, her gaze drifting across the grand dining room. Crystal chandeliers sparkled overhead, casting a warm glow over the elegantly dressed guests. Then her eyes landed on their table near the center of the room — the Brillo Pad heir and his stunning wife, Tatum Angstrom.

They were deep in conversation when the atmosphere in the room suddenly shifted. It started with a few heads turning near the entrance. Then a few more. Within seconds, the low hum of refined conversation had noticeably quieted as dozens of eyes drifted toward the doorway.

Jordan frowned slightly.

“What the hell…?”

Vanessa didn’t even need to look. She already knew.

A bright, cheerful voice cut through the refined air like a chainsaw through silk. “Hallå! Is this the fancy dinner? I think I am in the right place, yes?”

Every head in the room turned.

Standing in the doorway was **Linnéa Bergström**.

She wore a tiny, shimmering silver dress that barely reached mid-thigh, paired with bright **pink leg warmers** and a massive, fluffy **pink fur hat** that looked like it had been stolen from a 1980s music video. Her blonde hair was

pulled into a high ponytail, and she had applied just enough makeup to look like she was either going to a party or starting one. In one hand, she held a glass of champagne she had clearly already started drinking. In the other, she clutched a small pink clutch that matched her hat perfectly.

She looked completely, gloriously out of place.

The old-money crowd stared in stunned silence. A few people actually lowered their forks. One elderly woman in a diamond necklace looked like she might faint.

Linnéa didn't seem to notice — or care.

She scanned the room with bright, curious eyes until her gaze landed on Vanessa and Jordan's table. Her face lit up like a Christmas tree.

"Vanessa!" she called out cheerfully, waving with her champagne glass. "There you are! I found you!"

Jordan's head snapped toward Vanessa so fast it was a miracle he didn't give himself whiplash.

"You have got to be kidding me," he muttered.

Vanessa simply smiled and raised her glass in greeting.

Linnéa practically skipped across the dining room, her pink leg warmers flashing with every step. The entire room watched in horrified fascination as she weaved between tables, completely oblivious to the scandalized stares following her.

When she finally reached their table, she beamed down at them.

"Surprise!" she announced, throwing her arms out dramatically. "I am here! And I brought my hat!"

Jordan stared at her for a long moment, then slowly turned to Vanessa.

"You called her," he said flatly.

Vanessa took a delicate sip of her wine.

"I told you I would take care of it."

Linnéa plopped down into the empty chair beside Jordan without waiting for an invitation, setting her champagne glass on the table with a cheerful clink.

"Surprise!" she announced again, beaming at both of them. "I took the first flight out of Stockholm. Then a train. Then another train. Then I had to take a taxi up the mountain

because the helicopter was too expensive. But I made it! And look — my hat survived the whole trip!"

Jordan stared at her, clearly trying to process what was happening.

“Linnéa,” he said slowly, “what the hell are you doing here?”

Linnéa blinked at him, genuinely confused.

“Vanessa called me,” she said, as if it were the most obvious thing in the world. “She said you needed help finishing a job. So I came! I am very good at helping. Ask anyone.” Jordan looked like he was trying very hard not to laugh — or scream.

“You could have warned me,” he said to Vanessa.

“I thought it would be more fun this way,” she replied calmly.

Linnéa leaned forward, her pink hat bobbing slightly.

“So,” she said brightly, “who are we destroying? Is it the man with the Brillo Pad money? He looks very punchable. And his wife is very pretty. I like her already.”

Jordan closed his eyes for a moment, clearly praying for patience.

“Linnéa,” he said, “we are in the middle of a very exclusive, very formal dinner. You are wearing a pink fur hat and leg warmers. People are staring.”

Linnéa looked around the room as if noticing the horrified expressions for the first time. “Oh,” she said cheerfully. “They are very fancy here, yes? I thought this was a party.” Vanessa finally let out a soft laugh.

“Welcome to St. Moritz, Linnéa.”

Linnéa grinned and raised her champagne glass.

“To destroying marriages,” she said loudly enough for several nearby tables to hear. “And to pink hats!”

A few people actually gasped.

Jordan dropped his head into his hands.

“I’m going to kill you both,” he muttered.

Vanessa reached over and gently patted his arm.

“You’ll thank me later.”

Linnéa took a long sip of her champagne, completely unbothered by the scandalized stares still aimed in her direction.

“So,” she said, leaning in conspiratorially, “tell me everything. Who are these people? Why are we ruining them? And most importantly — do they have good wine? Because this champagne is very average.”

Jordan lifted his head and gave Vanessa a long, suffering look.

“You really didn’t warn me.”

Vanessa smiled sweetly.

“Where would be the fun in that?”

Linnéa clapped her hands together, her pink hat wobbling dangerously.

“This is going to be so much fun,” she declared. “I can already tell.”

Across the room, the Brillo Pad heir and his wife were staring at their table in open confusion — and just a hint of fascination.

Vanessa raised her glass toward them in a silent toast.

Let the games begin.

--**End of Chapter 3**

Chapter 4: The Heir's Wife

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The dining room of the Grand Hotel des Bains was unusually quiet for a Friday evening. Whispers moved through the room like a slow, deliberate wave — soft at first, then growing louder as more heads turned toward one particular table near the center. Waiters paused midstep. Conversations died mid-sentence. Even the clinking of silverware seemed to fade as dozens of eyes drifted toward the same place.

At the center of the attention sat the Brillo Pad heir and his wife, Tatum Angstrom. The husband’s face had gone pale beneath his usual golden tan. Tatum sat perfectly still, her spine straight, her expression carefully composed — but her fingers were gripping the stem of her wine glass so tightly her knuckles had turned white.

The cause of the sudden shift in atmosphere was simple.

A single photograph had been taken the night before and was now circulating through the hotel’s most exclusive circles like wildfire. It showed the husband standing far too close to a young woman at the hotel bar — a woman who was *not* his wife. The image was slightly blurry, taken from across the room, but clear enough to cause damage. The woman in the photo had long blonde hair and was wearing a tiny silver dress… and a very distinctive **bright pink fur hat**.

Linnéa Bergström.

Vanessa and Jordan watched the scene unfold from their usual corner table, both of them sipping their drinks with quiet satisfaction. Vanessa’s black cast was propped up on a velvet footstool, her injured leg stretched out comfortably. Jordan sat beside her, looking effortlessly relaxed in a dark cashmere sweater and tailored trousers.

“Phase one complete,” Jordan murmured, his voice low enough that only Vanessa could hear. Vanessa smiled, slow and dangerous.

“Just the beginning.”

She glanced across the room at Linnéa, who was seated at a small table near the window, casually sipping a glass of champagne as if she hadn’t just helped set off a social bomb. The Swedish gymnast looked completely unbothered by the stares and whispers directed her way. If anything, she seemed to be enjoying the attention.

Vanessa turned back to Jordan, her voice soft.

“She’s good at this.”

Jordan followed her gaze, watching as Linnéa casually adjusted her pink fur hat while a waiter refilled her champagne.

“She’s very good,” he agreed. “I still can’t believe you brought her in without telling me.” Vanessa’s smile turned amused.

“I told you I would take care of it. And I knew you’d say no if I asked first.”

Jordan chuckled despite himself.

“You’re not wrong.”

He took a slow sip of his drink, still watching Linnéa from across the room.

“She’s fearless,” he said. “Completely shameless. And she has this… instinct for destruction. It’s almost scary how quickly she understands what makes people tick.”

Vanessa nodded, her eyes gleaming.

“She’s been like that since the moment we met her. During the last job, she stayed behind after everyone else left and helped us finish what we started. She had ideas even we hadn’t thought of. Very creative. Very ruthless. I knew then that she could be useful.” Jordan glanced at Vanessa’s cast.

“And now she’s our field agent while you recover.”

“Exactly,” Vanessa said. “She’s young, beautiful, and completely unafraid to cause chaos. The perfect weapon for this particular job.”

Across the room, the whispers had grown louder. A few people were openly staring at the Brillo Pad heir and his wife. Tatum’s smile had become strained, and the husband was now pretending to check his phone while clearly trying to ignore the growing attention. Vanessa leaned back in her chair, her voice calm and satisfied.

“The first crack has formed,” she said. “Now we just need to keep pressing until it splits wide open.”

Jordan raised his glass in a quiet toast.

“To Linnéa,” he said. “Our new secret weapon.”

Vanessa smiled and clinked her glass against his.

“To chaos.”

--**End of Chapter 4**

Chapter 5: Wesponizing Legacy

Chapter 5: Weaponizing Legacy

Tatum Angstrom stood alone on the balcony of their private chalet, staring out at the snowcovered peaks of St. Moritz. The night was quiet, the air crisp and cold, but inside her chest, everything felt heavy.

She had spent the last nine days watching her carefully constructed life begin to unravel. It started small — a few whispers at dinner, a few sideways glances at the hotel bar. Then came the photograph. That damn photograph of her husband standing far too close to that wild Swedish girl with the pink fur hat. Now the rumors were spreading faster than she could contain them. People were talking. People were *judging*.

And the worst part?

She wasn’t even sure she cared anymore.

Tatum wrapped her arms around herself, her breath fogging in the cold mountain air. She had married into old money. She had played the part of the perfect wife for ten years. She had smiled at galas, hosted dinner parties, and kept her mouth shut when she should have spoken up. And for what?

To watch everything fall apart because of one stupid photo?

She closed her eyes.

She was tired.

So incredibly tired.

Inside the chalet, her husband was on the phone again, speaking in low, urgent tones to one of his lawyers. He had barely looked at her all day. When he did, his eyes were full of blame — as if this entire mess was somehow her fault.

Tatum let out a slow, shaky breath.

She had never felt more alone.

--Across the resort, in a much smaller but no less luxurious suite, Linnéa Bergström was having the time of her life.

She had spent the afternoon with Tatum at the hotel spa, and the two women had clicked instantly. Tatum was quiet, elegant, and clearly starving for real conversation. Linnéa, in

typical fashion, had been completely shameless — talking openly about sex, relationships, and how ridiculous most marriages were.

To her surprise, Tatum had listened. Really listened.

And for the first time in days, the older woman had actually smiled.

Linnéa had noticed the sadness in Tatum’s eyes the moment they met. She recognized it instantly — the look of someone trapped in a life that looked perfect from the outside but felt hollow on the inside. It was the same look she had seen in so many of the athletes she had met over the years. The same look she had seen in herself before she decided to stop pretending.

Linnéa had made it her mission to crack that shell.

And she was succeeding.

--That night, just after midnight, there was a knock on the door of Jordan and Vanessa’s suite. Vanessa was curled up on the couch with her leg propped up, reading a book, while Jordan sat nearby reviewing notes on his laptop. They both looked up at the sound.

“It isn't locked,” Vanessa called.

The door burst open.

Linnéa Bergström strode inside like she owned the place, her bright pink fur hat slightly askew and her cheeks flushed from the cold. She was wearing a tiny black dress that barely covered anything, and her pink leg warmers were still on.

Without missing a beat, she kicked the door shut behind her and began stripping off her clothes right there in the middle of the room.

“It’s so warm here,” she announced cheerfully, pulling her dress over her head and tossing it onto a chair. “I don’t know how you two stand it.”

Jordan blinked.

“Linnéa—”

But she was already completely naked.

She walked straight over to Jordan, who was still sitting in his chair, and climbed onto his lap without hesitation. She reached down, pulled open his robe, and positioned herself above him. Her movements were quick, confident, and completely shameless.

“I missed you, Jordan,” she said, her voice low and playful as she began to move her hips, slowly at first, then with more purpose. “You have no idea how much.”

Jordan let out a surprised groan, his hands instinctively gripping her waist.

“Linnéa—”

“Shhh,” she whispered, leaning in to kiss his neck as she rode him with increasing intensity. “Just let me have this. I’ve been so good all day.”

Vanessa watched from the couch, her book forgotten in her lap. A slow, delighted smile spread across her face as she took in the scene — Linnéa completely naked and unapologetic, riding Jordan with wild abandon while he tried (and failed) to maintain any sense of composure.

Vanessa giggled with pure delight.

She had created this. She had brought Linnéa into their world, and now the Swedish gymnast was thriving — chaotic, fearless, and completely uninhibited. It was beautiful.

Linnéa's breathing grew heavier as she moved faster, her powerful gymnast's body flexing with every thrust. She moaned softly, her head falling back as she chased her release. "I missed you," she gasped again. "I missed this."

Jordan groaned, his hands tightening on her hips as he tried to keep up with her rhythm. "You're going to kill me," he muttered.

Linnéa laughed breathlessly, her voice thick with pleasure.

"Not yet. We still have work to do."

She came with a sharp cry, her body shaking as she ground down against him one final time. Jordan followed seconds later, his head falling back against the chair with a low groan. For a moment, the only sound in the room was their heavy breathing.

Then Linnéa leaned forward, resting her forehead against Jordan's with a satisfied smile. "Now," she said cheerfully, "let's plan our next steps before sleep."

Vanessa finally burst out laughing, the sound bright and genuine.

"You," she said, shaking her head in amusement, "are absolutely perfect."

Linnéa grinned over her shoulder at Vanessa, still completely naked and straddling Jordan. "I know," she said. "Now… who's ready to destroy some old money?"

--**End of Chapter 5**

Chapter 6: Emotional Replacement

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Tatum Angstrom laughed — actually laughed — as she leaned back in her chair, swirling the remains of her espresso martini. The hotel's private lounge was quiet this late in the afternoon, with only a few other guests scattered around the room. Soft jazz played in the background, and the large windows offered a stunning view of the snow-covered Alps glowing under the late winter sun.

Linnéa Bergström sat across from her, legs crossed, looking completely at ease in a tiny black sweater dress and her ever-present pink leg warmers. Her bright pink fur hat sat on the table beside her like a fluffy mascot.

"I'm serious," Linnéa said, her thick Swedish accent making every word sound slightly mischievous. "In Sweden, we don't do this whole… pretending thing. If you're unhappy, you say it. If you want to fuck someone else, you say that too. Life is too short for all this… what is the word? Suffering in silence?"

Tatum shook her head, still smiling despite herself.

"You make it sound so simple."

"It *is* simple," Linnéa insisted, leaning forward with a grin. "You are beautiful. You are smart. You are young. Why are you wasting your life being miserable with a man who barely looks at you?"

Tatum's smile faltered slightly. She looked down at her drink, her fingers tracing the rim of the glass.

"It's not that simple," she said quietly. "There's… history. Family. Expectations. My husband's family built something. A legacy. Walking away from that would destroy everything."

Linnéa tilted her head, studying Tatum with those sharp, perceptive eyes.

"And what about *you*?" she asked softly. "What about what *you* want? Does that not matter?"

Tatum was quiet for a long moment. When she finally spoke, her voice was barely above a whisper.

"I don't even know what I want anymore."

Linnéa reached across the table and gently placed her hand over Tatum's.

"Then maybe it is time to find out."

--Across the resort, in a private cigar lounge, Jordan Harlan was having a very different kind of conversation.

The Brillo Pad heir — whose name was **Henrik Angstrom** — sat across from him in a large leather armchair, nursing a glass of aged whiskey. The room was dimly lit, the air thick with the scent of expensive tobacco and old money.

“I just don’t understand it,” Henrik muttered, staring into his glass. “One minute everything is fine, and the next… it’s like the whole world is turning against us. That photo… it’s ruined everything.”

Jordan took a slow sip of his own drink, his expression sympathetic but carefully measured. “People love a scandal,” he said calmly. “Especially when it involves someone like you. Old money. A family name. It makes for good gossip.”

Henrik let out a bitter laugh.

“My grandfather built an empire from nothing. Brillo Pads, of all things. And now my wife and I are the punchline of every joke in this damn hotel.”

Jordan leaned forward slightly, his voice low and thoughtful.

“Have you talked to Tatum about how this is affecting her?”

Henrik frowned.

“She’s… distant. Quiet. She barely looks at me anymore. It’s like she blames me for all of this.”

Jordan nodded slowly, as if considering something.

“Sometimes,” he said carefully, “when a marriage is already under strain, something like this just… exposes the cracks that were already there.”

Henrik looked up sharply.

“What are you saying?”

Jordan met his gaze steadily.

“I’m saying that maybe this scandal isn’t the real problem. Maybe it’s just the thing that finally made you both see what was already broken.”

Henrik was quiet for a long moment, swirling the whiskey in his glass.

“I don’t know what to do anymore,” he admitted. “I feel like I’m losing her. And I don’t even know if I ever really had her.”

Jordan didn’t respond right away. He simply watched the other man, letting the silence stretch.

Sometimes the most effective thing you could do was say nothing at all.

--That evening, back in their suite, Vanessa sat on the couch with her leg propped up, listening as Linnéa recounted her afternoon with Tatum.

“She’s so sad,” Linnéa said, pacing back and forth in nothing but a silk robe. “She tries to hide it, but I can see it. She’s lonely. She’s bored. She’s been playing the perfect wife for so long that she forgot how to be herself.”

Jordan leaned against the doorframe, arms crossed.

“And the husband?”

“He’s scared,” Vanessa answered before Linnéa could. “Scared of losing control. Scared of what people will think. Scared that his perfect little world is falling apart.”

Linnéa stopped pacing and turned to face them both, her expression unusually serious. “They’re both miserable,” she said. “And they’re making each other more miserable every day. It’s sad, really.”

Vanessa studied her for a moment.

“You like her,” she said softly.

Linnéa shrugged, but there was a flicker of something genuine in her eyes.

“She’s nice. Smarter than she lets on. And she deserves better than this life she’s trapped in.” Jordan raised an eyebrow.

“You’re not getting attached, are you?”

Linnéa grinned, the mischievous spark returning to her eyes.

“Me? Never. I’m just here to help destroy a marriage. But if I can make one person a little less miserable along the way… that’s not so bad, is it?”

Vanessa smiled.

“No,” she said. “It’s not so bad.”

She looked between Jordan and Linnéa, her voice calm but commanding.

“Keep going. Both of you. Tatum is already starting to pull away. Henrik is starting to question everything. We’re close.”

Linnéa’s grin widened.

“Close to what?”

Vanessa’s smile turned sharp.

“Close to breaking them completely.”

--**End of Chapter 6**

Chapter 7: The Image Cracks

Chapter 7: The Image Cracks

The three of them were gathered in Vanessa and Jordan’s suite, the late afternoon light casting long shadows across the room. Vanessa sat on the couch with her injured leg propped up on a pillow, looking elegant even in casual loungewear. Jordan paced slowly near the window, arms crossed, while Linnéa sprawled across an armchair in her usual chaotic fashion — pink fur hat still on, one leg dangling over the armrest.

They had been at this for over an hour.

“Okay,” Jordan said, rubbing his temples. “What if we leak that the husband has a secret love child?”

Linnéa made a face.

“Too cliché. Everyone does love children these days. It’s not shocking anymore.” Vanessa tilted her head thoughtfully.

“What if we make it look like Tatum has been secretly funding some radical political group? Something embarrassing?”

Jordan shook his head.

“Too political. These people don’t care about politics. They care about money and reputation.”

Linnéa groaned dramatically and flopped back in the chair.

“Ugh. This is harder than I thought. Why are old money people so *boring* to destroy?” She suddenly sat up, her eyes brightening.

“I have an idea,” she announced. “But first… I need to think. And I think better when I’m naked.”

Without any further warning, she stood up and began stripping off her clothes right there in the middle of the room. First the pink fur hat came off, then her sweater, then her tiny skirt, until she was completely nude. She grabbed a large silk pillow from the couch, dropped onto the floor, and began slowly grinding against it, her powerful gymnast’s body moving with lazy, deliberate rhythm.

Jordan raised an eyebrow but didn’t look away.

“You’re unbelievable.”

Linnéa grinned up at him, completely unashamed, her hips still moving against the pillow. “It helps me think! The silk feels nice. Don’t judge me.”

Vanessa watched her with open amusement, clearly entertained by the display.

“By all means,” she said. “Think away.”

Linnéa closed her eyes, her breathing growing slightly heavier as she continued to move. For a few minutes, the only sounds in the room were the soft rustle of silk and her quiet, thoughtful hums.

Then her eyes suddenly flew open.

Her face lit up like she had just discovered fire.

“I’ve got it!” she gasped, sitting up so fast she nearly knocked the pillow over. “I know exactly what to do!”

Jordan and Vanessa both leaned forward.

Linnéa’s voice was filled with excitement as she began to explain.

“Okay. So back in Sweden, there was this *huge* scandal. It was called the Toblerone Affair. This woman — Mona Sahlin — she was the Deputy Prime Minister. Very powerful. Very serious. Everyone thought she was going to be the next Prime Minister. Then one day, someone leaked that she had been using her government credit card for personal things. Not even big things! Groceries. Diapers. A Toblerone chocolate bar. A *chocolate bar*! The media went completely insane. They called it the Toblerone Affair. She had to resign. Her career was destroyed. Her reputation was ruined forever. All because people found out she thought the rules didn’t apply to her.”

Linnéa’s eyes were gleaming now.

“People *love* it when powerful people fall. Especially when it involves money. Especially when it involves family money. It makes them feel like maybe the system isn’t so rigged after all.”

She looked at Jordan and Vanessa, clearly proud of herself.

“So we do the same thing to Henrik. We make it look like *he’s* been misusing the family fortune. Private jets for mistresses. Secret gambling debts. Expensive gifts for other women. We don’t even have to prove it. We just have to make it *look* real enough that people believe it. Then his reputation — his family’s legacy — it all comes crashing down in front of everyone in St. Moritz.”

Vanessa and Jordan stared at her for a moment, genuinely impressed.

Jordan let out a low whistle.

“That’s… actually brilliant.”

Linnéa beamed.

“I know! I want to prove I can be just as good at this as you two. I want to show you I’m not just here to have fun and take my clothes off.”

She stood up, still completely naked, and began pacing as she laid out her plan. “Okay. So here’s what we’re going to do. Jordan — you’re going to plant the seed. You’re going to start ‘accidentally’ letting things slip to the husband’s friends. Little comments. ‘Did you hear about the private jet?’ ‘I heard someone say something about gambling debts…’ Make it sound like you’re trying *not* to gossip. People will eat it up.”

She turned to Vanessa.

“And you — you’re going to make sure Tatum hears about it. Subtly. Maybe through me. I’ll ‘accidentally’ let something slip when I’m with her. Make her start questioning everything.” Linnéa’s eyes were bright with excitement.

“It’s going to be perfect. By the time we’re done, everyone in St. Moritz will be talking about how the great Brillo Pad heir has been secretly destroying his own family’s legacy.” She finally paused, her expression softening slightly.

“I just… I feel a little bad about Tatum. She’s actually nice. I don’t want to hurt her too much.”

Vanessa reached out and gently took Linnéa’s hand.

“You don’t have to think of it as destroying *her*,” she said softly. “Think of it as destroying a *marriage*. A marriage that was already broken. A marriage that was making both of them miserable. Sometimes the kindest thing you can do is burn it all down so they can start again.”

Linnéa was quiet for a moment. Then she nodded, her usual spark returning.

“Okay,” she said. “Then let’s burn it down.”

She looked at Jordan, completely serious despite still being naked.

“Jordan. Your marching orders are simple. Start planting the seeds. Make it look like you’re trying *not* to tell people. The more reluctant you seem, the more believable it will be.” Jordan smirked.

“Consider it done.”

Linnéa grinned, clearly pleased with herself.

“Now,” she said, stretching lazily, “who wants to help me practice my ‘accidental gossip’ voice?”

Vanessa laughed, shaking her head in fond exasperation.

“You,” she said, “are going to be the death of us.”

Linnéa winked.

“Probably. But it’ll be fun.”

--**End of Chapter 7**

Chapter 8: The Image Cracks

Chapter 8: The Image Cracks

Scene One: The Cigar Bar

The private cigar lounge at the Grand Hotel des Bains smelled of aged tobacco, expensive leather, and old money. Jordan Harlan sat in a deep leather armchair, a glass of rare single malt in one hand and a cigar he had no intention of smoking in the other. Across from him sat three of St. Moritz's most influential men — all of them old money, all of them deeply invested in the social hierarchy of the resort.

Jordan had been here for nearly an hour, carefully weaving a web of half-truths and carefully planted doubts. He was playing his role perfectly — the concerned acquaintance who was *trying* not to gossip, but just couldn't help himself.

"I really shouldn't say anything," Jordan said, lowering his voice as if he were doing them all a favor. "But I've heard some… troubling things. About Henrik."

One of the men leaned forward, eyes gleaming with interest.

"Go on."

Jordan sighed, as if reluctant.

"It's probably nothing. But I've heard whispers about some… financial irregularities. Private jets that weren't exactly for business. Large sums moving to accounts that don't seem to have any legitimate purpose. And there's talk of… well, let's just say certain *personal* expenses that the family trust might not approve of."

The men exchanged glances.

Jordan took a slow sip of his whiskey, keeping his expression perfectly neutral. "I'm sure it's all just rumors," he added, as if trying to walk it back. "You know how people love to talk."

But the damage was already done.

Inside his head, Jordan was thinking the same thing over and over:

What's the Toblerone? What's the Toblerone?

He needed one hook. One unforgettable detail that would stick to Henrik Angstrom forever. Something people would whisper about for years. Something that would make the scandal memorable.

Then it hit him.

He leaned in slightly, lowering his voice even more.

“I probably shouldn’t say this… but I heard something about a very specific expense. Something small. Something ridiculous. A single charge on a family account for… a very expensive watch. A Patek Philippe. The kind that costs more than most people’s houses. Apparently it was a gift. For someone who wasn’t his wife.”

The men’s eyes widened.

Jordan sat back, satisfied.

There it is. The Toblerone.

A single, absurdly expensive watch. A ridiculous, unforgettable detail that would make the entire scandal stick in people’s minds. From now on, whenever anyone thought of Henrik Angstrom, they would think of that watch.

Jordan took another sip of his whiskey, hiding his smile.

--### Scene Two: The Ladies’ Lounge

Across the resort, in a sunlit private dining room overlooking the slopes, Linnéa Bergström and Tatum Angstrom were having lunch.

Tatum picked at her smoked salmon sandwich while Linnéa enthusiastically devoured hers, talking a mile a minute between bites.

“…and then I stuck the landing perfectly! Bronze medal! Can you believe it? Me! I still can’t believe it sometimes. I mean, look at these muscles!”

Linnéa flexed her arm dramatically, showing off the lean, powerful definition of her gymnast’s body. Tatum couldn’t help but stare. The flush that had been creeping up her neck for the past twenty minutes deepened.

Linnéa noticed immediately.

Her eyes sparkled with mischief.

Tatum was beautiful — stunning, really — but there was a sadness in her that Linnéa recognized. A quiet desperation. A woman who had been starved of real attention, real desire, for far too long.

Linnéa decided it was time to act.

She leaned across the table, her voice dropping into something low and intimate. “Come to help me powder up my nose?” she asked, her Swedish accent making the words sound almost innocent.

Tatum blinked, caught off guard.

“I… what?”

Linnéa stood up, took Tatum’s hand, and gently tugged her to her feet.

“Come on,” she said with a playful smile. “The ladies’ lounge is just down the hall. It’ll only take a minute.”

Tatum hesitated for only a second before allowing herself to be led.

The ladies’ lounge was empty when they arrived — a luxurious space with marble counters, soft lighting, and plush velvet seating. The moment the door clicked shut behind them, Linnéa turned and pressed Tatum gently but firmly against the wall.

Their eyes met.

Linnéa didn’t ask permission. She didn’t need to.

She kissed her.

It started slow — soft, exploratory, almost teasing. But within seconds, it turned wild. Linnéa’s hands were everywhere — sliding under Tatum’s blouse, gripping her waist, pulling her closer. Tatum gasped against her mouth, her body responding with an intensity that clearly surprised even her. Years of repression, of quiet misery, of being the perfect wife… it all came crashing down in that moment.

Linnéa lifted Tatum onto the marble counter like she weighed nothing, her gymnast’s strength on full display. She kissed down her neck, her collarbone, her breasts, her hands moving with confident, hungry purpose.

Tatum moaned — a sound she hadn’t made in years — as Linnéa dropped to her knees in front of her. The Swedish girl looked up at her with bright, wicked eyes.

“Relax,” she whispered in her broken English. “I take care of you. You deserve this.” What followed was raw, intense, and utterly overwhelming.

Linnéa was relentless — using her tongue, her fingers, her entire body with the same precision and power she used on the balance beam. Tatum came apart completely, her hands tangled in Linnéa’s hair, her moans echoing off the marble walls. She came once, then again, her body shaking so hard she nearly slipped off the counter.

By the time it was over, Tatum was breathless, trembling, and completely undone. Linnéa stood up, gently cupping Tatum’s face with both hands.

“You okay?” she asked softly, her accent thick with affection. “You look… very pretty like this.”

Tatum stared at her, eyes glassy with pleasure and something deeper.

“I… I don’t even know who I am right now,” she whispered.

Linnéa smiled and kissed her gently.

“That’s okay,” she said. “You don’t have to know. You just have to feel.”

She helped Tatum down from the counter and pulled her into a warm embrace, stroking her hair with surprising tenderness.

“You are safe with me,” Linnéa murmured. “I promise.”

Tatum clung to her, breathing hard, her world completely rewritten in the span of twenty minutes.

--**End of Chapter 8**

Chapter 9

Chapter 9: The Breaking Point

The dining room of the Grand Hotel des Bains had never been so silent.

Every single person in the room — old money, new money, staff, and guests alike — had stopped what they were doing to watch the spectacle unfolding at the center table. Henrik Angstrom and Tatum Angstrom were in the middle of a fight so raw, so vicious, and so public that it felt like watching a car crash in slow motion.

“You’ve been lying to me for years!” Tatum shouted, her voice shaking with rage and heartbreak. Her usually perfect composure had completely shattered. Tears streamed down her face as she stood up, her chair scraping loudly against the marble floor. “I defended you! I smiled for the cameras! I played the perfect wife while you were out there making a fool of both of us!”

Henrik’s face was red with fury.

“Me? You’re blaming *me*? After everything I’ve done for you? After I gave you this life? This name? This *legacy*?”

Tatum let out a bitter, broken laugh.

“Your legacy? You mean your grandfather’s legacy? The one built on *Brillo Pads*? You’ve done nothing but coast on it while secretly destroying it!”

The entire room gasped.

This was no longer a private argument. This was a public execution.

From their usual corner table, Vanessa and Jordan watched in quiet fascination. Vanessa’s black cast was propped up on its usual footstool, a glass of wine in her hand. Jordan sat beside her, one arm draped casually over the back of her chair.

“Well,” Jordan murmured, “this escalated quickly.”

Vanessa took a slow sip of her wine, her eyes never leaving the couple in the center of the room.

“I knew it was coming,” she said softly. “But even I didn’t expect it to be this… spectacular.” Just then, the double doors of the dining room swung open with dramatic flair.

Every head turned.

Standing in the doorway was **Linnéa Bergström** — and she had outdone herself.

She was wearing a *massive*, fluffy, bright **hot pink fur coat** that looked like it had been made from the pelt of some unfortunate mythical creature. On her

head sat an even more ridiculous **pink fur hat** — this one shaped like a giant pom-pom with little silver bells hanging from the edges. Her pink leg warmers were on full display beneath a tiny black dress, and she was carrying a matching pink clutch that looked like it could double as a weapon.

She looked like a deranged 1980s pop star who had wandered into the wrong century. The entire room stared in stunned silence.

Linnéa scanned the crowd until her eyes landed on Henrik and Tatum's table. A slow, wicked grin spread across her face.

Without hesitation, she marched straight through the dining room, her pink coat swishing dramatically with every step. The bells on her hat jingled with each movement.

She stopped right in front of their table, placed both hands on her hips, and looked directly at Henrik.

"Excuse me," she said loudly, her Swedish accent thick and cheerful. "I think you dropped something."

Before anyone could react, she reached into her pink clutch, pulled out a single, very expensive-looking **Patek Philippe watch**, and dramatically dropped it onto the table in front of Henrik.

The entire room gasped.

Linnéa smiled sweetly.

"I found it in my room last night. You must have left it there when you came to… *visit*." Henrik's face went from red to white in a matter of seconds.

Tatum stared at the watch like it had personally insulted her.

Then she turned to her husband, her voice deadly quiet.

"You told me that watch was in the safe."

Henrik opened his mouth, but no words came out.

Tatum's voice rose, shaking with fury.

"You *gave* it to her? After everything? After all the lies? After all the rumors? You actually gave her your *grandfather's* watch?"

The entire dining room was now completely silent. You could have heard a pin drop.

Linnéa tilted her head innocently.

"Oops," she said. "Did I make things awkward?"

Tatum turned to her, and for a moment, something almost like gratitude flickered in her eyes. Then she looked back at her husband.

“We’re done,” she said, her voice clear and final. “I’m done. I want a divorce.” Henrik finally found his voice.

“Tatum, wait—”

“No,” she cut him off. “I’m done waiting. I’m done pretending. I’m done being the perfect wife while you destroy everything we built.”

She grabbed her purse, turned on her heel, and walked out of the dining room with her head held high.

The second the doors closed behind her, the room erupted into whispers.

Linnéa stood there for a moment, looking extremely pleased with herself. Then she turned, gave a little curtsy to the stunned crowd, and skipped over to Vanessa and Jordan’s table. She dropped into the empty chair beside them, still wearing her ridiculous pink fur hat and coat.

“Well,” she said cheerfully, “that went well.”

Vanessa stared at her for a long moment, then let out a low, impressed laugh.

“I’m glad I was ringside for that.”

Jordan shook his head, clearly torn between amusement and disbelief.

“You are completely insane.”

Linnéa grinned.

“I know. But admit it — that was *brilliant*.”

Vanessa raised her glass.

“To Linnéa,” she said. “The Pink Menace who just ended a marriage in front of half of St. Moritz.”

Linnéa clinked her champagne glass against Vanessa’s.

“To destroying old money,” she said proudly. “And to pink hats.”

Jordan sighed, but there was a smile tugging at the corner of his mouth.

“God help us all.”

--**End of Chapter 9**

Chapter 10

Chapter 10: The Reward

The knock on the door came just after sunset.

Vanessa was sitting on the couch with her injured leg propped up, a glass of wine in her hand, while Jordan stood nearby, both of them quietly reflecting on the events of the past three weeks. The suite was peaceful for the first time in days.

“Come in,” Vanessa called.

The door swung open.

Standing in the doorway was **Linnéa Bergström**, wearing her signature pink fur hat and an even more ridiculous oversized pink fur coat that made her look like a glamorous Swedish Muppet. Hanging off her arm, looking slightly dazed but undeniably happy, was **Tatum Angstrom**.

Tatum was dressed in a sleek black coat and boots, her usually perfect blonde hair slightly tousled. She was smiling — a real, genuine smile that neither Vanessa nor Jordan had seen on her face since they arrived in St. Moritz.

Linnéa beamed at them.

“Surprise!” she announced cheerfully. “Tatum is coming back to Stockholm with me. She wants to see the ABBA Museum!”

Vanessa blinked, then let out a soft laugh.

“The ABBA Museum?”

Tatum nodded, her cheeks slightly pink.

“I’ve always wanted to go,” she admitted. “And… I think I need a fresh start. Somewhere far away from all of this.”

Jordan raised an eyebrow, clearly amused.

“And you’re just… taking her?”

Linnéa grinned and tightened her grip on Tatum’s arm like she was claiming a prize. “She said yes! We’re going to eat meatballs and sing ‘Dancing Queen’ and forget all about Brillo Pads and old money and stupid husbands.”

Vanessa smiled warmly, her expression softening into something almost maternal.

“Well then,” she said, adjusting her crutches as she stood up. “You two have fun. And Tatum… take care of yourself.”

Tatum looked at Vanessa and Jordan with genuine gratitude.

“Thank you,” she said quietly. “For everything. I know you’re not… normal people. But you helped me see things clearly.”

Jordan gave her a small nod.

“Sometimes the truth hurts before it heals.”

Linnéa suddenly lunged forward and pulled both Vanessa and Jordan into a tight group hug, her ridiculous pink coat enveloping them.

“I’m going to miss you two,” she said, her voice slightly muffled. “You’re my favorite monsters.”

Vanessa laughed and patted her back.

“Go cause chaos in Stockholm, Linnéa.”

Linnéa pulled back, grinning.

“Always.”

She turned to Tatum, took her hand, and gave an exaggerated little bow.

“Come, my beautiful Swedish princess. ABBA awaits!”

Tatum laughed — a bright, genuine sound — and let herself be led out the door.

As they disappeared down the hallway, Linnéa’s voice echoed back:

“Don’t worry! I’ll send pictures of the giant ABBA costumes!”

The door clicked shut.

For a moment, the suite was quiet.

Jordan turned to Vanessa with a small smirk.

“Well,” he said. “A rule’s a rule.”

Vanessa smiled, her eyes soft.

“This time, it doesn’t feel like the world is ending. At least nobody’s world that matters.” She glanced down at her cast. “Be careful with my leg.”

Jordan stepped closer, his hands gentle as he helped her back to the couch.

“I’m always careful with what’s mine.”

--What followed was slow, tender, and deeply intimate.

Jordan helped Vanessa out of her clothes with careful attention, mindful of her injured leg. He positioned her gently on the bed, propping pillows under her knee before climbing over her. When he finally pushed inside her, it was slow and deep, his movements controlled and loving.

Vanessa moaned softly, her hands sliding up his back.

“She did all the work this time, you know,” she whispered, her voice breathy. “Maybe you should be *her* reward.”

Jordan let out a low chuckle against her neck, his hips moving in a steady, careful rhythm. “Ah, naw,” he murmured. “You are the genius behind it all.”

Vanessa smiled, her fingers threading through his hair as pleasure built between them. They moved together with the kind of familiarity that only comes from years of shared darkness and desire. Every thrust, every kiss, every whispered word was a celebration — not just of another job completed, but of the strange, twisted family they had built. When they finally came, it was together — quiet, intense, and deeply satisfying. Afterward, Jordan carefully pulled Vanessa against his chest, mindful of her leg as he held her close.

For a long time, they lay in silence, the only sound their breathing and the distant wind against the windows.

Then Vanessa spoke, her voice soft and reflective.

“You know what I’ve learned?” she said. “Some people need to be broken before they can ever truly be free. We didn’t destroy Tatum. We gave her permission to leave. And sometimes… that’s the greatest gift anyone can give.”

Jordan kissed the top of her head.

“And sometimes,” he added, “the people we think we’re destroying… end up destroying us a little in return.”

Vanessa smiled against his chest.

“I suppose she already got her reward.”

Jordan chuckled quietly.

“Yeah. She got the ABBA Museum.”

Vanessa let out a soft laugh.

“God help Stockholm.”

They lay there together in the quiet, two monsters who had somehow built something resembling a home out of chaos, destruction, and the occasional pink fur hat.

Outside, the snow continued to fall over the mountains of St. Moritz.

Inside, for the first time in a long time, everything felt still.

--**End of Chapter 10**

End of Book 6
