

Chapter 15

Sophie waited just outside the entrance of the ‘D’ shop, watching the crowd carefully for Micah’s face. Her family was already seated in the stadium. She glanced at her watch. Six forty-five. How unlike Micah to be late. Her phone pinged with a message and she fished it out of her back pocket, but sighed with disappointment when she saw that it was from Levi. ‘Are you guys coming in?’ She quickly replied, ‘He’s not here yet.’ She slid her phone into her back pocket and glanced at her watch again. Six forty-six. She pulled her phone out again and called Micah’s number, knowing that he always engaged his Bluetooth whenever he was driving. It went directly to voicemail. She frowned and ended the call.

Shortly before seven o’clock, Levi came out of the stadium and joined her near the ‘D’ Shop.

“What’s going on, Sophie? You’re gonna miss the first pitch.”

She frowned. “I don’t know, but I’m worried, Levi. The last thing he said was that he was headed over to Corktown to pick up his cellphone and that he’d meet me right here at six-thirty.”

Levi raised his eyebrows and asked, “Isn’t that the site where you’ve had so much trouble?”

Sophie nodded. “He promised not to go onto the site if security had already left—” She was interrupted by the ringing of her phone. LaKeisha’s photo and number lit up her screen. Sophie started to shake as she quickly swiped to answer. “LaKeisha...what’s going on?”

“There’s been a lot of trouble at the Corktown site. They’ve been taken to Receiving Hospital.”

Sophie almost lost her breath at the news but managed to say, “I’ll be right there.” And she ended the call.

“What’s up, Sophie?” Levi asked.

She started to back away, quickly explaining, “Trouble at the site. I’ll be at Receiving. I promise to call as soon as I know more.” She turned and sprinted in the direction of her home

Sophie fought her way through the downtown traffic as best she could, praying every minute. She’d forgotten how congested it could be on a Friday night since she’d started walking everywhere. It took a full fifteen minutes just to navigate the less than two-mile destination. By the time she’d left her car with the

valet and ran into the hospital, via their emergency entrance, thirty minutes had passed since LaKeisha's phone call.

Benedict saw her enter and he hurried to greet her. Unfortunately, a news crew stepped in front of her, along with several microphones and cellphones, each asking the same thing, "Ms. Young, what's going on? Have you talked to the police? Is this the final straw for Corktown?"

Sophie was clearly caught off guard. Benedict saw her eyes widen in surprise and her mouth clamp shut. She was completely engulfed by the press. Thankfully, hospital security appeared at about that same time and began fanning them away. Benedict hurried into the crowd to retrieve Sophie. He pulled her into his arms and walked her quickly away from them.

"Over here," called a female voice, and Benedict saw a nurse indicating a room behind the nurses' station.

Once they were inside, she asked, "What happened?" She was out of breath, eyes wide with fear, her face streaked with tears.

"From what the police told me, a gang showed up right before quitting time and rushed whoever was left on the site, including security. Three people were shot, one of them was Stan—"

Sophie's heart fell. "Is he alive?" she whispered.

"As far as I know."

"I can't believe it. I thought we were through with this."

“The rest who were brought here are the other gang bangers, and a couple of our construction workers...and Micah.”

“How is he?”

“The nurse told me they’d send a doctor out to talk to us as soon as they can,” he replied, giving her back a gentle pat.

She quietly cried, leaning into Benedict’s shoulder. “How is everyone else? Have you heard?”

“Haven’t heard anything, just that they all went down swinging.”

She pulled out of Benedict’s arms and frowned with anger. “We’re pulling the plug on Corktown. It’s been nothing but a nightmare, and now this! Lamont can have our drawings, but he’s just going to have to find another team to run this project.”

At that moment magnetic doors opened behind them and they turned to see a man in scrubs at the nurses’ station. The nurse indicated Benedict and Sophie, and he came to them with an outstretched hand. They immediately recognized Micah’s brother, Ben.

“I didn’t know you were at this hospital,” Sophie said, reaching for his hand. “How’s Micah?”

“I think he’s gonna be okay,” Ben answered. He took a breath and let it out. “It’s a really weird thing to look down at a trauma patient and find your brother on the table.”

Sophie put her hand on his arm and asked, “Are you okay?”

Ben nodded. “But I’m sure you want to hear about Micah.”

“What happened to him?” Sophie asked.

“He took quite a blow to the back of his head. Twenty stitches. The initial x-ray didn’t show any sign of skull fracture, but I’d like to keep him a few days so that we can do an MRI and make sure there isn’t anything else going on that we can’t see yet...like a concussion.”

“Is he conscious?” Sophie asked.

“Oh, yeah,” Ben answered with a grin. “And he’s pretty upset. Apparently, he’s missing a big Tigers game.” He noticed Sophie’s jersey and nodded. “And I would imagine that you’re the ‘great lady’ that he was supposed to meet there tonight?”

Sophie allowed a small smile and nodded.

“You can go back and see him,” Ben said. “We’ve given him some morphine for the pain, so he might ramble a little. But I know he’d love to see you.”

“How about Stan and the others?” Benedict questioned.

“Stan was one of the gunshot victims,” Ben began, “and they still have him in surgery. He was hit in the upper shoulder and should be just fine. The other two gunshot victims, both from the gang, took hits to their lower extremities. They’re still in surgery but should be just fine as well.” He took a breath and said, “There were three other gangsters who are still being stitched up. And we might keep two of them overnight for observation, but the other one can go to jail right away. Your construction workers suffered some minor lacerations and bad bruising. They’ll be okay to go home yet tonight.” He couldn’t seem to keep from quietly laughing and then he added, “One thing we noticed was that the injuries your team sustained,

including the gunshot, were far less than what they inflicted. I guess you shouldn't make a hometown boy too mad...it makes 'em swing awful hard."

While Benedict started getting information together on the rest of the employees, Ben took Sophie back to one of the procedure rooms. He stopped at a closed door and gave it a quiet knock, then opened it.

Micah was lying on his side, covered to his chin with white blankets, while a nurse finished dressing the massive wound on the back of his head. He saw Sophie and rolled his half-lidded eyes.

"Sophie," he slurred. "I'm so sorry. I don't know what came over me."

"Oh, it's okay," she said with a tender smile, coming to his bedside and kneeling beside him. She reached for his hand, noticing his terribly bruised and bloody knuckles. She gave it a delicate caress.

"They came in swinging their purses...and I've just been feeling so much younger lately..." he chuckled. "I still haven't found my phone. LaKeisha's gonna kill me."

"It's okay, we've got other phones you can use."

"Somebody said, 'don't forget to get that Jew,' and I thought 'don't they know I'm not Jewish anymore?'" His nose and forehead wrinkled as he said, "Isn't that weird, Sophie?"

Realization fell on Sophie, knotting her stomach into hard ball. But she just smiled and nodded.

"How did the Tigers do?" he asked.

She gave him a lopsided grin. “I don’t know. I had to leave to come and see you.”

He sighed with disgust and then his half-lidded eyes looked surprised. “Did you know that Stan carries a gun on the job?”

Sophie nodded, still smiling.

“Whoa.” He looked as if he was attempting to focus on her eyes, and then he added, “You can’t imagine how surprised I was when he pulled that thing out. I thought I was back in Texas there for a minute.” Micah laughed softly, obviously under the influence of the morphine by now. “And they all started to run like punks...except for the guy who got me in the back of the head...and it was lights out.” He smiled and clumsily reached for her hair, giving it the sweetest of strokes. “I love your hair, Sophie...” His voice trailed off and his hand suddenly dropped. He had fallen fast asleep.

Sophie smiled as she watched him sleep. She laid his hand beside him, carefully lifting the white blanket over his exposed arm. She leaned forward and softly kissed his forehead. He didn’t stir.

“I love you, Micah,” she whispered.

“He’ll sleep all night,” the nurse said quietly.

Sophie nodded as she continued to watch him.

“He seems like a great guy,” the nurse added.

Sophie gently caressed his cheek and said, “He’s the best.”

When the orderly came to take Micah to his room upstairs Sophie stormed off to find Benedict. *Don't forget to get that Jew* kept going through her head, over and over again. There was only one person she knew, besides Benedict and Frank, who had done 'research' on Micah and would probably be aware that he was Jewish. And only one person with enough motive and ugly heart to cause the disruptions that had occurred at the Corktown site.

Mort and Frank had arrived by now, and the three of them were surrounded with the families of employees, all crowded into the tiny room behind the nurses' station, trying to get whatever information they needed as quickly as possible. Hospital staff was helping, taking people here and there to see their loved ones. Sophie glanced out at the lobby and saw that Metro Police had now been added to help control the news crowd that had gathered. For but a moment she was tempted to go out there and give the interview of a lifetime. Instead, she waited patiently until they'd pointed the last family member in the right direction.

When they were alone, she asked, "Where are the detectives? Have they been here yet?"

"They're taking statements from what I understand," Mort answered. "Why?"

"I have a pretty good idea of who did this," Sophie said with a scowl.

Mort raised one eyebrow. "What have you got, Sophie?"

"Micah said that somebody said, 'don't forget to get that Jew.'" She took a deep breath and looked at the three of them.

"There's only one person I can think of that would know about Micah being Jewish," Mort said.

Sophie was so angry that she couldn't speak

"Who?" Frank asked with a frown. "And why would they care?"

"He doesn't care that Micah's Jewish," Benedict said, the look of realization flashing in his eyes. "He cares that Micah's in the way."

"Oh dear, don't tell me," Frank began.

"It's Fred," Mort said. "I'd bet every single one of my *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazines* on it."

Sophie was so furious that she almost called Fred on the spot to 'tell him off,' but Mort told her to 'play it cool' and let the cops talk to him. Along with Benedict, Frank and Mort, Sophie painstakingly walked Detectives Anderson and Michaels through her and Fred's stormy relationship and the Bricktown project first. She also went into some detail about how he had been "begging" for money from his elderly aunt who lived just down the hall from Sophie's mother.

"I agreed to do Bricktown with him as an advisor," Sophie began. "I didn't sign anything because I wasn't sure of his work. Fred's been working around Detroit for many years, doing smaller projects and a few restorations, and there were rumors that he was cutting corners in order to get bigger deals. He landed a large contract for the restoration of two buildings, one on either side of a major thoroughfare. Fred thought it would be great to put a state-of-the-art walkway connecting the two on the fifteenth level. I agreed, and his initial drawings were fabulous.

“However, when we got into the nuts and bolts of the thing, I wasn’t comfortable with the safety of the structure. He wanted to cut some important supports to reduce the bulk and therefore streamline the looks. I told him I couldn’t go along with that. I just didn’t think it would be safe long-term. He threw a huge fit, kicked me off the project, and then his assistant leaked the details of our argument to the press. He gave interview after interview about how foolish I was being—well, you must remember the rest. It was plastered all over the Detroit newspapers for months.”

The detectives nodded, and Michaels asked, “Why would his office release those details into the press? You’d think they’d want to keep it a secret.”

Benedict replied, “Fred went on to get approval from his investors and a city building inspector. He wanted that information in the public eye in order to make Sophie Young look like an overpriced and greedy businesswoman—”

“And that his sophisticated, more economical method was far superior to hers,” Detective Michaels finished.

Benedict nodded.

“Which should have garnered him more business,” Frank interjected. “But the whole scheme backfired on him. He hasn’t been able to get very many contracts since the episode.”

“Also,” Mort began, “Things started getting really weird when Sophie’s plans for an Architectural Summit became public. As soon as she acquired the Lightening Group’s Corktown project, he started trying to wine and dine them away from us. He claimed he could save the group all this money and time if they’d just stay out of the summit and go with his firm.”

“And how do you know this information?” Detective Anderson asked.

“Lamont told me,” Sophie answered.

“That’s just hearsay,” Detective Michaels quipped.

Sophie shrugged. “Ask Lamont for yourselves. He’s probably got some kind of proof. Emails maybe.”

Detective Anderson was clearly baffled. “So why would he cause so much trouble on the site?”

Mort cleared his throat, and all eyes were on him. “He’s trying to scare us off the site so that he can come in and save the day,” he stated matter-of-factly. “Lamont Williams has big plans for his charter school, and if he can’t get us to do it, he’ll find someone else. Fred is desperate for contracts. No doubt in my mind that he’d step right in, take over where we left off, and there’d never be another problem.”

“And,” Sophie said, “Micah said that he heard someone say, ‘don’t forget to get that Jew.’ Micah was born and raised Jewish, and Fred knows that because he admitted to me that he’d done some research on him.”

Detective Michaels frowned. “Why would he deliberately go after someone he doesn’t know?”

Mort raised his eyebrow and said, “Fred wants more than just contracts. The rumors floating around downtown are that he wants to merge with Design & Structure.”

“Sophie’s his weakest link,” Benedict said. “Frank and I have already turned him down, so he’s been after Sophie for a couple of years now. But Sophie has

been preoccupied..." he stopped himself there, looking to the detectives to connect the dots.

Detective Anderson looked at Sophie. "Preoccupied with Micah Bloomfield? The guy they almost wacked?"

She nodded.

"Micah's in his way," Mort added. "And if he can scare Micah out of town, or maybe even eliminate him altogether, it would be a whole lot easier for Fred to do a deal with Design & Structure...Or. So. He. Thinks."

Detective Michaels rolled his eyes and looked at his partner. "Okay, I'll bite. How 'bout you?"

Detective Anderson nodded. "We'll look into it." He looked at Sophie and warned, "But play it cool with this character. Don't let on that you're onto him."

"Will do," she agreed.

Sophie notified her family of what had happened and they immediately left the game to join her at the hospital. She filled them in on what she knew, but didn't tell them of her suspicions about Fred just yet.

Sophie's mother gave her a knowing smile and nodded her head. She knew well what was going on, but would remain quiet until she and Sophie could have a private conversation.

Stan came through his surgery with flying colors, and the detectives interviewed him as soon as he was conscious. As his story unfolded it was learned that he'd been fired on first.

“They came out of nowhere,” Stan explained, “and they were all carrying wrenches and chains, and somebody had a gun. But the gunshot seemed random, like an accident. By this time the construction crew, along with Micah, were engaged in a serious physical clash. So, I pulled out my little buddy and fired at two of the perps. It wasn't until after that that I realized I was the one who'd been shot.

“After that, a bunch of the little punks ran away, but there were several others who were taking an old-fashioned beat-down by our guys and they couldn't get away. A big guy managed to break free, and I distinctly heard someone give the order, ‘don't forget to get that Jew.’ The big guy seemed to know exactly who that was. Micah was wailing the tar out of someone and didn't see it coming, but the big guy went up behind him and hit him with a crescent wrench.”

“Why didn't you fire at him?” Detective Michaels questioned.

“He was too close to Micah before I realized what was going to happen.”

Detective Anderson took a deep breath, looked at Detective Michaels and then back at Stan. “We'll be in touch.”



Despite Micah's fairly severe wound, there was no concussion, which was a pleasant surprise. Micah joked and said that it was because he had such a thick skull. Sophie did not laugh. Ben advised at least a week off work, absolutely no

driving. He released him from the hospital on Sunday afternoon, and Sophie drove him home. She kept her suspicions about Fred to herself, thinking that if it was true all would be revealed soon enough. Fred hadn't contacted her yet, but she knew that he was waiting for Monday—when Micah wouldn't be around to get in the way.

“Do you want to put your feet up?” she asked sweetly after she'd gotten him into a comfortable chair in the living room.

“No, not really,” he answered.

“Anything to drink? Ben said plenty of fluids.”

Micah managed a small smile. “No, not yet.”

She nodded and looked at the plastic sack that held his bloodstained clothing. “I can drop this off at the cleaners for you tomorrow. I bet they can get it out.”

Micah looked at the sack and frowned. “Maybe we should just throw them out.”

“Nah. I got mascara all over my linen jacket and believe it or not, Lafayette got it out for me.” She put the bag into the entry way so that she wouldn't forget it when she left. She came back to the living room and asked, “Can I get you anything? I feel like I should be doing something for you.”

Micah shrugged and smiled at her. “Those pain pills Ben gave me made me feel pretty good, but I am kind of hungry. The hospital's food wasn't that great.” He gave her a thoughtful look and asked, “How 'bout a steak?”

She smiled and replied, “I thought you’d never ask. I grabbed a couple of steaks, with some other groceries for you, when I went over to Whole Foods yesterday. And I’m pretty sure I can run your grill.”

Micah raised his eyebrows and asked, “I can probably run the grill.” He gave her a wink and added, “You know how obsessive I’ve gotten about my grilling.”

Sophie laughed and nodded. “Okay, you can probably run your own grill.”

A knock was heard on the door, and Sophie offered, “I’ll get it.” She hurried to see who the visitors were. To her delight, it was Lamont and his children. She let them into the spacious entryway.

“Sophie, we’re so sorry,” Lamont began. “How is he?”

“He’s doing very well,” she answered.

Nikki and Nathan smiled, and Nathan said, “Can we see him? We have some stuff to help him recuperate.” It was then that Sophie saw the medium sized box he was carrying.

“I’m sure he’d love to see you all,” she said, and they followed her into the living room where Micah was seated.

“Well, hey guys,” Micah greeted with a smile when he saw them, starting to get out of the chair.

“Don’t get up,” Lamont said, putting a friendly hand on Micah’s shoulder. “We’ll all sit down with you.”

Micah eased back into the chair, and Lamont took a seat on the corner of the couch nearest him.

Nikki was obviously aghast when she saw the giant bandage on the back of his head. She immediately dropped to her knees beside him and took one of his hands into her own. “Oh, Micah, they almost killed you!”

Micah chuckled. “No, not even close.”

“I’d bet Uncle Micah can hold his own,” Nathan chortled. “We’ve trained him well.”

Everyone laughed and nodded in agreement, but Micah hung on to Nathan’s words...*Uncle Micah...is that what they call me?* Micah had nieces and nephews from his brother’s family, but he hadn’t gotten close to them the way that he had gotten close to Nathan and Nikki. It had always been too painful of a reminder...

“And look,” Nathan went on, putting the box on Micah’s lap and opening it up for him. “We brought you some supplies.” He began pulling out architectural magazines, mystery novels, and a pound of coffee beans.

“And my personal favorite,” Nikki said, reaching into the box and pulling out an iPod. She looked at Micah and said, “You can’t be home alone without one. It’s my old one, but I bought fresh ear buds for you and loaded it with some of that old fogy music you like...Neil Diamond, the Bee Gees...you know, all those guys.”

Micah was moved beyond words and he smiled with contentment as he looked from Nathan to Nikki, and then back at their treasures. “This is awesome,” he declared, looking up at them again. “This will help me so much. You really are the greatest kids I’ve ever met.”

“Oh,” Nathan scoffed, “we’re okay.”

“Let me show you how to work this,” Nikki went on, giving him instructions about the old iPod, and pulling out the package of new ear buds.

Micah watched and listened to them explain how his recuperation should go, that he should try to walk every day and resume his workouts after his stitches had been removed. He smiled at them, but he was holding back tears. *Would you have been like them?* he found himself asking. *These kids are wonderful...thank you Jesus for bringing me something You knew I was going to need.*



Sophie was at work early on Monday morning, even before Meredith. Lamont and his children had promised to check on Micah during the day, and she'd promised to bring his lunches. She was also looking forward to making him dinners, running his errands—everything he'd done for her when she'd been laid up.

She walked down the wide hallway, by herself, on the twenty-fifth floor, pausing at Micah's dark office. This is where they usually parted ways for the morning. Her ire rose within her, and if Fred would have been there, she would have torn him apart. She took a deep breath and continued to her own office, flicking on the lights and taking a seat behind her desk to change her shoes.

She was just pulling her pumps out of her tote bag when her phone pinged with a message. Thinking it was already Fred, because she knew he was out there lurking somewhere, she snatched up her phone. To her surprise it was from Micah. She had replaced his lost phone over the weekend, but, unfortunately, he'd lost all of his contacts.

OMG, Sophie! Mom's on her way over to help me with a bath!

Sophie laughed out loud. She could easily see tiny Liana, a former nurse, wrestling her full-grown son into the tub. Though Ben had told Micah he was free to shower as long as he kept his head dry.

She pulled herself together and replied,

Lol. Why?

Idk. Ben must have given her a bad report about me. I suppose she'll read to me and tuck me in after that.

Sophie laughed again and replied,

Lol. Nobody is this funny.

I'm not laughing.

Sophie couldn't help but laugh. She texted back,

Should I bring extra sandwiches for lunch?

That's a good idea. She'll probably still be here, keeping an eye on me.

Okay. Let me know if you need anything else.

How about a getaway driver?

Sophie laughed and shook her head. "I love you, Micah," she said, setting down her phone. She looked out of her floor to ceiling windows at the most desired view in Downtown and Midtown combined. She lifted her eyes to the heavens, and with a smile on her lips she raised a hand and said, "Thank you, Jesus. He was exactly what I needed."

When LaKeisha and Meredith arrived, they immediately reported to Sophie. After Sophie brought them up to date on everyone's condition, they got down to business.

"I have a list of everything on Micah's desk that was due this week," LaKeisha said, making a notation in her smartphone. "He's pretty organized so I don't think we'll have a problem finding something that we need."

"What about all the foundations he's been working on?" Sophie questioned. "Did he leave us thorough narratives on progression thus far?"

"Aiden has the narratives for Woodward, and he's quite pleased with them," LaKeisha informed. "He's emailing me his copies this morning..." she paused, clicked her phone, and added, "Here they are. I'm sending them directly to your desktop."

Sophie nodded. "How about the modifications he's done for Bijou and Niccollo? Are we up to speed on that?"

"Yes." LaKeisha clicked her smartphone again. "Everything is in your inbox now, except for a late report from Stan, but his intern found it and is forwarding it directly. There was a problem with the HVAC in Corktown, and Mort's assistant will be forwarding that just as soon as he's finished it. Micah had him move something to stabilize an upper-level wall."

Sophie took a breath and turned to Meredith.

"Sarani Perez called this morning," Meredith began. "She heard what happened over the weekend and wants to know if you'd like to move your Boston meeting to Detroit."

Sophie smiled and nodded. “Yes, I forgot all about that. It would be so much easier if I didn’t have to travel right now.”

Meredith clicked her smartphone. “I’ll contact her immediately. Also,” and she looked up with a smile, “Aiden, Bijou, Adolph and Niccollo all offered whatever help you need while Micah is away...they’ve all become very fond of him and want to make sure his projects are appropriately maintained.”

Sophie smiled. She wasn’t the only one who’d fallen in love with Micah.

Meredith’s phone pinged and she looked surprised. “Fred McMasters is downstairs. He’d like to see you.”

Sophie’s eyes narrowed. “Send him up,” she answered.

Sophie was seated behind her desk when Fred breezed into her office, arms outstretched. He hurried to her desk, gathering her in his arms as one would a good friend.

“Sophie, I’m so sorry. What can I do to help?” he breathed.

Sophie pushed out of his arms, sliding her chair quickly away from him. She got out of her chair and took several steps away from him to widen the distance between them.

“Sophie,” he frowned, as if he were quite puzzled. “Whatever is wrong?”

“I told you that I was seeing someone,” she reminded, in a not-so-friendly tone.

Fred nodded and sighed. “So you did. How is he?”

“He’s fine,” she said, but thought, *no thanks to you*.

Fred smiled openly, but it was a strange smile, as if it were being forced. “I just thought I’d better come up and see if you guys needed anything.”

Sophie raised one eyebrow, deciding to deliberately bait him. “Why would you think we need anything?”

Fred shrugged. “Well, you just lost two men on an important site. I imagined you’d be having a hard time scrambling enough talent to finish the job.”

“The girls and I have everything handled,” she replied curtly. “On top of that, I’ve got four world famous architects who’ve already volunteered their help if we need them. I’ve got more talent than I can juggle right now. I think we’re sitting just fine here, Fred, but thanks for the offer.

Fred nodded, but maintained his insincere smile. “Well, that’s nice to know. Would you like to get lunch today?”

Sophie wanted to throw something at him. Unfortunately, he hadn’t incriminated himself yet. The safety of her office was one thing, but she wasn’t willing to have a public lunch with him in order to extract information.

“Like I said, Fred, I’m seeing someone,” she answered.

Fred’s smile faded and he shook his head with obvious scorn. He frowned as he replied, “Oh, come on, Sophie. How long are you going to carry on with that guy?”

“A long time,” she answered quietly.

Fred rolled his eyes. “Oh, you are not,” he retorted. “Besides, he’s going back to Texas. Why are you wasting your time?”

Sophie pretended a puzzled expression. “Back to Texas?” she asked.

“Come on, Sophie,” Fred insisted, “he got an offer from Wade McMasters. Do you really think he’s going to pass that up? Especially after what happened in Corktown?”

Fred’s intimate knowledge of the situation nearly took Sophie’s breath away. She gathered her bearings and asked, “How did you know about that?”

Fred let out his breath and answered, “I had lunch with Bijou a couple of times. She told me.”

Sophie glowered at Fred. “Get out,” she demanded.

“It was only a couple of lunches,” he said, taking a few steps closer to her. “It didn’t mean anything. Not like what you mean to me.” He reached for her hand.

Sophie jerked her hand quickly from his grasp and stomped to her door. “I said, ‘get out.’ And don’t you *ever* come to see me again.”

“Fine,” Fred said, heading for the door. He paused in front of her and said, “But you’ll be sorry.”

“I don’t think so, Fred,” she quipped.

Fred shook his head, stormed out of her office and down the hall.

Sophie huffed and went back to her desk, quickly reaching for her phone. She angrily pounded a text to Meredith, ‘Set up a meeting with Bijou. ASAP.’