

Chapter 4

Talk about Ridin' Dirty

I feel like I'm in a low-budget hip-hop video.

No drugs. No guns. No homies.

It's all about the Benjamins, baby....

Two hundred and thirty million dollars worth. Plus the Range Rover, which the Khaleed Brothers told me to keep, before pointing me in the right direction. I've been driving for forty minutes, and I'm still in the fucking sand. The GPS shows 6.4 kilometers more until I hit pavement.

I can't wait to get Mikale on the fucking phone.

His ass, I gotta hear about this wedding bullshit. Who the fuck throws a wedding for ten days anyway? This cock-sucking phone—how is it I still have no reception? I’ve passed two separate caravans of bedouins on camelback, and most of them were on their phones, blabbin’ away.

Fucking third-world bullshit.

It takes me another twenty minutes, but I finally get a signal. I can’t dial Mikale’s phone fast enough. It’s just fucking ringing and ringing, though. No answer. This ass-lick dickface! This is the shit I’m talking about, and he’s worried about me showing up to the office in sweaty gym clothes and charging pussy to the credit card...fuck him.

He’s left me no choice.

I dial Kennedy, Maggie’s maid of honor. We haven’t spoken since she decided to stay with her husband.

She answers. “I thought you might never speak to me again,” she says, almost in a whisper.

“How’s vanilla?”

She laughs. “Boring.”

“Want me to record a few of my best moves? I can send them to his phone...like a dick pic.”

Another laugh.

That laugh. I still hear it all the time. “How’s he treating you?”

“You know, we’re trying to do the counseling thing.”

“Remember what I told you about a turd.”

“Hard to polish.”

“Bingo. Listen, as much as I love keeping you from him, I need to speak with Mikale. It’s kind of an emergency, and he’s not picking up.”

“He hasn’t left his daddy’s side for the past three days. I’ll go find him and tell him to call you right back.”

“I’m here in the Sandbox again. So reception is super shitty. Tell him to keep trying.”

“I thought you were in Greece.”

“Yeah, no.”

“Okay, let me go find him. I miss you,” she hurries and says, then disconnects. Like she had to say it but didn’t want to chance me not saying it back.

I would have. Not that I wanted to, but I would have.

The “thing” I was telling you about with Kennedy, went on for over a year. No one knew. Not Mikale. Not even Maggie, and Kennedy and she have been best friends their entire lives. They met when they were in diapers. Mikale and I are a little more than a decade older than them. Maggie was an accident. By the time they were running off to their first day of school, Mikale was studying International Business at Oxford, and I was at NYU in the United States, studying finance.

After graduating, I started rippin’ and runnin’. I’d seen Kennedy a handful of times over the years, but it had been at least seven or eight before we both ended up at one of these “My Dad’s Bigger Than Your Dad” parties. This particular one was being thrown by Mikale’s father.

Kennedy showed up married.

In my defense, she didn’t actually bring this up right away. In fact, she never said anything about it until my hand was already in the cookie jar. And some things you just can’t take back. If I’m being totally honest, I’d heard she’d married a few years earlier, but...

I didn’t even have intentions of attending the party. In fact, I purposively planned not to attend. It was in Brussels for one. And two, I’ve always hated this type of crowd. My plan was to

get out of Zurich for the weekend and head to my flat in London for a few days, reacquaint myself with the Queen's hookers. Mikale wouldn't let the fucking thing go, though. Kept insisting I attend, whining, "There'll be more than a hundred billion dollars in the room."

"So fucking what," I'd said.

Mikale doesn't get it, never has, never will.

Biggie said it best: "*Mo money, mo problems.*"

I'm pulling in six-eight million dollars a year. In my sleep. Living this thing they call the American Dream...but overseas. I'm not trying to grow the business any bigger than a forty-sometimes fifty-hour workweek. That's it. Mikale's trying to land in *Forbes'* Foreign Billionaires next to his old man.

Anyway, I eventually let Mikale talk me into going to the party with one caveat—that I do it baked. Two hours in, I was bored out of my mind. If I had to listen to another "on my yacht in the South of France," or "at my Swiss Chalet" story, I was going to blow a fucking gasket.

I snuck out back. Fired up a spliff. Twenty minutes into imagining myself anywhere but there, Kennedy plopped down next to me and invited herself to the other half of the joint.

She took a big pull. Held it like a man. "If I ever throw one of these lame-ass parties, punch me in the vag," she said, exhaling.

"Deal."

We locked it in with a fist bump.

"Let's get out of here," she said.

I figured, what the hell...run it up the flagpole. See what happens.

Well, I ended up falling. Hard. Head over heels. I even stopped hookers, cold turkey. She kept telling me she was going to leave her billionaire husband—they weren't shaggin'. Then she

ended up pregnant. It was his. She broke the news to me a few weeks before one of Maggie's many wedding shindigs.

"We're going to try and work things out."

She told him she'd been having an affair, but never told him with who.

Fast-forward to the party. *Hor d'oeuvres*. I'd been drinking. Heavily. "Toast! I've got a toast," I slurred. Even clinked a champagne glass a couple of times with a spoon. Got everyone's attention.

Dead silence.

After two minutes of slobbering, there were no secrets left in the room. I finished with, "And Kennedy says you're a boring fuck. Vanilla."

Mic drop.

Her husband was the one who threw the glass at my head.

I lied, telling myself I was starting to crave hookers again anyway.

It's taken fifteen minutes, but Mikale's calling now. I answer.

But before I can unload on him, he says, "*Enculer!*" (It's French. Literally translates to *ass-fuck*. Slang for jerk-off, shithead, ass-munch, dickface—names you'd call your buddies.)

"Asshole. I've been calling you all day."

"I sent you a text telling you I'd be unavailable. It's Mother. She makes Father and I hand over our phones every morning. We don't get them back until the end of the day's festivities. I just had to go explain to her that it was an emergency. She's been planning this wedding since Maggie turned four."

"How do you manage to swing from Mommy's nipple to polishing Daddy's knob so seamlessly?"

“Lots of practice. Now, what’s the emergency?”

“Have you bothered to even check your texts or voicemail?”

“Not yet.”

“I’ve got the money. I’m driving it back to the hotel now.”

“What do you mean?”

“It means your terrorist buddies paid in cash.”

“Cash? The whole two hundred million?”

“No, they gave me five twenty-dollar bills and the rest in food vouchers. What the fuck do you think?”

“I think you’re a dick. How are you going to get that much cash into the bank?”

“No idea. They gave us an extra thirty million to help figure it out.”

“That’s something. Money has to get to the contractors in London though. There’s zero chance they’ll take cash. Means you’ll have to be very careful cleaning it. You won’t make a very good prison bitch.”

“Why do you assume it would be me going to jail?”

“Mommy’s nipple, Daddy’s knob.”

Good point.

“I’m going to get the money up to the hotel room. We’ll go from there.”

“Do you think that’s safe?”

“Well, I’m not going to advertise it. Got any better ideas?”

“Not at the moment. I’ll pull Father aside, see what he thinks we should do.”

“I’ll be back at the hotel in about an hour. Call me back, Mikale. I fucking mean it,” I say and disconnect.

Before I get to the hotel, I get a text from him saying we need to talk about the hookers.

Did he miss the part about the Rover stuffed with dough?