

EXCERPT FROM *DEADLY PRESCRIPTION*

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Kathryn stopped by the reception desk at SpecialtyRx. “Mr. Bailey, please.”

The receptionist, accustomed to screening requests to see the CEO, glanced at her condescendingly. “Do you have an appointment?”

Kathryn smiled. “No, I don’t. I was visiting someone else in the building and thought I’d stop by for a moment. I just have a quick question for him. Tell him it’s regarding Anna Rivera. My name is Kathryn O’Neill.”

The receptionist arched a perfectly shaped eyebrow and called his secretary. A few moments later, the secretary met her at the door.

Kathryn turned to the receptionist. “Thank you so much,” she said smugly.

Warren Bailey met her at the door of his office with a puzzled look on his face. “Good afternoon, Ms. O’Neill. Please come in. This is Quentin Jacobs, our Chief Security Officer. What can we do for you?”

“I’m sorry to interrupt, gentlemen. Thanks for seeing me on such short notice. I was visiting someone else in your building and thought I’d stop by while I was here. I need to ask a quick question about a personal matter and wasn’t sure where to start. I was hoping you could steer me in the right direction.”

Warren leaned against his desk. “Of course, my dear. Anything that we can do to help. We were so shocked to hear about Anna’s unfortunate death.”

Kathryn, looking into Warren’s eyes, smiled. “I’ll bet you were.” She opened her briefcase.

Warren glanced over her head at Quentin.

“Anna and I were very close. I’ve been trying to help out her family as much as I can, you know, packing up her things at Luke and Anna’s house, some of Luke’s things, too. I came across this in Luke’s desk.” She handed him the paper.

Warren noticeably paled as he took the paper. He again glanced over at Quentin, who hadn’t taken his eyes off Kathryn.

Kathryn moved next to Warren and casually leaned against the desk, shoulder-to-shoulder, like they’d been friends forever. “Mrs. Rivera showed me the letter about Luke’s life insurance policy. That was a shock; they certainly weren’t expecting that. That’s a lot of money.”

Warren looked at Kathryn. “We carry a minimum of five hundred thousand on all our senior executives.”

Kathryn smiled. “That’s a very generous benefit.” She pointed to the paper in his hand. “The basic life benefit is five hundred thousand, but this life certificate indicates that it’s a double-indemnity policy in the event of accidental death, so shouldn’t the total benefit be a million dollars?”

Warren relaxed. “I think you’re probably right, dear. I’ll have our benefits manager look into it.”

“Thank you so much. Who’d have thought that two young people would have died so unexpectedly, one right after the other?”

Warren started leading her towards the door, his hand on the small of her back. “I hope the money helps ease her family’s pain.”

Kathryn stopped, sparks flashing in her eyes. “They lost their only daughter in a very questionable manner, Mr. Bailey. I’m afraid nothing will help them get over that. I know I won’t.”

She turned at the door. “One more thing.” She reached into the briefcase and pulled out a thick manila envelope. “I also found these SpecialtyRx files in Luke’s desk. I thought you’d want them back. If I find anything else, I’ll be sure and share it with the appropriate party.”

Warren Bailey’s deep tan had all but disappeared.

She smiled at him again, thoroughly enjoying the look on his face.

Quentin stepped forward. “Where did you say you found these, Ms. O’Neill?”

Kathryn smiled. “At their house. They closed on it a few weeks before Luke was ... killed, but neither was living in it, yet. Anna was still living with her parents and Luke was staying at the corporate apartment. They were still picking out furniture, but Luke had already set-up his office in the house and was working from there while Anna was deciding on paint, wallpaper and putting away gifts; you know, things like that.”

Warren looked at Quentin. “We weren’t aware that they had purchased a house.”

Kathryn grinned. “You don’t say.” Warren was almost squirming.

Quentin took the files out of Warren’s hand and glanced through them. “These files contain proprietary information, Ms. O’Neill. I’m sure you understand the importance of security. I would like to personally look through Luke’s desk to ensure that we have everything that pertains to SpecialtyRx business.”

Kathryn couldn’t keep from smirking a bit. “Believe me, Mr. Jacobs, I understand your position completely. But you won’t find anything else; I was very thorough.”

Warren locked eyes with Quentin.

Kathryn held out her hand to Warren and nodded to Quentin. “Thanks, gentlemen. Have a good day.” She walked down the hall to the elevator.

Quentin quietly closed the door behind her, since Warren seemed frozen in place.

“Oh, my God,” said Warren. “She knows something.”

Quentin smiled and shook his head. “No, she doesn’t—she’s just playing with us. If she really had anything, the Feds would have been here.”

“I don’t care,” said Warren. “She’s one more loose end. I want her dealt with—now.”

“Don’t worry,” said Quentin, patting him on the back. “I’ll take care of everything. The less you know, the better.”

Quentin walked over to the window and watched Kathryn climb in her Jeep Liberty. “I wonder what she was doing in our building?”