

The Evolution of Elsa Kreiss (Kriminal Erotic Series Book II)

Chapter 9 Excerpt

“I see you’re admiring my Christiansens.”

Elsa jumped. The Russian was suddenly a few feet behind her and she hadn’t heard him come in.

“Herr Ivchencko, you startled me.” She turned to face him.

“My apologies. I didn’t mean to interrupt your appreciation for my artwork.”

“I wasn’t ‘appreciating’ it, actually.” She stuck her hands in her pockets.

He walked closer, standing a mere two feet away, a little closer than she cared for. He was inside her personal space without her invitation. “You were smiling.” He looked at her with his cold gray eyes.

“I was thinking about something else. Why did you send me this message?” She pulled it out and tossed it at his feet.

“Right to the point, I see.” He clasped his hands behind his back and turned to gaze at the paintings, ignoring the wadded up missive.

“I’m always right to the point when someone threatens me. What is the meaning of this? What secret do you think you have knowledge of that you can infer threats?”

Ivchencko noted the defiance in her voice and stance. He smiled, then said, “One which you obviously responded to. You’re here, after all. If you didn’t have a secret, you would be home, da?”

Elsa drew in a steadying breath. “I don’t know what game you’re playing, but I’m tired, and this has gone far enough already. What is it you want?”

“You’re quite the spitfire, aren’t you?” He walked over and sat down in one of the two wingback chairs facing her. “Very well. It’s simple, really. You, yourself, noted it last night at the gallery. I have a diseased mind.”

“Herr Ivchencko, I’ve no interest in your mind, diseased or otherwise –“

“Mistress Elsa! I am a man who tolerates very little, and I will not tolerate being interrupted.” He held up a hand.

“I don’t give a flying fuck what you tolerate. State your business, and let’s be done with this. I’m tired, and wish to go home.” She quickly went through a mental checklist. Her gun was still holstered on her left side, but her jacket was zipped. She slowly reached to unzip it, talking as she did to keep him distracted.

“Do you know how those paintings arrived today?” His question threw her.

“I imagine someone delivered them, why?” Her jacket now unzipped, allowed her easy access to her firearm should this situation escalate out of control. She had a queasy feeling in her stomach.

“Yes, they were delivered. But not by Lukas. I was expecting Lukas, but instead, that black bitch entered into my home with two other employees of the gallery.”

Elsa’s eyebrow came up. “And? What does that have to do with anything?”

“Didn’t I just say?” He looked at her as if she should understand, but something in his eyes was not quite right.

“No, you didn’t.”

“I was expecting Lukas. I was expecting the one person I’m familiar with, that I trust, to deliver my items. Instead, he sent that filthy woman into my home. There are many things in this world that I do not tolerate, and Ms. Bishop is one of them.”

“The woman that works with Lukas?” Elsa’s brain churned on this information. What was this man’s problem? “What in the world does that have to do with me?”

“Your boyfriend has offended me. He sent that filthy black woman into my home. And she doesn’t like you at all, by the way.”

This surprised her. “I don’t even know her. What problem could she possibly have with me?”

Ivchenko laughed. “Apparently, you have something she wants, something she wants badly. In fact, her jealousy is so profound, she went out of her way to dig up a little dirt on you. You can thank your friend, Christiansen, for that.”

Elsa’s face lost all composure. “She wants Lukas? This is all about Lukas?” Her tired thoughts were jumbled as she considered his words. Ms. Bishop wanted Lukas. She viewed Elsa as a threat, and then did what? Seduced Paul for information on her? Goddamit! She was going to throttle that drunken fool. And now because this cold Russian psycho had personal prejudices toward black people, he’d threatened her all because he was mad at Lukas.

“Look. Whatever your problems are with Lukas, you can take them up with him. I’ve only just met him. Last night was our first date. After this nonsense, it’s also our last. Good day to you.” She turned and began walking to the double doors where she came face to face with a young man with dark hair.

“Excuse me.” She tried to go around him, but he reached out and grabbed her neck. She felt a sting, and then a warm sensation followed by intense lethargy before she lost all consciousness.