



# Five-Star FLEEING



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## Chapter 28

It was the start of another work week. While I shoveled the papers on my desk, Doreen dashed into Mr. Ganiff's office, out of breath. I didn't bother to try and stop her. I did, though, waltz in moments later as I wanted to see what the commotion was all about.

"Mithter Ganiff! You gotta hear thith one! That Theebok, he'th done it again!" She giggled uncontrollably.

Ganiff lifted his head from his *Daily Post* and smiled. "Miss Doreen, what a pleasure. Who did what again?"

Before she could compose herself sufficiently to respond, Doreen was knocked aside by Selena, tears of laughter streaming down her cheeks.

"Hello there, Selena. Now, ladies, please tell me. What is it?"

Both women exchanged glances, then doubled over in mirth.

"Mithter Ganiff, you jutht have to lithten to thith."

Doreen picked up the phone, dialed a few numbers and placed the receiver against his ear.

Ganiff's good eye widened. Then, a smile like a beacon swept across his face from chin to upper proboscis. "What in the world—"

"Theebok," Doreen tried to explain between bouts of whooping gales of laughter that she could no longer suppress, "he wath tethting out hith new voithe mail thytthem. The one he'th been talking about for monthth."

"Yeah, I know the one." Ganiff nodded, fighting off a smile. "The system with call forwarding, three way calling," he chuckled, "oh, and that hook-up to the MIR satellite." Now he dissembled; he barked and snorted in glee.

The struggle not to laugh was a foregone conclusion. Their laughter was contagious and I found myself giggling like the village idiot without even understanding the underlying cause.

I should note here that Standard atelier guests were oftentimes used as guinea pigs for the testing of new hotel equipment without their consent nor knowledge. In this case, they were subjected to Seebok's new telephone and voicemail system. The feedback received from those irate guests was disheartening. I knew that this new venture was a failure. Atrocious. Similar to the new televisions, barely functional.

But that didn't deter Seebok. Not when a particular vendor paying for a one-year lease on a brand new BMW was at stake. Another little tidbit I picked up from Trish, his assistant.

"Hey, give that back to me!" With good humor, Ganiff grabbed the receiver

from Doreen's hand and placed it back on the console. He could no longer restrain himself. Emanating from the man's mouth was the honking, hooting and cackling that bore his distinctive trademark. A semblance of laughter that up till now I had not been privy. "Hallelujah! Now we know what Seebok's been doing all these weeks. No wonder the jerk's always missing in action."

Doreen chortled with delight. "Well, it wathn't vendorth meetingth!"

Trish ran in, panting and tittering. Followed by Big Guy, Ms. Wapiti, Joe Smith and Edwing from Concierge. We now had assembled in the office a fair representation of several departments within the hotel. Doreen pressed the speakerphone button for everyone's benefit and redialed the voicemail to replay the message.

"Oh, Seebok," said a sultry Jamaican accented voice. One that was categorically not that of the Southern Mrs. Murray. "Yesterday was amazing. Even better than last Friday. Ah, hmmmnnnnnnnn. Three times in one hour. You stud, you beast, you! Can't wait to see you tonight at my place. Hmmmnnnnnnnn. Oh, and this time you wear the thong. As I said to you, tit for tat. I'll wear your favorite strap-on."

"I can't get enough of thith!" said Doreen, redialing the voicemail again to replay the message.

The communal merriment had all of us cracking up; a few were rolling on the floor in convulsions. Some of us knelt with our midsections wrapped by our arms, others bent indecently over chairs, in paroxysms of breathing.

"Why is this on the voicemail?" I asked, wiping my watering eyes with my fingertips.

At that moment, Murlise entered the office, got a load of the decadent state of the people inside and burst out in a deep laugh, realizing that the word was out about Seebok.

"He must have pressed the wrong button," said Murlise, tears rolling down her over-sized lantern jaw, "and copied the message to everyone's voicemail boxes."

"You mean, just the hotel admin offices?" I wanted to know.

"No. Every phone in the hotel, even the guests!" Murlise held onto her sides. "We've been fielding calls from our conscientious customers who want to make sure that Seebok gets to see some action tonight."

"Full house tonight?" Ganiff kept on sighing and trying to regain his composure, but Doreen kept on redialing the voicemail saying, "I thwear, thith'll nefer get old!" At the onset of each replay of the message, Ganiff would start the bark that would ignite the laugh that would orchestrate his subordinates to join him in concurrence.

"Of course," Murlise affirmed through her laughter.

Never could I have imagined such a raucous scene in such an otherwise

miserable environment. I guess the humiliation of an incompetent and detested co-worker is what it took to bring the Supreme Superior personnel together. All the more so because it was Seebok.

Mr. Ganiff guffawed so hard that he squealed in amusement. “What a lying, cheating piece of crap he is.” For my benefit, he pressed his nose to the side in reference to the Alletti garbage fiasco that nearly jeopardized his and Seebok’s very lives. “So now he’s cheating on his wife too. Helluva way to keep it discreet, huh?”

All at once, I recalled the tape of Seebok in the elevator cab. *Ah*, I realized. *So that explains what the little bugger was up to!*

“Do you think he’ll show his face?” asked Selena above the hilarity.

Doreen had to stick in her two cents. Unintentionally, she spoiled our magic moment. “I remember my hubby went away to our thummer houthe upthtate for a golfing weekend without me. When I did hith laundry, I found a pair of my pantieth. I thought they were mine even though they were too thmall for me!”

Everyone stopped laughing and stared at her. A little too late, she recognized that the story did not fit the occasion.

Ganiff sat back in his seat and straightened his tie. “Well, don’t we all have work to do now? I know I do.” With a wave of his hand, he shoosed everyone out of the office.

After everyone exited, Seebok strolled in without a care in the world. “Is Mr. Ganiff available?” he asked.

With the best straight face I could muster, I pointed towards the office, fearing a stroke from holding in my laughter.

He entered Ganiff’s office. The moment the door shut, I let loose with a howl. It took me a minute to compose myself sufficiently to pick up the intercom. I was thrilled to see that it remained functional in its non-functional way.

“Boss, I gotta talk to you.”

I thought that now was the appropriate time to be the proverbial fly on the wall. I poured a cup of coffee from the carafe on my desk and reflected, *it’s showtime*.

“And I, you,” replied Ganiff who chortled.

“Is there something wrong, sir?” Seebok said, apparently unaware of the uproar he had caused.

“Ah, Seebok, what am I gonna do with you?” sighed Ganiff dramatically.

I picked up the cup and took a sip.

“Listen, Boss, I was doing some research on the porn industry. Did you have any idea that it is a billion dollar industry?”

I almost gagged on my coffee.



Criminals, liars and thieves, oh my! And to think not even a year ago, Linda would never have associated those words with the 5-Star New York City hotel, the Supreme Superior.

Having fled from dubious circumstances in her prior career, Linda Lane is now the acting Resident Manager of the esteemed Supreme Superior Hotel, all the rage of the entertainment, business and hospitality industries. Surrounded by celebrities, upscale guests and strangely conflicted hotel colleagues, Linda finds that the most daunting aspect of her job is her association with her celebrated boss, the General Manager. The longer she works for him, the more she realizes that perhaps her flight from her past was not precisely an escape from the inevitable.

'Five-Star FLEECING' is an adult-themed comedy concerning corporate theft through the eyes of Linda Lane, a naïve yet ambitious New Yorker. Almost Feydeau-esque in nature, 'Five-Star FLEECING' mixes it all up — distortions in time and space, hotel guests, celebrities, paparazzis, duplicity, crazed employees, karma— and spins almost out of control. Anyone who enjoys reading gossip rags, traveling, entertaining or even wants a brief respite will find Five-Star FLEECING a great adventure.

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