

Every reporter was always looking for the scoop of a lifetime, that one piece that would make their careers soar. They'd pull every string, call every contact, turn every stone, and even get down on the mud if it meant getting it. And Joanna Murray was no different.

She had clawed her way through the intensely competitive world of journalism, fought with every competition, sneaked her way into the most guarded places with guile, deft fingers, and a charming smile, all to get the truth to report to her bosses so it'd get printed on the papers.

Joanna had exposed corrupt politicians, covered scandals, showed the ugly side of civil rights movements. And she had *never* shied away from any of it, no matter how many times she was threatened. She was *good* at her job, and she didn't intend to stop.

Was it a sense of justice that motivated her, an honest quest for truth that the often lied to and manipulated masses needed to hear? Or just her own ambition to rise ever higher on the ranks until her name became equated to success and leadership?

Couldn't it be both?

And right now, the current trend was Femmax. The drug that promised equality by making women stronger, gave them what they needed to no longer wander through the streets at night afraid. If men weren't going to make the world safer for them, they'd take it into their own hands.

A lofty promise, a righteous one. But when it came from a private corporation, there were *always* going to be skeletons buried in the closet.

Joanna was intent on getting to the bottom of this, find out whatever it was the Vigorex corporation was hiding.

She took a calming breath as she walked through the halls of the magnificently furnished house, opulence and money dripped from every corner, every drape, every piece of furniture, every single small decoration that most likely cost more than what she made in a month. Joanna wore a business pantsuit, a white blouse, and a black jacket, trying to present herself with both elegance and professionalism. A quick visit to the saloon had left her frazzled auburn bobcut looking pristine and charming with the way her locks curled and framed her heart-shaped face.

She had to look her absolute best when interviewing this woman.

“-these baseless rumors are spread by our jealous competition. Femmax is approved by the FDA, and available to the general consumer. Our success is astronomical, so of course they want it off the market,” An experienced voice said with practiced charm.

It had taken her calling out a lot of favors, but she got a chance to start piecing things together, an interview with the CEO herself, Erica Midswen. A woman in her forties who of course looked *spectacular*, as someone with as much money as she would, being able to afford the best care. Her bronze skin was lacking in wrinkles, her hair was pulled back in a bun without a single strand out of place. She laid back on the couch in front of Joanna, one arm resting over her crossed legs, the other one lying on the long backrest. A posture she no doubt presented to convey power and authority.

It didn't hurt that her arms were pretty sinewy, like a regular weightlifter's. Her sleeveless white blouse revealed the strength of her limbs, while her black skirt allowed Joanna to catch a glimpse of those *very* toned legs. A bodybuilder, she was not, but she looked like a professional athlete or fitness model.

“Congress has been making a push to investigate your newest more experimental batch,” Joanna pointed out, keeping her posture professional as she sat in front of the CEO, her green eyes looking inquisitively at her.

The businesswoman rolled her brown eyes. “They're just making noise. A bunch of men in power don't like what we've been doing, so they've tried to shut us down at every opportunity” Erica smiled, “They have no basis,”

“Your test subjects are basically changing from one day to the next. There have been multiple accounts of strange behavior by these women” Joanna pointed out. She had to make the woman lose her self-control, if only for a moment, get her to make a mistake and slip something up. “And you keep a *mountain* of paperwork for each contract signed by these women to keep things under wraps, and yourselves from being liable in case your drugs have harmful side effects on them”

Erica kept her face stony, “Standard NDA procedure and consent forms for clinical trials. And so far, we have not had a *single* health complication from any of our... volunteers” She picked the word carefully, Joanna could tell. “Your claims are as empty as those of my competition *and* the politicians”

Joanna merely smiled teasingly. “If it's so safe, then I can only wonder why *you* haven't tried it yourself if you stand by your product so strongly”

The CEO's face fell blank, and for a moment Joanna felt she had managed to push her buttons enough for the woman to be outraged and lash out. Good, the papers loved it when a CEO got loud and angry.

Instead, Joanna watched as she slowly fell back into that practiced smile. "Would you excuse me for a moment, my dear?" Erica stood up and walked out with a not-so-subtle sway of her hips.

Joanna didn't have to ponder on why Erica had left so abruptly, for she soon returned with a pill bottle in her hand. Her thoughts raced at the possibility, staring at the CEO who stood up between the two couches in front of her. Fingers slowly and playfully opening the cap.

"I've realized you are right about one thing,"

Erica grinned. It was a hungry, *predatory*, gesture.

"I should stand by my product~"

She threw the lid away and reached inside, taking one capsule pill... and quickly swallowing it.