

A woman is suing former Apollo CEO Leon Black, saying he raped her, paid her \$1 million, and falsely accused her of extortion

 [businessinsider.com/apollo-leon-black-rape-defamation-extortion-lawsuit-2021-6](https://www.businessinsider.com/apollo-leon-black-rape-defamation-extortion-lawsuit-2021-6)

- Guzel Ganieva, a model and **aspiring lawyer**, says former Apollo CEO Leon Black raped her.
- She says Black tried to impress her with ties to Goldman Sachs and Creative Artists Agency.
- Black said Ganieva "extorted" him, but she said he gave her loans that she didn't want.
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The woman who accused former Apollo Global Management CEO Leon Black of sexual misconduct has filed a blistering lawsuit against the billionaire investor, saying he "forced sadistic sexual acts on her" and falsely accused her of extortion.

Guzel Ganieva, who first [tweeted](#) on March 17 that Black had sexually harassed and abused her, provided the most detailed version of her allegations yet in a lawsuit filed Tuesday morning. Her tweets [surfaced](#) in news stories in early April, just after Apollo announced that Black's resignation — which followed reports that he [paid millions](#) to the accused child sex abuser Jeffrey Epstein — would take effect sooner than planned.

Black's representatives didn't immediately respond to a request for comment. In the past, he has said he had a "consensual affair" with Ganieva and said she "extorted" him to keep their relationship private. He's said that he told "criminal authorities" about the matter.

But Ganieva said in the lawsuit that Black preyed on her for years and said his claims could imperil her chances of becoming a lawyer, as she recently graduated from law school. She said they met at an International Women's Day event in 2008, when he picked her out of a crowd, took her to dinner at La Grenouille in New York and talked about the connections he could help her make.

He helped her with her Harvard Business School application, claimed to have ties to Creative Artists Agency that could help her get ahead, and introduced her to people at Goldman Sachs, the suit says. It included copies of an email from May 2014 that mentioned a meeting with Pete Lyon and Alison Mass, senior executives at the investment bank, and an email in which someone named Pete told her that no job was available.

Goldman representatives declined to comment.

Despite initially saying he had no interest in sex, Black initiated a "cycle of intimidation, abuse and humiliation" that included an instance of violent rape in July 2014, according to Ganieva's lawsuit, which was filed in Manhattan state court. She said she was extremely ill when he showed up at her door, dragged her into bed, took off her clothes, and raped her.

Ganieva said that she left New York to get away from Black but knew he was keeping tabs on her, and he arranged a meeting when she came back to New York in 2015. At the meeting, Ganieva said she signed papers that she barely understood but now thinks were a nondisclosure agreement. She said Black has refused to provide copies, not even responding to letters that her lawyers sent in 2020.

From that meeting until April 2021, shortly after she tweeted her first accusations of abuse, Ganieva said she received regular payments from an account called "E Trust." She said she became upset when Black, under scrutiny for his ties to Epstein, denied wrongdoing in late 2020 and again after he accused her of extortion and said he paid Ganieva only to avoid publicity.

"Black's decision to falsely state that Ms. Ganieva extorted him 'for years' is right from the playbook of scores of wealthy and powerful men facing similar accusations," wrote Ganieva's lawyers. They said Harvey Weinstein and Bill O'Reilly, among others, had made similar accusations.

The lawsuit, which was signed by Jeanne M. Christensen and Lindsay M. Goldbrum from the firm Wigdor LLP, included photos of two one-page documents from 2011 and 2013 titled "Loan Agreement Between Leon Black and Guzel Ganieva." Both documents have signatures at the bottom.

Ganieva said the loans — for \$480,000 each, at 5% interest — were meant to give Black a way to control her. She said she began to understand the significance of what Black did after enrolling in law school.

The case is the latest black eye for Black, who resigned from the CEO job at Apollo Global Management after a review found more than \$150 million in payments Black made to Epstein or his charity. He formally left the CEO role in March, months earlier than expected, and also left the chairman's role, citing personal and family reasons.

In past statements, Black has said he was extorted by Ganieva and paid her to protect his family from embarrassment. Those statements form a basis for Ganieva's lawsuit.

This story has been updated to indicate that Goldman representative declined to comment.