

### Valery's POV

There he stood grinning at me smug, while I stood frozen in my place trying to figure out how to comprehend the current situation I was in

"I found you"

His voice echoed through my ears as I tried to process the situation in my mind

Lucas was here, after 2 years..

So many questions rang through my head as I stared into his deep brown eyes, I couldn't even process what was going on, all I could think was his words he had just say

What did he mean, he found me?

Was he looking for me?

No that couldn't be it, we weren't even that close before, why would he even be looking for me

"How about we get started" Hunter's voice snapped me out of my daze

As I took my seat by Tanner, who sat at the center then me at his right, with Hunter on his left and Samuel beside Hunter, everyone else took their seats while Lucas took his seat on the center on the other side of the table

Everyone had begun talking, but all their voices sounded blurred and muffled to me, it was like the world around me wasn't moving correctly, I didn't know how to explain this feeling as I stared at him across the table I wasn't really concerned to what they were talking about, since I was only here to represent my department, showcase my designs, and our department's progress, etc, I need to be serious, Lucas and this situation maybe uncomfortable, but he is a client regardless, and any support from him will be good.

He barely changed. I thought to myself

I tried everything in my power to remove my gaze from him, but there was a part of me that wouldn't let me, he was too busy with their discussion to notice I was staring

I snapped out of my current stance when I heard my name being called from beside me

"Vallie, do you mind" Tanner asks me motioning to the files that contained some of our designs

Realization quickly hit me, I stood up from my chair grabbing the files and placing each design and our recent statistics and sales from our stores, on the board for everyone to see I need to focus on the matter at hand and not some old friend that just happens to be the CEO who is trying to merge with us, so I took a deep breath inhaled and exhaled, turning around to face them with a smile on my face before beginning to speak

"Good afternoon, I am Vallie Stone I am head of designers and I am also one of the managers of this company" I began with a smile, trying to look at anything then Lucas "on the board you can see our sales have recently been increasing around 2-3 months ago" suddenly before I could continue a familiar voice stopped me

"Why aren't they increasing anymore" I look at him dead in the eye looking for any mischief, but that look in his eyes I knew he was dead serious, I wanted to glare at him or snap at him for interrupting but I couldn't it wouldn't be good for my image or the company's, so I sucked it up and answered his question politely

"Our latest designs have yet to be released" I said as kindly as I could though my teeth "we will showcase them on June 9th at Klien fashion very first fashion show, many other CEOs and wives and girlfriends will be there along with models, actors and actresses to bid on a first edition dress" I smirk to myself as I speak "if anyone has any questions feel free to ask" I say smiling mainly at Lucas who was looking at me with something in his eye that I couldn't read, I was doing my best at trying to hype up, and sell our event, I will be honest marketing has never been my strong suit

"Thank you Ms. Stone" Lucas began to say as he stood up "Mr Klien, I will have my board draw up a contract immediately and send it over at once" Lucas stated firmly daring us to protest, but none of us did, this merge could help our company grow even more "After the fashion show we can work on our next project together"

Tanner, Hunter, and the other board members walk over to Lucas and members to thank them, while I drifted away to the halls trying to get to my office so I can be alone, hopefully this is the first and last time I will have to see Lucas

"Ms Stone" my assistant said getting in front of me

"I will be in my office, I do not want to be disturbed" I said firmly to her, I didn't want to be rude but I just want to be alone in silence as I paint

I walked through the halls humming to myself as I go, till I reached my office, I stepped in kicked off my heels and took a seat at my desk, I felt at peace here in my office, but my peace was short lived when my office door was open

"I told you I didn't want to be disturbed" I snapped not bothering to look back

"I'm sorry I was not informed" as the words left his mouth I jumped back in surprise not expecting it to be him who entered my office, I instantly turn around to face him to see him smirking at me

"What are you doing here" I asked as calmly as I could, but I wasn't sure I pulled it off, my hands were beginning to sweat, I kept my head high not breaking eye contact, if he thought I have forgotten about our last encounter he is mistaken me for the meek girl I was a year ago.

"I could ask you the same thing" he teases as he takes a step forward his eyes wondering around the my office as if he is examining each and every detail

"I work here" I snap back as I calm down my nerves, as I try to even my breathe, I turn my back towards him as I gather up some random papers to distract myself from him

"I mean in Paris" he chuckles so low I almost didn't hear it

"I could ask you the same thing" I say with a smirk as I copy him, just like he did to me that night a year ago

"Fair enough" He says standing by my window which is covered with sketches, designs, paintings, doodles and just about everything else, I walked over to where he stood by the window, looking down at the city below us as silence filled the room

"Vallie Stone" he questions as he looks towards me with a smile

"Vallie is a nickname Tanner came up with, and Stone was my father's last name" I say not taking my eyes off the view

He raised a brow at, frowning as he did so "are you two a thing?" he asks out bitterly

"No" I snapped back, I somewhat felt insulted by his comment "it doesn't mean if a man gives a woman they are seeing one another, or have feeling for one another YOU should know that better than anyone" I retort hotly emphasizing on 'you'

"You look good" he says randomly changing the topic, and ignoring my reply all together "red suits you" he teases, causing heat to rise to my cheeks

"Thank you" I murmur softly keeping my head down so he will not notice the blush that was still on my face, we stayed put in a comfortable silence, looking towards the city as the sun began to set

NO VALERY, BAD ARE YOU FORGETTING WHAT HE SAID TO YOU!? Mentally shouting at myself I shaking my head, turning back towards him with a glare

"Is there something I could help you with Mr. Carmichael"

"Go to dinner with me tomorrow night" he says, no commands me, I looked back at him shocked by his words

Why would he want to go to dinner with me, and as if he could read my mind he answered my question

"Too make up for lost time" he winks, causing me to laugh out while shaking my head at his immaturity

"I'm not sure" I say hesitantly

Do I really wanna go to dinner with him, even if it is just a dinner

"Think about it" he says with a smile that could make my heart skip a beat...

But it didn't

"If you change your mind call me" he says handing me his number and walking away from

I was finally alone, but did I really want to be alone?