

## 116 Long Time No See

Amelie didn't know what to say or even think. Except for one thing -- this was too much for her poor heart. 1

Her eyes began to wander all over his exposed body and she felt her entire face growing so hot, she was scared it would set her hair on fire.

*"The reason why I have been acting so awkward and clumsy around Lima was precisely because I couldn't get the picture of his body out of my mind. And now, when I was finally beginning to get comfortable with my feelings, he had to come here tonight and take off his clothes again!"* 2

Finally able to get a hold of her emotions, Amelie averted her eyes and said rather quietly, "Is this a hobby of yours? To just casually undress?" 1

"Pardon?" Thankfully, Liam didn't hear and Amelie dismissed her comment with a long and loud sigh.

Before she could say anything else, a quite persistent knock echoed through her bedroom and Mary's chipper voice followed after, "Mrs.



Bennett, it's Mary! I brought you some herbal tea to calm down. May I come in?"

The two of them exchanged confused glances and parted their lips in frustration. It would have been alright to let the maid in right away, had Liam not taken off his clothes just moments prior.

And even though they both were good at thinking on the spot when it came to making rushed decisions, tonight, that skill had magically disappeared, pushing Liam to do something ridiculously silly instead.

"I'll hide behind the window curtain!" He whispered loudly enough and dashed toward the tall window of Amelie's bedroom, hiding himself behind the long and wide beige curtain. 1

Amelie wanted to bring him back and tell him that it would be wiser to hide inside the closet instead but Mary's concerned voice interrupted her train of thought.

"Mrs. Bennett? Are you there?"

The maid left her no choice; she had to answer her.



"Uhm, yes... Come in, Mary."

The maid pushed the door open with her behind and came inside, carrying a small tray with a teapot, a glass cup, and a small platter of dark chocolate slices on it. As she made her way to the coffee table in the middle of the room, she flinched, noticing a pile of man's clothes on the floor, but pretended that she had seen nothing, even though her lips curved into a subtle, yet awkward smile.

The moment she placed the tray on the coffee table, Mary turned around, offered Amelie a somewhat guilty look and Amelie finally realized it too.

*'Oh my God!'*

The woman's face blushed with a distinct shade of red while Mary shoved the tray under her left armpit and bowed. It was the house rule for the maid to stay beside her employer unless dismissed but her current situation was far from being normal. She had to think fast too; and thankfully, she was capable of that.

"Well, Mrs. Bennett... Uhm, you know, I completely forgot that Mrs. Greene asked me to



bring in a load of laundry from downstairs, so... Well, I'll go now. Enjoy the tea! Call for me if you need anything!"

She practically ran out of Amelie's room, leaving the woman completely baffled by her strange behavior.

*'She ran away so fast that I didn't even have a chance to explain anything... Well, I don't think she would care for my explanations anyway.'*

With another long sigh, Amelie picked up Liam's clothes and started walking toward the window where he was supposed to be standing.

"Liam? She is gone, you can come out now."

She was sure her voice was loud enough for her husband to hear her but no reply followed.

"Liam?" Amelie stopped right in front of the curtain and noticed a slight draft fluttering its fabric with its gentle blows. Shocked, she parted the curtain, and her suspicions were immediately confirmed--Liam escaped through the window!

Amelie was stunned. Why would he do



something so silly and potentially dangerous? Did he think he was in a bad rom-com movie or a poorly-written play?

Pressing his clothes against her chest, she leaned forward, sticking her upper body out of the window, and looked to her left, her eyes narrowing as she realized what happened.

*'I can't believe this,' she furrowed her brows, noticing the opened door of the balcony that led to his bedroom. 'He climbed out of the window and jumped over to his balcony, risking a nasty fall to the ground. Is he really that easily ashamed? Or could he just be generally foolish?'*

Whatever it was, it made Amelie burst into laughter. She imagined Liam climbing over the balcony wearing nothing but his underpants and realized that if there was someone finishing their work outside the mansion, they would have been subjected to a rather amusing sight as well.

*'Alright, I'll talk with him about this tomorrow. I think... it's time he knew how I feel.'*

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Samantha smiled as Richard turned another page of an old fairytale book he found in the library of his office. His soft voice filled their serene bedroom with the imagery of a foreign and magical tale that made Samantha smile each time something new happened in the story. 1

"Why do you insist on reading to the baby? I'm just a couple of months in, the baby hardly has any organs now." 1

Samantha found it silly that Richard insisted on reading and singing to the baby when her pregnancy was at such an early stage; he even played the piano one time because he was convinced--or did he read it somewhere?--that classical music was good for the baby.

She didn't mind it, really. On the contrary--she was happy.

She couldn't help but compare this pregnancy to her last one, which had been a nightmare, if not worse.

Back then, she had worked tirelessly, balancing several demanding jobs with the overwhelming physical and emotional toll of carrying a child--all because William Sanson refused to



acknowledge that the child was his too.

Every day had been a struggle, every moment a battle against exhaustion and pain. But now, with Richard by her side, things were different. This pregnancy felt like a dream, almost too sweet to be true. 3

*'Thanks to that reporter whom Kyle sent to me, the media is buzzing about my pregnancy already and everyone is busy talking about my incredible Cinderella story. I was worried that having Amelie around might hurt my chances of staying close to Richard but now... Everything has worked out perfectly. This is the life I deserve.'* 2

As she reflected on these thoughts, a soft knock on the door pulled her back to reality. The maid entered, her cheeks flushing a deep pink as soon as she saw Richard sitting on the bed with a book in his hands.

"Mr. Ashford, your assistant is here with an urgent matter, it seems," the maid stammered, her eyes flicking nervously between Richard and the floor. 2

Richard nodded, his expression calm and

composed. "Bring him to my study," he instructed, his voice firm yet kind. "I'll meet him there in just a moment."

The maid smiled, a touch too warmly for Samantha's liking, and hurried out of the room. Samantha's gaze followed her, a twinge of irritation bubbling up inside her. She didn't like the way the maid looked at Richard, with that shy, almost flirtatious smile. It made her uneasy.

She watched Richard closely as he turned to leave. *'She likes him,'* she thought, her mind spinning with jealousy and insecurity. *'She's trying to flirt with him, I'm sure of it. That... bitch.'* 1

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Amelie walked through the long corridor of the Bennett mansion, clutching Liam's clothes in her hands. She deliberately waited until morning to let Liam calm down and approach this matter reasonably but now as she was approaching his study, she herself was getting nervous again.

*'I think I should just come clean. I can tell him that I feel attracted to him and it will make everything so much easier, right?'*



She nodded and pressed the clothes tighter against her chest as if that little action could give her more emotional strength to do what she had to do.

Amelie was about to knock on Liam's door when she heard heavy footsteps walking in her direction.

She was rather surprised; Vanessa made all the maids in the Bennett mansion wear flat shoes that barely made any noise, thus, hearing such resounding footsteps was very unusual for this household.

Amelie turned her head toward the source of the sound and felt her blood freeze inside her veins. For a moment, she thought she had seen a ghost appear before her and it made her entire body tremble.

Why was she there? Was she really there or was Amelie finally going insane?

Whatever the answer was, the woman in front of her was real. And her low, harsh voice was the evidence of that.

"Hello, Amelie. Long time no see."

