

## 127 Friends

"Oh my God!" 1

As Amelie stepped into the living room, she nearly dropped her jaw to the floor, her eyes big and round from shock. When Mary told her there was an unexpected guest, all kinds of anxious thoughts started swarming inside her head; after all, when someone was to visit one's house late at night and without an invitation, that rarely meant good news.

Indeed, tonight's visitors didn't mean good news. They meant amazing news. 1

"What are you guys doing here?!"

Amelie didn't know whom to look at--all three of her best friends were standing in the living room, smiling and looking at her with teary eyes. Emily, Lauren, and, most importantly, Elizabeth; they seemed like a mirage in a desert but at the same time, they were incredibly real. 1

They were there.

"Aren't you going to give us a hug Or was this



short period of time enough to turn us into complete strangers?" Emily finally answered back, and all three of them opened their arms, inviting their friend for a group hug.

Once Amelie found herself surrounded by the most important women in her life, enveloped in the combined and familiar scents of their perfume, she could no longer hold back her tears. She didn't want to cry, but she did want to let that one strong emotion show itself and let the others know that it was still there.

"So what is going on here? How come all three of you are here at this hour?"

Emily and Lauren looked at Elizabeth who, in turn, offered them a somewhat awkward smile, and looked back at Amelie.

"They were waiting for me, Lily. I am really sorry that I went off the radar so suddenly like that, but there was a reason for that."

"A reason? Did something happen to you while you were away?" Amelie grabbed her friend's hands in hers, catching her gaze with worried eyes but Lizzy shook her head, dismissing her concerns.



"Once my ex-husband found out that I got married to Jonathan and changed my name to his, he tried to sabotage our lives in every way possible which caused quite a few problems for our family. That's when... well, that's when Liam offered his help." 2

"Liam?" Yet another piece of information that caught Amelie off-guard and Lizzy nodded. "He helped us escape my ex's claws while also supporting John's career while we were settling in the new place. I must admit that Liam helped us both tremendously but that was the reason why no one could reach me for a while. I'm sorry, Lily, but I couldn't let anyone know."

Amelie felt conflicted once again. While she appreciated that Liam helped her friend in need, she still didn't like that he continued doing so many important things behind her back. Her husband truly required some serious scolding. 3

Nevertheless, right now, she couldn't allow those thoughts to ruin such a happy occasion.

"Then what about you two?" Amelie turned to the other women and frowned at them playfully. Lauren sighed. "Once you left Richard for Liam





Bennett, the political situation inside our circles split in two and, unfortunately, the two of us were thrown to the other side."

Emily agreed with a nod as well. "Our husbands really put up a fight with us, Lily. They are Richard's business partners so it's only natural that they want to support him out of loyalty, so we had no choice but to follow their decision. Luckily, after the news of Liam becoming that nation's new tycoon, things started to change, and once we learned that Lizzy was about to come back as well, the three of us got in touch, and now... here we are."

Amelie couldn't stay mad at her friends since she knew pretty well that some things were out of their control. However, she still didn't know why exactly Lizzy came back from abroad again.

"Was it my sister?" She asked carefully, secretly hoping that Julia indeed complied with her request. To her relief, Elizabeth nodded. "Yes, her people escorted me all the way back but it was still Liam who asked me to come here. He didn't tell me why, though. I was going to visit you anyway, but the urgency of his message made me nearly jump on the first flight



available."

Amelie caught three pairs of worried eyes staring in anticipation at her and silently wondered what kind of message her husband had sent to alert them so much.

*'Yet another thing to scold him for.'*

Her lips let out a long exhale as she shook her head, offering her friends a reassuring smile.

"There was nothing urgent, really, but I am still glad that neither of you has lost your touch. You have mentioned that after my second marriage, high society had its internal split--well, I am well aware of that. And while it is only a matter of time before more people realize that it's more beneficial to stick to Liam and me rather than Richard, there are people whom we can already start influencing."

Elizabeth's eyes lit up with unconcealed excitement; the adept socialite inside her was still pretty much alive and desperate to take action once more. Amelie acknowledged it with an understanding smile and continued,

"Even though I am now, too, a member of the



Bennett family, it seems that Vanessa Bennett, Noah Bennett's widow, does not want me inside her delicately assembled social circle. I need your help in changing that." 1

Lauren frowned. "Vanessa Bennett, huh? Well, I can't say I don't understand her but I do find her attempts to keep as an outcast rather childish. Anyway, do you already have a plan?"

Amelie smiled. "While Vanessa is still clinging to the illusion of power she is holding with Liam's supporters, rumor has it that there is someone else eager to see her disappear from the scene. And that person might be our chance at winning more people over."

"Oh?" Emily was now sharing collective excitement as well. "And who might that be?"

"None other than Lizzy's "sister from another mister"; Angelina Castillo."





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