

133 Sunflowers

Angelina looked away, fixing her big green eyes at the already cold cup of tea on the glass coffee table next to the couch. She resented talking about it and she definitely didn't feel comfortable enough to talk about it with Amelie but she decided to give her an honest reply anyway. 1

"My brother Ted is still in love with that bitch," she started carefully, "If she fails to take Diamond Group from you, she will gaslight Ted into accepting her "feelings" and this will end with her taking my family's business from me. She has a kind smile and people trust her but I know better than that. Therefore, she needs to leave."

Amelie was surprised again. She believed that Angelina hated Vanessa because of what she did to her brother but she had no idea her resentment had another, more selfish reason lying underneath.

Amelie was torn between decisions.

On the one hand, Angelina's selfishness meant certain cooperation. On the other hand, Amelie would be dragged into yet another internal power struggle which she didn't care for.

'It would have been easier if all she wanted was to faze Vanessa out, but this is far more complicated. I will need some time to think this over.'

Angelina's phone rang, jolting Amelie out of her musings. Her guest checked the caller's name and left her seat, offering Amelie an apologetic smile.

"Please excuse me, I need to take this, it's important."

Amelie nodded and watched her guest leave and the moment Angelina disappeared into the terrace leading out of the living room, Vanessa's personal assistant, Rachel, stepped inside, carrying a large red paper bag with a famous clothing brand written all over it.

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Bennett," she greeted Amelie with a bright smile, approaching the couch where she was seated. "One of the maids told me you were there so I hope you don't mind

my coming in. Am I interrupting anything?"

She looked at the coffee table and noticed that the tea set was arranged for two. Amelie motioned for the woman to join her on the couch but Rachel shook her head and placed the paper bag next to Amelie instead.

"Mrs. Vanessa Bennett is visiting her friend outside the city but she wanted me to deliver you this gift to congratulate you on finally setting the wedding date. Please don't reject it, she put a lot of thought into choosing it."

Amelie's face remained emotionless even when she opened the bag, pulled out a nice carton box hidden inside it, and then retrieved an extremely beautiful silk headscarf of a unique emerald color.

Yes, it was an astonishing and very expensive gift. But it was hardly chosen with care. The only thing Vanessa had in mind when she picked it--if she indeed picked it herself--was to get something expensive and rare enough to show Amelie that she was still making an effort to be friendly.

"Thank you," Amelie placed the scarf back into

the box and closed it. "Please let her know that I am very grateful."

She then observed Rachel's smiling face for a while before continuing, "Actually, I'd like to send something in return."

"Oh, you don't have to," Rachel began, "Mrs. Bennett will definitely feel offended."

'Offended?' Amelie frowned slightly, 'Like she doesn't know that it's customary to send at least something back when receiving a gift. Unfortunately, I still don't know much about what she likes, but a bouquet of flowers is always a safe choice, right?'

"Rachel," she now asked out loud, "What flowers does Vanessa like?"

The woman hesitated with her response and Amelie noticed some strange tension in her body. Finally, Rachel relaxed again and answered, "Sunflowers. She likes sunflowers."

"Alright, could you please ask Carla to get a nice bouquet of sunflowers sent to Vanessa today on your way back?"

"Of course."

Rachel nodded and left the room while Angelina stepped back inside from the terrace, noticing the gift.

"What was that? Was that Rachel?"

Amelie answered with a nod and Angelina sat next to her again.

"A gift, huh? Did you say you were sending something back too?"

Amelie figured that her guest overheard her conversation with Vanessa's assistant but ignored it and replied in a casual tone, "Yes, I will send her a bouquet of sunflowers."

Angelina arched her eyebrows and Amelie noticed the same tension grip her entire body.

"Did Rachel tell you to get them?"

"She did," Amelie replied, still not quite understanding what was happening.

"I see," Angelina looked in the direction of the hallway, then turned back to Amelie and forced a smile. "Alright, where were we?"

Amelie closed the book she had been reading since she returned to her study and checked the time on her phone's screen.

'Liam said he would be late for dinner but it's already too late to eat anyway.'

She left her chair and stepped out of the room, heading for the kitchen to let the staff know that they could put the food in the fridge and clock out.

As she reached the first floor of the mansion, Mary rushed toward her from around the corner, almost bumping into her, her face flushed and worried, and her voice loud,

"Mrs. Bennett! We have just received a call! It's Mrs. Vanessa Bennett, she's in the hospital!"

"In the hospital?" Amelie widened her eyes at her. "Why? What happened?"

"She got a severe allergic reaction to something. I think the woman on the phone mentioned flowers...? Sunflowers, yes! She had a bad asthma attack and was taken to the hospital!"

"Asthma?" The women turned to the sound of Liam's voice. He stood next to Amelie and turned to Mary. "Is it Vanessa? Did something happen to her?"

"Allergic reaction to sunflowers," Amelie replied instead of the maid.

"Sunflowers?" Liam seemed utterly surprised, "Who in the world would send her them? Everyone who knows her is aware that she is extremely allergic to sunflowers!"

"Well, I--" Amelie started but was immediately interrupted by Angelina who was escorted through the hallway by Mrs. Geller.

"It was my fault," she explained, "I was the one who told Amelie to send Vanessa sunflowers. I guess," she offered Amelie a strange look and concluded, "I guess I forgot."

