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"Lily," Richard moved his hand closer to his ex-wife's but paused, unwilling to move it further. 1

Amelie ignored that name and silently brushed her index finger over the rim of the wine glass with a circular motion. Richard tried again, "Thank you for helping me last night. I must have caused you some trouble since you left so quickly. Or so I was told."

"Richard," she finally shifted her eyes back to the man and frowned a little, "What is it that you want from me? Do you want to stay friends? Fine, I am able to do that. So please stop with this erratic behavior. You will only hurt yourself by acting this way."

"Why did you help me last night?" The man raised his voice a little but then shrunk as his ex-wife shot him a warning glare. "You could have left me there and let me ruin this wedding myself by not showing up or showing up still drunk. If you had done this, you could have had your moment of victory over me. So then why?"



"Because you think you can be my friend?"

He then leaned closer to Amelie and added, "Admit it, Lily. You still have feelings for me. We could have found a way to work things out between the two of us. So why--" 1

"Are you being serious right now?" Amelie could no longer bite her tongue; this situation had turned into an emotional disaster. "You want *to work things out*? And what exactly does it mean for me? Do I have to be your mistress? Or do you just want to continue using me for your own benefit while Samantha will be the one to take all the credit?"

"No, Amelie, I--"

She did not let him finish again as she rose from her seat and glared down at his pathetic face.

"Yes, you're right—I do have feelings for you. I feel pity, resentment, and disappointment. You deserve a woman like Samantha by your side. I'm glad you realized it first before I wasted any more of my time on you." 8

Since Samantha missed the wedding banquet, it



was decided to have a small celebratory brunch the day after, before the guests started departing for their homes.

"Have you heard?" Elizabeth sat back on her seat next to others and gestured for them to gather around, her lips stretched into a cunning grin.

"That woman is even dumber than we suspected."

She jerked her head in Samantha's direction and continued, "Georgina Westwood is having a benefit next month to gather donations for the learning center she has been overseeing for the last decade, and guess what? That woman said she would donate a staggering five million dollars to the cause!"

Everyone gasped while Amelie's brows knitted together in worry.

"Where will she get this kind of money?" Emily finally asked on her behalf and Lizzy shrugged.

"Does it matter? She will probably take that money out of Richard's pocket pretending that it belonged to her 'father' or whatever."

Amelie frowned again. It did matter. Because it sounded like Samantha was about to waste the



money that Amelie left her to use for the welfare projects that woman inherited.

"Excuse me for a moment," she stood up from her seat and was about to walk away when Liam grabbed her by the sleeve of her blouse, glancing somewhat nervously at her. "What is it? Do you want me to go with you?"

Amelie looked back down at him and took a moment to think. Perhaps it wouldn't be such a bad idea to have some people around them as she talked to Samantha. This way, there would be witnesses to confirm that she never tried to purposely offend her or do her any harm.

"Yes," she smiled at him and then addressed the rest of her friends. "I need some of you to hover over Samantha's table while I'm talking to her."

"Of course!" Both Elizabeth and Lauren stood up right away and Amelie nodded. "Alright, let's go then."

Luckily, the woman was alone at her table, sipping on a glass of fresh orange juice while Richard was busy discussing something important with his assistant in the opposite corner of the restaurant.

"Miss Blackwood? Ah, yes... It's Mrs. Clark now. May I have a word with you?"

Sam nearly choked on her drink, coughing loudly as she gasped for air. She motioned for Amelie to take a seat and composed her expression, waiting patiently for her to begin.

"I've heard you offered five million dollars to Mrs. Westwood's learning center. I assume you are going to use my money to do that?"

Samantha furrowed her brow and almost snarled back at her, "Your money? Now that I am legally married to Richard, there is nothing yours that we share."

Amelie let out a slightly irritated sigh and rubbed her forehead. "It does not matter. That money will last you years of charity work, it is not meant for reckless spending."

Sam was beginning to lose it. "So? Did you come here to lecture me on how I should or should not spend **my** money? It belonged to you and now it belongs to me. I spend it however I want. Please stop meddling with other people's business and mind your own, Mrs. Bennett."



"At least," Amelie tried to reason with her one last time; not for Samantha's sake but for the sake of those whose lives depended on that money. "Make sure to use proper means of dispersing the budgets and... don't neglect the necessary paperwork. Thousands of lives depend on this money, Mrs. Clark. As an orphan yourself... I hoped you would understand that."

Amelie did not want to hear a single word uttered by Samantha. She was a lost cause. Thus, offering her one last polite nod, she rose to her seat and left, returning to the company of her friends.

Richard took a seat beside his wife, his eyes following Amelie's movements as he asked, "What did you talk to Amelie about?"

"Money," Samantha almost spat these words and Richard frowned. "Your donation? I have just heard about that. You better make sure Georgina Westwood knows that what you said was just a figure of speech. There is no way you are donating this money to that organization under your name. Is that clear?"

The coldness of his voice made Samantha chew

on her lip in frustration.

There it was again. Every time Amelie would meddle in their lives, Richard would become like this. As if he never loved her in the first place. 3

Fisting her hands under the table, Samantha shot a burning glare in Amelie's direction, her mind fuming with hatred. *'Annoying... How she annoys me..!'*

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