

## 154 The Dressmaker

"Make sure to be careful, alright? This was a limited edition Chanel suit, they don't make these anymore, you know? Only ten of those were made and I have one!" 1

Samantha stood in front of the mirror in Amelie's old bedroom, scrutinizing her reflection as the dressmaker, a rather young-looking woman named Kathy, who was famous for having deft fingers and a unique vision of style, worked on adjusting the hem of the skirt at her working station.

The room, once filled with Amelie's presence, was now being repurposed as a makeshift atelier, and Samantha relished in the symbolism.

"Also, make sure the hem is exactly two inches longer," Samantha instructed, "The stomach makes everything look shorter."

The dressmaker nodded, her eyes focused on the fabric as she pinned the hem with meticulous care.

Samantha's pregnancy had made her wardrobe a

challenge, but she was determined to maintain her image. That's why she had hired the second-best dressmaker in town to alter clothes that used to belong to Amelie's signature style, tailored to fit her changing body. <sup>2</sup>

*'So many amazing outfits to wear, and none of them fits me because of this growing stomach! I can't wear those ugly pregnancy clothes, no matter whose famous name is plastered all over them!'*

"This will look perfect once it's finished," the dressmaker assured her, smiling as she adjusted the fabric under the sewing machine.

Samantha barely acknowledged her, her mind already drifting to the next outfit she wanted altered. Then, she sighed and said carelessly, "I am going to use the bathroom real quick. Keep working."

A few moments after she left, the door to the room creaked open, and Richard walked in, his expression a mix of irritation and confusion as he looked around the room, clearly surprised to find it occupied by a stranger.

"Who are you? What are you doing here? Where



is Samantha?"

Kathy, sensing the tension in his voice, hurried to answer, nearly jumping to her feet. "I am Kathy Monsoon, Mrs. Clark hired me to redo her clothes. She stepped out to use the bathroom. I'm just working on some adjustments for her here."

Richard nodded, though he didn't seem interested in her reply at all. His eyes scanned the room, lingering on the remnants of Amelie's wardrobe scattered all around the space once again. He frowned.

"That's quite a mess she has made here..." He then turned to face the woman and widened his eyes as he noticed her blushing face. For a few long seconds, he stared at her, finding her features rather intriguing and his own face began to soften. 2

"Looks like my wife has practically buried you in work, huh?" He asked with a playful smile on his lips.

The dressmaker smiled as well. "Well, Mrs. Clark is a generous client, I cannot complain."





Outside the door, Samantha stood silently, listening intently to the exchange. She watched through the narrow crack in the door, her heart pounding in her chest. 2

The way Kathy spoke, the way she smiled at Richard—it sent a surge of jealousy coursing through her veins. She bit down on her lip, her nails digging into the wooden doorframe as she fought the urge to storm in and create a scene.

*'Is she flirting with him?'* Samantha thought, her mind racing. *'How dare she?'* 2

Richard, oblivious to Samantha's presence just outside the door, nodded at the woman and said, "Well, I hope my wife isn't keeping you too busy. I know I give her my permission to splurge on the pregnancy clothes but she doesn't really need much."

"Oh, not at all, Mr. Clark," the dressmaker replied, her smile widening and her cheeks turning red. "It's a pleasure to work with her."

Samantha's anger flared as she listened to their polite exchange, her jealousy morphing into a blinding rage. She wanted nothing more than to burst in and tear the woman away from Richard,



to scream at her to leave and never come back. But she held back, waiting until Richard turned to leave.

Hiding back in the bathroom, when she heard the door click shut behind him, she waited a few more seconds before marching back into the room, her face twisted with barely contained fury.

The dressmaker looked up as Samantha entered, sensing the change in the room's atmosphere.

"Oh, Mrs. Clark, you're back..."

Samantha narrowed her eyes, her voice dripping with disdain. "Yes, I *am* back. Now what is it? Why did you stop working? I'll be in labor by the time all of this is finished!"

Startled, Kathy hurried to return to the skirt but in her rush, her hands fumbled with the fabric, and the seam she had been working on went crooked. Samantha noticed immediately, her temper flaring once again.

"What the hell is this?" she snapped, grabbing the fabric and thrusting it in the dressmaker's face. "Are you trying to sabotage me? I have just told you this is a rare item and you went ahead

and ruined it?!"

Kathy looked up, shocked and confused. "No, Mrs. Clark, I—I just made a mistake, I'm sorry—"

"A mistake?!" Samantha's voice rose to a shrill pitch. "You think you can get away with making a mistake like this? Or are you too busy trying to flirt with my husband? Is that what got you so unfocused, huh? Seducing other women's husbands?!" 3

The dressmaker's eyes widened in fear as Samantha's words sank in. "Mrs. Clark, I would never—"

"Don't lie to me!" Samantha screamed, her fury reaching its peak. She grabbed the woman's wrist with a vice-like grip and shoved it toward the sewing machine. Kathy gasped in terror, but before she could react, Samantha's hand reached for the power switch. 1

The sewing machine quietly roared to life, the needle moving up and down with terrifying speed. The dressmaker screamed, jerking her hand away just in time, but not before the needle grazed her skin, leaving a line of blood on her trembling fingers. 1



She stumbled back, falling to the floor in shock, tears streaming down her face. Samantha loomed over her, her chest heaving with rage. "Get out!" she hissed, kicking the woman's leg with a viciousness that made Kathy cry out in pain. "Get out of my house and don't you ever come back, you slut!"

The dressmaker scrambled to her feet, clutching her injured, bleeding hand as she ran out of the room, sobbing uncontrollably. Samantha stood there, her breath coming in ragged gasps, her heart pounding in her chest. She felt no remorse, only a cold satisfaction that she had put the woman in her place.

But she wasn't alone. Unbeknownst to Samantha, one of the maids—one she had lashed out at before for exactly the same reason—had been standing just outside the door, phone clutched tightly in her hand, recording the entire scene. 4

