

174 Last Chance

Vanessa sat in her room, hugging her knees at her chest, staring blankly at the wall in front of her. 1

Her skin was pale and dry, her eyes rimmed with dark circles from several anxious, sleepless nights she had spent agonizing over her grave mistake.

The woman had confined herself to the Bennett mansion for quite some time now, only leaving her room late at night when everyone else was asleep. It was as though she were a ghost haunting the hallways, avoiding the judgmental gazes of the household staff.

Vanessa even refused to talk to Rachel, her assistant, leaving her share of work in her capable hands.

Her mind was a storm of conflicting emotions about what she had done to Liam that cursed night.

She had crossed a line, and she knew it. But the silence that followed was even more unnerving;



it was mere torture. No one had tried to confront her, no one had asked questions. The lack of confrontation only heightened her anxiety and fright.

'Even if people outside the mansion don't know anything, everyone here is probably aware of what I have done,' she thought, her fingers twisting in the hem of her blouse. 'Everyone is treating me like I am afflicted by plague. They even sent my personal maids away...'

Vanessa suddenly froze, the realization crashing over her like a cold wave. *'No!'*

Her eyes widened with fright as the pieces clicked into place. Liam was preparing to send her away.

She instantly leaped from the bed, her face pale and taut with fear; her eyes widening as if she were becoming mad.

'No! I can't let him do that to me! Not like this!'

Panic gripped her chest as she began biting her nails, pacing back and forth in the room. Her thoughts raced and she started thinking that she was about to lose her mind completely.

'Once everyone learns that I am being sent away, the speculation about the reason will spread like wildfire. The truth about me trying to sleep with Liam could be revealed, destroying my reputation, or Liam might spin some pathetic story about me honoring my late husband's memory or missing him too much to stay here anymore...'

Neither of these outcomes was acceptable for Vanessa. If people thought she had acted improperly, she would be ostracized from high society. And if Liam took control of the narrative, she would lose everything that was still rightfully hers.

'The company shares, the inheritance Noah left me—it's enough to live comfortably, but if Liam takes charge... Without Grandpa Bennett, he'll cut me off completely. He won't forgive me for what I tried to do. I'll never be able to come back here again... Ugh, what the hell do I do now?'

Her thoughts spiraled once more, and she was suddenly reminded of Samantha's words about using people's weaknesses to her advantage.

'I failed to use Liam's weakness, but what about

Amelie's?' 1

Vanessa's breath quickened with soaring anxiety as she grabbed her phone, her hands trembling. She nervously scrolled through her messages, almost dropping the phone a couple of times, until she found the last message exchange with Samantha. A nervous smile tugged at her lips while she read through their conversation. 1

'This is my last chance. I have nothing else to lose. I have to try it.'

In the mansion's office, Liam sat behind his large desk, Amelie beside him, her intense gaze reading something important on her laptop screen.

The man occasionally glanced over at his busy wife, a proud smile tugging at his lips. Working next to her filled him with a deep sense of contentment.

He hated that their offices at Diamond Group were separate, but it was necessary since they handled different responsibilities and needed time to focus on their own things.



Today, however, things at the office were slow, so they were working side by side on Einar's new smart city project, and Liam was enjoying every moment of it.

After yet another brief glance in her direction, Amelie sighed, her eyes still focused intently on her laptop screen, didn't look up when she spoke in a playfully warning tone. "Liam, if you don't stop staring at me and start focusing on your work, I will have no other choice but to leave."

Captain Pantaloons, who had been snoring quietly on a chair next to Amelie, raised his head for a moment, offering Liam a somewhat annoyed quiet growl, then buried his nose into the velvet pillow again and returned to the land of the doggie dreams.

Liam leaned over, showed the dog his tongue, then rested his head on Amelie's shoulder, and purred softly, "What can I do, I can't focus with you next to me. Can you really blame me?"

Amelie let out another sigh and gently pushed her husband's head away with a finger. "Then we should never work together again!"

Liam gasped dramatically, pressing his hand



against his parted lips and shaking his head in a theatrical protest. "No! I will focus! I promise! I am focusing right now! Look!"

He started frantically typing something incomprehensible in a newly created document while Amelie chuckled softly, shaking her head as she, too, returned to her task.

"Now I understand why Mr. Hall is always so jittery around you; you are a scatterbrain!"

Liam pouted again but their playful banter was abruptly interrupted by a persistent knock on the door.

"Yes?"

Rather disappointed, Liam straightened up, inviting the person outside to come in. The door creaked open, revealing Austin, his face pale and drawn, his expression one of clear distress.

"What's the matter?" Amelie asked, her tone shifting from playful to serious in an instant. Whenever she saw that expression on anyone's face, it rarely meant something good.

Austin didn't answer immediately. He fidgeted

with his phone at the door, then slowly approached their desk, and placed the phone in front of the couple, finally answering in a low and concerned voice, "It has just popped up in the gossip feed. You have to take a look at this." 2

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