

## 37 It's Related To You

"What is it?" Amelie examined Samantha's appearance with a curious look in her eyes; a silk knee-length robe, heeled slippers, hair loosely tied up in a bun with a beautiful pin. Something that many upper-class women liked to wear at their homes. Something that Amelie wore too. 1

Samantha sure was pretty comfortable in her house already.

The woman pressed her back against the closed door behind her and looked at Amelie from under her thin eyebrows, lowering her voice to almost a whisper, "Mrs. Ashford, can we talk just for a little bit? There is something that keeps bothering me and it's related to you..."

*"To me?" Amelie's bewilderment continued to grow, 'How the hell am I bothering her when I am not even here most of the time?'*

Samantha's words sounded absurd but Amelie got curious.

"Alright, what is it?"



Her question allowed Samantha to approach her desk and take a seat on the guest chair which was occupied by Mrs. Geller just a few moments ago. Despite already facing Amelie, Samantha looked uncomfortable and nervous, still contemplating whether she should really discuss the matter that had been bothering her.

Finally, she cleared her throat and asked, "Mrs. Ashford, how well do you know Mrs. Elizabeth Gilmore?"

Amelie raised her eyebrows in confusion once more. "Why do you ask?"

Samantha shifted in her seat and continued just as nervously, "Well, she is always surrounded by men and she is always on top of every gossip in town... I was wondering if there is something more to her than that. I mean..." She paused and stretched her lips in an almost unnoticeable smile. "I think I heard someone talk about her... Not in a pleasant manner." 1

That was already more than enough to make Mrs. Ashford finally lose her temper. She could tolerate Samantha talking badly about herself, but to raise such disrespectful speculations





about her best friend -- that was crossing the final line.

Amelie frowned and raised her voice, "Do not ever talk about Elizabeth disrespectfully. She is a well-known socialite and her staying on top of all the news is because her family is in the media business. Don't you dare to ever use this against her, do you understand me?"

Amelie's loud yet low voice made Samantha leave her seat immediately and recoil in fear.

"I'm sorry, I didn't mean it like that! I just heard some rumors and thought it might affect you too... I'm really sorry! I should just go."

She faked a teary expression, offered the woman a bow, and rushed to leave the room, almost running away as if she were leaving the scene of a crime.

She didn't fail, however; Amelie's reaction was precisely what she wanted. Now, she had yet another thing to cling to for her own benefit.

As Miss Blackwood disappeared behind the door of Amelie's study, Mrs. Ashford covered her face with both hands and let out a long sigh.

*'I can't just leave this be. She heard rumors? As if. What the hell is she scheming now?'*

Amelie tapped her finger on the locked screen of her phone and looked at the time -- their kids must be already asleep now so bothering them would be rather inappropriate. Yet, the anxious feeling prompted by Samantha's words would definitely not leave unless she got it taken care of. 2

She made a decision and sent a message to her friends, asking them to get on a group call with her. Luckily, they all jumped right in without delay.

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"Ugh, that little bitch! What the hell does she want with our Lizzy?" Emily's voice sounded too funny to be taken seriously -- the long thin cigarette between her lips created that effect.

Amelie sighed. "Do you know anything that she might use against Elizabeth? Maybe something happened while I was busy preparing for the benefit? I know she can take care of the media but things could still slip away."





Her other two friends fell silent, mulling over the recent events. Emily spoke first, "I haven't noticed anything special. Her husband has been drinking more than usual lately but he keeps himself in check so he didn't cause any scandal. Frankly, Lizzy has been too busy with her daughter so she is barely out and about to get into trouble too."

Amelie silently agreed to Emily's statement. It was true that when Lizzy didn't go out, she liked to spend her free time taking care of her baby daughter. She loved her deeply and preferred to raise the girl herself as much as she could without resorting to the aid of nannies too often.

"It's quite funny now that I think about it," Lauren said after a brief pause in their conversation, "Remember how popular she used to be when we were younger?"

Emily agreed, "Yes, especially during her university days... I could never imagine she could become such a devoted mother as she is now! Do you guys remember how many men were pining over her?"



"How can I forget that? She was so pretty and popular that I almost left our friend group! I was afraid I might die of jealousy."

The women laughed but Amelie's mind was far from enjoying their reminiscing session.

*'She used to be the most popular girl around and even now, she keeps attracting a lot of male attention whenever we attend a party or any other social event. Was that what Samantha was talking about?'*

Their phone call lasted for a few more minutes before Lauren had to hang up, claiming that her nagging husband needed to have a talk with her about her cigarettes. As she left the call, Emily sighed and asked with a tinge of worry in her voice, "What is going on there? Is that woman bothering you with her nonsense?"

Amelie released a soft chuckle but her real feelings were far from joy; she was just happy there were people who knew what she was going through. At least to some extent.

"No, I'm not bothered by her but I am afraid that she might switch to someone else instead."



"Don't worry, we'll keep an eye on our surroundings and will let you know if we catch her snooping around our business."

"Thank you, Emily."

Mrs. Crane, too, left the call and Amelie found herself sitting in complete silence once again.

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2

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