



59 Yes, Mr. Bennett. I Will Miss You

The evening enveloped the city in its fragrant and warm blanket of a nice blend of blooming flowers and raindrops that were turning into invisible steam as they were beginning to evaporate from the surfaces they had touched several minutes ago. Amelie got out of her car and strode directly toward the entrance of the Emerald Hotel, playfully jumping over the little puddles created by the short summer rainfall. 1

As she reached the door and greeted the friendly doorman, she noticed Liam Bennett standing next to the entrance to the garden and running his eyes all over the place as if looking for someone.

Once he noticed Mrs. Ashford, he greeted her with a warm smile and Amelie felt strangely light and unburdened, as if all the weight of the daily troubles she had been shouldering up until this moment, evaporated together with the last raindrops on the hot pavement.



Amelie's lips stretched into a wide smile as well.

Liam almost ran toward the woman and the moment he stopped, breathing heavily as he tried to compose himself, Amelie let out a light chuckle and asked, "How have you been, Mr. Bennett? It's been a while."

"It really has! I heard about what happened from Kyle... I feel so bad for not checking up on you later, I am really sorry, Miss Ashford! Are you fine now?"

"Yes, no need to worry about me, Mr. Bennett, I am feeling alright."

Liam nodded and shrugged his shoulders somewhat awkwardly as he looked back at the door that led inside the hotel's building.

"I would love to talk to you during one of our usual walks but now I am scared that it might strain your body if I insist... What should I do? Ugh, I have been waiting so long and got too excited."

Amelie felt a little awkward after hearing his words. *'He has been waiting for me all this time? I wonder for how long...'*



Regardless of Liam's waiting time, she couldn't just dismiss their meeting and go straight up to her room. Truthfully, she, too, was way too excited to finally see him again.

"You know, I could use a short walk before going back to my room. I have spent the whole day sitting, moving around won't do me any harm."

"Really?" the genuine excitement in Liam's voice betrayed his true feelings. "Alright! Let's go for a walk then!"

As they walked in the pleasant shadows of the garden's greenery, hiding from the scorching setting sun, the two of them seemed to have forgotten how to talk. The silence was pleasant and soothing but the tension of two people harboring many unspoken sentences was still electrifying the air between them with invisible sparks.

Amelie spoke first. "I heard from Mr. Marshall that you were busy handling some important family matters. I hope everything is alright."

Liam sighed; he didn't like to talk about his problems but he did want to confide in Amelie.



"Well... You have probably heard that my older brother is very sick."

The woman nodded and he continued, "It's skin cancer. He is in a very bad condition and both Grandpa and I are preparing for the worst."

Amelie covered her mouth with her right hand trying to hide her frantic emotions. Yes, she was aware of his brother's condition but she still had hoped that it wasn't that serious.

"I'm really sorry, Mr. Bennett," She gently placed her hand on Liam's shoulder and looked him in the eyes as they stopped their walk, losing herself in the bottomless depth of his gray orbs. "If there's... If there is anything you need, please let me know. I'll do my best to help, I promise."

Liam responded with a somewhat sad smile and asked in a serious voice, "Can I ask for a hug, Miss Ashford?" 2

Amelie's cheeks flushed with a distinct shade of pink as she thought about getting closer to Liam. She silently scolded herself for feeling so embarrassed; she was too old for that, and a little too married as well. But she couldn't help it. She was attracted to him. 1



Nevertheless, she couldn't deny him this type of intimacy, thus, she opened her arms and nodded. "Yes, you can hug me, Mr. Bennett."

The man didn't hesitate. He quickly wrapped his big strong arms around Amelie's shoulders as if he were afraid she would change her mind at any moment, pulling her body closer to his.

Amelie felt the pleasant mixture of his perfume and the innate scent of his body circle around her as the evening wind danced around them in a soothing waltz. Liam softly placed his chin on top of Amelie's head and carefully inhaled the scent emanating from her fair wavy hair. After finally meeting her, he felt that it was the only scent that could calm his seething nerves.

Amelie didn't know how long they had been standing like that, enveloped in silence when suddenly, Liam's velvet voice brushed over her ears. "Miss Ashford... will you miss me if I have to leave?"

The woman widened her eyes, stunned by that simple question. For some reason, it had never even once occurred to her that Liam might one day leave.



"How soon are you leaving?" She finally asked back.

"It doesn't matter." Was the only sentence he could voice.

Amelie felt something sharp lodged inside her throat. It did matter. Everything mattered. Everything related to him.

Fighting back the urge to choke on her tears, Amelie took a deep breath and closed her eyes, her whisper fading with the strong gust of the evening wind.

"Yes, Mr. Bennett. I will miss you."

Liam's lips stretched into another sad smile.

"Good."

He tried to focus his vision through the thickening veil of bitter tears. He felt that it was hard to breathe. In that very moment, when there were just the two of them; so close and yet so far apart, Liam felt the most miserable.

Amelie's galloping heart, however, was the only symbol of hope. Yes, despite everything, there was hope. He wanted to believe it.



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'Yes,' he sought comfort in his burning thoughts,
'Now I know it. It means I still have a chance.' 2

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