



97 You Don't Want Me, You Want The Idea Of Me

"Amelie, wait!" As all four of them stepped out of the courtroom, Richard grabbed his ex-wife by the wrist which she, in return, shook off as if the man's hand was infected. His mere touch now felt disgusting to her.

"Mr. Clark, you're acting out of line. Please don't grab my wife like that or I will be forced to react accordingly." Liam shot him a warning glare but Richard's irritation only spiked again.

"Your wife?" He almost hissed.

Before Liam could retort again, Amelie stepped forward between them and looked Richard straight in the eyes. "What is it that you want now? You wanted a divorce, you are a divorced man now. What else could you possibly need from me?"

"Let's talk privately, Lily. Just give me a few minutes."

Amelie briefly glanced at Samantha, who, too,

was a little confused by Richard's reaction, then let out a long sigh, and nodded.

"Five minutes. Whatever you still have to say to me, you only have five minutes of my time." 1

The two of them stepped away from their partners and even though Richard knew he was limited in time, the words refused to come out of his mouth. Finally, he brushed his dark brown hair away from his forehead and began,

"Why did you do this? Is it money that you're after? Is this what this marriage is all about? To ensure that you keep living just like you did before?" 2

Amelie couldn't help but laugh; day after day, her ex-husband's true colors were becoming uglier. 1

"What the hell is wrong with you? I really can't understand you anymore, Richard. You have everything you wanted now: a loving woman beside you, a looming possibility of an heir, all of JFC's connections and money. What else could you possibly need that your rage is so tied to me?" 1

"Godammit, Amelie, I need **you**!" 3



The man's voice sounded somewhat desperate but Amelie could not care less for his delusions.

"You don't need me, Richard. What you want, is the "idea" of me. You want me to be there, always ready, always waiting for you, always *needing you*. Well, that is all too bad, Richard, because I don't need you anymore." 4

Richard didn't get a chance to offer his response as Liam approached Amelie and took her hand in his, smiling somewhat awkwardly at her. "Miss Ashford, five minutes is over. Let's just go."

"This is just another marriage of convenience, Amelie! He is just using you for his own personal gain!" Finally, Richard almost shouted again, the angry despair in his tone almost reaching its peak.

Amelie smirked. "What if I am using him too? Yes, it is a marriage of convenience. It is convenient for both of us."

The ride back to the Emerald Hotel was silent and even a little awkward. Neither Amelie nor Liam seemed to have anything to say to one

another yet it was evident that both of them had a lot on their minds.

It was a hectic morning, after all.

When the awkwardness started to feel suffocating, Amelie took her phone out of her purse and started scrolling through the newsfeed, her expression tensioning the more she read through the myriad of articles and comments.

'Everyone knows already...'

The speed at which the news was spread was not particularly surprising to her. What was surprising, however, was how quickly the public divided upon learning that Amelie got married on the same day she got divorced.

She was the epitome of a perfect upper-class wife, I guess being a wife is what matters to her the most.

Amelie Ashford is by far the most popular socialite in our country; I bet if we had known about her divorce earlier, there would have been a long line of eligible bachelors waiting to propose another marriage of convenience to



her.

She could have at least waited a little before dropping this bomb on her husband. Does it mean she wasn't so pure herself after all? Has she been having an affair with Liam Bennett this whole time too?

I think this is one of the most satisfying face-slapping I've seen in years. Way to go, Mrs. Ashford, or should we all call her Mrs. Bennett now? 1

Amelie sighed and shoved the phone back into her purse, leaning back against the car seat with her eyes tightly shut. Liam noticed that she was upset and gently touched the back of her hand, offering his new wife a subtle smile once she fixed her eyes on him.

"Is something wrong, Miss Ashford?" 1

"No... Well, I guess I wasn't really prepared for how the public would react to my marrying you, Mr. Bennett. Some people accuse me of infidelity and hypocrisy while others support me and wish me a better married life this time. I know I should be above that, but..." 1

She didn't really know what to say to explain the way she felt. She thought her life was changing the moment she learned that Richard was cheating on her but only today did she realize that the real changes are yet to start.

Liam listened to what she had to say, then slowly nodded, and shifted his eyes away, focusing his vision somewhere outside the window.

"Well... As public figures, we are the source of entertainment for them so they are bound to talk about us however they please. I don't think you should be worried about that, Miss Ashford. What matters is that you are now free to do anything you want and with that, soon enough, the public opinion will shift back to worshipping you again."

Although his words meant to offer Amelie some reassurance, somehow, she felt a little stinging undertone in the way they were uttered. Liam seemed... upset.

The woman parted her lips, ready to reply, but her husband spoke again. "Miss Ashford... What you said to Mr. Clark back then, about... Ugh, well, never mind. It's nothing."

Amelie raised her eyebrows in bewilderment. *'So this is what he is pouting about? He heard what I said to Richard at the courthouse?'*

Her hand now took charge, covering Liam's fingers as she stretched her pinkish lips into a warm smile.

"Did those words hurt you?"

"Not really..." But he was still upset.

Amelie turned in her seat and squeezed Liam's hand which finally made him look back at her as well.

"Mr. Bennett, now that we are officially married, how about we get a little closer?"

"What do you mean?" Liam's cheeks flushed with embarrassment; he really didn't know what to expect. Amelie chuckled.

"Let's start calling each other by our first names. You can even call me Lily--this nickname is only for people I consider my closest friends." 2

"Are you serious?!" The man clasped both of his wife's hands in his and widened his eyes which were now shining with unconcealed excitement.



"You can't take this back now! I will start calling you by your nickname!"

Amelie was now laughing. "Sure, please, go ahead."

Suddenly, Liam let go of her hands, leaned back against the car seat, and took a deep breath. Then, his lips trembled slightly, and he said in a quiet voice, "Amelie... Lily." 4

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