

Chapter 15 - Death by Confusion

The intensity of Solene's cheeks blushing could have been compared to a rose petal after she heard Henri's words. It was a promise all new to her. A promise she was sure he was going to execute without hesitation.

It shouldn't have flustered her that much considering he was her fiancé but still, she couldn't control herself. A kiss like that meant she'd taste his lips again and God knows how much she enjoyed them to the fullest.

Good thing the light inside the limousine was dim and she had the option to keep her face hidden from his view. This way, she was safe from his observing eyes. At least for now.

With her heart thudding against her rib cage, she carefully decided to stay silent during the remainder of their ride.

Henri didn't seem bothered by it. He remained contemplatively silent too, but a few minutes later, he received nonstop calls from work effectively pulling him out from their little sweet bubble.

When they arrived in the mansion, Solene slipped out first, giving him a single nod before doing so. She entered the foyer wherein Patricia was already waiting.

"This way, Milady," she said, bowing low and then gesturing to a hallway leading to the dining area.

Solene arched her brows, feeling a little confused. "Is it dinner already?"

Patricia shook her head and replied, "No, Miss. Your wedding team is waiting for you there to finish your preparations."

"Oh," Solene nodded quickly, realizing the meaning of her words.

She was led to a separate area of the dining room. It was more

like a board room complete with an oval table and high chairs. Joyce and Armand were already waiting for her there together with Madame Floresca. On her side of the table were the candle holder Solene picked and other giveaway designs she was supposed to choose.

"My sincere apologies for what happened inside my boutique, Miss St. Fair," Madame Floresca stated, looking truly ashamed.

Solene wanted to assure her it was fine, so she said the first thing that popped out of her mind.

"Don't worry about it, Madame. Bad things happen sometimes," she stated, smiling warmly, but then, sudden guilt emerged from her subconscious. She had to hide the frown that had leaked into her face then.

'Shit happens sometimes yes, but if she's with me, shit will always happen,' her guilt stressed.

"Master Henri specifically instructed we continue our discussion inside the estate. I believe you were still supposed to finish up with the other details of the wedding, right?"

"Yes, I was," Solene answered quietly. She joined her team on the table and turned her attention to the sample giveaways laid on the table. After a minute of selection though, her mind couldn't choose. She was too preoccupied with thinking about the incident earlier. She just couldn't put it to rest.

"Hey, uhm, do you mind if I ask something about the incident in the boutique?"

Madame Floresca looked up and answered, "Sure, what is it, Miss St. Fair?"

Solene bit her lip first, shifted her eyes down, and voiced out, "Do you think it was weird that Henri suddenly appeared inside your shop?"

"Suddenly?" Madame Floresca quickly echoed. "What do you mean? As far as I can remember, the Master used the front door to enter the shop and he stopped my ex-employee just in time."

Solene stared at her in haste, her mouth agape. That didn't seem to be the case as per her memory. Clearly, Henri materialized out of nowhere. He didn't use the door at all. Her brows furrowed, dicing every word the older woman said. Something was wrong with the whole picture.

"How about you Joyce? Armand?" Solene turned to them and asked.

Joyce shrugged her shoulders and looked at Armand.

"We didn't notice anything weird, Miss Solene. We were even thankful the Master came to rescue you," she stated.

"We felt so useless. We couldn't do anything to help you," Armand continued.

"Oh, I see..." Solene sighed.

She remained silent for another minute, looking as if she understood them, but deep inside, she was carefully considering their words. They didn't look like they were lying. She could see it in their eyes.

Or...they could just well be really good actor and actresses trying to cover up the truth and make her think what happened in the boutique earlier was within the confines of scientific explanation. No teleportation. No out-of-body experiences. No telepathic insertion of images.

'Things are not always as they seem.'

She had heard those words directly from Henri's mouth once or twice. Could these words apply to what was happening now?

She silently nodded to herself.

Yes, definitely.

And she couldn't wait to find out the whole truth.

"One day more to go," she muttered to herself.

Joyce lifted her brows and angled her head towards her. "What do you mean, Miss Solene?"

Solene waved her hands in haste and smiled. "Oh, nothing. Nothing. Just my family. They will be arriving here the day after tomorrow. I'm pretty excited to see them. Anyway, let's continue?"

Madame Floresca nodded and went to flipping pages of her wedding catalog in front of Solene.

"You may want to check these giveaways, Miss St. Fair. You'll find them matching your taste."

"Patricia, what is the nature of Henri's work?" Solene asked sometime later in the evening. She had just finished her dinner meeting with the wedding team and was now back in her room, fresh out from the bathroom wearing a knee-high robe and a light-red sleeping gown.

Patricia was arranging the beddings when she paused and looked up with shifty eyes. "I am...unfortunately not allowed to answer that Miss Solene. I'm sorry."

"But the family is doing legal business right?" Solene continued, crossing the bathroom door and walking towards the bed. She knew the maid wouldn't spill the answers, but she thought she might as well use a different tactic to get some information out from her.

"Of course, Miss. The family owned numerous companies both in and outside of Portugal," Patricia enthusiastically said. "Most are on the field of pharmaceuticals, aviation, infrastructure, and

research, but you name it, they have everything.”

Solene knew the family was uber-wealthy, but still, it was surprising to hear it like that.

Clearing her throat, she focused on the task at hand and questioned again, “Is this the reason why they have a strong influence on the people here? I noticed it earlier today when Madame Floresca and her ex-employee argued. They seem to look up to the family with high regard.”

She rounded the corner, picked up a pillow, and started fluffing it while she waited for the maid’s reply.

It was a long wait and based on the look on her face, Patricia was considering something.

“They do have a strong influence, yes,” she answered cautiously whilst looking down the mattress, “but most important of all Miss, the people of this country—in this town—highly respect the family.”

“I see...” Solene sighed. Respect was something she understood, but it wasn’t enough for Joyce, Armand, and Madame Floresca to lie right on her face—if they were really lying that is. There was definitely something more.

Suddenly, three knocks on the door caught the women’s attention. Patricia excused herself with a bow and answered it. By the time she came back, an old lady followed behind her.

“You have a visitor, Miss Solene,” the maid informed.

“Yes? Who is it, Patricia?” Solene glanced towards her way.

“I’d like to introduce her ladyship—”

“Don’t bother. She knows already who I am,” Patricia was cut off when the old woman stepped in and waved her hand. “You may leave us.”

With that, the maid obediently nodded and left the room.

