

The Unwanted Wife: Revenge After Divorce

Chapter 051

AMELIA

"Oh shit! Oh shit! Shit!" I exclaimed over again as soon as I realized what I had done.

My mind was in a whirl as I tried to remember what the after effects of receiving a canister of pepper spray full in the eyes were. How I wished I had used the taser instead. Lucien's renewed howls of agony brought me to my senses. I hooked my hands under his armpits and with all my strength, hoisted him up. He stood on unsteady legs, took a step forward and promptly rammed his head against the wall.

"Son of a bitch!" he screamed and promptly clapped a hand to his forehead while the other rubbed frantically at his eyes.

"I'm so sorry, Lucien," I said miserably. "I had no idea... I didn't know you were the one..."

I stopped apologizing because Lucien's couldn't hear me over his shouts anyway. I grabbed his arm to lead him inside. His groping hit the doorjamb and he swore again.

"Stop trying to find your way in and let me lead you," I shouted.

He seemed to have heard me because he leaned on me for support and let me lead him into the bakery. Once inside, I pressed him into a chair. My hands fluttered helplessly over him.

"My eyes. My eyes," he groaned.

"What can I get you?" I asked. "What can help?"

He just kept screaming about his eyes. What was I doing? I wasn't even supposed to ask him of a solution anyway, not when he was almost incoherent with pain.

"Wait," I ordered after a moment of wringing my hands helplessly. "I'll be right back."

I approached the counter, and after looking around helplessly for a moment or two, proceeded to the kitchen. I still felt a lot of the residual fear from earlier. I felt mortified and so guilty that I had hurt Lucien, one of the few real friends I had, that I couldn't exactly think straight. I found myself in front of the fridge I had opened, staring into its depths, trying to remember what could help Lucien now. My eyes lighted on it after a few seconds.

Milk! Of course. Milk would help soothe the stinging. I ran out of the kitchen, forgetting to close the refrigerator's door in my haste. Lucien was on his feet once more, with one hand stretched out in front of him, groping blindly.

"Water," he croaked. "I need... water."

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He stumbled and nearly knocked over a table, but I caught his arm in time.

"No. I've got something better." In my experience, water would only aggravate the stinging.

I half dragged, half pulled him towards the sink in the corner. By the time we got there, I was panting. Lucien was tall and outweighed me by far. Pulling him along was hard work. His groping hand touched the porcelain sink.

"Good," I said. "Now bend over."

He did. I pulled away the hand he had covering his face. I pushed his head lower into the sink, unscrewed the cap on the carton of milk with my teeth and poured it over his head. The milk ran through his hair, completely covering his face. I smeared it on his face, rubbing it around his eyes. I repeated the process over and over again until his cries mostly stopped. After rinsing out the milk with some water, bathing his face with the milk and rinsing it again, I led him back to the chair into which he collapsed gratefully.

"How do you feel now?" I asked, peering into his reddened face.

There were long, deep scratches from his fingernails extending from his brow to his cheeks. I winced. I would have to put something on those scratches soon.

He gingerly passed his hand over his face once. "Better, I think."

He tried to open one eye, and winced. I poured him a glass of milk and wrapped his hand around it.

"What's this?" he asked.

"It's milk. Drink up. It will make you feel better."

He drank and I spent some minutes watching him anxiously. Again, he opened one eye tentatively. He managed to keep it open before opened the other. I heaved a deep sigh of relief. His eyes were open, reddened, but it didn't look like there would be any lasting damage.

"Thank goodness you can see," I sighed.

"Yeah." He blinked, looked around the room. "I can, but for a moment there, I thought I would go blind."

"I'm so sorry," I said at once. "I didn't know-"

Lucien waved off my apology. "It's okay. I understand. At least, there's no lasting damage done."

"That's true. It's just that I was so scared when I saw you approaching."

"Yeah. About that..." He smiled sheepishly. "I guess I also owe you an apology. I'm sorry for scaring you."

I returned his smile, but it soon became a frown. Now I was sure that Lucien was not going to be permanently maimed because of me, I clearly remembered my fear of being watched today, and the days before that, the fear that had prompted me to buy the taser and the pepper spray in the first place.

"Ummm. One of the reasons why I acted the way I did out there was because for a while now, I've been feeling like I'm being watched." I paused. My next question could be termed as rude, but I just had to know. "Tell me the truth, Lucien, have you been the one watching me?"

Lucien reached for the glass of milk, found it empty, hesitated and then ventured to meet my curious stare.

"Yes," he said slowly. "I did that... Once or twice..."

I arched a brow. I had trouble believing this. The feeling I had had been fairly consistent. "Once or twice?"

"Or more," he admitted. "I've been er- hanging around the area since Will and I and the others came here to see you."

"But... why didn't you come in to say hello then? It's sort of creepy that you just kept your distance. If I had known you were the one, I would not have gotten scared out of my wits the way I've been these last few days."

"I apologize. My bad. It's just that you are always so busy here that I kept feeling it wasn't right to come in and take up your time, you know..."

He trailed off. Perhaps it had struck him as it had struck me that his excuse of lurking around was not good enough. It was pretty lame actually. I couldn't help feeling that there was more to Lucien's presence around the bakery than he had told me, but if he was willing to overlook the fact that I had almost blinded him, I was willing to overlook the fact that he had been acting a little weird.

"Amelia," he said after a pause of some moments in which I refilled his glass with milk. "There's something I haven't really been able to forget."

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"Oh. What's that?"

"Our date." He smiled a little. "We never really finished having our date, you know? That guy, Damian, interrupted us before we could properly get started. I wish... I wish he hadn't. You and I would have had a good time. I'm sure of it, but he just had to butt in. It wouldn't hurt if I took you out one of these days. We could continue from where we left off." He smiled hopefully at me. "What do you say?"

I answered him, choosing my words carefully. "Lucien, I'm really sorry that our dinner date got interrupted, but I don't think it's such a good idea for us to go on another one."

"Why not?" he asked before I could explain further.

"I'm married, Lucien. My husband wasn't really happy to see both of us together that time, so I suggest we let it go."

Lucien's face clouded over the moment his gaze strayed to my wedding ring. It felt like a shutter had fallen and the man I had an easy sort of friendship with was gone. In his place was someone I did not recognize.

"I want us to go on another date, Amelia," he insisted. "I stumbled across the perfect seafood restaurant the other day. You will enjoy it there. I'm sure."

"You aren't listening," I said a trifle impatiently now. "I can't go on a date with you, but you are welcome to stop by the bakery to say hi-"

"No. You work here. What's that thing they say about all work and no play?" I started to say something, but he impatiently waved a hand, motioning me to silence. "Fine. Since you don't like seafood, we'll go somewhere else like-"

"This is not about the kind of food I like."

But I could have been talking to the wall for all the attention he gave me.

"-the new five star restaurant that opened a few days ago. We'll go there. Tomorrow at seven, I'll come pick you up and I'm not taking no for an answer."

He glowered, then grinned. My unease slowly became fear. I suddenly realized that I was all alone with Lucien in the building. I felt a chill creep up spine. I got to my feet.

"I'm not going out with you, Lucien," I said firmly, proud of how steady my voice sounded even though I was quaking in my boots. "And frankly, you're creeping me out." I pointed to the door. "Please leave. I was even about to lock the place up before you showed up."

Lucien got to his feet, grinning crookedly. Suddenly, he let out a laugh.

"News flash, Amelia. I'm not leaving until we go on that date," he said.