



205 Side Story: Unexpected Relationship, Part I

Amelie hugged Oscar closer, adjusting his position on her lap. "This is not the time to be naughty! Mr. Ingvarsson was so nice to invite us to his wedding, we need to be respectful and well-behaved!" 1

Little Oscar offered his mother a pitiful pouting expression but Amelie dismissed it with a shake of her head. Unlike his father, she was able to resist his little tricks.

"Sorry, I got lost on my way back from the bathroom. This hotel is not big but it sure is built like a labyrinth!"

Liam took a seat next to his wife, carefully grabbing his son under his arms before positioning him on his lap. "Being naughty again?"

He fixed the little black bowtie clipped to Oscar's collar and winked at the boy--something his son really enjoyed for some reason and desperately tried to repeat, failing miserably every time.

Liam scoffed at yet another failed attempt to



wink back, patting the boy on his raven-black hair. "You are only two years old; you will get there."

"Can you believe it? Einar is getting married today. That relationship sure progressed unexpectedly quickly!"

Amelle looked around the wedding venue, watching as the last guests were finally settling down in their designated seats. She had never visited Iceland before; mostly because there was no need to, but now that she was here, everything seemed so different, yet somewhat familiar.

'I guess all of this is her... She probably bullied Einar to submission with her assertive personality. Who would have thought that a stern man like him could actually be such a softie for his woman.'

Liam looked around as well, smirking somewhat arrogantly.

"I don't know about quick, but that union was definitely an unexpected one! Although, they do share one huge hobby and I guess that alone makes them incredibly compatible."

Amelle nodded and smiled understandingly.

Indeed, it was probably that common interest that made them finally notice one another.

And that interest was gossip.

A year into the Smart City project, the first and already very successful deal between Diamond Group and Einar Ingvarsson's company, it was time for the Icelandic businessman to visit his overseas partners again.

There were countless things to discuss, and although Einar refused to admit that even to himself, most of the time, his visits had only one true goal—to see Amelie again.

"That was an awfully long meeting," Angelina Castillo stepped outside the meeting room, stretching her entire body as she struggled to fight back the urge to yawn.

She was already one of the leading partners on the Smart City project and once Amelie gave birth, she delegated most of her tasks to Angelina who later proved to be quite a skilled addition to the executive team.

Today's meeting was indeed a long one, mostly because they had to have a long conference call



with several overseas investors, but now that it was finally over, Angelina was still not in a position to call it a day.

"Miss Castillo, would you like to join us for dinner?" Ron and Anna exited the meeting room too, followed by the rest of the team.

"No, I can't, but thanks for the offer!"

Angelina dismissed their invitation rather nonchalantly and without allowing anyone to say even a single word to her again, quickly waved her hand goodbye and ran toward the elevators.

"She has been running away from work like that for the past couple of weeks... Is she dating someone?" Anna arched a curious brow, but Ron only shrugged his shoulders. "Who knows? I haven't heard anything."

"Oh! What about you, Mr. Ingvarsson?" Ron turned to face the man as he was the last one to leave the meeting room. Einar offered him a baffled expression and Ron rushed to explain.

"Dinner! Would you like to go grab some dinner with us?"

Einar sighed and looked at the closing elevator door. "Not today. I want to get some rest tonight."



The bar on the eleventh floor of the Emerald Hotel was still surprisingly lively, even though it was the middle of the week.

Tired businessmen and cheerful tourists, all gathered under the dimmed orange lights of the crystal chandeliers, sipped on their drinks, either captivated by lively conversations with their partners or caught alone, simply enjoying their peaceful solitude.

Einar took a seat at the bar counter, pulling out a black pack of his favorite cigarettes.

"Scotch on the rocks, please," he asked a friendly bartender who was already familiar with his usual orders.

Having gone through three cigarettes and two glasses of scotch, the man was ready to finish his day, when someone took a seat right beside him, ordering a drink in a familiar female voice.

"Vodka tonic, please, and don't be stingy with vodka!"

Startled, Einar turned around and widened his eyes as he saw Angelina, nearly slumping over the bar counter with her upper body.



"Miss Castillo?"

He was not quite sure he was seeing things right; perhaps that scotch was a bit too much on an empty stomach, but the woman next to him smiled back, nodding her head in confirmation.

"Mr. Ingvarsson! What a pleasant surprise."

"It is a surprise," he inhaled the smoke of his third cigarette, blowing it away to make sure it wouldn't reach his new companion. "What are you doing here?"

Angelina sighed as she accepted the drink from the bartender, then, to Einar's astonishment, almost downed it in one go, and slammed the glass on the counter, wiping her mouth with the back of her hand.

"It's a long story... But I am glad I caught you here. I have started feeling quite lonely drinking here alone every night."

Once again, Einar was caught off-guard by her unexpected confession. "Every night? Here?"

Angelina nodded. "Pretty much. I live here now, you know. My place is being renovated so Amelie offered me her penthouse suite for the time being."



"Really? So we have been neighbors this whole time and we did not even know it?"

The woman scoffed. "I guess so. It does seem weird now that you've said it out loud."

She ordered another drink while Einar took a few moments to scrutinize her appearance.

"Your clothes are different. Were you running away from the office to change? What's the occasion? Were you really on a date?"

Angelina emptied her second glass and sighed, the alcohol clearly making its way straight to her head. "Does it look like I was?"

Einar stared at her blankly for a while, then suddenly scoffed, shaking his head. "Yes. It looks like you were on a very bad date!"

Angelina smiled, leaning over the bar counter again. "Every one of them is bad. They are all blind dates arranged by my parents, you know. They say it's time for me to get married, but let's be honest here for a moment... Is there really anyone to marry? We are not all that lucky to have Liam Bennett's double stored for us."

The mention of his love nemesis made Einar wince but he quickly hid his distressed



expression behind a thick puff of dark cigarette smoke.

"Everyone kept assuming that you were dating someone," he made an attempt to slightly change the subject, "But I knew you were not."

"Oh yeah?" Angelina straightened her posture but then leaned against her elbow as she realized that the bartender was indeed not stingy with vodka in her tonic. "And why is that?"

"Because if you were, I would have known about that. You might be a knowledgeable socialite here, Miss Castillo, but I am quite knowledgeable too."

All of a sudden, Angelina burst into laughter, almost knocking off the third drink brought to her by the startled bartender. Once she was finally able to calm down, she slapped Einar on the arm, snorting. "That's right! Amelie told me you were quite a gossip girl! Well, you are definitely in luck today, Mr. Ingvarsson because the man I met today is nothing but a walking gossip!"

Einar's eyes sparkled with unconcealed excitement as he leaned closer to Angelina. "Oh? I'm all ears!"



The rest of the night went by in a blur.

The bartender kept bringing them drinks while the two of them, engaged in a lively and undeniably entertaining discussion, lost track of both the empty glasses beside them and the fact that they were no longer sitting at the bar.

Perhaps it was the loosening effect of the alcohol, or maybe the sheer fact that they simply wanted to talk and have someone who was willing to listen, but they ended up talking about absolutely everything, and before they knew it, the night had taken an unexpected turn.

"Ugh," Angelina groaned, tapping her hand all around the bed in search of her phone which had been ringing loudly for almost a minute.

She tried to open her eyes but the bright morning light blinded her vision instantly and thus, she resumed her search in complete darkness while the annoying ringing sound continued to torture her ears.

"Ugh, damn it! It's too loud!"

Angelina flinched and paused, frozen by the sound of a low male voice beside her.

Slowly, she struggled to open her eyes again,



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only to plunge into a state of shock once she finally saw whom that voice belonged to.

'Shit!'

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