



## 206 Side Story: Unexpected Relationship, Part II

Angelina Castillo, despite what everybody else preferred to believe, was not an average upper-class woman who liked to visit exclusive tea houses, VIP parties, or places one could only enter with a "golden ticket" placed into their hands the moment they were born. <sup>1</sup>

It was true that she liked to gossip and it was even truer that she knew everything about everyone, but it was not the curiosity itself that prompted her to be so nosy.

No, Angelina Castillo wanted to be on top of things because knowing so much about so many gave her a unique opportunity to create an intricate web of friends and acquaintances that would offer her a helping hand when she would find herself needing one.

And that time was now.

Raised in the shadow of her brother Ted, Angelina never expected to be seen as something more than just another upper-class wife. Her mother, just like her mother before her, dedicated her life to getting married, giving



birth to children, and arranging occasional benefits and parties that would present her husband in a better light.

Angelina, however, had always desired something other than a peaceful life of limited motherhood. She wanted to be seen for her abilities and skills rather than her lineage or inheritance.

Still obedient, she did become the most popular socialite and the most desirable guest at every official event, and eventually, having received no suitable opportunity to showcase her real talents, that reputation had become her entire personality.

Until Amelie Bennett saw through her act and caught a glimpse of her potential.

It was all thanks to Amelie that Angelina could finally show not just her family, but the whole world how capable she truly was, but now... All her efforts would go to waste because of one drunken mistake.

'Shit!' Angelina scolded herself silently, wiping her eyes with both hands.

There was no mistaking it--next to her, barely covered by a soft white blanket, stretched





comfortably on the bed of his penthouse suite, was naked Einar Ingvarsson, the man whose project was her ticket to freedom from the long-hated image she was forced to wear all these years.

How could she let that happen?

Angelina tried to sit up and the moment she did, she felt sharp pain squeezing her brain inside her skull.

*'Of course...'* Angelina sighed, remembering countless vodka tonics she downed last night, silently adding a dozen new insults to curse her drinking self.

What was she supposed to do now?

*"This is not good,"* Angelina forced herself to finally leave the bed, tiptoeing around the room as she picked up her scattered clothes. *'Of all the people I could have had a one-night stand with, I just had to choose the man I am working with! This might ruin everything! How can I work with him now? He will kick me out of the project for sure, too... God!'*

Having finally got dressed, she shot the sleeping man one quick look before dashing out of his room as if it were on fire.



Once the door behind her clicked closed, Einar opened his heavy eyelids and turned around, placing his big hand on an empty pillow next to him. He smiled somewhat bitterly, recalling the night he spent with Angelina on his bed, then sighed, and covered his face with both hands, groaning.

*'What now?'*

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*'I should just act naturally and pretend that nothing happened. It was just a one-time thing, nothing special, right? I can remain professional. I AM a professional!'*

Angelina was determined to just bury the last night's events and act like nothing happened, secretly praying that Einar would do the same.

However, much to her surprise, Einar seemed to have a different objective in mind. No matter how hard Angelina tried to avoid him and keep their relationship on a strictly professional and work-related level, all the man tried to do was get her to be alone with him again.

"Miss Castillo, would you like to have dinner with me?" His first attempt was to ask her out for dinner after yet another late meeting at the



office.

She dismissed that invitation skillfully, pretending to have a slight fever due to the change in weather and it looked like Einar bought that excuse. He even gave her a day off and insisted she did not stay for the late meetings, fearing that she might fall ill.

While she was at her suite, still pretending to be sick, Einar texted her continuously and even traded some gossip when he heard of one.

*'What is he doing?' Angelina groaned after her phone rang with another message. 'He is supposed to get farther from me, not the opposite!'*

She had to admit, though, that every such text put a big smile on her face, and that was precisely what made her feel so confused.

Einar's next attempt to get closer to her was an invitation to see a movie at the new movie theatre, followed by a nice dinner in one of the most expensive restaurants in the city.

Naturally, she declined that invitation as well, barely fishing for another believable excuse.

And thus, day after day, the two of them





continued to play that emotional ping-pong for weeks: Einar served countless invitations while Angelina blocked them all with cold excuses.

In the end, however, tired and no less disappointed, the man finally gave up and gave Angelina what she wanted--distance.

She thought she was happy with such an outcome, but once her phone fell a lot more silent again and Einar's demeanor resumed its usual coldness in her presence, something deep inside her was digging its claws into her heart.

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One late evening, Angelina, still struggling with the whirlwind of compromising feelings, decided to bury her head in work and hopefully push Einar out of her system that way.

Finishing up one of the reports, she felt exhaustion creep in on her so she left her temporary office at the Diamond Group's headquarters and headed for the coffee stand to fuel up her brain.

As she walked past one of the conference rooms, she caught two people in the middle of a conversation that directly involved her name.

