

The Divorced Heiress Is Getting Married Again! Chapter 17 - The Benefit

Chapter 17: The Benefit

Amelie couldn't tell how long they had been wandering around the garden. The uncomfortable silence between them made every minute feel like an eternity.

She glanced at Liam, noticing that his usually bright and cheerful face was now dark and serious. It dawned on her that he, too, knew how to put on a mask when necessary.

'I guess no one can avoid this. People of our status learn to be fake just as naturally as they learn to walk or read,' she thought.

Suddenly, Liam let out a dramatic sigh and, with an obviously feigned upset voice, asked, "Miss Ashford, what do you think about me?"

Amelie stopped and raised her eyebrows, giving him a surprised look. The question caught her off guard, but she took a moment to consider her response.

"I'm not sure... Are you interested in my first impression of you or what kind—"

Liam only laughed.

"No, do you find me handsome at all?"

Amelie was dumbfounded once again. What kind of question was that?

Although she found it rather ridiculous, she couldn't help but feel flustered. His handsomeness made her way too nervous; it was unnerving and very embarrassing.

Liam noticed Amelie's pink cheeks and laughed again; his laughter made Mrs. Ashford think that he was easily amused.

He continued, "You looked too uncomfortable after seeing that woman, so I thought I'd try to cheer you up with my shenanigans."

Then, his face turned serious again, as if he were a completely different person. He turned around and examined the spot where they had met Samantha, his dark eyes scanning the area before he broke the silence once more, "So she is your husband's 'friend'? Mr. Richard Clark must be a very... strange man."

Amelie gave him a curious look. "Strange? What do you mean by that?"

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Liam didn't say anything for a while, offering her only a somewhat melancholic smile. A sudden gust of wind fluttered his black hair, making it feel like they both were in a romantic movie scene.

'This... Right now... He looks even more beautiful,' Amelie thought, feeling embarrassed by her own bold thoughts. Fortunately, the wind caught her hair as well, sending her long, fair locks dancing around her face like ribbons, hiding her blushing cheeks.

Liam gently tucked a lock of her hair behind her ear and smiled lightly. "One would have to be completely blind to push a woman like you away. That's why I find him strange."

3

Amelie's heart skipped a beat. Her entire body felt hot while her mind went completely blank.

Why would he say something like that? To him, it might be just casual flirting, something he was used to, but to her... Especially now, those words meant the whole world.

Liam resumed their walk and said in a rather endearing voice, "I hope I can hover around you during the benefit, Miss Ashford. I'm all alone here, you see; I didn't care enough to make any *friends*."

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His emphasis on the word "friends" made Amelie feel at ease again. Finally, her face brightened, and she, too, was able to laugh.

3

Liam stretched his lips into a wide smile and gently touched Amelie's arm, inviting her to continue their walk.

The first night of the benefit was traditionally the most extravagant of all. This year, it featured ballroom dancing accompanied by live music from one of the country's most renowned musicians.

Guests could either donate money upon arrival or "pay" for a dance with a partner of their choice. They could do both, with the dance contributions adding to their initial donations.

As the event was organized by the JFC Group, Amelie and Richard, as always, were assigned the roles of hosts, greeting the guests together, side by side.

The atmosphere was charged with excitement; the setting, meticulously designed by Amelie's hired team, along with the evening's elegant concept, transported the guests back in time, evoking a sense of meaningful nostalgia. This event, like all its predecessors, was poised for memorable success.

Once the official greetings were finally over, Richard spotted Samantha in the crowd and went to her, leaving his wife completely alone.

"Sam, I asked you not to wear high heels tonight. Are you sure your leg is fine?" he asked her with evident concern.

1

Samantha smiled and nodded. "Of course it's fine! Thanks to your care, I was able to recover very quickly!"

Their saccharine exchange of words reached Amelie's ears, and she couldn't help but feel abandoned. Nevertheless, she knew she couldn't show it; there was no need for unwanted attention. Not tonight.

"Lily, everything looks amazing!" Elizabeth's voice brought Amelie back to her senses. "As always, you have done an incredible job with this place! You have no rivals when it comes to organizing such important events."

"Thank you, Lizzy." Mrs. Ashford offered her friend a smile, but in truth, she wasn't happy at all. For the first time in her life, she felt like a stranger in such a familiar place.

Suddenly, Elizabeth nudged her lightly and asked, "Is that who I think it is? Liam Bennett?"

As if out of nowhere, two more of her close friends appeared beside her. Emily Crane gasped and shook her head. "Gosh, such a gorgeous face! I wouldn't mind taking him as my lover. In fact, it would be a crime if I didn't!"

Lauren Weil joined in. "Do you think all the rumors about him are true? I wonder if he'll leave this hall with another one of his future ex-girlfriends by his side."

"Regardless of his reputation, he's still next in line to inherit the Diamond Group," Elizabeth added. "Imagine being the woman who inherits all that wealth with him. I honestly wouldn't care if he cheats on me as long as I have all that money and power behind me."

Elizabeth's remark was cold, but it still managed to make her friends laugh.

Amelie listened to their conversation silently while watching Liam mingle with other people in the middle of the hall. Suddenly, their eyes met, and Liam winked at her in his usual playful manner. Once again, Amelie felt flustered, her cheeks turning red and hot.

"Excuse me, girls, I should go check on the other guests," she said, smiling at her friends before stepping aside to mingle with the rest of the crowd. As she walked through the expansive venue, she couldn't help but overhear people talking about her husband's new "friend."

Amelie stopped to take a glass of wine from a passing waiter when she was approached by Mr. Godard, one of Richard's business partners. He greeted her rather casually before finally asking, "I'm sorry, Mrs. Ashford, but did you really make a joint donation with that woman?"

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Amelie's eyes widened in shock. "Excuse me?"

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