

144 Everything has its limits.

"What did you say?" Catrin asked, disbelief clear in her voice. She had heard Arwen's words but she tried to convince herself that she had misheard. 1

The thin thread of patience Arwen had been clinging to finally snapped. Closing her eyes for a moment, she spoke through gritted teeth, "I said I am already married, Mom." Then, lifting her gaze, she locked eyes with her mother, her tone firm and unyielding. "You can't set me up with Ryan anymore because I am no longer single."

Catrin's expression turned dark and stormy. Knitting her brows tightly, she thundered, "What nonsense are you spouting now? You broke up with Ryan, and if you have broken up with him, how on earth can you be married?" Her voice rose, demanding an explanation.

Hearing her mother ask that, Arwen let out a dark, humorless chuckle. "Well, because Ryan isn't the only man existing in this world, Mom. If I say I am married, my husband doesn't necessarily have to be Ryan." 1

A flicker of realization crept into Catrin's eyes, but it was quickly replaced by a look of barely suppressed rage. While Catrin tried to process Arwen's words, Arwen picked up the tablet

Catrin had thrown aside earlier. She tapped a few times on the screen, bringing up the article from *TheScoop*, and then turned the screen for her mother to see.

"Here. Since it's so hard for you to believe, then you can read it all for yourself." Arwen said, her voice tinged with irony.

Catrin snatched the tablet, her eyes scanning the headline. There, in bold letters, was the breaking news she had dreaded:

"Exclusive: Arwen Quinn surprises everyone with a marriage with a mysterious CEO."

The article also attached to the snap of Arwen's post, which held the evidence of the marriage – the marriage certificate with Arwen's name glittering over it with someone else's surname.

As she scrolled through the article, Catrin's face turned a sickly shade of white, and her hands visibly trembled. Her eyes scanned the details, lingering on the marriage certificate with Arwen's name boldly printed alongside a new surname that she had never heard of in the elite circle. The reality of Arwen's action hit her like a physical blow.

Without warning, Catrin's hand swung up, landing a sharp slap across Arwen's cheeks, The sound reverberated through the room, followed

by a tense silence.

Arwen didn't get the time to react. She stumbled back, shock and pain etched across her face as she raised a hand to her stinging cheek. But her gaze didn't falter. She held her head high, meeting her mother's glare with defiance.

"Catrin!" Idris yelled, failing to register things at the right moment. 4

At his raised voice like that Catrin snapped at him sharply. "Don't, Idris, Don't. Don't protect her today. She has crossed all her limits." Then stuffing the tablet in his hands, she motioned him to check. "Read yourself and see what great thing your daughter has done to piss me off this time. She has crossed all her limits. And in no way, I am going to forgive her for this," she said and then turned to look back at Arwen.

But when she didn't spot even an ounce of guilt on Arwen's face, her fury knew no bounds. "How dare you?" her voice was low, but laced with pure fury. "How dare you humiliate me and this family like this? You ...you wretched, ungrateful child! Do you have any idea what you have done?" Her hands trembled as she pointed towards the tablet in Idris's hands. "Marrying a stranger without consulting us? You have ruined everything we have worked for!"

Arwen's gaze hardened, a flicker of bitterness

flashed in her eyes but she didn't speak a word. From her eyes, it felt like she was holding in a storm that was dangerously unfurling within her.

When Catrin saw Arwen standing mum, she thought she was finally able to put some sense into her daughter. "I have had enough of your foolish decisions," she shouted, her voice sharp enough to cut the glass. "I don't care about your pitiful excuses. You will fix this disaster, Arwen. Go to that courthouse or whatever lowlife office you need to and file for an annulment or a divorce, right away." Her words were biting, cold as steel. "You are going to make this right. I won't allow you to ruin yourself like this."

Arwen's lips twisted into a bitter smile. With her gaze unwavering, she let out a dark chuckle that stoned Catrin in her place for a second. "Make this right? For you or for me, Mom? Because as far as I can see, this marriage has given me something I have never felt in my life with you: freedom to live the life I have got."

Catrin's eyes flashed with barely contained rage, "Arwen I don't want to argue about this. Do as I asked you. Go and annul your marriage with that lowlife you have chosen. I want every trace of him wiped from your life."

"He is not some stain on my life, Mom, that I

need to clean up. He is my husband," Arwen's voice rang out, sharp and unwavering, making Catrin take a step back subconsciously. "And I haven't given you the right to speak about him like that."

"Right?" Catrin scoffed. "Do you think I need your permission to insult him?"

"Yes, Mom, you do," Arwen replied, her gaze steely. "Respect for him is non-negotiable. You may have controlled me as your daughter. But as his wife, I won't tolerate your contempt. This is no longer about what you want. My life is no longer yours to dictate."

"I am your mother, Arwen" Catrin snapped, but it no longer carried the same weight of confidence. "How dare you speak to me like that?"

Arwen nodded. "You are my mother, and that's why I tolerated it for so long," Arwen continued, her voice steady but resolute. "But everything has its limits, and this needs to end. If you are stubborn enough to not end it, then I happily would."

