

### 131: A Grand Slap in the Face

"I don't remember," Laura chuckled awkwardly.

"Since you don't remember, let me help you recall," Caitlin said calmly as she took out a form. "Professor Walker helped me organize a fundraiser, and Phoebe kept the records. Everything is here."

"There were 21 classmates who donated to me, but Laura, your name isn't on the list!" Caitlin continued, her voice steady.

She clearly remembered how, at her lowest point, Laura had publicly humiliated her over the money she had borrowed. Laura had pretended to lend Caitlin money, only to later accuse her of stealing it. That betrayal had left a scar in Caitlin's heart, one she would never forget.

Caitlin had never forgotten those who had helped her when she was in need, and likewise, she would always remember those who had kicked her when she was down.

As their eyes locked, Laura seemed to recall the past, but she quickly averted her gaze, uncomfortable.

"Today, I want to take the opportunity of this reunion to properly thank the 21 classmates who helped me by donating back then," Caitlin announced as she stood up, bowing politely. "Thank you all!"

"No need to thank us, who hasn't had a hard time?" some classmates replied, brushing it off.

"But when you donated, some gave \$100, some gave \$200. I'm deeply grateful. Today, I'll repay you all a hundredfold, a thousandfold," Caitlin continued.



She took out a stack of pre-written checks and handed them to Wendy. "Wendy, please distribute these according to the names."

Wendy was stunned as she took the checks from Caitlin. She could hardly believe her eyes. Caitlin had just said that she would repay them a hundredfold, and now she was actually doing it!

For example, those who had donated \$100 would now receive \$1 million, and those who had donated \$200 would get \$2 million!

Wendy's jaw nearly dropped. She couldn't help but wonder, "\*\*Caitlin, where did all this money come from?\*"

She shook herself out of her stupor and began calling out the names. "Usher, here's yours."

Usher, a man in the room, gasped as he took the check. "What? One million?!"

Soon, other names were read out, and the room was filled with gasps of shock and excitement.

"I've got a million too! Oh my God!" someone shouted.

"I've got two million! What in the world!" another exclaimed.

As Caitlin handed out the checks, everyone was filled with excitement, especially those whose lives were not going well—this was like a lifeline thrown to them. Even Phoebe received a check for a million.

But there were some classmates who hadn't contributed to the fundraiser. They looked on, feeling a bitter jealousy. The ones who had donated money felt incredibly lucky, but the others, who hadn't chipped in, were practically fuming with envy. It felt worse than biting into a



hundred sour lemons.

Jasmine and Joanna watched as Caitlin casually handed out checks worth millions, and they couldn't hide their disdain. \*\*Where did all this money come from? Was it clean? they wondered. \*\*It must be from some old man backing her.\*\*

But the most uncomfortable person in the room was Laura. She felt her face burn with shame. Not only had she refused to donate, but she had also humiliated Caitlin over borrowing money. Now, as she reflected on it, she could barely contain her regret.

Caitlin's voice broke through her thoughts. "Laura, it's been over five years now. Don't you think it's time to publicly clear up what happened back then? Don't you think you owe me an apology?"

Everyone turned their attention to Laura, and she was overwhelmed with embarrassment.

"Laura, didn't you accuse Caitlin of stealing your money back then? We all believed you. Was that just a lie?" someone asked.

"Yeah, even if you didn't want to lend her money, you didn't have to go as far as to accuse her of theft, did you?" another added.

"That's right! This almost led to Caitlin being punished by the administration!" someone else chimed in.

"Exactly! You should apologize to Caitlin," a fourth person said.

Laura could feel her stomach churn as everyone turned against her. She felt like she could vanish into the floor to avoid their stares. She knew that if she didn't apologize right now, she would be the one who would face the consequences of their judgment.



Caitlin continued, "If you apologize now and clear up the truth, I'll forgive your ignorance and stupidity. I won't hold it against you."

"But if you refuse to apologize, I will report this to the police and make sure you face the consequences!"

Caitlin had always been someone who repaid kindness with kindness, and vengeance with vengeance. She wasn't going to let this stain on her life go unaddressed.

After a long pause, Laura finally stood up and began to cry. "I'm sorry, Caitlin... I was the one who lied about lending you money and then accused you of stealing. I was just jealous of you. I was envious of your background and your grades. I was too narrow-minded, and I regret it so much. Please, don't report me to the police. I was wrong, and I'm sorry!"

Laura's apology was heartfelt, and the room fell silent as everyone processed her words. At that moment, Caitlin had won her battle. \*\*The truth had come out.\*\*

"I accept your apology," Caitlin said calmly, "But just so you know, I will be posting a video of your apology on the NYU forum. The consequences of that, you'll have to deal with yourself."

Laura had no retort. She had dug this hole herself, and now she had to lie in it.

Once the apology was over, the reunion officially began. The room was divided into two groups—those who were happy and excited, and those who felt like they had bitten into something sour.

Just as they were eating, a waiter entered the room with a bouquet and handed it to Caitlin. The other women in the room immediately became



jealous.

"Who sent you these flowers?" Caitlin asked the waiter.

"A man," the waiter replied.

Caitlin's expression changed slightly, and she asked, "Who was he?"

The waiter shook his head. "I didn't catch his name, just a man."

Caitlin carefully set the flowers down and left the room, stepping into the hallway. As she walked, she saw a familiar figure pass by. It was the back of a man she recognized—the same man who had sent flowers to her mother's memorial.

Without hesitation, Caitlin hurried to follow him, taking a few turns before reaching the vicinity of the men's restroom. But by the time she arrived, the figure had disappeared.

She suspected the person might have gone into the bathroom, so she followed him inside.

To her surprise, she didn't find him, but instead, she ran into someone she absolutely did not expect.

Sebastian!