

## Chapter 10

Without hesitation, Julian picked up the call and pressed the speaker button for all to hear.

His chin lifted confidently as he turned slightly so the crowd could witness his so-called triumph firsthand.

He wanted everyone to hear Mr. Henry say it — Ryan's mother had been blacklisted.

But the moment Mr. Henry's voice came through the speaker, something was off.

Mr. Henry, who had earlier spoken with confidence and authority, now sounded rattled. The strength in his voice was gone, replaced by hesitation — almost fear. 1

"Julian... if I may ask..." Mr. Henry began, his voice sounding so uncertain, "...what is the full name of the patient you mentioned?"

Julian frowned slightly and glanced at Elizabeth. She gave him a look of confusion. Even she had picked up the strange tone in Mr. Henry's voice.

Julian turned back to the phone. "Her name is Lucia," he replied. "Lucia Walker."

The room was so quiet you could hear the a pin drop. 2

There was a long pause before a sound came from the phone again.

Mr. Henry inhaled sharply, then asked another question. But this time, his voice cracked.

"And... th-the man standing before you. The one interfering with your



engagement... does his full name happen to be... Ryan W-Walker?"

Julian blinked. He glanced sideways at Elizabeth again. She raised an eyebrow.

"Yes," they both answered in unison, their voices cautious now. "His name is Ryan Walker."

On the other end of the call, Mr. Henry gasped aloud.

The sound wasn't small. It wasn't subtle. It was audible—sharp, shocked, and filled with dread.

Gasps echoed around the room.

Julian's smile faltered in that moment. "Mr. Henry... is something wrong?"

There was a pause.

Then Mr. Henry's voice thundered through the speaker.

"You must be completely foolish to ask me that, Julian!"

The insult hit like a slap across the face. Julian blinked in shock, stunned into silence.

Elizabeth stepped forward, her arrogance unshaken. "Excuse me? Did you just raise your voice at us? What's the meaning of this? You couldn't carry out a simple request and now you're panicking?"

Mr. Henry was silent for a moment. Then his voice returned, sounding low and dangerous.

"I'm warning both of you. Forget this call ever happened. Pretend we



never spoke. Because if you drag me further into this matter, I'm going to lose everything, including my job."

Confusion hit the crowd like a wave. No one understood what was happening, but they could sense that the atmosphere had completely turned.

Mr. Henry continued, his voice was frantic now. "Don't mention my name again. I never spoke to you tonight. And for your own good, walk away from that man while you still can."

Ryan stood still, silent as ever, watching everything happen without him moving a muscle. But a light smirk played at the corner of his lips.

He didn't say a word.

Elizabeth narrowed her cold eyes, still unable to grasp the situation. "How is your job on the line from blacklisting some old woman in a hospital bed? Are you drunk, Mr. Henry? Or just an incompetent fool?"

That was the final straw.

Mr. Henry snapped.

"You arrogant brat," he growled. "Because of your mouth, I'll be cutting twenty percent off your fiancé's salary starting tomorrow. And that's me being generous."

"What?!" Julian yelped. "Mr. Henry, please—sir—"

But the line went dead.

Call ended.

The room froze.



Everyone turned to Julian and Elizabeth, who now looked utterly humiliated. Julian's salary had been cut down by 20% and he didn't get any favor returned by Henry.

Whispers broke out again, only louder this time.

"What just happened?"

"Why was the Director Of Finance At Nova Inc. scared of a church rat like Ryan?"

"I thought Julian had the power?"

"They just got shut down on their own engagement night..."

The crowd looked disappointed, all the anticipation they had felt flat. Even Julian's friends were embarrassment on his behalf.

Julian clenched his fists, clearly trying to come up with something to say, but nothing came out.

Elizabeth's face twisted in cold rage. Her eyes zeroed in on Ryan. "What the hell just happened?"

Ryan didn't flinch. His voice was calm and as composed as always.

"Has my mother been thrown out of the hospital yet?" He asked, checking the time on his wristwatch.

Elizabeth snarled and took a step forward. Her hand raised—ready to slap.

But before it landed, Ryan caught her wrist.

His grasp wasn't rough, But was firm enough that she froze.



“What were you up to?” Ryan said, meeting her eyes.

Julian let out a roar and lunged forward. “Let go of her! You don’t get to touch my fiancée!”