

Chapter 110

The Nova Headquarters modern architecture screamed power and prestige.

Elizabeth McCarthy arrived and strutted through the revolving doors with Julian trailing just behind. She took it all in with her chin tilted upward as though she already belonged in the place.

But her moment was interrupted.

A young woman in a red pencil skirt and a black blouse came hurrying across the lobby, a file clutched in her hands. She wasn't watching closely enough, and in the rush of the morning, she accidentally brushed against Elizabeth's shoulder, her arm grazing the side of Elizabeth's blouse.

Elizabeth froze in place, glancing down as though she'd just been splashed with mud.

"Watch where you're going!" she snapped in a high pitched voice.

The staff member turned quickly with wide eyes. "Oh my God, I'm so sorry, ma'am. I didn't—"

The apology wasn't enough. Elizabeth's hand shot up before anyone could react, and the sound of the slap echoed through the entire hall.

"You've stained my clothes!" Elizabeth barked, even though the blouse looked exactly the same as before. "Do you have any idea what this cost? Do you even know how to handle yourself in a professional environment?"

The young woman's cheeks flushed crimson, her eyes darting nervously to the surrounding employees now frozen in shock. "I really am sorry,



ma'am. It was an accident—"

Slap!

Elizabeth struck her again, her voice rising. "Accident? You bump into someone on their way to meet the CEO of Nova, and you call it an accident? People like you don't even get to breathe the same air as the kind of people I'm meeting today. Learn your place."

"Elizabeth, that's enough!" Julian stepped in quickly, catching her wrist before she could land a third slap. His voice was low as he spoke quickly. "We're here for a meeting, not to make a scene."

Elizabeth jerked her hand free and glared at him. "You saw what she did! And you know how important this is. This.." she gestured dramatically at her blouse "is not how I'm supposed to walk into a meeting with a CEO of this caliber."

The girl tried to apologize again in a trembling voice. "Ma'am, please...."

Elizabeth cut her off with a wave of her hand. "Save it. I don't have time for low-level incompetence. Go fetch coffee or whatever it is you people do, and pray you never cross me again."

The staff member's lips trembled, and she quickly turned away, clutching her files like a shield as she scurried off. A few employees exchanged uneasy glances, whispering under their breath.

Elizabeth, on the other hand, seemed energized by the confrontation, holding her head high as though she had just cemented her place above everyone in the building.

She and Julian were about to turn around and walk to their destination when the main glass doors of the lobby slid open, and Ryan Walker



walked in. Claudia walked in beside him, linked at the hand.

Elizabeth's smile faded into a tight, bitter line the instant she saw him. Her body stiffened.

"You've got to be kidding me," she muttered before stepping forward. "What are you doing here?"

Ryan's eyes flicked toward her. "Good morning to you too, Elizabeth."

"Don't play games with me, Ryan," she snapped. "Why are you following me? Are you seriously stalking me now?"

He tilted his head slightly, looking amused. "Following you? I think you give yourself too much credit."

Elizabeth took a step closer, her voice dropping. "If it weren't for the fact that Claudia works here and probably felt sorry enough to let you tag along so you could see what the inside of a real corporate building looks like, you wouldn't even be able to step foot in a place like this."

Claudia's eyes narrowed, but Ryan gave her hand a small squeeze, silently asking her to let it go.

Elizabeth pressed on, her voice loud enough for nearby employees to hear. "Nova is a hundred times bigger than my father's company ever was. Just because you lucked your way into taking it from us doesn't mean you get to walk into every major company in this city as if you belong."

Ryan sighed, his patience already thinning. "Elizabeth, maybe focus on what you came here to do, instead of wasting your breath on me."

Elizabeth gave a dismissive wave. "Oh, I don't have time for you, Ryan. I'm here to meet with the CEO of Nova, someone who actually matters."



So forgive me if I don't have the energy to deal with an idiot who thinks buying one company makes him important."

Before Ryan could respond, Julian stepped forward, giving Ryan a cold glare. "You should know your place, Walker. Stop following the woman who dumped you. She moved on, and you're still lingering like some pathetic shadow."

Ryan smirked instantly. "A useless man like me," he said evenly, "now owns the McCarthy family business. The whole thing."

Julian's jaw tightened, but Ryan wasn't done.

"And you," Ryan continued, "you're an ex-employee of Nova. A junior staffer who got fired... without even knowing why. Tell me, Julian, what exactly do you have to your name? Because from where I'm standing, you've got nothing but a secondhand suit and a lot of misplaced confidence." 1

Julian's nostrils flared, and he took a step forward, his fist clenching at his side. "Say that again."

Ryan's smirk deepened. "You heard me."

Julian lunged forward, but before he could close the gap, Elizabeth grabbed his arm quickly. "Julian! No!" She tugged him back forcefully. "Don't wrinkle your suit before meeting the CEO, he's not worth it."

Ryan raised an eyebrow, the corner of his mouth twitching in amusement.

Elizabeth smoothed down Julian's lapel with care, then turned back to Ryan with a mocking smirk. "Enjoy standing in the lobby, Ryan. Some of us have real meetings to attend."



She brushed past him, pulling Julian along toward the reception desk.

Ryan didn't move immediately. He simply watched them go with a small smile forming on his lips.

Because in less than an hour, Elizabeth McCarthy's confidence was going to shatter.

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