



## Chapter 135

The restaurant had fallen into an almost unbearable silence after the loud shriek of the wealthy woman whose glittering gown was now smeared with sauces, lobsters, and caviar worth tens of thousands of dollars.

All eyes were locked on Elizabeth and Julian, who stood frozen by their table like culprits caught in the middle of a heist.

The lady who looked extremely elegant, slowly rose to her feet. Her lips parted, and her voice rang across the restaurant filled with pure rage.

“Do the two of you,” she said slowly, her manicured finger pointing at Julian and Elizabeth, “have any idea how much this food cost? Do you have the faintest clue of what you’ve just done?”

Elizabeth’s lips trembled, but nothing came out. Her throat was completely dry. She could feel her entire body heating up as though she were standing under a scorching sun.

Julian tried to steady his voice, but his nerves betrayed him. “M-ma’am... it was an accident. Surely, it can be resolved. Accidents happen.”

The woman’s sharp eyes cut into him. “Resolved? Accidents may happen, yes—but accidents have consequences. And this,” she spread her arms, gesturing to her dripping gown and the wasted food splattered on the table, “is not a small accident.”

Her words echoed through the restaurant.

She turned to the young waitress, who stood nervously nearby, still clutching her serving tray like a shield. “Tell them,” the lady demanded coldly. “Tell them exactly how much this meal was worth.”

The waitress swallowed hard, adjusting her apron before speaking. “The



... the food on the tray, madam, was worth fifty thousand dollars. Altogether."

A collective gasp went through the restaurant. Elizabeth's knees nearly gave out. She gripped the back of her chair for support, her nails digging into the wood.

"F-fifty... thousand?" Elizabeth stammered, her voice barely above a whisper.

Julian's jaw tightened, his fists clenching by his side. He wanted to argue, to deny it, to somehow reduce the gravity of the situation, but the authority in the waitress's tone left no room for doubt.

The elegant woman didn't stop there. She turned slightly and gestured to the woman seated beside her, who had been quiet until now. "And let me introduce you," she said calmly, "to the person who designed this gown you have ruined."

The second woman rose gracefully, adjusting her glasses and smoothing her blazer. Her presence exuded the calm confidence of someone who had long been accustomed to mingling with the wealthy. She spoke clearly with an accent.

"My name is Iris," she said firmly. "I am a designer. And I created this gown you see before you. Every thread, every stone, every embellishment. Only I know what went into its making."

Elizabeth's heart pounded louder and louder. She wanted to run, to escape, but her legs refused to move.

Iris stepped closer, her gaze was becoming sharp. "This gown cannot be repaired, it is ruined. She will never be able to wear it again. And do you know why?"



Elizabeth shook her head in small, nervous motions, unable to speak.

Iris's lips curved into a cold smile. "Because this gown is adorned with diamonds, real diamonds. Each carefully chosen, carefully placed. And each diamond on this gown cost ten thousand dollars."

Elizabeth's eyes widened so much she thought they might pop out of her head. Her chest tightened, and she gasped for air. "Ten... ten thousand dollars per diamond?"

Iris nodded solemnly. "Yes. Ten thousand dollars per piece. And there are one hundred diamond pieces etched to this gown."

The room erupted in murmurs. Guests turned to one another, whispering in disbelief, in awe, in judgment. Some shook their heads, others raised their eyebrows, but all eyes came back to Elizabeth and Julian, waiting for their reaction.

Julian staggered back a step, his hands flying to his hair. "That's... that's impossible. One hundred? That would mean..." His voice trailed off as the calculation struck him like a blow.

"One million dollars," Iris finished for him mercilessly. "That is the value of this gown."

Elizabeth nearly fainted. Her hand clutched at her chest as her eyes darted wildly around the restaurant, as though searching for a hidden escape door.

Julian tried to recover, his voice breaking. "A-and how would we even know those diamonds are real? Anyone can say anything to inflate prices. How are we supposed to believe this?"

The restaurant stirred again. A few guests exchanged glances, nodding at



his point. ①

And then, out of nowhere, a man from a nearby table stood up. He was middle-aged, dressed in an immaculate gray suit, with eyes that were clearly interested. He approached the scene calmly, slipping something small from his pocket.

"I happen to have a diamond tester," he announced, holding up the device. "I can determine, right here, whether these diamonds are genuine or not."

Elizabeth's breath caught in her throat. Her mind screamed in silent prayer. Please, let them be fake. Please, please, let them be fake.

The elegant woman crossed her arms, her chin tilting upward. "Do it," she ordered. "Test them. Let them see."

Iris stepped aside, allowing the man to lean forward. He pressed the device gently against one of the sparkling stones on the ruined gown. The machine beeped.

"Real," he said simply.

A wave of murmurs went through the restaurant.

He moved the tester to another stone. Beep.

"Real."

Elizabeth's hands flew to her mouth. Tears welled in her eyes as panic consumed her.

The man tested a third, a fourth, a fifth diamond. Each time, the machine beeped the same response.



"Real. Real. Real."

Elizabeth swayed on her feet, dizziness threatening to overwhelm her. She grabbed Julian's arm desperately. "Julian," she whispered frantically, "we... we can't pay for this. We can't. What are we going to do?"

Julian's face was pale, sweat beading on his forehead. His lips moved, but his voice barely escaped. "I... I don't know."

Ryan, sitting quietly at his table with Claudia, leaned back in his chair, his eyes cold, unreadable. Claudia's gaze flicked between him and Elizabeth, her lips parting slightly as though to say something, but she remained silent, respecting Ryan's choice to watch in silence.

The elegant woman finally spoke again, her voice cutting through the heavy silence. "You have destroyed my meal worth fifty thousand dollars. And you have ruined a gown worth one million dollars. Tell me ..." She leaned forward slightly, her eyes burning into Elizabeth and Julian. "How do you plan to compensate me for this?"

Elizabeth opened her mouth, but all that came out was a strangled line of words, "I... I can't... we can't..."

Julian straightened, trying to salvage what little dignity he had left. His voice shook, but he forced himself to speak. "We don't have that kind of money to spend on a dress. This... this isn't reasonable. We can't be expected to—"


"Can't?" the woman cut him off sharply. "Then perhaps the law will help you understand your obligations." She gestured toward the manager. "Call the authorities. I will not let this go."

Elizabeth gasped in horror. "No, please! Please, don't call the police!"



Please!"

Her voice broke, echoing across the restaurant.

Ryan's eyes narrowed, watching her crumble. Claudia placed her hand lightly over his, her voice low. "Are you... going to step in?" 

Ryan's lips pressed into a thin, unreadable line. His silence was the only answer.

Elizabeth and Julian were trapped, drowning in humiliation.

big sale: 100 bonus free fou you



get it