

Chapter 48

Julian got up slowly with Elizabeth's help. His nose was still tender, and the humiliation was getting out of hand as more people were arriving at the party.

Without saying a word, they approached the B-list scanner together.

"They are looking, we have to go in quickly," Elizabeth said in a whisper and then she placed Julian's thumb on the scanner.

Each of them pressed their thumbs against the panel, and after a moment, the screen lit up green, confirming their access from the B-list.

"I can't believe it. I can't believe we made the B-list while Ryan is on the A-list," Elizabeth said as she felt a bit disappointed.

With a soft mechanical hum, the glass doors of the event hall slid open.

"It doesn't matter whether he was on the A-list or not. We are still entering the same venue, aren't we?" Julian said dismissively.

The Stallion Night VIP party was in full swing by the time there entered the halls.

Guests in expensive clothes were already seated.

"We need a place to sit, where do we sit?"

Julian's eyes were running wide as his eyes searched for Ryan in the hall. Their eyes weren't here to admire the luxury. They were hunting for someone, Ryan.

It didn't take long to find him.

"There's the idiot! I told you he isn't important in this party, take a look at where he is sitting behind the hall," Julian said overconfidently.

"If he was an important personality, he would have sat on the golden seats meant for VIP, but instead, look who are sitting there... Your parents," Julian told Elizabeth who nodded and confirmed.

Ryan was sitting alone at a humble corner of the expansive hall, quietly sipping from a glass of water. Unlike most guests who arrived arm-in-arm with spouses or dates, Ryan sat alone, waiting for his name to be called. [2](#)

Julian nudged Elizabeth and gestured toward the corner. With their heads held high, they made their way to him.

Elizabeth was the first to speak. "Would you look at that? Sitting all alone like a lost puppy in a room filled with kings."

Ryan didn't respond. He simply looked at her, as calm as ever.

She leaned in, lowering her voice but ensuring her words carried enough hatred. "You know, one of the best ways to measure your failure is by looking at who walked away from you." [3](#)

Ryan said nothing. His gaze didn't even drop from her eyes.

Elizabeth continued, her words sounding even sharper. "A woman like me—a woman of class, beauty, and taste—left you for a better man. Julian Knight. That should tell you all you need to know about how pathetic your life is."

Julian smirked beside her, crossing his arms, his bruised pride temporarily healed by her words.

"Look around, Ryan," Elizabeth said, gesturing to the hall. "Everyone

here has someone beside them. Even the oldest couples in the room didn't come alone. But you? You're sitting like a stray in a world you don't belong to." She said coldly.

Her eyes narrowed with disgust. "That's what you are. You are alone, lonely, unwanted and unfit for this level of class, no woman wants you."

"I'm here for a reason," Ryan said finally, his voice was still very calm that it shocked them. "And it's not to impress you."

Elizabeth scoffed. "Oh please. You're barely holding onto your dignity. You think one entry through a scanner makes you one of us? This world isn't for you. God knows how you got your way with hacking through the system."

She leaned back a little and glanced at him from head to toe. "Even I—your ex-wife—have found someone better. I'm about to marry into a greater legacy than you could ever dream of."

But just as she finished her sentence, the sound of the door drew everyone's attention.

The crowd near the entrance started whispering. There was murmuring, a little wave of excited whispers as cameras turned and heads followed the same direction.

Elizabeth glanced back, then froze.

From the entrance, a woman walked in, looking graceful, extremely elegant, and breathtaking.

All eyes were on her. She was undoubtedly the most beautiful woman that had ever stepped in that venue.

Julian squinted, then he suddenly became tensed.

Elizabeth gasped softly. "Is that...? That's Claudia Duval, the prettiest woman alive... Oh My God..."

Julian nodded slowly, visibly shocked. "Yeah, that's Claudia Duval."

"The Claudia Duval," Elizabeth repeated, completely stunned.

"She's the face of half the luxury brands in this country. She.. she is the richest woman in the city, a Supermodel and as well Nova's brand ambassador. I use her products. I follow her on every social media platform. She's my role model," Elizabeth gushed, so excited like she had seen an angel...

Julian nodded again. "She's flawless. And terrifyingly powerful."

Elizabeth clutched his arm. "I've always said I wanted to be like her. My God, she's even more beautiful in person. Look at the way people are reacting. She commands a room just by walking into it."

The murmurs grew louder as Claudia walked through the hall, unbothered by the flashing cameras and fluttering fans trying to greet her.

But then something unexpected happened when her direction changed, the moment her eyes landed on Ryan. In that moment, she started walking towards Ryan.

Elizabeth's hand slowly slipped off Julian's arm.

Julian's face dropped. "Wait. Is she coming... this way?"

Elizabeth's heart pounded. "No... No way... She's heading towards us?" Elizabeth was super excited, she'd finally get to meet her role model.

Claudia walked with elegance and as she claimed towards the back of the

hall. As she neared their table, Julian immediately stood to attention.

The moment Claudia Duval reached their front, Elizabeth looked like she was starstruck.

Julian quickly extended a hand to shake her, smiling nervously. "Ms. Duval, welcome. It's an honor—"

Claudia looked at his hand like it was contaminated. Then, without a word, she walked past him.

Elizabeth's eyes widened.

"Wait please! Claudia..."

She took a step forward, trying to gain Claudia's attention. "I just wanted to say... you're my role model. You look absolutely stunning tonight."

Claudia glanced at her briefly, without a smile or a word, and continued walking.

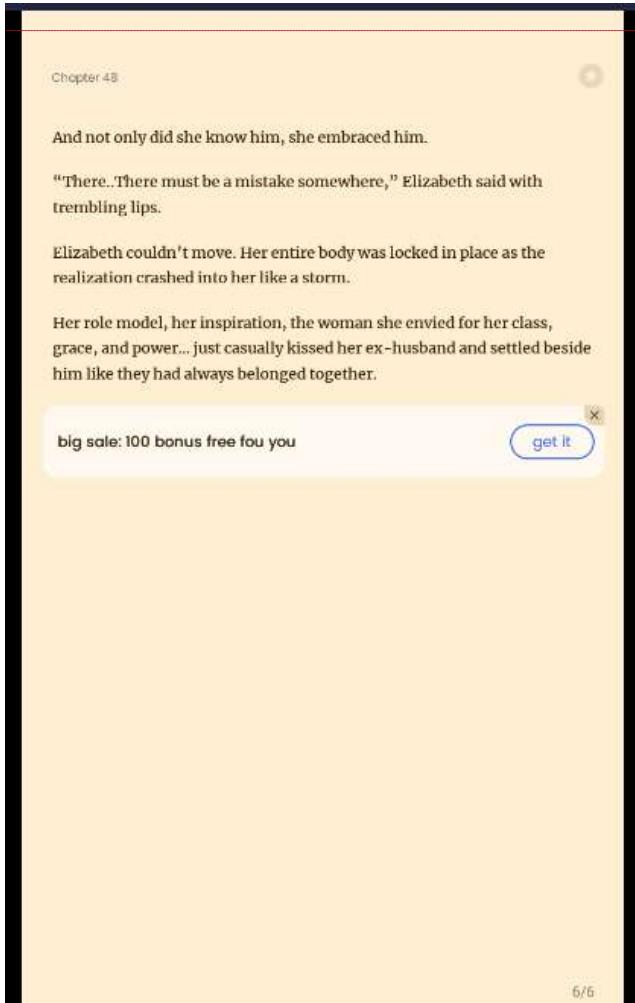
Then, in full view of every shocked guest in that corner of the hall, she reached Ryan.

Without hesitation, she leaned in and gently kissed Ryan on the cheek. Then she took the seat beside him, crossed her arm through his, and placed her head lightly on his shoulder.

Gasps rippled through the room from the shock.

Elizabeth's mouth fell open instantly, she couldn't believe her eyes.

Claudia Duval, the most beautiful and prosperous woman was here... for Ryan?



Commented [Ma1]:

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