

Chapter 51

Elizabeth stood frozen, her hand was still hovering near her cheek where Claudia had slapped her. Her chest rose and fell in quick, embarrassed breaths.

"You... you slapped me?" Elizabeth asked, trying to regain her composure from the slap she just received. Her lips trembled as she struggled to speak another word, but it seemed like a difficult task, and she couldn't find words to say. The humiliation was too much.

"Yes, I did and I will slap you again if you raise your filthy hand against him, ever again," Claudia said in a calm voice that seemed to calm to lay the kind of warning she had just laid.

Her vision blurred with humiliation, but before she could find the words to respond to the threat, a voice echoed through the grand hall. Someone had climbed onto the stage with a microphone.

"Ladies and gentlemen," the announcer said, standing tall on the brightly lit stage with a microphone in his hand, "we have officially reached the highlight of the evening, where tonight's esteemed guests will present their donations for the advancement of our great state. As we all know, this event has been going on for over seven years now, each year. And I must say, the offers we have had is unlike any other we have received in years."

All heads turned toward the stage as the announcer spoke.

Elizabeth stiffened instantly, noticing Claudia's attention was no longer on her. She quickly composed herself and turned to Julian, whispering, "Let's just sit down. We can't afford to make a bigger scene."

"I told you that earlier, isn't it to late for that already? People would think you are jealous to see Ryan with another woman," Julian said, also looking a bit angry.

"You left him for me anyway, so you shouldn't mind whoever he is with, okay?" He added and then Elizabeth gritted her teeth.

"How can you even say that? I am not jealous... that man is nothing to me, I can not be jealous, never! And please don't say that again," Elizabeth said to her and Julian just sat down, his face still in a frown. He felt a bit embarrassed by the way Elizabeth reacted.

Elizabeth's face was still a mess of confusion and rage. As she looked at Julian, she leaned close and whispered through clenched teeth, "Talking about being embarrassed, have you thought about where you have put us? So, you're seriously about to give away 200 million? Just like that? That's half of what's left in your account. What are we supposed to do after that?"

"Our wedding, Julian ... all your promises, all your plans, they are crashing," Elizabeth said in a low but frustrated voice.

Julian looked uncomfortable. He straightened his suit, looking away from her burning gaze.

"Calm down okay, nothing is crashing. I am still Julian Knight, don't forget that okay? I will have everything falling back in place very soon, trust me," he said back to her.

"You said it yourself earlier, Elizabeth," he murmured. "If I don't donate, we'll be disgraced. The media will chew us up, and I'll be dropped from the donor committee. It'll be everywhere by morning."

Elizabeth groaned and slapped her forehead, loud enough to startle the couple seated in front of them. "So, what about our wedding? The honeymoon? The venue? The dress? Are we supposed to get married in a public park now?"

Julian glared at her. "Lower your voice. We'll talk about this later."

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As tension brewed between the couple, the announcer on stage was suddenly joined by another middle aged man with a sharp suit.

He walked confidently onto the platform and took the mic from the announcer.

"Ladies and gentlemen, good evening. My name is Philip Crown, head of coordination for the Stallion Night VIP Party."

There was a polite round of applause. Philip gave a tight-lipped smile and turned slightly toward the golden VIP seats at the front center of the hall.

"Before we begin the donations, there's one important matter to address. I'd like to ask, who are the guests currently seated in the golden VIP seats?"

The crowd murmured in confusion. Cameras turned to the plush gold-trimmed chairs where Mr. and Mrs. McCarthy sat proudly, their posture looking straight and confident.

Mr. McCarthy looked puzzled and confused by what Philip just said. He stood slowly, buttoning his coat, and spoke loud enough for the mic to catch.

"Excuse me? What do you mean, 'Who are we'?"

Philip smiled politely before speaking his next words. "Pardon me, sir. I

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don't mean to sound rude, but the golden seat this evening was specially reserved for a very high-status individual. It appears there may have been a mix-up."

Mr. McCarthy blinked. "A mix-up? Do you have any idea who you're talking to? I'm Mr. McCarthy. A Billionaire, Philanthropist, and also a Board sponsor. I've been seated here for the past six years."

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