

Chapter 53

Philip Crown stood there without taking a step, his eyes were locked with Mr. McCarthy's as Mr. McCarthy insisted that neither he nor his wife would vacate the golden seat.

There were murmurs from different corners of the hall, everyone's eyes were on the McCarthys and their display.

Philip took a deep breath and spoke again, his tone was calm but was also very authoritative. "Sir, with all due respect, if you refuse to comply, I'll have no choice but to involve the security team to escort you both to alternative seating. This is a matter of protocol, not personal insult as I have said earlier."

Mr. McCarthy shot up from his seat, his chest heaving quickly. "Protocol? Protocol? I've donated to this event for the last five years straight! My name is etched in the very records of this event! And now you're threatening to remove me like some... common man?"

Mrs. McCarthy slammed her palm on the armrest of the chair. "This is outrageous! We have sat on these golden seats every year! Who do you think you are? Who do you think you are to make such demands of us?"

Philip raised a hand to signal security, but before he could make the full gesture, Julian's voice exploded from the back of the hall.

"That's enough!"

Everyone turned.

Julian stormed down the steps from the back with Elizabeth trailing behind him, with her face twisted in a frown.

"You," Julian said, pointing aggressively at Mr. Philip, "You.. You are trying to disrespect my parents-in-law to be! Have you lost your mind?"

Gasps echoed as Julian's words filled the hall. Some guests looked uncomfortable, others looked a bit intrigued. Elizabeth arrived at his side and folded her arms with a cold expression on her face.

"I don't know what backdoor brought you into the organizer's committee," she began, her voice was extraordinarily sharp and cold, "but it's obvious you're clueless. My father has made more meaningful contributions to this event than anyone else here. He practically helped build this event's reputation. And now you want to disrespect him?"

Philip stared at her like she was speaking absolute nonsense.

"I'm not here to debate legacy," Philip replied calmly. "I'm here to enforce order from the organizers of this very event. And this seat," he pointed firmly at the golden seat once more, "this seat was not assigned to Mr. or Mrs. McCarthy. If you have an issue, kindly direct it to the organizing committee, not me."

Elizabeth let out a bitter laugh. "You must be joking. Assigned to whom then? Don't tell me you're reserving this for a peasant?"

She turned to point in the direction of Ryan and Claudia, who still sat quietly at the back of the hall not minding what was happening there at the front of the hall.

"You mean to tell me," Elizabeth continued, raising her voice for all to hear, "that this man..this disgrace of a man, is the one the organizers think should sit on the golden seat?"

Philip cocked his head slightly. "Do you always shout when you feel intimidated?"

That drew another wave of gasps and stifled chuckles, every one was so shocked, no one had seen Elizabeth McCarthy being challenged this way.

Julian stepped forward. "Watch how you talk to her! She is my wife to be, get that and make sure you avoid speaking to her rudely."

"No," Philip replied calmly, "you all should watch how you talk to people who clearly outrank you, Don't act foolishly like a child."

Elizabeth barked in anger, particularly pointing at his expensive suit, "Outrank?! You mean Ryan Walker outranks my family?"

Philip looked at her with amusement. "It's incredible how blind arrogance can be. Look at him," he gestured at Ryan once more, "and then look at yourself. The man you called a pauper is here, dignified and seated with a woman ten times the class you pretend to have."

Gasps turned into laughter instantly and Elizabeth's mouth dropped open, she had never been insulted that way by anybody.

Claudia elegantly crossed her legs beside Ryan and smiled like a queen observing jesters.

Elizabeth's eyes flared in disbelief. She couldn't believe her eyes...

"Are you out of your mind?! Claudia doesn't belong with someone like him! He's a fraud! A delivery guy who even got himself fired!"

Philip's smile widened. "And yet, he sits quietly, drawing every eye and commanding every breath in this room while you scream and sputter like a child denied candy."

Elizabeth's fists clenched. Her face turned pale from shame and embarrassment.

Julian tried to step in again. "Listen, I don't know what game you're playing, but you'll regret it if you keep going. You have no idea who I am."

Philip didn't even flinch. "You are a man who just lost half a billion dollars in a bet to the same 'pauper' you're mocking. Need I remind you that everyone saw it?"

Laughter erupted again.

Elizabeth could hardly breathe. "This... this is insane. How can you people not see he's a fraud?!"

Philip took a slow step forward. "Would a fraud be on the A-list?"

"I—" Elizabeth stammered, then froze. She had absolutely no idea how that happened.

Julian looked away, his fists trembling.

"Exactly," Philip said. "Now, will you vacate the seat or will I need to bring in the full security team?"

Before they could answer, Ryan rose from his chair at the back, still holding Claudia's hand. He strolled calmly toward the front, the crowd gave them way in admiration of how beautiful they looked together. His confidence shocked Elizabeth as he walked forward. When he reached the golden seats, everyone held their breath.

Ryan turned to Philip and nodded. "Thank you for your effort, but there's no need for any more drama."

Philip nodded back respectfully. "Just doing my job, Mr. Walker."

Elizabeth's mouth fell open. "Mr. Walker?"

Ryan looked at her with calm eyes. "Yes, Elizabeth. I was a delivery man, but that doesn't mean I lack the right to be addressed as such."

Elizabeth snarled at his face. "You're still a nobody. You'll always be nothing!"

Claudia stood up beside Ryan. "This is Funny. That 'nobody' is more respected in this room than your entire bloodline."

Mrs. McCarthy shrieked, "How dare you! Do you know the power and respect that the McCarthy bloodline carry?"

Out of the rage building up in her, she wanted to slap Claudia, but then reached to slap Ryan instead after thinking his would be easier since he was just a nobody.

But before her hand could land, Philip caught her wrist mid-air. "Ma'am, if you touch Mr. Walker again, you'll be escorted out, permanently."

Mrs. McCarthy gasped in horror.

Philip then turned to security, raising a brow.

The guards nodded and began moving in quickly.

Elizabeth blinked fast, her throat becoming dry from leaving her mouth wide open in shock. "What?"

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