

## Chapter 23 Forced Apology

"Oh, my God! So, it was you that stole my ring. But how did it get into Annabel's purse?" Heather questioned the waiter just to pin the whole thing on him.

"I planned to sell the ring after getting off work. However, you began to look for it and even asked the security to search everywhere. I was scared of getting exposed, so I slipped the ring into her purse when no one was looking. Please forgive me. I didn't mean it. My mother is lying seriously ill in the hospital, and she needs surgery. I have no money, so I was forced to steal."

"Tell me, who put you up to this?" Annabel asked, frowning at him.

"No one. I did on my own accord," the waiter answered in a trembling voice, but he kept looking at Heather with fear.

Heather feared that everything would be exposed if Annabel continued to interrogate the waiter. Biting her lower lip, she chipped in, "You know what? I don't want to pursue the matter. I'll let you off the hook because you did it for your mother."

"Thank you. I'm sorry once again." The waiter thanked and apologized to Heather.



"You don't want to pursue it? That wasn't what you said when I was accused of stealing the ring. Why the sudden change of mind?" Annabel uttered expressionlessly.

"That's enough, everyone. Since the ring has been found and Heather has forgiven the thief, there's no point dragging the matter," Brock piped up when he saw that Heather was too embarrassed to say a word.

Heather waved her hand in a hurry and asked the police to take the waiter away. She took the ring, turned around, and was about to leave.

"Wait a minute." Annabel stepped forward and blocked Heather's way.

This schemer wanted to leave after causing so much damage? Annabel wasn't going to allow her to get away with this. No one dared to humiliate her and leave just like that.

"What's the matter?" Heather looked at Annabel warily. With a smirk, Annabel uttered, "Are you going to leave just like that? You humiliated me in front of all these people. I almost got arrested for what I didn't do. The least you can do before leaving is to apologize to me. Go on, I'm waiting!"

"No way!" Heather's blood was boiling.

The last thing she wanted to do was to apologize to Annabel, a country bumpkin, in front of all these



dignitaries. What would that make her?

"Apologize to her," Rupert said in a deep and cold voice. The terrifying expression on his face made Heather take a step back.

Balling her hands into fists, she said very reluctantly, "I'm sorry, Annabel. I shouldn't have accused you wrongly just now."

Annabel rubbed her ear and asked, "What did you say? I didn't hear you."

Biting back the curses she had for Annabel, Heather sighed deeply and uttered through gritted teeth, "I'm sorry!"

The shame was too much for her to bear. She wanted to disappear immediately.

Unlike his granddaughter, Brock wasn't ashamed to apologize. He cleared his throat and said, "I'm sorry for what happened, Annabel. Heather isn't at fault. It was just one big misunderstanding. Don't take it to heart, okay?"

"It's fine. I just hope that next time such a thing happens, you will give the accused a listening ear and find out the truth before taking sides. False accusations are very destructive to a person," Annabel intoned with a polite smile.

At this moment, Brock became extremely embarrassed.

He faked a smile and muttered, "Noted. Anyway, are your hands okay? How about I ask someone to take you to the hospital?"

"No, thanks. I'm tired. I'll take my leave now." The issue drained Annabel's strength. She yawned, picked up her purse, and left under the gaze of everyone. ②

As she stood by the roadside for a taxi, lightning suddenly flashed and thunder struck. The air became chilly; it was about to rain.

What an unlucky night!

Annabel didn't have an umbrella, and there was no taxi in sight.

A raindrop suddenly fell on her face, sending a chill to her entire body.

Just as she began looking for where to take shelter, a black Bentley stopped right next to her.

It was Rupert's.

The car door opened, and Rupert's handsome face came into view.

"Get in," he said simply.

Annabel was a little stunned.

Why did Rupert leave the party too? Did he purposely leave because of her? But why?

With a raised eyebrow, Rupert uttered, "Are you not getting in?"

"Thank you." As soon as Annabel sat in the passenger seat, she remembered what happened the last time. She quickly fastened her seat belt to avoid a repetition.

Rupert swallowed hard. His hands tightened over the steering wheel.

Annabel looked so hot this evening. The red dress she had on accentuated her curves.

One of her thighs was visible due to the split on the side of the dress. Damn, she was just too sexy!

"Where are we going?" Looking out of the window, Annabel realized that this was not the way home.

Rupert tilted his head and cast a glance at her. "To the hospital."

Hospital?

"Why are we going to the hospital?" Annabel was confused.

Rupert frowned. "Have you forgotten that your hands are red and swollen?"

How considerate of him!

"Thank you, but you need not bother. It's just a minor allergy reaction," Annabel said with a smile.

"You call that minor? Besides, why did you hurt yourself

just to prove your innocence?"

"What else could I have done? Should I have allowed them to frame me as a shameless thief?" Annabel slightly tilted her body.

"You should have employed another means. A better one," Rupert responded coldly.

"What other means? Can you think of any that is better than the one I used?" Annabel fired back, rubbing the space between her eyebrows.

It had been a close shave for her. She had almost gotten arrested because of Heather's flawless scheme.

Her allergy to platinum was the only thing that could prove that she never touched the ring.

Annabel didn't think there were any better ways.

Rupert looked at her and said in a low voice, "You should have turned to me for help."

How was turning to him for help a better way? What could he have done to help her?

Annabel couldn't understand this.

She said with a faint smile, "Anyway, thank you." 🗨️

She was grateful that he trusted her against all odds.

Rupert snorted without responding.

Again, he found her intriguing.

She was calm and very smart.

This wasn't how he imagined her to be before they met.

Rupert took her to the hospital. The doctor checked the allergy reaction and revealed that it was nothing serious. He then prescribed an ointment.

After they got home, Annabel wanted to go back to her room, but Rupert stopped her. "You should sleep in my room. I'm worried about you." ❶

Annabel wanted to refuse, but when she saw the sincerity in his eyes, she nodded. The two of them walked into his room.

"I'm going to take a shower." Rupert strode to the bathroom.

The pattering sound of water was heard shortly after. Sitting on the sofa, Annabel took out the ointment the doctor prescribed and carefully applied it on her fingers. Her fingers itched.

After applying the ointment, Annabel stood up but her head accidentally bumped into Rupert's chin.

A sharp pain came from the crown of her head. She raised her head, only to see Rupert standing in front of her.

"Ouch! When did you get here?" she asked, her eyes widening in surprise.