

## Chapter 19 The Stolen Ring

No?

That meant Annabel wasn't the girl Rupert met when he was a child.

A disappointed look was written all over Rupert's handsome face.

Oblivious to how he was feeling, Annabel stared at him in suspicion.

What did he mean? Did he want her to get kidnapped?

None of them said anything for the rest of the ride. When they got home, Erica handed Rupert an invitation and said, "Don't forget Brock Norman is holding a banquet for his seventieth birthday this weekend."

The banquet was scheduled to hold in Imperial Hotel—the most luxurious hotel in the city. All the guests were either rich, powerful, or both.

Annabel had gotten her fair share of attending banquets after the company's anniversary a few days back. Much to her displeasure, Erica woke her up early in the morning and lectured her about it.

"Get up! You must not embarrass this family!" Erica uttered coldly, wagging her finger at Annabel.

The banquet hall was bustling with life. Many people were chatting and cheering in their dashing outfits. However, the whole thing was boring to Annabel. She sat in a corner and looked around until her eyes fell on Rupert, who was standing out in the crowd like a star. With a huff, she stood up and decided to go to the rooftop to get some fresh air.

She had just taken a few steps when a group of young women stopped her; Heather and her mean friends.

Heather stretched out her hand to flaunt a shining diamond ring that made her look nobler.

With a taunting smirk, she said, "See? This is a famous limited edition piece designed by world-class designer, Ada. My grandfather bought it at an auction abroad for my birthday last year."

One of Heather's friends crooned, "Oh, it's so beautiful! It suits you perfectly. No one else can pull it off like you do. Gorgeous!"

The women's fawning behavior made Annabel sick to her stomach. She looked at them with a frown. How shameless can these women be?

As far as she was concerned, there was nothing special about that ring. It was beautiful, but the diamond was so small. It was nothing compared to the huge diamonds her own grandfather gifted her.

"Excuse me, ladies." Annabel moved to the side and walked past them without a backward glance.

"Bumpkin! She's so classless!" Heather and her friends cursed, glaring at her back.

Annabel spent a great deal of time on the rooftop. The moment she reluctantly returned to the banquet hall, a uniformed waiter pointed at her and shouted, "It's her! She's the one I saw just now!"

Annabel halted in her tracks. She was at a loss what the waiter was insinuating. Where the hell did he see her? And why was he shouting?

Heather burst through the crowd that had gathered in the blink of an eye. "So, it was you who stole my diamond ring!"

Stole her diamond ring? What the hell?

Frowning deeply, Annabel looked at Heather and asked, "What diamond ring?"

Heather's friends surrounded Annabel and joined in the accusation.

"Gosh! I find it surprising that Rupert's fiancée is a thief."

"I'm not surprised at all. Bumpkins like her have no morals. Remember how she gawked at the ring when she saw it a while back? She can never afford such an expensive ring, so she stole it!"

"Heather, there's no point exchanging words with her. Just call the cops!"

A realization hit Annabel at this moment. These people were accusing her of stealing. It was a set-up!

She glanced at Heather's hand and found that the diamond ring was gone.

"What's going on here?" Brock walked to the middle of the crowd with the aid of his walking stick.

"Grandpa, please help me." Heather held her chest and put on a sad mask. Pointing at Annabel, she continued, "This girl stole the diamond ring you gifted me. And she's pretending not to know anything about it!"

"Don't worry, I have got this." Brock patted his granddaughter on the shoulder. Then he turned to Annabel and inquired, "Did you steal Heather's diamond ring?"

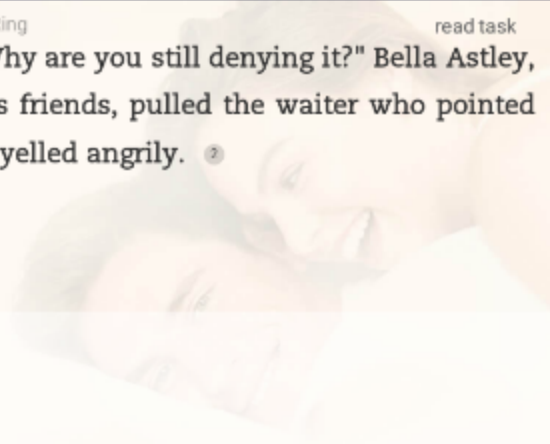
"No, sir," Annabel replied calmly.

Brock frowned and said, "I can afford to buy a million diamond rings. However, the missing one is Heather's favorite. If you have it with you, please hand it over. I'll buy you another one. Just return it now."

Annabel was shocked. "How can I return what I didn't take? The ring is not with me!"

"Shame on you, Annabel! Someone saw you steal it with

his own eyes. Why are you still denying it?" Bella Astley, one of Heather's friends, pulled the waiter who pointed at Annabel and yelled angrily. 🗨️



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