Module B. Colour from the Cosmos

Lesson 11 - Processed Diamonds

*Colour*

Colour of a diamond is one of the more important variables to consumers when choosing a diamond. *Ideally*, a diamond is colourless. In reality, almost all diamonds have a yellow undertone and this affects their outward image. The colour scale that gemologists use for determining the quality of colour starts from D, which is colourless, and ranges to Z, which is a fairly deeply-coloured yellow and considered undesirable. When colours are beyond the classification of Z, they are then termed fancy or fancy intense, an indication that their colour is saturated enough to be unusual. This sets these strongly-coloured fancy diamonds into a new category.

When a gemologist is grading a diamond they will often have a Master Set of diamonds that span the range from D to Z. The stone being graded is then compared to the Masters and given a classification. Categories D, E, and F are colourless, G to J are near-colourless, K to M have faint colour, and N to R have very light yellow, and S to Z have obvious light yellow colour.

To an untrained eye, the colours D to F (possibly up to I) will appear the same colour, depending on what metal the stone is set in. Stones set in yellow metals may inherit some of the colour from the ring below, while those in white metals will not receive an undertone from the setting.