

Chapter 1599 Why Is He So Heartless

The quirk at the corner of Janet's mouth and the playful gleam in her eye made Brandon chuckle. He lightly tweaked her nose, teasing her in a jesting tone. "Come on, Janet. Jealous over my cousin? Really?"

Hearing the word "cousin", Janet's mind drifted back to the tidbits she'd gathered from Mandy earlier in the day, causing a ripple of discomfort.

She brushed Brandon's hand away with a huff, retorting, "I'm not green-eyed or anything. Just calling it as I see it."

Picking up on her icy demeanor, Brandon tilted his head, brows knitted. "Okay, spill. What's going on, Janet? Audrey stirs up some trouble for you? Or maybe she dropped some not-so-sweet nothings in your ear?"

Taking a moment to let the coldness in his voice sink in, he added, more somberly, "If she's bugging you, just say the word. I'll show her the door faster than you can say 'goodbye'."

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Janet, sensing that Brandon wasn't the least bit swayed by Audrey's tactics, felt a wave of relief wash over her. She shrugged it off, saying breezily, "You know what? Water under the bridge. Anyway, she'll be out by tomorrow."

Grabbing her hand gently, a crease of concern marred Brandon's forehead. "Hey, something's off. Do tell me. If you don't clue me in, I'm going to be counting sheep all night."

Janet sighed at his earnest expression, deciding to open up.

She relayed the morning's conversation with Audrey and ended with a shrug, a bit defeated. "To her, I might as well be a ghost in this house. It feels like I don't even belong."

His face turning stormy, Brandon tightened his grip on her hand, remorse evident in his voice. "I can't believe she'd pull that on you. I'm so sorry you had to go through that."

Janet, taking in the regret mirrored in his eyes, felt a pang of guilt. Softening, she reassured him, "Hey, it's not on you. I kind of jumped the gun there. My bad." 2

Brandon pulled her into a gentle embrace, whispering softly against her lips, "If there's a shadow on your day because of this, it's on me. But I promise she'll be out of our hair by tomorrow."

Nestled against his warm chest, hearing the rhythmic beat of his heart, any lingering tension melted away from Janet. "Brandon, thanks for putting up with my drama."

Lifting her gaze, she wrapped her arms around his neck, sealing the sentiment with a tender kiss.

In the cozy guest room of the sprawling villa, Audrey quickly attached herself to an IV drip. The distant sound of approaching footsteps made her perk up. Eagerly anticipating the visitor, she decided to amp up the drama a bit. With practiced ease, she slouched against the bed's headboard, adopting an appearance of frail vulnerability.

A soft knock interrupted her rehearsal.

A hint of elation twinkled in Audrey's eyes as she mustered a weak, croaky voice. "Yeah? Who is it? Come on in."

As the door creaked open, Audrey shot the visitor an eager gaze, her voice tinged with hope. "Oh, Brandon! It took you long enough to..."

Her chipper greeting hit a wall mid-sentence. Instead of Brandon, the face of the butler greeted her. Audrey's face fell, the depths of her disappointment evident. "Ugh, it's just you? Where's Brandon? Did he hear about my sunstroke? Why isn't he here?"

The butler's gaze turned icy for a split second before resuming its professional detachment. In a voice that practically dripped with indifference, he said, "Mr. Larson's orders are clear. Stay put tonight. Oh, and do pack up your bags. You'll be leaving after the burial tomorrow. Got it?"

Audrey's feeble facade crumbled, her voice rising in disbelief. "Hold up! Brandon's giving me the boot? Just like that?"


The butler mentally checked off his task, having no desire to engage further. He was nearly out the door when her shrill voice halted him.

"Hey! Hold it right there! You think you can just waltz in and out without giving me a second glance?"


Concerned that her antics might draw unwanted attention, the butler paused, sighed deeply, and turned back. "Alright, Miss Larson. What do you need now?"

Audrey, her eyes burning with indignation, fired back, "So, let's get this straight. I'm down and out here, and Brandon doesn't even come to see me.

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 +120 Points at most

Why's he rushing me out? I'm his family, for heaven's sake! What's gotten into him? Why is he being so heartless?"

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