

Apocalypse 682

Chapter 682 Kisha's Stance

Seeing Kisha gently tending to Duke's cheek, Mrs. Evans felt her throat tighten, her anxiety growing with each passing second. The way Kisha's brows furrowed in concern only made her more nervous as she softly rubbed the spot where the slap had landed.

Then, out of nowhere, the usually cold and composed Duke acted coquettishly. "Wifey, it hurts," he murmured, sounding as if he were on the verge of tears.

Mr. Winters rolled his eyes at his son's shameless display. He knew exactly what Duke was doing—putting on a show to flaunt his love for Kisha in front of the Evans, further provoking them. More than that, it was a clear message to Melody: she could never be his wife, not in this life or the next.

Kisha also had the urge to roll her eyes at Duke. She knew better than anyone that the slap was nothing more than a mosquito bite to him—it wouldn't even sting.

It was obvious he was just playing around, but instead of exposing him, she simply sighed and continued rubbing his cheek, looking sorrowful.

Meanwhile, the Evans family stared in shock. They had never seen Duke act like this before. Yet here he was, behaving like a pampered husband, seeking his wife's comfort while shamelessly flaunting their love.

Eric, Elios, Eliot, and Ethan all felt like they were witnessing something they shouldn't—the sight of Duke acting this way was almost painful to watch.

"Duke, can't you hold back a little?" Eric sighed in defeat. "You already know my sister is hurting from your rejection, and acting like this in front of her will only make it worse."

Unlike the others, Eric didn't react strongly to seeing Duke with Kisha—after all, he knew she was their long-lost sister. That knowledge made him more accepting of their relationship, though deep down, he wished things were different.

If it were up to him, no man would have her just yet. He and his brothers wanted to spoil and make up for all the years they lost with her before even thinking about marriage.

But alas, Duke had already won her heart before they had the chance to reveal the truth.

Eric's words to Duke were merely an attempt to give Melody a way out, to prevent the situation from becoming even uglier.

But could things really be smoothed over after Mrs. Evans had already slapped Duke? Of course not.

Kisha wouldn't let them brush it under the rug as if nothing had happened. Even if Duke didn't feel any pain, the slap wasn't just about physical harm—it was a blatant act of disrespect.

He had been struck in front of his subordinates, a clear sign of how little the Evans family thought of him. And that was something Kisha would never tolerate.

Kisha finally spoke, her voice clear, firm, and laced with cold authority.

"Hold back his actions? And why should he? First of all, this is Duke's territory—you should be the ones controlling yourselves. Secondly, we already informed you of our marital status earlier. While we were away, you should have talked some sense into your pampered princess, told her to have some self-respect and rein in her temper. And thirdly—shouldn't you be apologizing for striking my husband without even understanding the full situation?"

Her sharp gaze swept over each member of the Evans family, making it clear she wouldn't back down.

Mrs. Evans felt a sharp sting in her heart as she watched her daughter fiercely defend Duke while simultaneously tearing into them. Her eyes reddened instantly.

She knew she was at fault, but her body had moved before her mind could catch up. Maybe it was habit—years of shielding Melody, of letting her maternal instincts take over. But she never truly meant to slap Duke.

Now, standing there, she struggled to find the words to explain herself. Her lips trembled as she looked at Kisha, searching for understanding, but Kisha only met her gaze with cold indifference. That icy stare shattered what little composure she had left.

Kisha, for her part, felt an inexplicable closeness to the Evans family, but she couldn't afford to let sentimentality cloud her judgment. She had to stand by her husband.

More than that, she knew exactly what Melody was up to. She hadn't acted against her before—not because she lacked the time or means, but because she was confident.

Confident that, when the moment came, she could put Melody in her place and cast her out of her territory with ease.

Hearing Kisha's words, Mr. Evans and his sons felt a wave of embarrassment wash over them. They couldn't deny the truth in what she said.

For Mr. Evans, knowing that Kisha was his biological daughter weighed heavily on him. He hadn't always viewed her in a positive light, especially when she had made things difficult for Melody in the past.

But now, with everything falling into place, he couldn't ignore the bond of blood between them. He had wanted to tell her the truth, but their plans to do so had been disrupted.

Still, old habits were hard to break. He had spent years protecting and loving Melody as if she were his own, and even though disappointment had driven a wedge between them, a lingering sense of parental affection remained.

That instinct had taken over, pushing him to step forward in defense of Melody and his wife—without stopping to consider how it might look in the face of the truth.

"M-Miss Aldens, please... I apologize. It was all my fault. Don't scold my parents for this," Melody suddenly spoke up, her voice trembling as she choked on her sobs. She looked pitifully at Kisha, her tear-filled eyes pleading for mercy.

She reached for her father's sleeve, tugging on it gently as she shook her head, silently begging him to let the matter go.

Her actions carried a hidden agenda—two, in fact.

First, she wanted to pull the Evans family back to her side, making them believe that her past mistakes were nothing more than youthful ignorance, that she had simply acted out of fear rather than turning her back on them when they needed her most.

Second, she sought to draw a contrast between herself and Kisha. By portraying herself as the kind and gentle one while Kisha remained cold and indifferent, she hoped to sway the Evans' hearts.

If they were forced to choose between the two daughters, they should pick her—the one who had been by their side the longest, the one they had raised. And if she succeeded, perhaps they would finally stand with her against Kisha.

Melody wanted to drive a wedge between the Evans family and Kisha because she knew the Evans were her strongest supporters. If she lost them, she had no idea where she would go or how she would survive.

After all, with her father and brothers constantly providing for and protecting her, she had never truly needed to fend for herself.

As long as she could keep the Evans by her side, she could deal with Duke later. For now, securing her place within the family was her priority—Duke's rejection could wait.

Hearing Melody call her "Miss Aldens" instead of "Mrs. Winters" made it clear that Melody refused to acknowledge her as Duke's wife and was openly challenging her. Kisha raised an eyebrow.

'Does she really think that my marriage to Duke requires her approval? She gives herself far too much credit,' Kisha thought with a smirk.