

Wrath 101

Chapter 101:

“Do you find pleasure in this?” Janice asked, massaging her hand and looking at Delilah with a taunting expression. “If it’s not enough, I’m happy to continue. I can keep slapping until you’re satisfied.”

“You madwoman, how dare you strike me?” Delilah’s composure shattered, her anger simmering like a volcano on the verge of eruption.

“Delilah, what are you doing here?”

A voice cut in, prompting Delilah to hold back her rising anger. She turned, concealing her reddened face, and exclaimed with distress, “Mom, Janice hit me.”

Laurie was briefly taken aback, peering past Delilah, then asked in astonishment, “Janice, what brings you here?”

“How is this any of your concern?” Janice retorted sharply, her cold stare making Laurie feel distinctly unwelcome.

“Mom, my face really hurts.” Noticing Laurie’s lack of immediate defense, Delilah began to cry. “Why doesn’t Janice like me? I’m just trying to help her.”

Laurie observed Delilah’s face, noticeably swollen on one side from the slap.

Delilah, now tearful and looking quite miserable, tugged at Laurie’s heartstrings. Laurie had intended to make amends with Janice at the gala, but now...

“Delilah, what exactly happened?” she asked.

“Janice is wearing a fake Blue Heart necklace to keep up appearances.” Delilah gestured toward Janice’s necklace while crying. “Mom, the Blue Heart is valued at over twenty million. How could hers be real?”

Now Janice not only has a counterfeit but is also flaunting it. You know how much Mrs. Ramirez detests dishonesty. She'll be outraged if she finds out."

Laurie was stunned, staring at Janice in disbelief. "Janice, you..."

She was about to reprimand Janice, but the words failed her. After all, her visit was meant to apologize to Janice. Yet, with this new development, she was unsure how to proceed.

Delilah's frown was subtle, almost invisible. What was Laurie doing? She usually started scolding right away; why the hesitation now?

"Mom, you should talk to Janice. If she keeps this up, she'll not only damage her own reputation but also bring trouble to the Edwards family," Delilah urged.

Hearing this, Laurie sighed, trying to soften her voice as much as possible. "Janice, maybe you should take off the Blue Heart. Delilah has a point. Wearing that fake could indeed provoke Mrs. Ramirez."

"Mrs. Edwards, it feels odd hearing you call me that." Janice crossed her arms and sneered. "Didn't you used to call me a worthless wretch all the time?"

"Janice—"

"Be quiet!" Janice cut her off sharply. "We're not close."

The words "we're not close" stung Laurie more than she expected, yet she managed to force a smile and apologize to Janice for the mistakes she had made in the past.

"Janice, I know you hate me. I've come to realize my mistakes. I'm here to apologize and seek your forgiveness, okay?" Laurie then bowed her head, her regret genuine.

To Janice, however, this gesture was almost amusing. A belated apology felt like locking the barn door after the horse had already escaped.

Moreover, she had moved beyond her need for family approval and was indifferent to whether Laurie truly felt remorse.

“I understand you might not forgive me easily. That’s fine, I’ll continue to try making things right. But for now, please remove that counterfeit Blue Heart. If Mrs. Ramirez notices it, the consequence will be harsh.”

Chapter 102:

Janice shook her head and retorted, “You’re still the same. If Delilah plays the victim and cries a bit, you instantly take her side. Have you ever considered checking the facts? Just because she says mine is fake, it must be? What if hers is the actual fake?”

Janice’s challenge jolted Laurie to awareness. She turned to Delilah, feeling somewhat confused.

Historically, she had always taken Delilah’s word at face value. No matter how Janice explained, she wouldn’t listen, always insisting Janice was in the wrong.

“Delilah, can you provide any proof that Janice’s Blue Heart is counterfeit?” For the first time, Laurie addressed the issue and questioned Delilah.

Delilah was visibly surprised by Laurie’s questioning. Laurie was doubting her? She had always taken her side before.

“Mom, this necklace was personally selected and given to me by Carman,” she said with teary eyes. “You may not believe me, but do you not even trust Carman?”

Laurie looked shocked once more, her expression troubled. Carman, a well-known singer with extensive connections, could easily acquire the Blue Heart necklace.

Given that the Blue Heart was unique, Laurie’s gaze turned back to Janice, filled with increasing suspicion.

Janice just shrugged and said, "You've shown me one thing clearly. You really can't teach an old dog new tricks."

"Janice, how dare you speak to Mom like that?" Delilah snapped at Janice, her anger evident. "Fine, if you insist on causing a scene here, then take my Blue Heart. But first, you must admit you were wrong and apologize to Mom."

"Delilah..." Laurie's expression softened, and she looked at Delilah more affectionately.

She seemed to have misjudged Delilah. How could someone who appeared so compliant and reasonable be as manipulative as she had suspected? Maybe Janice was misleading her into doubting Delilah.

"Mom, don't stop me," Delilah said, reaching for her necklace as though she was about to remove it. "I don't want Janice to face humiliation, nor do I want you to suffer any injustice."

Janice watched with a smirk as Delilah theatrically pretended to take off her necklace, but she ultimately didn't remove it. In this tense moment, Laurie predictably grabbed Delilah's hand.

"Delilah, you don't want me to be wronged, but I don't want you to be wronged either." Laurie then turned to Janice, her look turning cold. "Janice, leave now. Don't force me to call the guards to remove you."

Grinning, Janice taunted, "Keep ignoring the truth, Laurie. It'll spare me the trouble of being merciful to the Edwards family." Laurie perceived the calmness in her tone as a piercing wound to her heart.

Breathing deeply, she steeled herself against the pain. It was time to cut ties completely and cleanly.

From this moment on, only Delilah would be her daughter. Laurie screamed, "Security, remove this woman immediately!"

"I'll see who dares!!"

A chilling voice sliced through the tension, drawing all eyes.

Nina strode forward, unmatched in elegance as her evening gown swirled around her. She radiated a queenly presence as she approached Janice.

Turning to Laurie and Delilah, Nina said, "A slight delay kept me, and yet you harass my daughter-in-law? What encouraged you?" Her words sent a shiver through the crowd.

Chapter 103:

Not only did Nina's statement assert her authority, but it also revealed Janice's unexpected identity.

"Really? Janice is married to the Green family's heir?"

"The plot thickens! Mrs. Green is known for fiercely defending her family. She must hold Janice in high regard."

"But wait, why would Janice wear a knockoff if she's backed by the Green family?"

The crowd murmured uneasily, suspicion dawning that they had been manipulated into antagonizing Janice.

Recognized as the pinnacle among the four influential families, the Green family's influence was undeniable. Even Leonie had no choice but to concede respect to Nina.

No matter if Janice's Blue Heart was real or not, Nina's backing meant that Leonie had no choice but to accept it as genuine and greet her with respect.

Silence enveloped the group; no one dared to voice further doubts.

"Nina, don't be angry." Janice took Nina's hand, her cold demeanor melting away. "There's no reason to get upset over a couple of fools."

Laurie felt a pang in her heart upon witnessing the close bond between Janice and Nina.

It was as though something precious to her had been claimed by someone else, filling her with a profound sense of loss. Nina looked over with a dismissive air. "Yes, indeed, just a couple of fools."

"Mrs. Green, don't you think that's rather harsh?" Laurie asked, her expression serious. "The Edwards family might not match the prestige of the Green family, but we remain one of the four distinguished families."

"One of the four distinguished families?" Nina repeated without even facing Laurie, nonchalantly flicking away a speck from her shoulder. "Who do you think you are? Would you even have a place among the four great families if the Patterson family hadn't mismanaged things over the years, giving the Edwards family the chance to take advantage?"

Nina tilted her head back slightly, her presence dominating Laurie. "Mark my words, the existence of four great families depends on my mood. If I decide otherwise, then only the Green family will stand."

Laurie was visibly shocked, struggling to grasp Nina's audacity. The others around them were just as taken aback by the exchange and Nina's bold declaration.

Nina's reputation for fierce loyalty and assertiveness was well known, and now they were seeing it live. Her mood dictated the recognition of the four great families; otherwise, it was just the Green family.

This assertion, made on the grounds of the Ramirez family and ignoring Leonie's presence, was audacious. Yet, it was clear that the Green family had the clout to support such claims.

The Green family was a powerful force. Rumors persisted that even combined, the other three families couldn't rival the Green family's influence. Though possibly an exaggeration, this notion still underscored the formidable power of the Green family.

Janice smiled to herself. Nina was proving herself to be the ideal mother-in-law.

Janice was seriously considering becoming Nina's real daughter-in-law. Unfortunately, it wouldn't be long before Aiden acquired the shares his grandfather had left, and they would have to put an end to their contractual marriage.

Delilah was still acting innocent and aggrieved, but deep down, she was overcome with jealousy. This commanding and protective mother-in-law should have been hers. If only Aiden hadn't been disabled. Even so, now that she had witnessed how fierce Nina was in defending her family, Delilah was starting to think that marrying a cripple might not be so bad.

Chapter 104:

"Mom, we've tried our best to persuade Janice in the kindest possible way. But she doesn't appreciate our good intentions. There is nothing more we can do here." Delilah knew that Nina was difficult to deal with, so she wisely chose to avoid any confrontation with the woman.

"Fine. Let's leave her alone, then. If anyone is going to lose face, it will be her and the Green family." Laurie linked her arm with Delilah's and cast a snide glance at Nina.

"Did I say you can leave?" Nina said, stepping forward. All at once, a number of bodyguards rushed over and surrounded Laurie and Delilah.

It was quite a spectacle. Were the Edwards and Green families about to have an altercation?

"What are you planning to do, Mrs. Green? Do you intend to lay hands on us here?" Laurie demanded, putting up a brave front, even though her heart was hammering wildly inside her chest. Although both she and Nina were from the four great families, their social standings were decidedly not on par.

"Did you really think you can just walk away after criticizing my daughter-in-law in front of so many people? I'm afraid it's not that easy." Nina pulled Janice closer and patted her hand. "Don't worry, dear. You have my support."

"Thank you, Nina," Janice said timidly, pursing her lips like Delilah would when she played the victim card.

Sure enough, the pitiful expression on her face tugged at Nina's heartstrings. "Apologize!" she snapped at Laurie with considerably more ire. "Don't even think about leaving this place without apologizing to my daughter-in-law."

"Don't push it, Nina Green!" Laurie retorted through gritted teeth. "You can just bully the Edwards family as you please!"

"The Edwards family, huh?" Nina scoffed. "A family who dotes on their adopted daughter even when she is in the wrong, while they treat their true flesh and blood like trash. You people are short-sighted and foolish. How dare you act all righteous with me? You have two choices: either you apologize or you face the consequences for your rude behavior."

With a whooshing sound, the bodyguards pulled out their batons in unison and brandished them in preparation for an attack.

"Mrs. Green." A woman in a blue dress walked over.

Janice looked at her. This woman carried her lithe figure with poise and elegance. She had an oval face and delicate features, but the most striking thing about her were her sharp eyes.

"What brings you here, Nellie?" Nina asked with a frown.

"If I didn't come out to intervene, Mrs. Green, I don't think tonight's gala would proceed as planned," Nellie Ramirez replied with a helpless smile. She glanced over at Laurie and added, "Whatever disagreement there may be between your families, I ask that you hold it off for my mother's sake. You can do whatever you want once the gala is over. I won't interfere." Judging from her attitude, it was clear to everyone present that Nellie and Nina were quite close.

Janice guessed Nina was about to let Laurie and Delilah off for Nellie's sake. But Nina and Nellie's relationship had nothing to do with her.

"Miss Ramirez," Janice interjected with a smirk, her eyes fixed on Nellie. "Is this the kind of hospitality your family extends to your guests?"

Nellie had hoped that by speaking up, she could put an end to this uncomfortable confrontation. She never anticipated that Janice would be so unyielding.

Casting a glance towards Nina, Nellie searched her face for any sign of disapproval, only to be met with a mask of indifference that seemed to tacitly condone Janice's behavior.

Chapter 105:

"Mrs. Green, who might this be?" Nellie inquired.

"Oh, how careless of me! Allow me to introduce you—this is Janice, my daughter-in-law." Nina's demeanor softened noticeably whenever she spoke of Janice. She even grasped Janice's hand affectionately.

A shadow passed over Nellie's features, though she mustered a faint smile. "I had no idea Aiden was married. That's quite the surprise."

"Indeed, the marriage was rather hurried. But we can always have a grand wedding later," Nina responded with a dismissive wave of her hand.

Her words seemed to cast a deeper shadow over Nellie, the subtle change in her expression nearly imperceptible. Yet, nothing escaped Janice's keen observation.

A smirk played at the corners of her mouth as she considered the possibility that Nellie harbored feelings for Aiden. She wondered why Nellie, a woman of her caliber, would take an interest in Aiden, a man society dismissed as a cripple. Could it be a genuine affection that transcended societal norms?

"Considering your doubts about the Ramirez family's hospitality, I'm eager to hear your thoughts on the matter, Janice," Nellie's soft voice broke through, snapping Janice out of her wandering thoughts.

Casting a sidelong glance at Laurie and Delilah, Janice said, "Delilah calls me out for supposedly wearing a knockoff. Yet, you propose we dismiss this affront quietly? Surely, that isn't fitting, is it? Are you perhaps shielding Delilah from repercussions?"

Nellie's expression changed noticeably.

The implication that the Ramirez family might be protecting Delilah could spark controversy and insinuations of underlying deals between the two families. This potential scandal threatened to tarnish both the reputation of the Ramirez family and her personal standing.

"You have a point. I may have been too impulsive earlier." After a brief pause, Nellie declared, "To stay fair, I shall take a neutral stance and verify the authenticity of the Blue Heart necklace in question."

Turning to Delilah, she inquired, "You're accusing Janice's Blue Heart of being a knockoff—care to back that up with proof?"

Delilah's face contorted slightly. She hadn't anticipated Janice's tenacity and refusal to back down.

"My Blue Heart was procured by my brother, Carman Edwards, who leveraged his connections. He assured me that his friend, a student of Leah Sugden, was the source."

With conviction in her tone, Delilah confidently proclaimed, "Miss Ramirez, doesn't this sufficiently demonstrate that Janice's piece is nothing but a knockoff?"

Nellie's expression turned into a frown. Aware of Carman's fame as a popular male vocalist, she pondered the ease with which he could have acquired the Blue Heart necklace.

She turned her attention to Janice. "And what about your proof?"

Janice, instead of responding, flashed a mischievous grin at Delilah. "You seem so certain that my Blue Heart is a fake. How about a bet, then?"

"A bet?" Delilah thought for a second, then let out a dismissive scoff. "Why on earth would I engage in a bet with you?"

“Scared, are you?” Janice taunted, shaking her head. “After all your talk, you’ve yet to present any real evidence of the Blue Heart’s authenticity.”

“Isn’t the mention of my brother, Carman, sufficient?”

Chapter 106:

“Oh, is dropping Carman’s name supposed to be that influential? Does it mean you can dine out for free on his reputation?” Janice sneered disdainfully. “Wake up, Delilah. Carman is a mere singer.”

Her biting words and piercing look left everyone in shock.

Despite Carman’s massive popularity and the support of Edwards Group, Janice dismissed him as a mere singer. Her words sparked fury in both Delilah and Laurie.

“How dare you belittle my son like that?” Laurie challenged sharply.

“You have no right to humiliate Carman’s accomplishments,” Delilah said fiercely.

“Cut the nonsense. Are you brave enough to place a bet?” Janice’s response was cold. “If not, it just shows your doubt about the authenticity of what Carman provided!”

Janice’s formidable tone made Delilah’s heart race. She knew she couldn’t afford to show fear. Regaining her composure, she assured herself that Janice was merely attempting to intimidate her. The Blue Heart, obtained by Carman, had to be authentic. Clearly, Janice was using the challenge as a scare tactic.

“Alright, I accept your challenge,” Delilah said, her voice tense. “Fail to prove your point, and you will kneel and slap yourself until I say stop.”

This bold declaration caused a ripple of shock among the bystanders. Everyone’s eyes then turned to Nellie, questioning whether the host would approve such a daring bet.

“With pleasure.” Nellie grinned. “Consider me the official witness to your bet.”

Eyeing Janice’s troubled expression, Delilah sensed her unease, strengthening her confidence. “I have taken up your challenge, Janice. Will you accept mine?”

Nina’s worried glance fell on Janice. “Is this wise?”

“Fear not,” Janice replied with a calm smile. “I only propose bets I’m sure to win. Just watch.”

“Very well!” Nina affirmed, throwing her support behind Janice. “Delilah, I’m prepared to take your bet,” Janice began, her tone measured. “However, I propose a small change.”

“What adjustment?” Delilah asked cautiously.

“Should it prove that your item is a counterfeit, then you will kneel and sing a song,” Janice said with composure. “I’ve slapped you too many times and it has lost its appeal to me.”

“Now, I wish to hear you sing a song.”

The implications of Janice’s proposition darkened Delilah’s expression considerably. The words suggested that Janice had already slapped her many times. If she lost this time, she would have to kneel and sing a song to entertain Janice. Such provocations were intolerable to Delilah.

“Janice, this is crossing the line,” Laurie said, her voice tense with anger. “Delilah only suggested you remove the Blue Heart for your benefit, and yet you persist in degrading her. Your intentions are clearly spiteful.”

Janice’s laugh was dismissive. “Oh, please. If Delilah had my best interests at heart, she would have advised me privately. Instead, she chose to publicly accuse me of wearing a fake, clearly intending to disgrace me. Everyone sees through her, except you.”

At this, Nina chimed in with a sneer, “So typical of the Edwards family, preferring the adopted child over their own. Such blindness in a mother.”

The biting remarks from Janice and Nina left Laurie and Delilah reeling, feeling the sting of public ridicule.

Chapter 107:

“Are both parties in agreement?” Nellie cut in, pressing for a resolution. “If there are no further objections, let’s proceed to present the evidence.” With that, she looked at Janice.

Unflinching, Janice met Nellie’s steady look and continued confidently, “Ladies and gentlemen, the Blue Heart is the brainchild of Leah Sugden, chief designer at Freak Design. You all know her, don’t you?”

The assembled crowd murmured their acknowledgment.

Encouraged by their response, Janice added, “Leah always embeds a unique mark on her finest creations. This signature not only signifies her pride but also serves to authenticate her work.”

As Janice finished speaking, murmurs swept through the crowd.

“Leah embeds secret marks? That’s new to me.”

“If it were common knowledge, wouldn’t that defeat its purpose as a security measure?”

“Yet, how is Janice privy to such exclusive information?”

Confusion rippled among the attendees, all eyes on Janice for clarity.

Nellie’s brow creased in skepticism. Without a solid explanation from Janice, her claims might appear fabricated.

Scanning the curious faces, Janice said, “Leah disclosed this about the mark to JE.”

Delilah’s expression changed dramatically at the mention of JE.

Still, whispers of uncertainty persisted in the crowd.

“It’s known that Leah and JE are linked, yet...”

“JE happens to be my best friend.”

Janice’s revelation silenced the crowd.

Disbelief painted the faces around her; if JE had indeed shared the secret with Janice, then her knowledge of the mark was credible.

“I recall now! At last week’s fashion design contest, Layne mentioned that Janice is JE’s friend,” said an attendee who had been at the event.

This piece of information confirmed Janice’s claim about her friendship with JE.

Nina glanced at Janice in surprise, not expecting her daughter-in-law to have such a connection.

She became more certain that the Edwards family had failed to recognize Janice’s value, and with each passing moment, she found herself growing fonder of her.

Nellie’s look turned contemplative.

Janice had been cast out by the Edwards family and was supposed to be down and out. Even though she was now Aiden’s wife, her origins would always be a point of criticism. Now, Janice’s connection to JE significantly boosted her reputation.

This newfound status outshone her former ties to the Edwards family, given JE's global acclaim as a legendary designer revered by the elite.

Janice lifted the Blue Heart necklace from around her neck and said, "This piece is marked on the reverse with the initials LJE. A comparison of the engravings on both necklaces will reveal the genuine article."

As she prepared to reveal the engraving on the Blue Heart, Delilah, in a sudden outburst, lunged forward, causing the Blue Heart necklace to tumble from Janice's grasp and fall to the floor. Simultaneously, the Blue Heart necklace in her possession clanked beside it.

"What are you doing?" Nina clutched Delilah's wrist firmly, her tone severe. "Are you trying to confuse both necklaces?" Everyone frowned. With the two necklaces mixed up, even if they confirmed one had the letters LJE, they still couldn't figure out which one belonged to Janice.

Chapter 108:

Janice, visibly annoyed, confronted Delilah. "Your audacity knows no bounds."

"Why continue this act, Janice?" Delilah asked, now visibly distressed. "You've already shamed me once; must you persist in tormenting me? Yes, I concede, my necklace is a counterfeit. Are you pleased now?"

Her scheme was clever; she not only obscured the truth but also portrayed herself as a victim of circumstances, excusing her earlier desperation.

Laurie had been momentarily stunned, believing that Delilah was about to be exposed. However, when she heard this, she quickly regained her focus.

"Janice, your previous actions caused lasting damage to Delilah's mind, and yet here you are, dredging up past grievances to push her even further. Your cruelty is boundless!"

Delilah and Laurie were clearly trying to shift all blame onto Janice, casting themselves as the wronged parties. Yet Janice maintained her composure, seemingly unfazed by their tactics.

“Did I do anything wrong? The one who did wrong things is Delilah,” she said coolly.

“You dare!” Delilah snapped.

“Let’s have order!” Nellie cut through the escalating tension sharply. “With the Blue Heart necklaces indistinguishable now, it seems we can’t verify their origins, so...”

“Who claims it’s impossible to distinguish them?” A cold, assertive voice interrupted.

Surprised, Nellie turned to see a distinguished man in a wheelchair making his entrance.

Aiden?

Nellie was surprised to see Aiden show up here. Traditionally, Aiden avoided public appearances at charity events, particularly since his accident. What brought him here now?

Her gaze flickered to Janice. Could Aiden’s appearance be linked to her?

“Why are you here, Aiden?” Nina approached, puzzled by his attendance at an event he typically avoided.

With a mild smile directed at Janice, Aiden said, “My wife faces adversity here. It wouldn’t be right for me not to defend her.” A gentle smile played on Janice’s lips.

She had been moments away from contacting Leah for assistance, but Aiden’s timely intervention alleviated that necessity. Her circumstances were delicate; unintended revelations about her status might restrict her current freedom.

“Honey, you look so handsome today.” Janice approached Aiden and leaned down, her smile affectionate and proud.

Aiden was visibly moved, his eyes softening as he admired Janice's radiant beauty. "And you, my dear, look beautiful today." Indeed, she was breathtaking.

Janice's ensemble for the evening, a black off-shoulder gown accented with a white shawl, enhanced her royal demeanor, setting hearts fluttering.

Their stunning presence momentarily captivated the crowd. The elegant poise of Aiden paired with Janice's grace portrayed them as a princely couple straight out of a fairy tale.

Nellie, her tone cold, couldn't resist asking, "Aiden, can you verify that the Blue Heart necklace Janice is wearing is authentic?"

With a measured look at Nellie, Aiden responded, "Indeed. To suggest that my wife possesses a counterfeit is unbelievable. Would the Green family not have the resources or integrity to ensure authenticity?"

The notion seemed to hang in the air, leaving the crowd to ponder. Given the Green family's status, the idea of them flaunting a fake was indeed far-fetched. Claiming that Aiden's wife was wearing a knockoff was, without a doubt, absurd.

Chapter 109:

"Mr. Green, your family's influence and wealth are undeniable, yet that does not eliminate the chance of deception," Delilah argued persistently, still convinced of the necklace's inauthenticity. "Janice's Blue Heart is a fake."

With a snap of his fingers, Aiden signaled Braylen, who stepped forward and flung a document at Delilah.

"Examine this closely!"

Caught off guard, Delilah retrieved the document, her confidence faltering as she scanned its contents. The document was an auction certificate, complete with detailed descriptions and images of the Blue Heart, including a photo showing its distinctive engraving, WE.

Confronted with this undeniable evidence, Delilah's determination crumbled.

"This can't be happening!" Delilah nearly unraveled, her hands itching to shred the contract, but Nellie took it from her. After reviewing the document, Nellie frowned and said to Delilah, "It's verified. The Blue Heart with Janice is authentic."

"It turns out the piece sold at today's Bridgeway Auction has been acquired by Mr. Green. He's the elusive tycoon."

"It seems this is a clear case of the pot calling the kettle black," someone remarked. "The Edwards family seems more and more like a joke, a complete embarrassment."

Derisive and disdainful looks swept through the crowd. Overwhelmed by humiliation, Laurie's cheeks burned with the desire to vanish.

As Delilah's eyes fluttered shut, on the brink of fainting, Janice intervened with a kick to her knee.

"Ah!" Delilah's sharp cry echoed as she crumpled to her knees.

"Feigning unconsciousness once more?" Janice grabbed Delilah's arm and smirked wickedly. "Still waiting on that song you owe me, Delilah."

"Janice, I suddenly feel so ill..." Delilah's complexion drained, her dramatic shift even catching Janice off guard.

"Sick, are you? That's reasonable," Janice said, her voice dripping with contempt for Delilah's deception. "I would be disappointed if you felt fine."

“Janice, release her this instant! She’s in agony!” Laurie, filled with anxiety, hurried forward to pull Janice away. Aiden signaled to Braylen, who stepped in to block Laurie.

“Mrs. Edwards, please hold back,” Aiden mocked. “Delilah is merely honoring her bet. Surely you wouldn’t want her labeled as dishonest.”

“Aiden Green, do you want to drive her to her grave?” Laurie’s voice cracked with desperation. “Remember, she was once your fiancée!”

“Stop this now!” Aiden exclaimed, his expression one of disgust. “I’ve had enough of this drama for tonight; it’s making me feel sick.”

The force of his declaration left Laurie reeling, while Delilah looked to her for support.

Laurie turned to Nellie sharply. “This is the Ramirez family’s territory. Will you just stand by as Delilah is degraded before all?”

Nellie’s expression was torn, but Aiden pressed on. “As the mediator, surely you aren’t biased?” Aiden’s intense gaze and thinly veiled threat sent shivers through Nellie.

It was a clear intimidation. Defying Aiden could spell disaster for the Starlit Club.

“Alright.” Nellie paused to take a deep breath. “Since Delilah agreed to the bet, she is obligated to see it through.”

Chapter 110:

Laurie shouted, “Nellie!” But it was too late; Janice was already forcing Delilah down.

Looking over Delilah, Janice demanded, “Start singing. Let’s not disappoint the audience.”

Her hand tightened around Delilah’s neck, producing a crackling noise.

Pain overwhelmed Delilah, her vision clouding, her consciousness reeling. "I'll sing!"

"Well done," Janice responded, stepping back with crossed arms to observe.

Swallowed by disgrace, Delilah harbored fantasies of vengeance against Janice, yet the pressing reality of the bet coerced her into compliance.

With no other options and a heavy heart, she began her song, each note filled with humiliation.

Delilah's voice was raspy as she sang off-key, sounding quite awful.

She finished her song and, overwhelmed by humiliation, fainted with her eyes rolling back.

At this moment, she was truly unconscious.

Laurie quickly ran to Delilah, lifted her into her arms, and carried her away.

Their departure marked the end of the spectacle as the mother-daughter pair exited.

The onlookers, having witnessed the scene, followed Nellie into the club's lobby. Tomorrow's newspapers would surely spotlight the incident with Delilah, a humiliating blow to the Edwards family's reputation.

"Mr. Green, the Blue Heart..." Braylen held out the genuine Blue Heart necklace.

Aiden looked at it with disinterest and said, "Discard it. I refuse to let my wife wear something that some certain person has touched."

Braylen paused, shocked by the extravagance. The Blue Heart was a unique piece worth over twenty million dollars. And yet, Aiden was willing to discard it.

Where could it possibly be thrown? It wouldn't bother Aiden if someone else found it, but it mattered to Braylen.

Give it to me," Janice interjected, taking the necklace. "Despite your opinion, I find it useful."

Aiden gave her a brief look and responded, "Do as you like."

Nina walked up and asked, "Aiden, how did you know Janice was being targeted?"

Aiden hesitated, but Janice quickly responded, "It's probably because we have a deep connection as a couple, a sort of telepathy."

Nina, slightly jealous, rolled her eyes. "Jealousy is going to get the better of me with you two around. Aiden, you've grown so much, and now you're making me green with envy with all this affection. If Alcott were as thoughtful as Aiden, I'd be chuckling even in my dreams."

Janice grasped Nina's hand. "What do you mean, Nina? You still have me. From this moment on, I'm going to spoil you rotten."

Janice, you're still the sweetest," Nina said, smiling. "But you should spoil Aiden. As a mother, I'm beyond the age for such treats."

Seeing you two in love is all the happiness I need." Janice and Aiden exchanged a knowing look. It was clear Nina cherished Janice as her daughter-in-law. A split between the couple would devastate her.

Laughing heartily, Nina said, "Well, I'm off to find Leonie for a chat. After everything that's happened, it's only right. You lovebirds enjoy your time."