

Wrath 181

Chapter 181:

"But I don't like her." Aiden's eyes locked onto Janice, carrying an unmistakable warning beneath their surface.

Janice met his gaze without flinching. "Nina, given Aiden's objections, perhaps Sierra and I should seek accommodation elsewhere."

Aiden frowned, his eyes growing even colder. "You're planning to move out? Have you forgotten about—"

"Aiden, could it be you're worried about falling for Sierra's charms? Or perhaps that she might set her sights on you?" Janice interrupted him. "Or is it that you doubt the loyalty of your own wife?"

Her words were layered with meaning.

Janice understood Aiden's reluctance to have Sierra stay was due to the current tense situation. He couldn't be sure of Sierra's intentions—whether she was genuinely seeking shelter or sent by someone to gather intelligence. Her words had been deliberate, meant to assure Aiden that Sierra posed no threat to their carefully guarded plans.

Nina, catching the tension crackling between them, spoke up anxiously. "Aiden, Sierra is genuine to her core. She won't cause any trouble. And Janice's loyalty to you is absolute. Please don't doubt that."

Janice moved towards Aiden, bending down in front of him, and gently grasped his hand. Her eyes shimmered with earnestness as she looked at him.

"Aiden, you're on board with this, right?"

Aiden felt overwhelmed by Janice's presence, reminiscent of a captivating siren. Her tender gaze and soothing voice made it nearly impossible for him to object.

“Braylen, please take me back to my room.”

“Certainly.”

Although Aiden didn’t explicitly consent, his compliance was evident through his actions.

“Janice, I’m always impressed by how tactful you are,” Nina exclaimed, her voice laden with respect. “Aiden has always been stubborn. Once his mind is set, it seems nothing can sway him, yet you’ve managed to make him rethink. No question about it — you’re absolutely perfect for him.”

Janice offered no response, merely smiling as she observed Aiden walking away.

“Nina, why not give Sierra a tour of the home? I need to see how Aiden is doing.”

“Of course.”

Ascending the stairs, Janice opened the door and found Aiden perched near the expansive window, his gaze lost to the serene garden outside.

“Is there anything on your mind that you want to talk about?” she asked.

“Janice, how often have we found ourselves in this kind of situation?” Aiden’s tone was icy, stripping the air of any warmth. “Do you truly see yourself as my real wife?”

“Aren’t I?” Janice strolled towards him with deliberate slowness. “After all, we are married by law. It’s only natural for me to have a few requests, right?”

Aiden turned, his face a tapestry of conflicting emotions. His previous statements had been sharp, yet now he struggled to find words even harsher or more cutting.

Janice positioned herself across from him, her chin propped on her hand, a mischievous smile playing on her lips as she gazed at him. "Aiden, our marriage might be a mere contract, but that doesn't prevent me from being a genuine wife, does it? Or do you feel I'm getting too caught up in this role?"

Aiden parted his lips to speak, yet no words emerged.

Chapter 182:

Janice's smile deepened, her eyes twinkling with a teasing ambiguity. "What if we turned this act into something real and became an actual couple?"

Aiden's eyes narrowed, his heart skipping a beat in shock. "What are you suggesting?"

"Just as I said." Her eyes lingered on the backyard as a small smile played on her lips. "You're capable and handsome, and most importantly, I feel comfortable with you. Choosing you seems like a reasonable decision."

"Huh." Aiden fiddled with the bracelet on his wrist, his expression turning stormy. "You're flirting with danger—you know that, right?"

Janice shrugged. "Won't you think it over? You said yes to this partnership, so it must mean something, doesn't it?"

"Enough!" Aiden closed his eyes, taking a moment to gather his thoughts before he spoke again, his voice firm. "We are merely business partners. Once I acquire the shares, our association ends."

"Very well, if that's your wish." Janice rose from her seat, her gaze playful as she looked down at Aiden. "The joint venture between Delgado Jewelry and Freak Design should proceed without a hitch. During the celebration, I'll find a way to get Kenneth to talk."

Aiden offered no response, his expression unreadable.

Casting a final look over her shoulder, Janice paused at the doorway, her voice tinged with a hint of warning. "Aiden, make sure you have no regrets."

Her words hung heavily in the air, leaving Aiden momentarily lost in thought. Was she hinting at regret over not making their pretense a reality, or was it about allowing her to approach Kenneth?

Restlessness seized Aiden. He glanced down at the bracelet encircling his wrist, seeking solace in its familiarity, but found his emotions churning wildly instead.

Janice's earlier suggestion about turning their arrangement into something real had briefly tempted him. Yet, the memory of the woman who had saved his life lingered, a constant barrier to any new entanglement.

Resolved, Aiden reached for his phone and called Braylen. "Schedule another appointment with Dr. Newman."

Once the call ended, he sat back, his gaze drifting to the night sky, thoughts swirling like the dark clouds above.

Meanwhile, Carman returned home, his mind brimming with creative energy. He shut himself in his room, immersing himself in the world of music. The sounds of piano keys and his occasional bursts of laughter filtered through the door.

"I did it!" Clutching the freshly penned sheet music, he quickly dialed Delilah's number. "The new song is ready. Let's get it out there as soon as we can. This time, I'm set to stir up the music world once again."

"This is great, Delilah! My new song is finally done!"

After staying up all night, Carman burst out of his room in excitement. Although he looked unkempt, with his overgrown beard and bloodshot eyes, his energy was through the roof.

"I've been putting it off for so long, but I finally finished writing my new song. It's going to be another chart-topping sensation, and pretty soon, everyone will be talking about it. When that happens, Vernon can only drown in his regrets."

Delilah was initially taken aback by Carman's sudden frenzy, but she smiled when she found out the reason behind it. "I always believed in you, Carman. You simply lacked inspiration, hence your recent slump. Now that you've found it, the music just flowed out of you, didn't it? You truly are a genius, Carman."

Chapter 183:

Carman basked in Delilah's praises. His spirits were still high despite his exhaustion. "You're right! That single, creative spark is so crucial for geniuses like me. If I can't find my passion, I'd rather not create anything than settle for mediocrity." His mindset was reasonable enough, especially since it justified his previous inability to write a new composition.

"What is going on here?" Laurie and Connor had just arrived home and were curious about the unmistakable cheer in the air.

"Dad, Mom! I've just finished my new song. Not only that, but I can guarantee that it's an absolute masterpiece!" Carman exclaimed. "You'll be hearing it everywhere soon."

Connor and Laurie exchanged a happy glance, eager to hear their son's newest work of art. After all, Carman had been talking about writing a new song for so long now, with little to no success. Now that he had finally managed to pull it off, they were more than relieved for him.

"Well done," Connor said, patting Carman on the shoulder. "With this, you've proven that everyone in the Edwards family can thrive even without Janice."

Laurie, Lowell, and Connor were already experiencing an outstanding streak of misfortunes, but as long as Carman succeeded in his field, no one could tell them that their past success was all thanks to Janice. They were going through a rough patch. Once they overcame it, they would surely rise back to the top.

"Of course," Carman said with an arrogant sniff, lifting his chin and puffing out his chest. "She had the gall to claim that she was the one inspiring me in my work. How dare she?"

"Take credit? See, even without her hovering around me, I was able to create a new song. A masterpiece, I'm telling you!"

“Daryl, tell the kitchen staff to prepare a special dinner tonight in celebration of Carman’s accomplishment.”

“Certainly, ma’am.”

Laurie’s mood had improved, if only slightly. Who wouldn’t be pleased by this development? She had humbled herself in pursuit of a collaboration, but none of the other companies were willing to lend her a hand. She had spent most of the past few days racking her brains for a viable solution.

A lot of money had already been invested in this project. If it remained on hold, not only would the company struggle to continue its operations, but Laurie’s status in the fashion world would be questioned and ultimately discredited. She would become the laughingstock among her peers.

“Mom.” Delilah walked up to Laurie and took her hand. “I have a surprise for you.”

“A surprise?” Laurie frowned in mild confusion. “What kind of surprise?”

“Here, take a look!” Delilah handed over a document.

Laurie still looked puzzled as she took the document and glanced at it. The moment she read the bold, capital letters on top, her eyes widened in shock.

A collaboration proposal with Sun Runway.

“Is this real?” she muttered in disbelief.

Delilah nodded. “I put in a lot of effort to secure this.”

“Delilah, you...” Laurie’s eyes welled up with tears of gratitude. She never expected that the problem that had plagued her all this time would be resolved by her beloved daughter.

“What is it, Laurie?” Connor had noticed his wife’s teary expression and peeked at the document. He, too, was astonished. “Are you saying that Sun Runway is willing to collaborate with us?”

Chapter 184:

“Sun Runway might not hold the same renown as Freak Design, but its prowess is undoubtedly formidable. With Sun Runway backing us, I’m confident we can push this project to new heights,” Delilah declared. Her smile was radiant yet tinged with the gravity of the sacrifices she had made to secure this partnership. Still, she maintained a calm and collected facade to put her family at ease.

“Delilah, you really are my little angel,” Laurie said, wrapping her arms around Delilah in a warm embrace. “I must admit, I had my reservations about you initially, but now it’s clear—you’re our lucky charm.”

“Comparing Janice to Delilah is downright insulting,” Connor sneered with a dismissive wave of his hand. “Without her new support from the Green family, she’d be nowhere. This letter of intent? This just proves we haven’t wasted our efforts on the wrong person over the years.”

Laurie nodded firmly, her eyes reflecting a mix of resolve and relief. “You wouldn’t believe the ordeal I faced today. To move this project forward, I’ve been tirelessly seeking partners, facing door after door slammed in my face. But now, Delilah’s letter of intent—it’s nothing short of a miracle. If we partner with Sun Runway, all those who turned me away will rue the day.”

Laurie felt the weight of her earlier frustrations easing slightly. Yet, she found herself puzzling over why Sun Runway, with its well-known standoffish attitude, would agree to ally with her company. How had Delilah managed to forge connections at Sun Runway and convince them to partner up?

“Delilah...”

“Mom, I already know what you’re going to ask,” Delilah interrupted, her eyes momentarily clouded. “All I can tell you is that I’ve given up a great deal for this partnership. But if it means helping you, I’m prepared to make any sacrifice.”

“Delilah, my beloved daughter.” Laurie pulled her into another tight embrace, tears flowing freely down her cheeks. “I promise, someday I’ll find a way to make it up to you.”

“Absolutely, we owe her that much!” Connor agreed emphatically. “Once Edwards Group surmounts this challenge, I will transfer ten percent of the company’s shares to Delilah.”

Carman listened, dumbfounded by his declaration. “Dad, you really spoil Delilah. Ten percent of the company’s shares? That’s billions. I only hold five percent.”

A hint of jealousy surfaced in him, yet he couldn’t help but feel truly happy for Delilah.

Delilah was absolutely ecstatic, yet she expertly masked her emotions, allowing only a trace of bitterness to surface. “Dad, there’s really no need for shares. Knowing you accept me as your daughter, whether I was born into this family or not, fills me with complete joy.”

Her declaration subtly shifted the family’s perception, further casting Janice in an unfavorable light. Janice seemed to bring nothing but chaos, while Delilah brought value. Their past judgments appeared more justified than ever.

“Dad, I’ve been thinking about how we can revitalize Edwards Group,” Delilah began, her voice laced with determination. “Our recent loss at the bid was a setback, but if we can secure a major new contract, it could be just the push we need to bounce back.”

A spark of hope reignited in Connor’s expression. “Delilah, you have connections that could help us?”

With a coy smile, Delilah nodded. “I might just make something happen. I’ve built a network over the years. Let’s see if I can leverage it.”

“You’re nothing short of remarkable, Delilah. If you pull this off and help our group regain its stature, I’ll ensure that thirty percent of my shares are yours,” Connor announced, his voice thick with excitement.

Chapter 185:

Carman and Laurie exchanged incredulous looks. Connor’s humiliation had cut so deep that he was willing to offer Delilah thirty percent of the shares as a reward if she managed to succeed.

“I’ll give it my all.” Beneath Delilah’s composed exterior, her heart thrilled with victory. The Edwards family was nothing more than gullible fools, duped by a handful of clever words. Next, it was Nellie’s turn to step up and prove her worth.

Carman’s new song was of exceptional quality, and the company naturally attached great importance to it. They allocated their best resources to ensure the recording was completed at lightning speed, and then they released it online. Countless fans, who had been eagerly waiting for Carman’s new song, were ecstatic when they heard the news.

“Carman’s new song is amazing! I know this will become the song of the year, I can feel it!”

“It took him a while to produce another banger, but it’s well worth the wait! Good things take time, after all. I’ll definitely be putting this song on repeat.”

“What an incredible song! I cried the first time I heard it. It’s so moving. It’s like my own life story was getting told through the music!”

The song started with a somber tone that gradually transitioned into a crescendo. It was made to build up a swell of emotions that exploded during the chorus, so it wasn’t surprising that many listeners were brought to tears.

Almost immediately after the release, fans shared Carman’s new song on every possible platform. Of course, they made sure to include lines upon lines of praise, and it ultimately became one of the top trending topics.

Carman was pleased with this outcome, as were the company’s executives, including Yvonne.

The song was doing so well on the charts that the company decided to organize a fan meeting for Carman. They wanted it to be a lavish affair where he would sing the song live. They were banking on his performance to captivate the entire city and extend the song’s reach worldwide.

“Well, Yvonne? Didn’t I tell you?” Carman was seated on the couch with his legs crossed and a smug look on his face. “I told you my new song would be a hit, and now here we are.”

“Yes, yes, your song sure is a godsend this time around.” Yvonne adjusted her glasses and smiled at him before gracefully taking a spot beside him. She leaned against the armrest and cupped her cheek as she glanced sideways at him. “So? What gift would you like?” She blinked her beautiful eyes at him, and he was instantly captivated by their undeniable allure.

Yvonne had always kept herself well-maintained, so even now, in her thirties, her beauty still rivaled that of the younger stars.

The mature charm she exuded was undeniable. Wearing her gold-rimmed glasses to match her formal blouse and pencil skirt, she carried an air of sophistication that Carman just couldn’t resist.

“What are you trying to do, Yvonne?” Carman rasped, averting his gaze away from her. “Before my new song came out, you weren’t this warm and open to me.”

Yvonne removed her glasses. Her eyes looked even brighter and more enticing without the barrier. “Are you sulking? If I hadn’t pressured you, would you have produced a new song this quickly?” Her smooth, seductive voice was right next to his ear, and the warm breath that fanned the side of his face made Carman bristle.

He swallowed a lump in his throat and cursed under his breath. He was about to make a move when his phone rang.

Carman glanced at the caller ID and frowned.

Chapter 186:

“Who is it?” Yvonne asked, her interest piqued by his reaction.

“It’s Vernon.”

When Yvonne heard that, she frowned slightly, confused. “Answer it.”

Carman ignored her and ended the call with a sneer. “He’s probably calling to apologize. The last time we met, he had his bodyguards beat me up. I still remember vividly how humiliated I felt. He must be

regretting his actions after seeing the success of my new song. I'll let him stew and wait until he shows enough sincerity before I pay him any attention."

Yvonne's frown deepened as she put her glasses back on. "Carman, Vernon holds a significant position within the fashion industry. He has access to most, if not all, of the top-tier resources in the field. If you're able to humble yourself and make peace with him, I can assure you that it will be worth it."

"What's this, Yvonne? Do you think I'm not skilled enough to compete with Vernon?"

"That's right," Yvonne replied without batting an eye. "So far, you've only produced one hit song—"

"Yvonne Byrd." Carman cut her off and grabbed her by the chin without warning. "I'm telling you right now, I am more than capable of producing hit after hit. Look me in the eye and tell me I am not on par with Vernon Lopez."

Yvonne's expression shifted.

To be fair, if Carman did manage to churn out this kind of music consistently, he could indeed challenge Vernon.

After all, success was usually measured by popularity these days. If Carman could pull off everything he had just declared, he would be well on his way to becoming an industry favorite.

Vernon might be a formidable force in his own right, but even he couldn't withstand the collective efforts of his rivals from different sides.

"Alright. I respect your decision," Yvonne said with a sigh. She tried to stand up, but Carman pinned her down against the couch.

"It seems to me that we have some unfinished business to settle."

For the first few seconds, Yvonne could only stare at him in shock. But her gaze soon turned teasing. “So eager to unwrap your gift... I wouldn’t dare to spoil your fun.” With that, she leaned in willingly.

As soon as Carman ended the call, Vernon’s face immediately darkened.

“He really just hung up on me,” Vernon muttered in disbelief, anger surging through him. He nearly threw his phone across the room, but the sight of Leah sitting quietly next to him made him reconsider. “Do you think we should have the PR team handle this?”

Leah, her gaze sharp and arms folded, took a moment to assess the situation. Dressed in a striking red gown, her bold makeup matched the commanding presence she projected, which caused Vernon to stiffen almost reflexively.

“I’ll handle it myself,” Leah said, reaching for her phone to dial Janice.

Janice’s voice, casual and unhurried, filled the line. “Leah, what’s going on?”

A rare smile broke over Leah’s typically composed face at the sound. “Janice, did you get a chance to hear Carman’s latest track?”

“A new release from Carman?” Janice sounded genuinely surprised. Leah realized then that Janice was out of the loop, which was understandable given her recent estrangement from the Edwards family.

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“I was wondering if you ghostwrote it for him, but it seems I was mistaken,” Leah continued.

After a pause, Janice caught on. “So, does it sound like something I might have done?”

“Precisely!” Leah confirmed, her voice firm. “There’s no way he could produce something this good on his own. I know your style, and I’m pretty sure you’re behind this.”

Janice's silence deepened, her mind humming. Had Carman heard that tune during their last encounter at Castle Shopping Center?

A sharp sneer crossed her face as she processed the thought. "Leah, no need to fret. He'll get what's coming to him."

"Then I'll sit back and watch the drama unfold." Leah's response came with a wry smirk. Then she ended the call with a sharp click.

Vernon was drenched in sweat by now.

Was that JE on the phone?

Leah used to seek privacy when speaking with JE, yet today she had conversed openly beside him. Perhaps, Vernon mused, he had finally earned JE's approval?

His heart swelled with hopeful excitement at the prospect.

"Vernon, she instructed us to step back and watch events unfold," Leah informed him.

"Absolutely," Vernon responded, nodding in agreement before he ventured a bold request. "May I have the privilege of meeting her someday?"

Leah's gaze hardened, sending a shiver down Vernon's spine. He hastily expressed his apologies for the presumptuous question. Yet, unexpectedly, Leah's expression softened into a smile. "Yes, you will meet her."

Back at Delgado Jewelry, Janice ended her call and opened Twitter, instantly bombarded by the buzz surrounding Carman's new track.

She clicked on a trending link and was greeted by a melody she recognized all too well.

“So, it is that song from Castle Shopping Center,” Janice muttered to herself, piecing together that Carman must have overheard and memorized it, turning it into his own as was his habit.

Once, she had willingly shared her music with him, since he was family. Now, those days felt like a distant memory.

“Janice, Delilah, could you come here?” Stella’s voice interrupted Janice’s thoughts.

Delilah approached with a knowing grin. “Today’s the submission deadline, Janice. All set?”

“Worry about yourself,” Janice retorted, strutting toward Stella’s office with confidence in her stride.

Delilah watched her leave, her smile twisting into a sneer. “We’ll see if you’re still smiling later.”

Delilah glanced at Cheryl and exchanged a meaningful look. Cheryl gave a subtle nod, as if they had a silent understanding. Earlier, in the break room, Cheryl had taken advantage of Janice’s absence. Quietly, she had swapped out the USB containing Janice’s design.

When Janice tried to present her work, she would find that the USB drive was empty. Knowing Stella’s temper, she would surely explode and berate Janice. Any previous successes of Janice would be overshadowed by this failure. The confidence and pride she’d once carried would be reduced to a cruel joke.

Chapter 188:

“What’s going on here?” Sierra caught their exchange of glances and felt uneasy. She narrowed her eyes and asked pointedly, “You two planning something, are you?”

“Miss Ramirez, what do you mean?” Cheryl quickly looked away and forced a smile. “I was just thinking about how Delilah treated me to lunch twice before. It was so kind of her, so I wanted to return the favor today.”

“Miss Ramirez, care to join us?” Delilah offered, appearing completely innocent. “You left so quickly last time, I doubt you enjoyed it much. I wouldn’t mind treating you again today.”

“No, thanks. You’d probably poison the food,” Sierra replied coldly. She sensed something was off but couldn’t quite put her finger on it.

Delilah let out a soft chuckle, tossed her hair over her shoulder, and strode confidently toward Stella’s office.

“What’s making her so happy?” Sierra murmured, watching Delilah’s figure disappear down the hallway. Her concern deepened. “Could they be plotting against Janice?”

A colleague’s voice broke into her thoughts. “Hey, have you heard? Carman just dropped a new song, and it’s incredible!”

“Yeah, I heard about it too! Took him a while, but the quality’s amazing. Definitely worth the wait.”

Sierra overheard the chatter, confused. Wasn’t Carman struggling to come up with new music? How did he suddenly release a hit, and why was it so successful?

Soon after, a familiar tune reached her ears.

Sierra’s eyes shot wide open, and she jumped up. “That is... Carman’s new song?”

“Yeah! Carman’s streaming it live now. It’s his new track. Hey, what are you doing?”

Sierra grabbed her colleague’s phone, staring intently at the live stream. Carman was performing his latest song, her face full of emotion.

Wasn’t this the familiar melody of the piano piece “Reborn” that Janice had given her? How had it become Carman’s new hit, “Life”?

In the office, Janice sat across from Stella. Delilah walked in and glanced at Janice. The latter looked calm now, but would she stay that way?

“Alright, everyone’s here,” Stella announced, reclining in her chair with arms folded. “Today’s the deadline. Let’s see your design drafts.”

“Stella, here’s mine,” Delilah said quickly, passing over her USB drive with her design work.

Stella plugged in the USB and opened the file. With just one look, her eyes brightened. “Impressive. This design is quite sophisticated.”

She looked at Delilah. “It seems you were too nervous last time to deliver your best. Today’s work has certainly redeemed your reputation.”

Janice raised an eyebrow, doubting that Delilah could create something worthy of such praise. It couldn’t be Laurie’s work either. Delilah knew nothing about design, and Laurie was barely average.

The most likely explanation? Delilah had enlisted a ghost designer, perhaps even someone renowned. That would explain Stella’s significant praise.

“Thanks, Stella. I really pushed myself, working through two nights to refine every aspect of the design.” Delilah’s eyes sparkled with pride, acting as if her efforts had been recognized. “As long as you’re pleased, all the hard work was worth it.”

After speaking, Delilah glanced at Janice’s cold expression. A sly grin crept onto her face. Still acting? She wondered what face Janice would make when finding out her USB drive was blank. She couldn’t wait!

Chapter 189:

“And your design, Janice?” Stella asked, turning her attention to Janice.

Janice cast a quick glance at Delilah and gave a mysterious smile. “I don’t have my design with me right now.”

“What do you mean?” Stella asked.

“It’s with Delilah.”

Delilah was stunned.

Stella frowned and turned to Delilah. “Care to explain?”

Before Delilah could respond, Janice continued smoothly, “Delilah, you mentioned wanting to review my design to exchange feedback. I thought you’d be done by now.”

Delilah stammered, flustered. Janice’s unexpected move shattered her plans. She never thought Janice would take control like this. Was Janice aware of her scheme, waiting for the right moment to expose her in front of Stella?

Delilah found herself cornered, unsure how to respond without implicating herself.

“You didn’t lose it, did you?” Janice asked, her gaze sharp and probing. “Weren’t you just talking with Cheryl?”

At the mention of Cheryl, Delilah stiffened in panic and stared at Janice in disbelief.

Janice knew it! Panic gripped Delilah as the realization set in. If Janice accused her of stealing the USB, Stella would undoubtedly investigate, and the fallout could be catastrophic.

“Ah, your memory’s sharper than mine.” Delilah forced a strained smile, piecing together a quick excuse. “I must’ve left your drive with Cheryl. I’ll ask her to send it over.”

Stella watched the exchange with a sharp eye. Well-versed in office politics, she sensed the underlying tension but decided to let it play out for the moment.

“Have her bring it over immediately,” Stella commanded.

“Of course,” Delilah replied quickly.

Confused, Cheryl soon arrived with the USB drive in hand. She looked at Delilah, puzzled. After all the trouble they had gone through, why were they reverting to the original plan now? Unable to explain, Delilah gave Cheryl a quick wink, signaling her to leave.

Stella inserted the USB into her computer. As the contents loaded, her brows furrowed tightly. She cast a cold glance at Janice. “Are you sure you completed your work?”

“What’s wrong?” Janice’s voice carried a mix of surprise and concern.

Stella didn’t respond verbally but instead rotated her laptop to show Janice the screen.

The USB was empty.

Delilah froze in shock. What was happening? Did Cheryl bring the wrong drive?

Panicking, she blurted, “Cheryl must’ve made a mistake. I’ll ask her to bring the right one.”

Janice’s smile broadened, playful yet sharp. “There’s no need. I just remembered that I gave you an empty drive.”

She then adopted a mock look of disappointment. “You said you wanted us to ‘learn from each other,’ but it seems like you never even looked at it. Delilah, why did you bother borrowing my USB drive in the first place?”

Delilah’s heart raced in panic as she realized Janice had outsmarted her.

Chapter 190:

Stella would now think she had borrowed Janice's USB drive to sabotage her presentation. Delilah had switched Janice's USB drive with an empty one, hoping Janice would have nothing to show, thus sabotaging her work.

What Delilah didn't anticipate was Janice turning the tables on her. Now that Delilah had admitted to borrowing the USB drive, it would reveal her true intention — not to study, but to undermine Janice. Since she hadn't even checked the contents, it was clear she meant to sabotage Janice.

As Delilah shook with rage, she noticed Stella's frigid gaze on her.

"Whatever grudges you have with each other, don't drag Delgado Jewelry into the mess. Do you understand, Delilah?" Stella asked.

"Stella..." Delilah started, but her voice faltered under the weight of the accusation.

"Where is your design, Janice?" Stella ignored Delilah and turned to Janice.

"Here." Janice produced a different USB drive and handed it over. This time, it wasn't empty.

Stella clapped upon seeing Janice's design, her eyes lighting up with admiration. "Remarkable, Janice. The style and elements you've used not only fit the Delgado Jewelry brand but also add a fresh, creative touch. Amazing."

A smile spread across Janice's face. "Do you still think I was making bold claims earlier?"

"Of course not. Your talent speaks for itself." Although Stella was an accomplished designer herself, she recognized that her talent and skills couldn't match Janice's. Her designs were mostly conservative, while Janice's were bold and innovative, always astounding and delighting.

"Both of your designs are excellent," Stella said, looking at Janice and Delilah. "Once the designs are finalized, we'll set a date for the exhibition. If all goes well, we'll be able to secure this collaboration with Freak Design. So, I want to remind you." She paused, her gaze locking onto Delilah. "Don't bring your personal issues to the exhibition."

Janice's lips curled into a smirk as she shot a mocking glance at Delilah. Feeling the weight of their gazes—one filled with warning, the other with mockery—Delilah seethed with frustration.

Now, Stella had her under close scrutiny, and if anything went wrong during the exhibition, Delilah would be the first one blamed.

"That's all for today. I'll post further instructions in the group chat. You may leave," Stella said, dismissing them.

Delilah stormed off before anyone else had the chance to move.

Janice quickly caught up with her, saying, "Do better next time, will you? Your tricks are outdated. Think of something more sophisticated. Otherwise, it'll be boring."

"Janice!" Delilah hissed, her anger flaring.

Janice turned away and walked off, unfazed and unbothered. She had just returned to her desk when Sierra approached, pouting and glaring.

"Janice!"

Janice looked at her, confused. "What happened?"

"I'm about to lose my shit," Sierra grumbled, stomping her feet. "Carman, that jerk, stole your gift!"

Sierra handed over her phone, just as the host of the live stream playing on the screen asked Carman a question.

"Can you share with us your thoughts on creating your new song titled 'Life,' Carman?"