

Wrath 201

Chapter 201:

Tess' heart faltered for a moment, though her composure never wavered. "True fulfillment comes from achieving what we strive for on our own. I don't know your...

"Identity or which company you might control, but if that's your idea of repayment, please reconsider. As I've said, saving lives is my duty as a doctor, and I expect nothing in return."

Her words stirred something in Aiden, drawing forth newfound admiration. "I apologize for my presumption. You truly are an exemplary doctor."

"Thank you," Tess responded with measured grace.

Aiden exchanged a glance with Braylen, who stepped forward to present a business card.

Tess accepted it, her eyes narrowing briefly over the text before setting it casually on her desk. "So you're Aiden Green. That explains your air of authority."

"I'll arrange the dinner. You'll hear from me once everything's settled."

"Understood."

Tess accompanied them to the door, watching Aiden's retreating figure.

Her heart fluttered in her chest as they disappeared from view. Perhaps those romance novels weren't so far-fetched after all—playing hard-to-get did have its merits.

When Aiden had offered to establish a hospital for her, the temptation had been almost overwhelming.

Yet rationality prevailed. After all, if she played her cards right, a few hospitals would be merely the beginning.

Back in her office, Tess picked up the business card, her eyes gleaming with calculated interest.

She had known Aiden's true identity before this. Their first encounter had marked him as someone extraordinary, prompting her investigation. The discovery that he was the Green family's heir only confirmed her suspicions.

Despite his disability, his position as heir remained secure. She'd maintained their connection, using his search for his mysterious savior as an opportunity to strengthen their bond.

Marriage might be too ambitious a hope for now, but cementing her position as his savior would give her ample time to win his heart.

"You seem unhappy, Mr. Green," Braylen said, pushing Aiden in his wheelchair. Although he usually avoided asking questions about his boss's personal matters, something in Aiden's demeanor compelled him to voice his curiosity at that moment. "You finally found the woman who saved you all those years ago. Shouldn't you be happy?"

Aiden's eyes clouded with doubt. He knew he should be celebrating. Instead, a strange sadness lingered, as if somewhere deep down, he'd hoped for a different ending to this story.

"Braylen, what was I really looking for all this time?" Aiden glanced at the bracelet on his wrist.

The question caught Braylen off guard. "To find her and repay her for saving your life."

For a moment, Aiden sat perfectly still. Then a bitter smile escaped him.

Chapter 202:

Yes, Braylen was right. Finding the woman who had saved him and repaying her had been the plan all along. So why did his heart feel so hollow?

Could his feelings for her run deeper than just wanting to say thank you?

Images of the past, when she had saved him, flashed through Aiden's mind. Apart from her appearance and the bracelet, everything else was a blur.

When she had saved him, he had felt a spark.

Finally, the reason for his disappointment clicked into place.

Over the years, his search for his savior had been relentless. Beyond repayment, he had yearned to know her, to understand every facet of her being, all to explain why his heart raced at the mere thought of her.

For all this time, his heart had belonged to that woman. Yet when he finally found Tess, instead of joy, he felt only a nagging irritation stirring in his chest.

This reality clashed sharply with everything he'd imagined.

There could be only one explanation for such a disconnect.

"Tess is not the woman from back then," Aiden declared, his voice dropping low as his eyes narrowed in certainty.

"Huh?" Braylen stared at Aiden, shock written across his features. "Didn't we just piece this puzzle together? Everything points to her—the accident's details match perfectly, and that bracelet on her wrist is the very one from your memories."

"No!" Aiden shut his eyes tight, his fingers finding their way to the tension building between his brows. "She is not that woman."

“Though gut feelings were hard to explain, he trusted his instincts on this. Tess wasn’t the woman who saved him. The bracelet on her wrist might be identical to his memories, but such pieces weren’t one of a kind.”

Just then, Aiden sensed something, and his eyes snapped open.

A familiar figure passed by in front of him.

It was Janice.

Her presence brought a calming effect to his troubled thoughts. He was about to call out when he noticed three people walking with her.

One was a disheveled man, wearing thick black-rimmed glasses, while another had a buzz cut and sharp, predatory eyes that gave off an intimidating air.

The third was a woman in a flowing white dress that highlighted her graceful figure, her eyes captivating.

Aiden’s experienced gaze told him these three were far from ordinary.

“It’s him!” Braylen’s fists clenched as his expression hardened. “He’s the man from the parking lot.”

Aiden’s gaze lingered on the man with the crew cut, his brow arching slightly in curiosity.

It wasn’t every day that someone who could put Braylen on edge appeared. But this man wasn’t just present; he was with Janice, treating her with a level of respect that bordered on reverence, like a subordinate addressing a superior. Yet, beneath the formal demeanor, there was an unexpected warmth, a faint trace of geniality.

“Keep an eye on this,” Aiden instructed curtly, his tone leaving no room for argument. He dismissed the idea of escorting Janice. Showing up now would only create unnecessary tension between them.

Chapter 203:

Meanwhile, Carman's new song was sweeping through the music scene like wildfire.

The track's popularity skyrocketed, turning it into a cultural sensation. Major collaborators clamored to ride the wave, eager to associate their brands with Carman's success.

As the accolades poured in, Carman quickly rose above his competitors, solidifying his position at the top of the charts. His social media following broke the ten-million mark, marking him as a top-tier singer-songwriter.

"OMG! Congratulations, Carman! Ten million followers, what a massive milestone!"

"Your new song is out of this world! It's a guaranteed contender for Song of the Year. I can't wait to see you accept the award!"

"I've had it on loop for two straight days. It's just that good!"

Amid the flood of praise, however, whispers of skepticism began to surface.

"Why does this song sound so familiar? I'm sure I've heard it somewhere before."

"Wait a second, I think I know where. I passed by Castle Shopping Center a few days ago, and I heard a piano piece that sounds just like this. Could Carman's song be related to it?"

"Plagiarism? Ugh, the music industry is full of copycats these days."

Carman's fans, fiercely loyal, quickly rose to his defense.

"Are you serious? Why would Carman plagiarize? Stop spreading lies."

"If Carman plagiarized, I'll delete my account."

"Same here. He'd never do something like that."

Whenever discordant voices surfaced online, Carman's fans struck with unrelenting ferocity, swiftly silencing skeptics. Before long, no one dared to question him openly.

In the presidential suite of Bengal Hotel, Yvonne stepped out of bed, a plush bath towel wrapped snugly around her. The soft fabric did little to hide her alluring figure, and Carman couldn't stop himself from stealing a glance, his throat tightening as he swallowed.

"Carman, there are quite a few accusations of plagiarism circulating online. Don't you think you should respond to them?"

Carman frowned, a flicker of irritation crossing his face. "Are you doubting me, Yvonne? You've seen how popular my new song is. It's natural for some jealous lowlifes to spread lies and hire trolls."

"I'm not doubting you," Yvonne replied calmly, holding his gaze. "But ignoring it won't make the problem go away. At the fan meeting, you should address it and clear your name. It'll give our PR team something solid to work with."

Carman leaned back, lighting a cigarette with deliberate ease. A cloud of smoke curled into the air as he studied her. "You trust me?"

"Of course I do."

"If you really trust me, why ask that question in the first place?" Carman flicked the ash into a nearby tray. "Listen, Yvonne. This song is entirely my work. I have every draft, every note. If those rumor-mongers keep pushing, we'll sue them for every penny."

Chapter 204:

As he spoke, Carman turned slightly, his gaze fixed on Yvonne with unshakable confidence. His bare chest, partially visible, caught her attention. Her breath hitched involuntarily, and her eyes darted away.

"Alright," Yvonne said, taking a deep breath to calm herself. "We've got an hour before the fan meeting. Let's head down and get ready."

"Hey!" Carman sprang forward, pressing Yvonne back onto the bed with a mischievous smirk. "I think we still have some time left. How about another round? I wasn't quite satisfied earlier."

Yvonne looked shocked for a moment, then winked at Carman. "Really? Aren't you worried I might just wear you out?"

Carman chuckled, his confidence unwavering. "I'm tougher than you think."

Carman's exclusive fan event took place in the grand banquet hall of Bengal Hotel.

The luxurious setup, with its elaborate decorations and lively atmosphere, left Carman feeling content and proud.

"Vernon's apology seemed genuine."

"You actually forgave him?" Yvonne asked, adjusting her glasses as curiosity flashed across her face. "That's unlike you."

Carman shot her a sly look, tilting her chin. "What's that supposed to mean?"

Yvonne rolled her eyes and lightly batted his hand away. "Seriously, we're in public. You should be mindful of your image. If your fans see this, it could turn some of them away."

"I understand what I'm doing," Carman said, pulling his hand back, his expression serious. "Vernon isn't getting off easy this time. He needs to kneel and make his apology in public."

Yvonne crossed her arms, a smirk tugging at her lips. Typical Carman. His pride was as relentless as ever, just like earlier when he'd bragged about his stamina in bed despite lasting only three minutes.

The exclusive fan event was a spectacle to behold. A live band, dazzling lights, and a meticulously designed program made it feel more like a full-scale concert than a casual gathering. The only drawback was the somewhat compact venue, but even that didn't diminish the event's grandeur.

Above the stage, shining brightly under the spotlight, a bold banner read, "Carman's Fan Meeting."

As the evening unfolded, the venue reached full capacity, buzzing with excitement. The crowd was filled with devoted fans of Carman, many of whom were well-off and eager to be part of the exclusive event.

While labeled as a fan meeting, the event was more of a high-end spectacle, a cleverly orchestrated blend of appreciation and profit-making.

Exorbitantly priced tickets lined the venue, and exclusive Carman merchandise ensured a steady stream of revenue.

The fans, oblivious to the underlying business motive, felt they were receiving an unparalleled experience, basking in Carman's presence.

In truth, the fan meeting was a calculated goldmine. Carman and his company orchestrated it, and the blindly devoted fans were the willing contributors.

Chapter 205:

"Carman! Carman! Carman!"

The electrifying chants echoed through the hall as Carman made his entrance.

Dressed in a dazzling, luxurious outfit, Carman stepped onto the stage with an air of confidence that sent the crowd into a frenzy.

“Ah! Carman, you’re so handsome!”

“I’m obsessed with you, Carman! Look at me, please!”

“Carman, do you accept fan boys? Love knows no bounds!”

The crowd’s overwhelming adoration brought a gleam of satisfaction to Carman’s face. He paused, soaking in the cheers, before raising a hand to quiet them.

“Good evening, everyone! It’s truly an honor to be here with all of you tonight,” Carman said smoothly, his voice charismatic as he addressed the crowd. “None of this would be possible without your unwavering support, the hard work of my team, and the dedication of my company. From the bottom of my heart, thank you.”

With a gracious bow, Carman triggered another eruption of applause.

“And now,” Carman continued, his tone growing sharper, “I’d like to take a moment to recognize our biggest sponsor for tonight’s event, Vernon Lopez. Thanks to his generous contributions, we’re able to celebrate in such a prestigious venue. Of course, we’ve had our share of disagreements, especially regarding the Blue Heart incident. But—”

“Don’t forgive him!”

Before Carman could conclude, a fan from the crowd shouted, “Vernon Lopez will never be forgiven. Carman was targeted and bullied online because Vernon provided a counterfeit necklace. You saw him as a trusted friend, yet he caused you so much harm. Vernon Lopez, you owe Carman an apology! You need to kneel and make it right. If you refuse, we will not forget this.”

This outburst made other fans realize that Vernon was the one who had caused Carman trouble. The fake Blue Heart necklace incident had triggered harsh online backlash against Carman. Though he had tried to set the record straight, the repercussions had lingered.

As staunch supporters of Carman, they felt a strong desire to see justice served. “Apologize! Apologize!”

“Kneel! Kneel!”

Their unified chants filled the room, creating an electrifying and charged atmosphere.

Vernon, standing to the side, squinted as he observed the scene. He could tell that Carman had orchestrated this moment, using the fan to provoke the crowd and force him into a public apology.

“Let’s stay calm, my dear fans,” Carman intervened with feigned sincerity. “Vernon has already recognized his mistake. We owe today’s event to his sponsorship.”

“No matter what, he must kneel and apologize!”

“Elsewhere then. He’s just a wealthy tycoon. What can he do apart from splurging his wealth?”

“If he doesn’t apologize, we’ll disrupt this event and start a campaign against him online.”

Chapter 206:

Carman, trying to calm his fans, threw a meaningful look at Vernon, signaling that the escalating crisis could be defused by his apology.

“Should we evacuate the venue, Mr. Lopez?” a subordinate inquired, noticing the mounting tension.

“No need,” Vernon retorted with a dismissive smirk, his hands casually in his pockets. “Clearing out would mean the end of the show.”

With that declaration, he made his way forward.

Clad in a dark blue suit, his hair neatly braided, Vernon exuded an air of defiant allure.

As he drew near, a wave of satisfaction washed over Carman. Even this fashion titan, mentored by Leah Sugden, was now forced to humbly make amends.

“You didn’t need to come forward, Vernon,” Carman said, even as he passed the microphone to him.

Vernon checked the microphone with a few taps before addressing the audience boldly, saying, “Apologize my ass!” The crowd was left speechless, and Carman stood flabbergasted.

Silence swept through the venue.

All eyes were on Vernon, stunned by his audacious retort.

“Vernon, do you realize what you’ve just said?” Carman questioned, unsure if he had heard correctly. “No need for apologies, but why curse?”

“Is cursing you, a plagiarist, a problem?”

“A plagiarist?” Carman’s demeanor turned cold. “Enough, Vernon! If you’re not going to apologize, just go. Don’t ruin this fan event.”

“This fan event?” Vernon scoffed, his tone dripping with scorn. “Why do you think I’ve been funding you so generously?”

“Why?” Carman blurted out.

“To publicly expose you, you plagiarist.” Vernon snapped his fingers, and his team moved onto the stage, pulling down the main banner.

To the audience’s astonishment, another banner unfurled behind it.

“Carman Edwards’ Critique Session on Plagiarism.”

“What? A criticism session for plagiarism? Have they lost their minds?”

“Ladies, it’s time to defend our beloved idol!”

Carman’s supporters were furious, each vocally committed to protecting their idol. They couldn’t accept the possibility of Carman committing plagiarism, suspecting a deliberate smear campaign.

Suddenly, a hauntingly beautiful piano melody filled the room, halting everyone in their tracks.

“Wait, this melody is so familiar.”

“Is this Carman’s new song on the piano? When was this version created?”

“It’s truly stunning. The piano rendition, without all the extra production, actually sounds better.”

Fans around expressed their surprise, finding the piano-only version more genuine and touching. Its simplicity stirred their emotions more profoundly.

“This isn’t just a version; it’s the original piece.” At that moment, Sierra stood from her seat among the crowd. Her expression was one of sheer indignation as she pointed accusingly at Carman. “The person you idolize is nothing but a thief. He stole something very dear to me. What you’re listening to is a piece titled ‘Reborn,’ a precious gift from someone close to me.”

Chapter 207:

The audience gasped in disbelief at her revelation.

“No way! Could Carman really be guilty of plagiarism? That’s impossible.”

“It doesn’t make sense. Carman is so gifted. Why would he need to plagiarize?”

“These accusations are blatant slander. Surely, they’re orchestrated by rivals aiming to damage Carman’s image.”

Amidst the unfolding drama, some fans began to harbor doubts about Carman’s integrity, their expressions turning skeptical.

In a panic, Carman yelled down to the stage crew, “Cut the music! What’s happening? How can you let someone hijack the show?”

“You’re missing the point, Carman,” Vernon said, his hands casually in his pockets as he gave Carman a derisive look. “This event was never a fan gathering. It’s a platform to expose you. These crew members? They’re on my payroll. They have no reason to obey you.”

“Vernon Lopez!” Carman retorted, his frustration evident as he clenched his teeth. “How does this benefit you? You realize the draw I have right now? Working together could benefit us both.”

Vernon waved him off with a tsk. “Do you really think I need your so-called popularity? I’m done with your tricks and ready to settle this.”

He then glanced toward Sierra, his expression softening noticeably.

Next to Sierra sat a woman exuding calm authority, her presence almost royal in its detachment. Could she be JE? Her composure was striking.

Even though Leah was formidable, JE seemed even more imposing. Merely her presence felt overwhelming.

Feeling Vernon’s stare, Janice turned and allowed a small smile to cross her features. Inside, Vernon was thrilled. JE was smiling at him.

Determined to repay her support, he decided it was time to act. With a swift motion, Vernon leaped up, swung his hand, and delivered a sharp slap across Carman’s face.

“How dare you strike me!” Carman exclaimed, holding his cheek and staring at Vernon in shock. “Have you lost your mind?”

“Take that, you sneaky copycat!” Vernon cheered, glancing at Janice to see her reaction. Her grin broadened when he slapped Carman.

“Ladies and gentlemen, I’m here to present a piano performance and video evidence to support it,” Vernon announced, snapping his fingers. A large screen flickered on, revealing Janice playing the piano.

The audience immediately focused on the woman in the video. She was graceful, poised, and radiated elegance. Her divine beauty left everyone in awe.

“She is so pretty.”

“Her performance is as stunning as she is.”

“I’m starting to worry that Carman copied her work. What should we do?”

“No, that can’t be right. Carman wouldn’t do something like that. There must be some mistake.”

As the debate grew, more fans began to doubt Carman, with some convinced he was guilty of plagiarism. Still, a few loyal fans fiercely defended his innocence.

Chapter 208:

“Janice, Mr. Lopez really knows how to stir things up,” Sierra murmured. “I expected a simple event, but this feels like a courtroom drama.”

A faint smile appeared on Janice’s lips as she found Sierra’s perspective refreshingly sharp.

“Look at Carman! It’s priceless. He must be completely panicked, clueless about how to respond.” Sierra laughed, venting her pent-up frustration. “And what’s your excuse now, Carman? If you’re out of ideas, just admit it. Why stoop to plagiarism? How is that fair to your fans?”

“I didn’t! That video is a fake—it’s been manipulated!” Carman protested desperately. “Yes, manipulated!”

“Really, Carman? You say it’s manipulated, yet the pianist in that video isn’t a stranger to you, right?” Vernon retorted, his head shaking in disbelief. “She’s your own sister.”

The revelation sent shockwaves through the crowd. Fans were stunned. Could Carman truly have plagiarized from his sister? Unbelievable!

If it had been someone else, he might have argued it was a coincidence, a similarity in melody. But with the original creator being his sister, that excuse was no longer valid.

“I can’t believe this. How could he be a plagiarist after all these years I’ve looked up to him?”

“I’m done with Carman. I’m turning my back on him starting now.”

“Carman Edwards, you fraud! You’ve wasted my loyalty and all those years I supported you.”

Many fans began cursing Carman. The more they had adored him before, the stronger their hatred grew now.

“Everyone, calm down! There must be some mistake.”

“We’ve admired Carman for years. Don’t we know his true character? He’s always doing charity work and stepping up during disasters. How could someone so good plagiarize?”

The steadfast fans continued to defend Carman, but their efforts seemed futile.

Carman, pale-faced, watched helplessly as his supporters turned against him. His mind raced, desperately searching for an escape.

Meanwhile, Yvonne observed the unfolding drama, her expression marked by tension. She had confronted Carman early on about the plagiarism rumors circulating online, but he had insisted the work was completely original, which had reassured her at the time.

If only Carman had been honest, they could have planned a strategy and avoided this disastrous situation.

The proof was irrefutable. The song Carman claimed as his own had been clearly copied, evidenced by a video of a performance that predated his song's release. The situation looked increasingly grim.

"Carman, you're determined to ruin me," Yvonne muttered, her voice laced with fury. Her face clouded with anger as memories of her moments with Carman resurfaced, making her stomach churn. Getting involved with him was the biggest mistake of her life.

"Find out everything. I want a full report on Carman and the woman in that video," she ordered.

Chapter 209:

"Yes, Ms. Byrd."

Yvonne closed her eyes and took a deep breath, willing herself to stay calm. The situation was spiraling out of control, and her reputation, built on years of hard work, was at stake. She had no choice but to act decisively. Carman's recklessness wasn't going to drag her down.

The live-streamed fan meeting, intended to celebrate Carman's success, had turned into a public relations disaster. His disgraceful behavior was now on full display, sparking a wave of criticism online. Fans and casual viewers alike were outraged. In a world where originality was rare, plagiarizing someone else's work was absolutely disgusting.

"Carman is handsome, sure, but how could he stoop so low? Stealing from his sister? That's just shameful!"

“Don’t forget the Blue Heart incident. I’m sure he swapped the real one and hid it for himself back then, too.”

“And Mr. Lopez? How could someone so respected associate with a fraud like this? It’s disgusting. Carman should just quit the industry.”

Vernon, watching the chaos unfold, hadn’t expected the public to take his side. But as the backlash against Carman grew, so did his relief. Each critical comment only strengthened his position, and he quietly welcomed the support.

As the plagiarism scandal exploded across social media, Carman’s sister unexpectedly became a trending topic as well. Her stunning beauty and rumored connection to the controversy made headlines, further complicating the situation.

Back at Carman’s company, the fallout was catastrophic. Calls poured in as business partners demanded explanations, and cancellations began to roll in. The company’s leadership scrambled to contain the damage, their frustration palpable as they cursed Carman behind closed doors.

Failure to control the narrative wouldn’t just mean hefty breach-of-contract penalties; it would result in the loss of future projects.

“Carman, what do you have to say for yourself?” Vernon stepped forward, his gaze unwavering as he stared at Carman, whose pale face betrayed his discomfort. “Maybe if you sincerely apologize to Miss Ramirez, she’ll consider forgiving you.”

Carman’s eyes flicked towards Sierra, but they froze the moment they landed on Janice beside her.

Janice? What the hell was she doing here? Was she here to gloat?

Carman’s jaw tightened as his anger flared. He couldn’t let Janice look down on him, not now, not ever.

“I didn’t plagiarize,” Carman snapped, taking a steady breath. “Why should I apologize to her?”

Vernon frowned. "You're seriously still denying it? Even with all the evidence? How can you possibly argue against this?"

Carman's gaze turned sharp as he pointed a finger at Janice. "It was you who plagiarized me! Don't play innocent, Janice. You're my sister; why would you stoop so low just to get back at me?"

The room erupted in murmurs, all eyes turning to Janice.

Chapter 210:

"Wait, that's her?"

"She's gorgeous! I can't believe someone so young composed that piano masterpiece."

"Janice is my new idol!"

The admiration grew louder, especially from the men in the crowd, who fixed their gazes on Janice like she was an untouchable icon.

Sierra scowled, stepping in front of Janice protectively. "What are you all staring at? She's mine."

Janice blinked, momentarily caught off guard by Sierra's claim, then let out a small sigh of exasperation. "Sierra, sit down. Let Carman say what he needs to say."

"Fine," Sierra huffed, reluctantly taking her seat. But she wasn't done asserting her claim. She looped her arm through Janice's and leaned in close, glaring at the crowd with fiery determination, daring anyone to look too long.

"Everyone, you just heard it. Janice is my sister," Carman sighed, his words tinged with practiced sorrow. "Years ago, she was taken from us and ended up in an orphanage. It wasn't until last year that our family finally found her. But her homecoming brought nothing but pain. Instead of gratitude, she showed only

spite, constantly tormenting my other sister with her schemes. Someone who harbors such malice has no place among the Edwards family. We had no choice but to cast her out.”

His words fell like thunderbolts upon the stunned audience.

This was the kind of scandalous revelation they’d only read about in tabloids; yet here it was, unfolding before their eyes. The crowd was hungry for more of this gossip.

“This new song represents countless sleepless nights of pouring my heart into every note,” Carman continued, his voice thick with emotion. “The melody was already taking shape before Janice’s exile. She must have heard me playing the melody and crafted her piano piece from it. She’s the plagiarist here.”

His calculated words worked their magic. Those who had doubted him earlier now stood bewildered, while his devoted followers, sensing blood in the water, turned their fury towards Janice.

“The nerve of her, accusing Carman of her own crime!”

“A pretty face hiding such a black heart!”

“Kicked out of the Edwards family and now seeking revenge? How pathetic! Dragging Carman’s name through the mud is disgusting!”

“Get out of here! You’re unworthy of being Carman’s sister or even breathing the same air!”

Like a match to gasoline, their righteous anger exploded, the mob’s collective hatred focused on a single target—Janice.

Yet, despite their venomous words, Janice’s commanding aura held them at bay like an invisible force field, reducing their fury to nothing more than verbal missiles hurled from a safe distance.

“Bullshit!” Sierra erupted from her seat, her voice cutting through the hostile atmosphere. “Someone of Janice’s caliber doesn’t need to steal anyone’s work. If anything, Carman’s the one who’s guilty of theft!”