

Wrath 401

Chapter 401:

“Hi. Ahem!” Lesly was taken by surprise when Janice approached suddenly, causing her to choke on her coffee and spill it.

The embarrassing moment made her feel quite uncomfortable.

“Sorry, did I spill any on you? I got nervous and lost control for a moment.”

Janice smiled, assuring her that she was fine. “May I sit?”

“Yeah, um, of course,” Lesly stammered, clearly feeling nervous.

It was hard to imagine this was Kenneth’s mother.

Considering Kenneth’s competence and straightforward nature, one would expect his mother to be just as impressive, but she seemed quite the opposite.

“Actually, I worked at your son’s company before...”

“I know! Kenneth told me about you. He mentioned his company had a brilliant designer named Janice. I even considered setting you up with Kenneth. Sorry, I shouldn’t have said that.”

Since Janice had been Aiden’s wife at the time, she realized her words were out of line.

Janice chuckled.

Lesly was truly amusing. So direct and yet so indiscreet—how did she manage in these elite social circles?

Lesly had cloaked herself in an air of awkwardness, adopting a stiff posture and quiet demeanor to ensure that no one would approach her. Yet Janice, undeterred, walked up to her, initiating a conversation that gradually bridged the gap between them.

“Janice, have you ever considered Kenneth? He’s truly admirable—intelligent, thoughtful, and full of aspirations. Since you’re single, maybe he could be a good match,” Lesly suggested, her words clearly indicating that she was already aware of the recent end of Janice and Aiden’s relationship.

The news of their divorce had remained private, known only to a few, Kenneth among them. It seemed likely that Kenneth had confided in his mother about it.

“Well...” Janice hesitated, her lips pressing into a tight line as she pondered the suggestion. Her decision had been spontaneous, perhaps driven by a combination of sympathy for Kenneth and a desire not to leave his mother feeling alone at the gathering. As she reflected on her quick choice, she felt a mixture of regret and resignation.

“Life has its own plans, I suppose. If two people are meant to be together, fate will find a way to bring them together.”

“I couldn’t agree more,” a male voice chimed in.

Janice felt a brief jolt as she turned to see a pair of radiant eyes, sparkling with an innocence that made them stand out. “Stephen?” she asked, surprised.

She quickly glanced at Wendy, who was engaged in an animated conversation with Leonie, and noticed the subtle confusion in her posture. Stephen, sensing the misunderstanding, gave her a reassuring smile.

“It’s alright,” he said. “I just came over to greet Mrs. Delgado.”

While that was the official reason, it was clear that his true purpose was to speak with Janice. “Is what you mentioned earlier true? Did you really understand my performance?” Stephen asked, his tone sincere.

Seeing Stephen willing to take such a risk just to verify her words, Janice couldn't help but be moved by his genuine earnestness.

"Yes, I've listened to many piano pieces and have gained a fair bit of understanding," she replied.

"I've performed this piece many times, yet nobody has ever discerned the emotions I've woven into it. You're the first," Stephen said, his voice soft with a mixture of pride and vulnerability.

A small smile played on Janice's lips as a thought struck her. "You probably come from a prosperous family, don't you? There seems to be no need for you to depend on Mrs. Chadwick."

Stephen was momentarily taken aback, but his expression soon shifted into a wry smile. "Indeed, I was born into affluence, but a devastating tragedy during my childhood shattered everything, plunging me into dire straits. To survive, I had no choice but to seek Mrs. Chadwick's protection."

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He glanced briefly at Wendy, his eyes reflecting a complex blend of pain and gratitude. These conflicting emotions made him an enigma—thankful for Wendy's support, which had sustained him, yet burdened by the heavy cost of her protection.

In exchange for Wendy's unwavering support, he had reluctantly given up his independence.

"Janice, may I have your contact details?" Stephen asked, his tone earnest. "It's rare to meet someone who resonates with me so deeply, and I wouldn't want to lose this connection."

"Certainly. I'll share my contact details with you," Janice replied, her voice calm, though she didn't add much more to the conversation. She handed him her details, her mind deep in thought. Her doubts were growing, and she needed to confirm them. Having his contact information would make her investigation easier.

A last name of White, a tragic childhood, a fall from grace, and sacrificing his independence for protection... Could he be a member of the prestigious White family from Cloverhill? Could he be related to her?

Janice longed to ask him directly, but such a question might seem forward, or worse, raise his suspicions. She knew she needed to uncover these mysteries on her own.

“Stephen, come over here.”

Just then, Wendy’s voice called out unexpectedly.

Stephen turned, his gaze settling on Wendy, and he gave her a nod of acknowledgment.

“Mrs. Delgado, I hope you have a wonderful time at the cocktail party. I’m heading there now.”

Lesly, witnessing this exchange, felt utterly bewildered. What just happened? He had been talking to Janice, so why was he saying goodbye to her now? Lesly’s eyes met Janice’s, filled with confusion, and Janice responded with an awkward smile. She knew Stephen had used Lesly as a pretext to initiate a conversation with her.

“Let’s continue our chat, Mrs. Delgado.”

Feeling a pang of sympathy for Lesly, who seemed almost invisible in these social settings, Janice decided to engage her further in conversation. After all, Lesly was Kenneth’s mother, and Janice, having once worked for their company, felt it was her duty to be courteous.

“Mrs. Chadwick, did you request my presence?” Stephen asked as he positioned himself in front of Wendy, giving a slight nod toward Leonie.

“Good evening, Mrs. Ramirez.” Wendy took a leisurely sip of her drink, her gaze sliding sideways to Stephen. “Were you speaking with Janice earlier?”

“Oh, I was simply following your advice on fostering good relations with our esteemed guests,” Stephen replied smoothly. “I noticed Mrs. Delgado seemed quite solitary, so I approached to offer my greetings. Quite by chance, Janice was there, and I seized the opportunity to engage her in conversation.” His explanation was carefully crafted, with just the right balance of politeness and charm.

Wendy paused, searching her mind for any discrepancies, but found none. She had overlooked Lesly’s presence earlier, which Stephen had cleverly used to his advantage.

“Stephen,” Wendy began, her tone icy as she pointed a finger at his chest, her eyes gleaming with cold authority, “remember, everything you have is courtesy of my goodwill. If I remain pleased, you shine like a star. If I frown, you’ll crumble to dust. Understand?”

“Perfectly clear,” Stephen replied, his smile strained, his indignation masked beneath a polite exterior.

“Just keep in line,” Wendy continued, her lips twisting into a smirk as she glanced toward Leonie. “Mrs. Ramirez seems rather downcast these days. I suggest you focus on lifting her spirits tonight.”

The statement struck both Stephen and Leonie.

“What exactly are you implying, Mrs. Chadwick?” Leonie’s brows furrowed tightly, her voice edged with restrained frustration. “What do you take me for?”

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“Mrs. Ramirez, you’re misunderstanding me entirely,” Wendy replied, her smile remaining serene. “I suggested that Stephen accompany you because of his background in psychology. I thought it might help ease some of your tension, nothing more.”

“Psychology, you say?” Leonie’s gaze shifted to Stephen, skepticism evident in her narrowed eyes. “He won the Best Actor award, which must have taken immense dedication. How could he possibly have time to study psychology? What could he have accomplished in such a short period?”

Her reasoning was sharp. Not everyone had boundless energy—unless they were a genius.

“Ah, but Stephen is a genius,” Wendy countered, her smile widening with almost maternal pride. “His talents extend far beyond what you’ve seen. Spend more time with him, and you’ll realize he’s nothing short of remarkable.”

This assertion sparked a flicker of intrigue in Leonie’s expression. She straightened her posture, folding her hands in her lap as she studied Stephen with newfound curiosity.

“Are you truly offering to let him accompany me?” she asked, her voice carrying a note of doubt as she directed her question toward Wendy. The ease with which Wendy presented Stephen left little room for trust, hinting at an underlying agenda that wasn’t immediately obvious.

“Mrs. Ramirez, I want to befriend you, which is why I’m trusting Stephen to assist you,” Wendy began, her tone dripping with what seemed to be sincere earnestness. “There’s no need to overthink this—it’s really that simple.”

Yet, most of the women in the room wouldn’t believe her. Lesly was the only one who might take Wendy’s words at face value.

“In that case, Stephen can accompany me tonight,” Leonie said with a small nod, her gaze drifting toward him. Her eyes, once indifferent, now sparkled with budding curiosity. Upon closer inspection, Stephen’s youthful features and undeniable charm stood in stark contrast to her husband’s dull and aging demeanor.

Her initial reluctance dissolved in an instant, replaced by an air of acceptance. There was something about Stephen’s enigmatic presence that seemed to draw her in effortlessly.

Wendy took a sip of her coffee, her gaze lingering on Stephen as if silently commanding him.

Although Stephen’s lips briefly twitched into a frown, he quickly masked his hesitation, settling into an expression of composed resolve. Resistance wasn’t an option, and he knew it.

Without a word, Stephen lowered himself into the seat beside Leonie, deftly pouring her coffee while slipping into a gentle rhythm of light conversation.

Janice's sharp eyes didn't miss a thing. A faint glimmer of intrigue flashed across her face as she silently pondered Wendy's intentions. Was this a calculated move, offering Stephen as bait to curry favor with Leonie? The idea seemed odd, especially considering how far Leonie had fallen.

Her daughter's disgrace and the colossal financial losses suffered by the Ramirez family had shattered her influence. What power could she possibly still wield?

"Janice, what's your opinion of Kenneth?" Lesly's cheerful voice cut through her thoughts.

"What? Oh, he's an admirable man—responsible, capable, and surely someone any woman would be fortunate to date."

Janice was merely being polite, but Lesly's eyes lit up.

"You're single now, right? Have you thought about Kenneth? I truly believe you two would make a fantastic couple!" she exclaimed.

Janice nearly choked on her coffee, hurriedly grabbing a napkin to recover her composure. Fixing Lesly with an exasperated look, she asked, "Mrs. Delgado, must we revisit this topic again?"

A faint blush crept onto Lesly's cheeks. "I can't help it. You're such a remarkable woman. I'd be thrilled to have you as my daughter-in-law. Back when you were with Aiden, Kenneth didn't stand a chance. But now, doesn't this feel like fate?"

Janice took a deliberate sip of coffee, allowing its warmth to calm her nerves. She then popped a small snack into her mouth. "As I've said before, I believe these things are best left to fate. If it's meant to be, it will happen on its own."

Chapter 404:

"Well then," Lesly muttered, clearly reluctant to drop the subject but unable to push further.

Even so, she discreetly reached for her phone and sent a quick message to Kenneth.

Fate? If it wouldn't come naturally, she'd make sure to forge it herself.

"Nina, I don't think this is a good sign," Sierra murmured, her voice low as she gave Nina a concerned tug on the arm. Her uneasy gaze darted toward Janice. "Mrs. Delgado seems quite taken with Janice. If she manages to make Janice her daughter-in-law, what happens to Aiden?"

"Relax," Nina replied with a casual wave of her hand, brushing off the concern. "Janice is clever enough to navigate this. Besides, I have complete faith in my son. There's no one in Efrery who can compare to him."

"Maybe you're right, but there's a reason people say it's better to be cautious. Janice is single now. What's stopping someone from swooping in and seizing the moment?"

Nina's face grew somber at Sierra's words, her confidence momentarily shaken.

Nina believed Sierra was right. With Janice growing closer to Lesly, it was clear they were getting along well. Nina feared this interaction might lead to unexpected developments.

Despite Aiden's repeated assurances that he would win Janice back, the slow progress made it seem increasingly unlikely. Nina felt it was only a matter of time before someone else would step in.

"That boy is really trying my patience!" Nina exclaimed, her frustration mounting.

Before she went abroad, Janice had been her daughter-in-law, but now that seemed like a distant memory. The possibility of someone else capturing Janice's attention left Nina utterly exasperated.

"Aiden, you have three months. If you can't win Janice back by then, you'll be removed as head of the company." In a fit of anger, Nina sent a message to Aiden.

Aiden was overwhelmed with work, managing both Green Group and Forest Corp. The merger of the two companies required his personal attention and verification of many details. But Nina's message

made his heart race. What had driven his mother to such extremes? Was there a new, serious contender for Janice's affection?

Aiden composed himself, straightening his posture and adopting a more authoritative demeanor.

"Braylen, what's the latest on my mother and Janice?"

Braylen quickly scrolled through updates on his phone, gathering details from their informants about a recent cocktail party.

"It seems a well-known actor attended the cocktail party with Mrs. Green and Janice. He's quite charming and popular among the social elite. Additionally, Janice and Mrs. Delgado have been seen together frequently."

Aiden's fingers tapped rhythmically on his desk, his expression tightening.

The news of the actor didn't concern him much; Janice's good judgment meant she was unlikely to be charmed by just an entertainer. However, the mention of Lesly and Janice's growing friendship made him pause.

"Mrs. Delgado, as in Kenneth's mother?"

"Yes!" Braylen confirmed. "Mrs. Delgado kept a low profile at the cocktail party, but Janice sought her out, and they appeared to enjoy a pleasant conversation."

"Prepare the car!"

"Huh?" Braylen paused, taken aback by Aiden's sudden command. "Mr. Green, there's a meeting later about the merger of the two groups. You can't miss it."

"I won't repeat myself."

Aiden's stern gaze swept over Braylen, sending a chill through him.

"Understood. I'll prepare the car immediately."

No matter how important his work was, it seemed trivial compared to Janice. Nina's message had hinted that Janice and Lesly's rapport might be more significant than he had imagined. Perhaps Lesly was even considering pairing her son with Janice. Now that he and Janice were divorced, her single status introduced too many variables.

Chapter 405:

He didn't like the uncertainty, regretting the hasty promises he'd made in the past.

In the conference room...

"Colson, what did you say? The meeting is postponed?"

"No way! This meeting is crucial. What's going on with Mr. Green?"

As word of Aiden postponing the meeting spread, disbelief rippled through upper management. They knew Aiden was in the building and had been actively engaged in work. What could be so urgent to require his immediate attention, especially given his pivotal role?

"Everyone, please remain calm." Colson stood up, commanding silence with a gesture. His authoritative presence quickly settled the room. "Understand this: Mr. Green holds the ultimate authority in decision-making. His decisions are not to be questioned. Furthermore, I will take charge of this meeting, analyze the current situation, and assign tasks to ensure every process is executed flawlessly." His words, clear and authoritative, brooked no doubt.

Colson, known as Aiden's right-hand man, wielded substantial influence. His involvement effectively acted as an extension of Aiden's will.

"I've just heard Mr. Green postponed the meeting for a woman. Isn't that a bit frivolous? With the merger of Forest Corp and Green Group, there are many critical issues requiring Mr. Green's direct input."

"Maxwell, you hold five percent of Green Group's shares, correct?" Colson asked, catching Maxwell Archer off guard with his direct approach.

"What are you implying?" Maxwell responded, visibly uneasy.

"I am here on behalf of Mr. Green to initiate the buyback of your five percent stake. Naturally, you will not be at a loss; we are prepared to offer twice the market value for your shares."

"No, you can't do this!" Maxwell exclaimed, rising abruptly from his seat, his face a mask of disbelief. "I have been a loyal supporter of Green Group for many years, giving my all to the company. How can you just dismiss my contributions without any valid reason? I cannot accept this!"

Colson unleashed a cold sneer as he approached Maxwell, his gaze intensifying with each step.

He placed his hands firmly on Maxwell's shoulders, forcing him back into his chair. The piercing look in his eyes sent a shiver through Maxwell.

"Why? Simply for disobedience. Do you think being a shareholder grants you the right to challenge Mr. Green's decisions? Unfortunately, you're mistaken."

Colson's gaze swept across everyone in the room, his voice steady yet commanding.

"Understand this: your seats at this table exist solely because Mr. Green respects the trust his grandfather once placed in you. Should he choose, he could take full control of both Forest Corp and Green Group. His word is final."

Silence enveloped the room, so profound that no one dared even breathe loudly. The veterans among them had long accepted this harsh truth. Their positions here hinged completely on Aiden's goodwill.

With his significant power and influence, replacing any of them would be as simple as issuing a single command.

Yet Maxwell, oblivious to the current dynamics, had audaciously questioned Aiden's decision. Was he unaware of who Aiden was? A titan at the helm of two major corporations was not to be underestimated. Challenging him was a direct invitation to disaster.

"Maxwell, offloading your shares at double the market value represents no loss for you." Colson clapped Maxwell on the shoulder and signaled to two security guards. At his cue, the guards advanced to escort Maxwell from the room. Henceforth, the meeting would include one fewer shareholder.

This action wasn't just about getting rid of Maxwell; it was a message to everyone else. It sent a clear signal that challenging Aiden would have consequences, putting an end to any thoughts of defiance.

Chapter 406:

Colson surveyed the room once more, his voice low yet filled with authority. "Any other questions?"

The remaining shareholders shook their heads unanimously.

"Alright, let's proceed with our meeting."

Meanwhile, at the cocktail party, Lesly and Janice were engrossed in a lively discussion.

Specifically, Lesly was the one becoming increasingly animated. Her usual social anxiety and feeling of being out of place had vanished in Janice's company.

She couldn't pinpoint why, but Janice's presence seemed to soothe her, making her feel comfortable enough to speak her mind freely. This comfort bolstered her resolve to have Janice as her future daughter-in-law.

"Janice, I'm quite skilled in the kitchen. How about I prepare a meal for you sometime?"

"Oh, I could never trouble you with something like that!" Janice replied, feeling both complimented and slightly alarmed. She desperately thought of a way to politely decline, concerned that if the conversation continued much longer, Lesly might actually come with chains to take her home.

"I enjoy cooking for those I like. What's the issue with that?"

"But it wouldn't be proper for me to let you go to all that trouble."

"Why are you so concerned with formalities?" Lesly rolled her eyes, took Janice's hands, and gazed at her sincerely. "No matter someone's position in society, aren't we all human? We all feel hunger and need food. Cooking is my passion; it's something I truly enjoy. Please, just let me treat you as my guest and let you taste my cooking."

Janice found herself in a dilemma. It wasn't that she didn't appreciate Lesly; on the contrary, she thought she was genuine and unpretentious. However, this was Kenneth's mother, after all.

"Mrs. Delgado, I didn't know you were into cooking. How come you've never mentioned this before?"

Before Janice could answer, a voice laden with sarcasm interjected from behind them.

As Lesly turned to see who it was, her previously cheerful demeanor vanished instantly. "Mrs. Green, what brings you here?"

Nina's eyes narrowed, her anger barely contained. She felt she had arrived just in time to prevent Janice from being whisked away. "Is there something wrong? Am I not welcome?"

"No, not at all. Your arrival just caught me off guard." Lesly quickly took a seat next to Janice and released Janice's hand from Lesly's grasp. "I noticed you two seemed to be enjoying a good conversation, so I thought I'd join."

"I see." Lesly retreated back into her reserved self. She avoided Nina's gaze, instead focusing intently on her cup, sipping her coffee in silence. The mood suddenly became awkward.

“Janice, Aiden just sent me a photo of some jewelry. What do you think of this piece?” Nina took out her phone and showed Janice the image.

Janice looked at it and nodded. “It’s quite beautiful.”

“That’s great, because Aiden chose it specifically for you.” Nina’s smile was knowing as she subtly glanced at Lesly. “He really went out of his way to pick this necklace. When I first saw it, I knew it would be perfect for you.”

Though Lesly kept her head lowered, pretending to be engrossed in her coffee, she was acutely aware of the exchange between Nina and Janice. Nina was making it clear that Janice would become her daughter-in-law again.

Sierra, observing from afar, chose to keep her distance. Being younger, she preferred to steer clear of such intense dynamics.

“Janice, are you fond of necklaces?” Suddenly, Lesly seemed to make a bold decision, enduring Nina’s sharp gaze as she spoke up. “My son recently created a beautiful set of jewelry, and I thought you might like it. Should I ask him to bring it over for you to see?”

Chapter 407:

Janice and Nina were both taken aback by her words. It was clear that Lesly was genuinely trying to make Janice her daughter-in-law.

Nina’s eyes narrowed, radiating a cold intensity. Her gaze on Lesly was so piercing that it felt as if it could scorch her.

“What’s wrong, Mrs. Green? Would you like to see it as well?” Despite Nina’s furious stare, Lesly managed a forced smile, briefly escaping her lower status.

Janice was utterly speechless. Truly, a mother’s love could empower her like nothing else. She defied the norms, all for her son’s happiness.

“Mom, what are you saying?” Just then, Kenneth, having received the message, appeared.

He looked as radiant and handsome as always, his smile capable of warming anyone’s heart. Who could resist such a young, cheerful, wealthy, and capable man?

Janice silently sipped her coffee, acting as though she hadn’t noticed him, pretending he wasn’t there.

However, after greeting Lesly, Kenneth turned his attention to her. “Janice, what brings you here?”

Janice rolled her eyes secretly, realizing she couldn’t pretend not to notice him any longer. “I...”

“Mr. Delgado, I invited my daughter-in-law to join me. Is that an issue?” Nina chimed in.

Kenneth raised an eyebrow, smiling softly, yet his words carried tension and aggression. “But I was under the impression that Janice and Aiden are divorced.”

“It was an impulsive decision! Besides, they could remarry. Is that a problem?”

“A remarriage requires both parties to agree. It can’t happen if only one person wants it, can it?”

Lesly’s eyes sparkled with excitement as she silently cheered for her son. It seemed he had feelings for Janice, given how he was challenging Nina.

Nina inhaled deeply, reminding herself to keep her composure. Otherwise, she would have stormed over to Green Group and confronted Aiden.

She didn’t hold it against Kenneth for having feelings for Janice. He was entitled to his feelings. After all, Janice was single, and the reason Janice was single was because Aiden had divorced her.

If Aiden hadn’t divorced Janice, this drama wouldn’t exist, and she wouldn’t have to constantly worry about losing her future daughter-in-law.

“Mrs. Green, you’re known for your wisdom and fairness. Surely you wouldn’t stand in the way of someone’s pursuit of happiness?” Kenneth asked.

The backhanded compliment left her unable to retort. Refusing Kenneth would make her appear overly narrow-minded.

“Of course not.” Nina forced a smile. “If you and Aiden compete fairly and you win Janice’s heart, I’ll wish you both happiness.”

She gazed at Janice warmly, taking her hands. “As long as Janice is happy, I will support whatever decision she makes with my best wishes.”

Janice saw true sincerity and openness in Nina’s eyes, not the hypocritical kind, but a genuine warmth. Despite Nina’s occasional aggression and overbearing nature, she had always treated Janice with respect and supported her decisions.

Even though Nina had been hesitant about Aiden and Janice’s divorce, she never pressured them to remarry. Now, facing Kenneth’s bold actions, she didn’t try to be evasive or force him to retreat.

Janice felt that Nina truly deserved to be considered family. Kenneth’s arrival caught the attention of the other ladies, who turned their curious eyes to the unfolding scene. Leonie had grown uninterested in the cocktail party. Kenneth had been intended as the match for her eldest daughter, but after Nellie’s situation, she no longer seemed fit to be a pawn.

On the other hand, Sierra had Janice and Nina supporting her. Trying to push her into a marriage alliance would only cause trouble.

Chapter 408:

“Would you like a drink, Mrs. Ramirez?” Stephen approached with a glass. “Sometimes, when a problem can’t be solved right away, stepping back may reveal a different way forward.”

“Is there really another way?” Leonie shook her head, letting out a rueful laugh.

Wendy exchanged a glance with Stephen, who nodded and reached for Leonie's hand.

Leonie recoiled, startled, as if shocked, but Stephen's gaze was magnetic. That one look softened her, and before she knew it, her hand was in his once more.

"Let me escort you outside for some fresh air," Stephen offered.

"Alright."

As she watched them leave, Wendy cast a quick glance toward Nina.

What a scene, indeed.

She was fully aware that she didn't yet have the power to join the battle, but this was just a matter of time. Soon enough, she would not only be part of it but also hold sway over everyone involved.

Kenneth's arrival charged the air, heightening the tension. Nina appeared to be sipping her coffee, yet her eyes discreetly followed Kenneth, intrigued by how he planned to charm Janice.

Kenneth, for his part, stayed composed. He first brewed coffee for his mother, handling the task with meticulous care.

This scene gave Janice some insight into why Lesly had developed her distinct personality. It seemed she was pampered by her family, shielded from the cutthroat social maneuvers often necessary in high society circles. In such environments, where scheming was a requisite skill, Lesly's lack of experience had relegated her to the margins, where she avoided conflicts.

"Janice, have some coffee," Kenneth said, extending a cup with a disarmingly warm smile.

But Nina was visibly irked. She cleared her throat and shot Kenneth a sharp look. "Kenneth, isn't this inappropriate?"

Kenneth turned to Nina, puzzled. "Mrs. Green, what do you mean?"

"Shouldn't you give me the coffee first?"

Kenneth glanced innocently at the coffee in Nina's hand. "I thought you were already set with your coffee and might not need another from me. But if you'd like, I can certainly give you this one."

"Ahem!" Nina coughed awkwardly, placing her cup down and averting her eyes to mask her embarrassment. She hadn't anticipated Kenneth noticing her using her coffee as a pretext to watch him. Yet, she felt compelled to maintain her dignity.

Recomposing herself with poised elegance, Nina replied coolly, "That would be acceptable."

"Then please, have this one," Kenneth said, offering the freshly made coffee to Nina.

Graciously, Nina accepted the drink and was about to sip when Kenneth offered another to Janice.

"I prefer the one in your hand," Nina quickly said, setting down her original cup and taking the one meant for Janice instead.

Janice's hand paused mid-air, a flicker of frustration crossing her face. She was quite parched after sitting and chatting for so long.

"Mrs. Green, I can make more." Kenneth remained composed and unruffled, maintaining his friendly demeanor throughout. His attitude was one of calm persistence, regardless of the provocation.

This left Nina feeling frustrated. She had hoped Kenneth would react angrily, giving her a reason to criticize him. However, his unflappable good nature left her at a loss as to how to proceed.

Kenneth refilled Nina's cup, inviting her to drink with a polite gesture.

Chapter 409:

Seeing his courteous behavior, Nina realized she might face criticism if she continued her unreasonable demeanor, especially with an audience of her peers watching. She needed to preserve her composure.

"Janice, please, have some coffee."

"Thank you!" Janice responded, finally taking her cup. She tasted the coffee, her expression one of genuine appreciation. "This coffee is delightful, and your skills are quite refined, Kenneth."

Kenneth was confident in this. "I enjoy making coffee. My mom loves it, so I get plenty of practice."

Lesly beamed with pride, her eyes shining. "Janice, if you enjoy it, I'll have Kenneth prepare it for you every day."

"That's too generous," Janice said, flattered but quick to decline. "Mr. Delgado has a busy schedule. He shouldn't spend his time this way."

"I can," Kenneth said unexpectedly. "You could return to Delgado Jewelry. Come by my office for coffee at lunch."

Caught off guard, Janice's expression reflected her discomfort.

Seeing this, Kenneth pressed on. "Since you left, Stella has been struggling. You were such a pivotal support for her, and your departure was sudden. If you're considering coming back, I think..."

"I don't think it's a good idea."

His words were abruptly cut off by a chilling voice, drawing all eyes to the newcomer. "Aiden?"

"This is getting interesting. Seems like there's some juicy gossip to uncover."

“Ladies, get ready for the drama.”

The ladies sensed the tension, their excitement palpable as they speculated that Aiden’s sudden appearance was somehow connected to Janice.

Kenneth’s previous attentions toward Janice had been unmistakably affectionate, suggesting that a confrontation between Efrery’s two most eligible bachelors over her might be imminent—an enthralling prospect indeed.

“Aiden, you’re finally here.”

Nina breathed a sigh of relief, fearing that if Aiden hadn’t arrived soon, someone else might have taken his wife away.

Truth be told, Kenneth’s refined manners and eloquent speech made him incredibly charming to women. Despite being Aiden’s mother, Nina couldn’t deny that, from a woman’s perspective, Aiden did fall short compared to Kenneth. Otherwise, Aiden wouldn’t have earned the reputation of being cold and difficult.

Kenneth’s smile stayed unwavering, showing no sign of fading despite Aiden’s unexpected arrival.

“Mr. Green, with Green Group and Forest Corp in the middle of a merger, how do you find the time for a cocktail party?” His words were sharp, subtly suggesting that Aiden shouldn’t be here, intruding on his time with Janice.

Aiden gave a cold laugh before sitting beside Janice, his icy gaze fixed on Kenneth.

“Aren’t you also busy expanding into the international market? How do you find time to be here?”

Their exchange was tense, both unwilling to back down, and the atmosphere was thick with hostility.

The ladies were completely captivated, like spectators at a performance. With few pastimes, they delighted in watching the drama unfold, and this was the perfect show for them to enjoy.

However, Kenneth was openly showing his feelings for Janice, Aiden's wife. He was rather bold, wasn't he?

Kenneth's gaze toward Janice was soft, his affection open and unabashed. "It's precisely because of the international market that I require Janice's support."

Chapter 410:

Aiden's eyes locked onto Kenneth, filled with a threatening intensity. "I admit, Janice is beautiful and exceptional. But she is my wife, so I ask that you keep your thoughts in check."

"Huh?" Kenneth raised an eyebrow, casting a playful glance at Aiden, unfazed by the threat in his eyes. "I heard you and Janice are divorced. That means she's single now, and that doesn't stop others from pursuing her, does it?"

Kenneth's statement not only widened Aiden's eyes but also sent a shock through the crowd eager for gossip.

Kenneth's boldness in expressing his feelings suddenly made sense—Aiden and Janice were actually divorced! It was such a significant piece of news. How had it stayed hidden for so long?

In that moment, Aiden was struck by a wave of regret over his past decisions. But regret was futile now. He had to remarry Janice to crush Kenneth's hopes.

"Janice and I simply had a typical lovers' quarrel. Once we both cool off, we'll remarry soon." He turned his gaze to Janice as he spoke.

Janice took a sip of her coffee, her expression neutral. "Aren't you overthinking this? I have no intention of remarrying."

Aiden was momentarily taken aback, feeling frustrated as he realized she wasn't giving him any room. But he had to keep his composure, or Kenneth would see him as a fool.

"No worries, you'll change your mind soon enough." Aiden was usually confident and decisive. Yet for some reason, confidence seemed to slip away from him as he said it.

It wasn't surprising, considering Janice's exceptional qualities. Even without a man's support, she stood out, often surpassing other successful men.

"Mr. Green, it seems Janice doesn't have feelings for you. That's good. It means I still have a shot," Kenneth said.

"A chance?" Aiden quickly turned to Kenneth, his eyes blazing with anger and a sharp glint.

However, Kenneth wasn't fazed by the intense glare. Instead, he met the challenge head-on, a confident, knowing smile curving on his lips.

The tension between them had built up to a breaking point, on the verge of erupting at any second. Luckily, both maintained enough composure to prevent things from spiraling out of control. Otherwise, this drama might have involved many innocent bystanders.

"You won't get that chance."

Upon hearing Aiden's resolute statement, Kenneth stayed calm, simply curling his lips into a smile. "If there's no chance, I'll make one. Is that so hard?"

"Then go ahead and try."

Aiden's eyes narrowed; their battle was even, neither one gaining the advantage. The key was Janice's neutrality, her lack of favoritism making them equals in this contest.

For Aiden, however, this was a blow to his pride. They had once been legally wed, enjoying certain privileges, but now he was on equal terms with Kenneth. How could that not be infuriating?

“Janice, I’ve found some clues about the White family.”

“Hmm?”

“Come with me, and I’ll tell you privately.” Aiden grabbed Janice’s hand and began to guide her away.

Kenneth furrowed his brow. Aiden was as bossy as ever. “Mr. Green, is there something you prefer not to say here?”

Aiden stopped, shot a glance at Kenneth, and let out a chilling laugh. “That depends on whether Janice prefers to talk about it here.”

With that, he turned his gaze to Janice.

Janice understood Aiden’s intentions. She turned to Kenneth with an apologetic smile. “This is a personal matter. I need to speak with Aiden privately. Please forgive me if I seem impolite.”

“No need to apologize. I understand.” Kenneth nodded, showing no intention of insisting otherwise.