

## Wrath 481

Chapter 481:

“Janice, didn’t you say you had a question? Since it’s just the two of us now, please feel free to share,” Stephen said, steering the conversation to safer ground.

Janice lowered her eyes and took an elegant sip of her coffee. Though she had intended to reveal her connection to Stephen, Aiden’s earlier words gave her pause for reflection.

The realization dawned that she had been rushing things. Her knowledge of Stephen barely scratched the surface. The years that shaped him, the hardships he’d endured—all remained a mystery to her. Revealing everything now could unleash a storm she wasn’t prepared to face.

“You possess both striking looks and remarkable talent. What draws you to someone like Wendy?”

Stephen’s brow creased, caught off guard by Janice’s unexpected inquiry. The question crossed boundaries; its directness was almost jarring. Yet deep within, Stephen felt a dam beginning to crack—years of pent-up emotions seeking release through this sudden opening.

“Janice, what makes this matter of such interest to you?”

After a thoughtful pause, Janice replied, “I’ve observed that you’re a person of substance, worthy of an extraordinary life. Yet despite your achievements, a darkness trails behind you like a persistent shadow. While I may not have you fully figured out, this observation comes from a place of genuine concern.”

Stephen was taken aback. Never before had anyone read him with such startling clarity.

“Stephen, if this makes you uncomfortable, there’s no need to answer. We can treat this as nothing more than a pleasant conversation over coffee.”

“Let me tell you a story.” Stephen’s grip tightened around the cup, his voice lowering to a softer, more reflective tone. “Twenty years ago, there was a boy named Fabian, born into a life of privilege.”

Fabian? Could it be Fabian White?

Janice's eyes narrowed slightly as realization dawned—Stephen was about to reveal his own past.

“While wealthy families often drown in rules and traditions, his home was different—a sanctuary of genuine warmth. Instead of the usual power plays, there was only pure, unconditional love. His father, though demanding, pushed him towards excellence out of deep care. And his mother showered him with endless affection. Living in such a nurturing environment, he truly believed he was the most fortunate child in the world.

Later, his mother became pregnant with what they learned would be a girl. While most children from affluent families might view a new sibling as competition for love and inheritance, Fabian's heart held no such darkness. He simply rejoiced at the thought of having a little sister to cherish and play with. He made a silent promise to himself that he would be her protector from the moment she entered this world.”

As Stephen spoke, a rare, genuine smile illuminated his face—the pure expression of a young boy's dream to guard his unborn sister. But within heartbeats, darkness crept into his eyes, his features twisting with traces of long-buried pain and bitterness.

“Janice, might I trouble you for another cup of coffee?”

“Of course.” Janice gracefully refilled his cup.

“Thank you.” Stephen seized the cup and drained it in one swift motion. He seemed to hope the scalding liquid might drown the turbulence in his heart, but it was like trying to hold back an ocean with bare hands. The bitter memories surged forward, relentless and unstoppable.

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“Perhaps Fabian's life was too perfect, his happiness too complete—enough to invite the envy of fate itself. That's when a silent, devastating plot began dismantling his family piece by piece. The family's empire faced attacks from all directions, while misfortune stalked each member like a shadow. At six years old, his world revolved around toys and laughter, the weight of his family's crisis far beyond his

grasp. Until the day his parents spoke of the family's possible downfall, reality crashed into his innocent world like a tidal wave. But what power did a six-year-old child possess against such forces? His only weapon was prayer, desperately hoping his family could weather this merciless storm."

Stephen's voice quivered, his body betraying the tremors of suppressed anguish. Janice's brow furrowed as she absorbed his pain. Though she hadn't lived through it herself, the raw despair in Stephen's voice and expression painted a vivid picture of that devastating time.

"One day, his father told him about a place where he needed to stay. His father promised to return for him after some time. He believed it without question. After all, in his young eyes, his father was invincible—a man whose words were as solid as stone. But as days melted into weeks, and weeks into months, not a single word came from his parents. Finally, unable to bear the silence any longer, he made his way back home alone, only to find his world had crumbled to ashes."

The coffee cup shattered as Stephen squeezed it in his grip, the fragments slicing into his palm and drawing blood.

"Stephen, you're bleeding," Janice said, her voice laced with worry as she clasped his hand to inspect the injury, her pulse quickening. What could have triggered such an emotional reaction in him?

"It doesn't matter," Stephen murmured, offering a strained smile while examining his palm. "These types of injuries have become familiar to me over time."

Startled by his indifference, Janice hesitated. His ability to remain so composed suggested he had suffered many injuries before.

"Forgive my reaction, Janice," Stephen said, tightening his hand into a fist and smiling reassuringly. "Sometimes, as an actor, my emotions overpower me."

"I get it," Janice responded, her expression one of lingering concern. "Please, don't strain yourself on my account."

With a resolute expression but eyes filled with fear, Stephen shook his head. “This story has long been hidden deep within my heart. Today, I encountered someone I can truly trust, compelling me to share my entire story.”

“Just remember not to overdo it.”

“Your understanding means a lot.” Stephen took a moment to soothe the chaos within before continuing. “A fire had turned the entire family to ashes. He recognized familiar faces among the charred remains, the gruesome sight imprinting itself in his memory like a nightmarish vision. He hurried into what had once been a cozy home, now turned into a scene straight from hell, frantically searching for his parents, though he feared what he might discover.”

Janice felt a sharp pang in her heart at his words. As she listened to Stephen’s narrative, her typically calm expression was replaced by cold anger, her gaze sharp and unwavering. She felt as though she had been taken back twenty years, reliving the terrifying moment when she saw the White family’s devastation and their charred bodies—a vision pulled straight from a nightmare.

“He searched for a long time but was unable to find his parents. At that moment, he was torn between relief and sorrow, unsure of what to feel. In the end, exhaustion overtook him, and he collapsed. Upon waking, he discovered he was in a spacious room. He noticed a woman nearby. The woman was both beautiful and seemed to possess a gentle demeanor. She said she would be his support from that moment forward.”

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Janice’s brow furrowed. Was this woman possibly Wendy? Her gaze turned to Stephen. Despair loomed in his eyes, unhidden and profound.

“And indeed, this woman became his support. Under her protection, his enemies ceased to surface again. However, gaining her protection came at a significant cost to him.” With a heavy sigh, Stephen faced Janice. “Let’s end the story here. For both our sakes, some things are best left unspoken. I appreciate your concern and thank you for listening. Moving forward, I suggest we keep some distance. I wouldn’t want to involve you in my troubles.”

“Stephen, you’re taking this too seriously. But if you think you can drag me down, you’re underestimating my strength,” Janice replied, a confident smile playing on her lips, her eyes sharp and authoritative. “Unless I trip over myself, no one poses a threat to me.”

Stephen, caught off guard, was struck by Janice's unexpectedly familiar yet mysterious presence.

Janice filled two cups of coffee—one for herself and one for Stephen. "Stephen, I appreciate you sharing your story. It has cleared up a few things for me."

"What exactly?" he asked.

"For now, let's just enjoy our coffee." Janice didn't answer further, placing the steaming cup before Stephen and quickly taking a sip of her own.

Later, upon returning to her villa from the pavilion, Janice found Aiden lounging on the living room sofa, absorbed in a book she had left there earlier.

"Are you done talking?" Aiden asked, raising his eyes to meet hers as she entered.

"Surely you haven't been waiting just for me," Janice teased, settling beside him with a grin.

Aiden remained silent, his gaze fixed intently on her.

Feeling the weight of his stare, Janice cleared her throat uncomfortably. "Yes, our conversation is over."

"And what did you learn?" Aiden asked, his brow furrowing slightly with concern.

Relaxing into the sofa, Janice let out a long breath. "I've gathered some information about him already, confirming that my initial judgment was correct."

Aiden realized Janice's words implied that Stephen could be trusted, unlike the Edwards family. "Now that you've confirmed that, I'll say no more. Meanwhile, while you were talking, I looked into Stephen and Wendy's relationship."

Janice's eyes sparkled with astonishment as she looked at Aiden. "You're incredible! I was just thinking of asking Prescott to investigate this, and you're already ahead of me!"

A knowing smile played on Aiden's lips. His thoughts constantly revolved around Janice. Of course, he could anticipate her next move.

"Is that a compliment?"

"You could interpret it that way." Janice's melodious laugh filled the air as she leaned forward, her breathtaking features mere inches from his face.

Aiden's heart raced, his pupils constricted, while her signature fragrance—an elegant scent that always captivated him—enveloped his senses.

"Tell me what you've discovered," she prompted.

Aiden steadied himself, suppressing the storm of emotions inside.

"Twenty years ago, Wendy adopted Stephen. She erased every trace of his past, fabricating the story that he was an orphan. For all these years, she has kept him as nothing more than her plaything."

Chapter 484:

"What?" Janice's eyes widened. Despite bracing herself for the worst, Aiden's words ignited pure fury within her. Now she understood Stephen's earlier silence—such a devastating past would haunt anyone.

"Janice, I understand your anger. But Wendy's support is substantial. Based on what we've gathered, we can be almost certain her backers were behind the White family's downfall."

Janice's eyes narrowed dangerously, her aura turning icy.

The very force that had destroyed the White family now stood behind Wendy, who hypocritically adopted Stephen only to use his situation to keep him trapped.

This was beyond simple evil.

“What other information do you have?” Janice pressed, hungry for more details.

Aiden paused briefly before speaking candidly. “Word is that Wendy indulges in certain unsavory behaviors. Her husband couldn’t tolerate them and fell into depression. Despite his disgust, her powerful connections forced him to swallow his anger. Wendy’s brazen actions and control over Stephen come purely from the confidence her backing provides.”

Janice had finally pieced together all the fragments of this disturbing puzzle.

Wendy’s adoption of Stephen was merely a front to satisfy her dark desires. His striking features made him the perfect prey for her twisted games.

As for those peculiar preferences, Janice could only imagine the possibilities.

Right now, she longed for nothing more than to capture Wendy and make her truly suffer.

“Janice, are you okay?” Aiden asked, concern in his voice.

“I’m fine!” Janice took a steadying breath, holding back her fury. “Thank you, Aiden. Don’t worry, I won’t do anything impulsive. Though I could crush the Chadwick family easily, that would be far too merciful.”

“What do you plan to do?”

“Of course, I’ll take them down piece by piece. Not just Wendy, but everyone behind her. They’ll all get a taste of hell as I tear their world apart step by step.”

Without warning, Aiden grasped Janice’s hand, his eyes burning with determination. “I’ll stand by you through all of it.”

Janice froze for a moment before quickly pulling her hand away. "You really don't need to get involved. We—"

"We're family," Aiden interrupted, his gaze tender. "I regret not understanding my feelings sooner. I lost my chance with you. But I won't let any more opportunities slip away. Even if you can't accept me now, give me time to prove I'm someone you can rely on."

Such a heartfelt declaration left Janice momentarily speechless. "I—I need to rest for a while. I have to continue filming the show later." She hurriedly retreated upstairs.

Aiden watched her leave with quiet satisfaction. Though she hadn't addressed his feelings, the absence of rejection gave him hope.

"I thought rekindling old flames wasn't your style, Aiden."

A deep voice came from behind.

Aiden turned to find Kenneth emerging from a nearby room.

"Someone like you wouldn't typically revisit past relationships," Kenneth remarked, a hint of mockery in his tone.

Aiden chuckled coldly. "Kenneth, you're mistaken. I don't rekindle old romances. But Janice is not just some past flame. She's an irreplaceable treasure. I lost her once, but I won't make that mistake again."

Chapter 485:

Kenneth maintained his stoic expression, though a glimmer of derision flickered in his eyes. "I'll be watching. But I think Janice sees you more as a friend now."

Aiden stood up, slipping his hands casually into his pockets, radiating a relaxed, carefree vibe. Kenneth's biting words had no effect on him. If anything, Aiden's lips curled slightly in amusement.

"It's alright. Sometimes, friendships evolve into something more."

Kenneth's eyes narrowed, his cold gaze fixed on Aiden. The speed at which this guy was changing was more than he had expected.

"What's happening here, Kenneth?" Maggie asked as she appeared at the top of the stairs, sensing something was off. She had simply planned to grab a glass of water, but the tension in the air made the situation feel far too intense.

"Just a little chat with Aiden."

"Are you hungry, Maggie?" Aiden asked.

"Huh?" Maggie blinked in confusion, her eyes wide with surprise at his unexpected question. Could it be that this intimidating man was genuinely concerned for her?

Aiden picked up the lunchbox Janice had given him earlier. He had planned to enjoy it alone, but now...

"I've got some food with me. Would you like to join?"

"Wow!" At the sight of the lunchbox, Maggie's eyes sparkled with excitement. "Is this the casserole Janice made? Oh my gosh, how did you manage to get it?"

Aiden shot Kenneth a playful yet challenging look. "Janice saved it just for me, of course. But since it seems you're not interested, I guess I'll just eat it all."

"I didn't even say anything yet!" Maggie exclaimed, already drooling at the sight of the casserole. She had convinced herself she'd never get a chance to taste Janice's dish, but now the opportunity was right before her.

The tempting aroma of the food was too powerful to resist, even with her lingering fear of Aiden.

Swallowing her hesitation, she shouted, "I'm starving!"

Aiden blinked in surprise, taken aback by her sudden outburst. He had only been teasing Kenneth with Maggie, but now she was playing along. Unexpected.

"Are you really hungry, Maggie?" Aiden's gaze turned hard, his voice laced with an unsettling edge.

Maggie felt a chill run through her, but her desire for the food was stronger than the fear creeping up her spine.

"I'm starving!" Maggie said again, flashing a shy grin while pinching her fingers close together. "I'll just take a tiny bit, only a little."

Aiden raised an eyebrow, the corners of his mouth twitching. After everything that had happened, refusing her would only give Kenneth more fuel to mock him.

"Alright, I'll give you a little."

Without missing a beat, Aiden glanced over at Kenneth before heading to the kitchen, taking his time as he retrieved the casserole to warm it up.

Seizing the opportunity, Maggie shuffled awkwardly closer to Kenneth. "I know it might seem rude, but I just can't help myself when it comes to Janice's casserole."

"It's alright." Kenneth's lips curled into a fond smile, his curiosity mirroring hers. However, he knew Aiden well enough. The man was far too possessive to share with him.

Soon, Aiden returned with the heated casserole, carrying an extra small plate clearly meant for Maggie.

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Maggie's gaze fixed on the small plate, swallowing hard as her eyes tracked every movement.

Aiden scooped a tiny portion of casserole onto the plate—barely enough for a single bite—but Maggie didn't dare complain.

Getting anything from Aiden was already a small victory.

"Thank you, Aiden."

He handed her the plate with a brief, pointed glance at Kenneth, as if saying, "This is a special treat, saved for me by Janice—something you can only dream of."

Kenneth remained indifferent, a sly smile tugging at the corner of his lips.

"Aiden, don't you think you're being a bit selfish?"

"Huh?" Aiden blinked, caught off guard by the remark. His confusion was clear.

Maggie, ready to take a bite, stopped as Kenneth's words cut through the moment.

"You shouldn't be so selfish with the younger ones, right?" Kenneth extended his hand and gently patted Maggie on the head. "Serving Maggie only a tiny bite doesn't really fit your status."

Aiden's eyes narrowed as he realized Kenneth's intention was to provoke him.

If Kenneth couldn't savor Janice's casserole, he was determined to make sure Aiden's experience with it wasn't enjoyable either.

Maggie looked at Kenneth with admiration shining in her eyes. Her brother was standing up for her.

This was what a real brother was supposed to do—having the courage to challenge an intimidating man, all to ensure she got a decent meal.

“Kenneth, it’s okay,” Maggie said, wearing a pitiful look. “A single taste is all I need.”

“Maggie, since you’re still growing, it’s important for you to eat more. Besides, I’m sure Aiden isn’t really that selfish, right?” Kenneth glanced at Aiden, a subtle smile playing on his lips.

A cold laugh escaped from Aiden. “Kenneth, you seem to overestimate me.”

“Really?” Kenneth blinked, clearly surprised. “Would the head of the Green family, the richest man in Efrery, really treat a young girl so harshly?”

“I admit I’m quite selfish,” Aiden said as he took a seat, picked up a spoon, and began eating the casserole. “Once I consider something mine, nobody else can take it from me.”

His expression brightened as he tasted it. The flavor was extraordinary. He hadn’t anticipated that Janice’s cooking skills would be so remarkable, rivaling some of the best chefs he had ever met.

Aiden raised his head, unfazed by Kenneth’s harsh words. “You seem to misunderstand me. I’ve never been one to follow ethical boundaries, so trying to make me feel guilty is pointless.”

He glanced toward Maggie and added, “I’m only offering to share this with your sister because Janice seems to have taken a liking to her.”

Kenneth’s expression grew more intense. He had clearly misjudged Aiden’s disregard for societal expectations, and his attempts to guilt him were futile.

“This casserole is absolutely delightful,” Aiden commented, savoring another mouthful and closing his eyes in pleasure.

Maggie hesitated, conflicted. Aiden's insult to Kenneth put her in a difficult position as his sister. However, the small portion of casserole she had received was too good to give up.

"Maggie, go ahead and eat," Kenneth said with a reassuring smile, noticing her hesitation. "I'm heading back to my room."

Chapter 487:

"Kenneth..."

Kenneth shook his head, gently ruffling her hair. "You're my sister. It wouldn't be right for me to compete with you over a meal."

"Thank you," Maggie said with a smile, then tried the casserole Janice had prepared.

It was absolutely delicious.

At that moment, Janice was in her room, unaware of the unfolding drama outside. She was on an international call.

"Tiffany, thank you so much."

"I'm glad I could help, RAIN. It's my honor to assist you," a woman responded through the phone. "Performing your signature piece under your instruction has been incredibly rewarding. I've made great improvement in both my technique and emotional expression."

"Just keep practicing diligently with my methods, and you'll soon overcome your current difficulties," Janice said.

"Again, thank you very much, RAIN."

The call ended, and Janice took a deep breath. She had anticipated Leonidas' scheming.

When Devin announced the self-introduction and talent show, she suspected Leonidas would seize the opportunity to uncover her identity as RAIN.

No matter the outcome, she knew she had to plan carefully and cover every detail. So, she contacted her friend Tiffany Watson, asking her to impersonate RAIN and quickly head to the Fashion Plaza in Nilwark for a flash mob performance.

To make Tiffany's performance convincing, Janice taught her several techniques, ensuring that only someone with profound expertise might suspect she wasn't the real RAIN.

Janice massaged her forehead. She had managed to thwart Leonidas' plan this time, but she was aware of his persistence and knew he would likely continue trying to expose her secret.

Just then, her phone rang.

"Nolan?" Janice answered, recognizing the worry in his voice.

"RAIN, why are you in Nilwark? My concert is starting soon, and you said you'd be there."

Janice rolled her eyes. "I always honor my commitments."

"Will you be able to get back in time?" Nolan asked doubtfully. "My concert is this evening. Even if you leave Nilwark now, I'm worried..."

Janice paused, suddenly recalling that Nolan's concert was indeed tonight.

Had it not been for his reminder, she might have forgotten — which would have been awkward.

She assured him, "Don't worry, I'll make it. Just so you know, I'm participating in a variety show right now, so it might be tight."

“That’s fine. I’ll wait for you, no matter how late it gets.”

“Okay.”

After ending the call, Janice sighed in relief. It was fortunate Nolan had called; otherwise, she might have unintentionally broken her promise.

“Leah, please tell Devin I need to step out briefly tonight due to urgent commitments,” Janice instructed, explaining the concert situation.

“Understood!” Leah immediately went to inform Devin.

Chapter 488:

Devin learned of Janice’s commitment that night and realized some of their initial plans might need to be delayed.

“Ms. Sugden, is there any chance we could reschedule? Does it really have to be tonight?” Devin asked, his voice tinged with resignation.

“Janice’s matters are of the highest priority. You’ll need to adjust the recording schedule or alter its format,” Leah responded.

Devin furrowed his brow, paused to think, then asked, “May I confirm what Janice’s plans are for tonight?”

Leah’s expression tightened as she thought about Nolan’s concert. Although Janice seemed to have forgotten about it, Leah clearly remembered and had planned to remind her soon so she wouldn’t miss the event. Now that Janice mentioned other plans, Leah was sure this was what she was referring to. With no reason to keep it a secret, she briefly explained the situation.

“Janice is attending Nolan’s concert?” Devin’s eyes widened in surprise. Nolan was no ordinary musician—he was a globally celebrated artist whose concerts were rare events. Tickets were nearly impossible to get, no matter how much money you had. For Nolan to personally invite Janice to one of his exclusive shows was truly extraordinary.

Still, thinking back to Janice’s earlier piano performance, which showed remarkable skill, it wasn’t entirely surprising that she might have connections with someone like Nolan.

“I have an idea for a compromise,” Devin said, a grin spreading across his face. “It’s a solution that won’t delay the recording and will still let Janice attend the concert as planned.”

“Oh? Let’s hear it,” Leah replied, intrigued.

Devin leaned closer and whispered his suggestion into Leah’s ear.

As she listened, her eyes brightened with approval. She nodded and said, “Alright, let’s go with that plan.”

The next two hours flew by. Soon, the guests came out of their rooms and gathered in the courtyard.

Devin, holding a megaphone, approached the group accompanied by a few staff members.

A staff member asked, “Mr. Reed, should we start the live stream now?”

“Yes, let’s begin,” Devin replied.

At his signal, the live stream resumed, and viewers flooded in like a tidal wave.

In the past two hours, excitement around Love Lab had skyrocketed. A crowd of eager viewers buzzed in the live chat, waiting impatiently for the broadcast to begin.

The moment the live stream started, the energy surged. Viewers were thrilled to see the strikingly attractive men and women gathered in the courtyard, and the live chat exploded with enthusiastic comments. "Stephen is absolutely the most handsome."

"Aiden is the real heartthrob, though Kenneth's charm isn't far behind."

"Debate all you like, but Janice takes the crown for being the most beautiful."

Fans eagerly cheered for their favorites. While Stephen enjoyed the largest fan base and the majority of comments, Janice's following was impressive in its own right.

Since the very first live stream, Janice's popularity had soared, especially after a video of her making casserole for Stephen went viral. Many shared clips of it, earning widespread positive reactions.

Chapter 489:

A dazzlingly beautiful and fiercely independent woman showcasing her cooking skills to impress Stephen was undeniably a standout moment.

Recognizing its potential, the show's producers heavily promoted this highlight, further boosting Janice's already growing fame.

Of course, the talent performances by Janice and Stephen added depth to her image, portraying her as a uniquely talented and captivating woman.

"Wow, is it even possible to be this perfect? She plays the piano beautifully and cooks like a pro. Marrying her would be a dream!"

"Janice's beauty is unmatched; no man could ever be worthy of her."

"Nonsense! You're forgetting about Aiden. He's her perfect match."

"I'll challenge that right now! My vote goes to Janice and Stephen."

“Well, I’m rooting for Kenneth and Janice!”

As soon as the show went live, shipping groups emerged, catching the producers off guard.

However, the producers were slightly disheartened that every fan group centered around Janice. Couldn’t the other guests get some fan support? They were putting in plenty of effort, too.

“I hope everyone’s had a good rest,” Devin announced, casting an authoritative glance over the gathered guests. “Up next is a game. The winner gets the privilege of choosing their partner first for tonight’s date.”

Janice blinked in mild surprise at the announcement but soon spotted a familiar face among the staff winking in her direction.

Wasn’t that Leah?

It was clear that Devin’s plan had Leah’s backing. This arrangement wouldn’t interfere with the recording and would generate more excitement for the show, making it a sensible decision.

“Mr. Reed, what kind of game are we playing?” Demi asked, raising her hand with an adorably curious look. “Will it be hard?”

“It’s nothing too difficult,” Devin replied with a grin. “Just a simple game—musical chairs.”

“Musical chairs?” Demi’s expression shifted as she glanced at the men, looking slightly uneasy. “There are six guys and three girls. Won’t that be unfair to us girls?”

Devin responded to Demi’s concern with a cryptic smile. “No game is perfectly fair. Besides, this one isn’t as straightforward as it looks.”

“Hey, did everyone catch Devin’s smile?”

“Can someone explain? What’s the twist in this musical chairs game?”

“Absolutely, there’s a twist! It’s six men and three women — it’s not about gender; it’s a contest among the men.”

This comment left many puzzled. How could it be a contest among six men? Yet, some viewers caught the subtlety.

“Remember, it’s a romance show. The men will go to great lengths to impress or protect the female guests. Expect plenty of drama.”

This insight reminded many of Aiden and Kenneth. They had been vying for Janice’s attention from the start, and this game promised an intense confrontation.

“Wow, now that you mention it, I’m even more excited!”

“Just what you’d expect from the creator of Love Lab, sparking drama right from the start.”

Chapter 490:

“Let’s get going, I can’t wait!”

Amid the growing excitement, Devin began explaining the rules of musical chairs.

“We’ll start with eight chairs. If you don’t secure a chair when the music stops, you’re out. Tonight’s winner gets to pick their date, and we’ll set up a special spot for them. You have fifteen minutes to get ready.”

The staff began setting up the venue.

“Janice, I’m sorry if I’ve come across too strong before.” Daniel approached Janice to offer his apology.

Janice was taken aback to see Daniel in a new outfit.

Despite his attempt to dress up, his flamboyant nature shone through. His shirt was provocatively unbuttoned to show off his chest, and his suit, tight over his muscles, looked more squeezed than stylish.

Oblivious to how inappropriate it appeared, Daniel struck what he thought was a charming pose to impress Janice. Janice, however, took a step back, her expression one of clear distaste.

“Daniel, could you please not stand so close?”

“I’m allergic.”

“Huh?” Daniel looked puzzled, failing to grasp Janice’s meaning.

Then, with a flash of realization and a confident grin, he said, “I get it. You’re allergic to handsome guys, right?”

“No, no, no!” Janice responded, waving her hands in frustration and exasperation. “I’m allergic to idiots.”

Daniel was too stunned to respond.

“I’m allergic to idiots” — Janice’s comeback was gold.

“The best part was Daniel thinking she meant ‘handsome guys.’ How could he even say that? Does he have skin as thick as a rhino?”

“Daniel is just a walking disaster on this show. His actions, fashion, and comments are all embarrassments. How did he even get here?”

Online, Daniel was the butt of many jokes.

Karl, witnessing the harsh comments, felt drained and on the verge of giving up.

Despite his repeated warnings for Daniel to be cautious with his words and behavior, Daniel still seemed clueless. He spoke less now and did try to engage with Janice. But with her disliking him so much, how could he possibly generate positive attention for a romantic storyline with her?

“Please move,” Aiden said as he stepped in, firmly pushing Daniel aside.

Daniel wanted to snap back but faltered under Aiden’s stern look.

In his mind, Janice was being ungrateful. He had dressed sharply, in a subdued yet flattering way, and she hadn’t appreciated it.

If Karl hadn’t suggested boosting his image by linking romantically with Janice, Daniel would never have approached her. In his view, she should be the one seeking him out.

“Janice, did that idiot bother you?” Aiden asked.

“Yes.” Janice sighed. “I can’t believe Wendy raised a son like him.”

Aiden scoffed, eyeing Daniel’s retreat. “Probably karma. With all the shady things Wendy’s done, having a son like that seems fitting.”

Janice’s expression darkened as she thought about the White family’s tragedy.