

Wrath 671

Chapter 671:

A door hinge squeaked loudly.

The basement door crept open.

A nasty odor assaulted Wendy's senses.

She fanned the air with her hand, trying to clear the stench as she descended into the poorly lit basement.

Suspended in the middle of the room was a man, bare and bruised, his hair a tangled mess.

With a snap of her fingers, Wendy had an assistant fetch a chair. She settled into it with elegance, legs crossed, seemingly indifferent to the bleak decor.

"Leonidas, how are you holding up?"

Leonidas raised his head, offering Wendy a wry smile. "Not too shabby. What now? Planning more torture? I'd recommend escalating it; your current methods won't break me."

Wendy ignited a cigarette, inhaled deeply, and released a swirl of smoke. "Let's not hurry. We've got all the time in the world to experiment. Today, I might just ease your pain a bit."

Leonidas' smirk disappeared, replaced by a cold, hard stare. "So, you visited your lover, I presume."

"Your insights are quite deep," Wendy remarked casually, her face veiled behind another puff of smoke, her mystique deepening.

“Indeed, I know much more than you think,” Leonidas muttered darkly, his eyes narrowing. “Perhaps we should consider a partnership?”

“Unfortunately, partnering with you isn’t on my agenda, especially after the harm you’ve caused. You’ll stay here and suffer until the end.”

Wendy snapped her fingers once more, prompting a group of imposing men to burst into the room.

Leonidas’ expression changed dramatically, dread flickering across his features. “What are you planning, bitch?”

Rising, Wendy approached Leonidas with deliberate steps. She extinguished her cigarette on Leonidas’ chest, her smile evil. “As I mentioned, I’m quite cheerful today. You’re about to have a delightful experience.”

“No, this isn’t right!” Fear crept into Leonidas’ voice for the first time.

His nature was undoubtedly erratic and deranged, yet he was fundamentally human. The arrival of these men threatened to strip him of all dignity.

He had never feared pain or death. However, the prospect of being humiliated was something he couldn’t tolerate.

“Ensure my guest has a very comfortable time,” Wendy said, her grin now purely sinister.

“We’ll ensure he’s well taken care of.”

The towering men briskly rubbed their hands together before closing in on Leonidas, their movements deliberate and unwavering.

Leonidas stared at them, the wild madness in his eyes giving way to sheer panic and hopeless despair.

“Mrs. Chadwick, wait! I have information about Stephen and Janice!” Leonidas cried out, but Wendy ignored his pleas and continued her exit.

The basement soon filled with Leonidas’ screams and the unsettling laughter of the men.

Wendy’s lips twisted in contempt; this was the price for hurting Stephen.

Chapter 672:

Her phone vibrated with a new message at that moment.

After a brief glance, her gaze grew stormier. “Eager, are you? We’ll see about that.”

The city of Efrery seethed with underlying tensions, the mystery of Leonidas’ disappearance, and Wendy’s schemes impacting Stephen’s life, demanding attention.

But Janice’s departure for Cloverhill was imminent, giving her spare time to address the complications in Efrery. Yet, before leaving, she needed to discern Wendy’s genuine motives.

Using Nina’s network, she secured a meeting with Wendy.

“Nina, your invitation for tea is quite a delightful surprise,” Wendy remarked, her smile appearing sincere.

“Given Janice’s keen interest in the entertainment sector, she requested I facilitate this meeting,” Nina explained, offering Janice’s hand a reassuring pat. “Considering Janice is like my own daughter, it’s only natural I support her entrepreneurial ambitions.”

Wendy’s gaze turned to Janice, her smile subtle yet discerning. “Your request is noted, and I’m happy to assist. It’s unexpected, though, that Janice wishes to discuss details about investing in Stephen so soon. He’s still recovering, and I have yet to discuss this with him.”

“That’s fine. Let’s explore the possibilities and potential for a deeper partnership,” Janice said smoothly, radiating confidence.

“Very well, you two continue. I’ll excuse myself to the restroom,” Nina announced, rising from her seat.

With Nina’s departure, Janice and Wendy found themselves alone.

Wendy remained silent, simply lifting her coffee for a sip.

Janice observed Wendy’s actions. Wendy seemed to deliberately ignore her, focusing intently on her coffee as if to assert control.

“Mrs. Chadwick, considering Stephen’s notable acting skills, I’m eager to understand his background better before making any investment,” Janice said evenly.

At this, Wendy halted her coffee mid-sip, her eyes flashing with a sharp glint before she smoothed her expression and faced Janice. “Does your interest lie with Stephen personally, or with his cinematic achievements?” she asked, her tone flat and unyielding.

“Does it really matter?” Janice replied with a quick smile, subtly shifting the dynamics of their conversation. “A man as attractive as Stephen naturally attracts attention, wouldn’t you agree?”

Janice lowered her tone slightly. “What do you think my chances are if I wanted to get closer to Stephen?”

Wendy’s expression grew cold, though she maintained a polite smile. “Considering your relationship with Aiden, don’t you find your question a bit out of line?”

“What of it? Are you concerned about Aiden, or is it me you worry about?” Janice asked, her voice tinged with challenge.

This remark slightly altered Wendy’s composure. “What exactly are you implying?”

With a chuckle, Janice took a leisurely sip of her coffee and responded coldly, "You fear I might captivate Stephen's heart, don't you? Why else would you introduce Stephen to Lesly and not me?"

Janice's gaze was piercing, her posture confrontational, giving Wendy no escape.

Chapter 673:

However, Wendy regained her composure and replied with a strained smile, "If you truly wish to pursue Stephen and aren't concerned about Aiden's reaction, I'll see what I can do."

Suddenly, Janice burst into laughter.

Wendy looked on, puzzled.

"I was merely joking. While Stephen is indeed attractive, Aiden is even more so," Janice said.

Wendy's gaze sharpened, a hint of cold flashing in her eyes. "You're messing with me!"

"Mrs. Chadwick, there's no need for anger. It was nothing more than a playful remark. I truly appreciate Stephen's talent; that's why I'm considering an investment."

Wendy scoffed, her stare penetrating. "I don't believe you. Stephen is quite the favorite among young women. Surely, you see his appeal." With a wry smile, Janice met Wendy's gaze squarely. "While Stephen is indeed impressive, my preference leans more towards Aiden's style."

The coldness in Wendy's eyes seemed to thaw slightly as she lifted an eyebrow. "Tell me more about Stephen," Janice requested calmly, taking a sip of her coffee. "I'd like to understand who I might be investing in."

"Stephen is an industrious individual. Ever since our first meeting, I believed he was destined for greatness. From then on, I supported him financially. Once he was old enough, he ventured into showbiz. While I've provided many opportunities, his success is largely his own making."

Wendy paused to sip her coffee, maintaining eye contact with Janice. "In short, Stephen is a worthwhile investment."

Janice nodded, her research corroborating Wendy's account. "I plan to start an entertainment firm. I intend to invest two hundred million in Stephen for a contemporary moral drama."

With Aiden supporting the project financially, it presented an opportunity, perhaps even a gift for her brother.

"The drama will explore the story of an older woman who adopts a boy, only to fall in love with him," Janice added.

Wendy's pupils narrowed briefly before she regained her composure. "That's quite a daring concept. Let's discuss this further at another time."

She rose gracefully from her seat, offered Janice a nod, and departed.

Janice's gaze followed Wendy, her expression turning cold and intent. She had keenly observed the fleeting change in Wendy's demeanor. Their dialogue had nearly confirmed her suspicions. Wendy deserved to die!

At that moment, a man entered the room. Dressed in a sharp suit yet stooped and weary, his eyes betrayed a profound melancholy, suggesting severe illness. He surveyed the room, his eyes eventually settling on Janice. He hesitated briefly before walking towards her.

Janice was preparing a fresh pot of coffee. As the man took the seat opposite her, she raised her eyes and greeted him with a subdued smile. "Mr. Chadwick, your presence is welcome."

"Ms. Edwards, considering your association with Mr. Green, I felt compelled to meet," Roger replied, managing a strained smile while his eyes revealed both admiration and discomfort.

Janice instantly assessed Roger.

Roger appeared weak and modest, lacking the vigor typically expected from someone at the helm of the Chadwick family. It seemed the true power within the Chadwick family rested with Wendy. That explained her ability to act without restraint, never facing blame for her actions. Roger, on the other hand, was nothing more than a puppet, holding the title of family head but wielding no real influence.

Chapter 674:

"Ms. Edwards, you invited me here. Is there something you need?" Roger's hands found their way to his thighs, his fingers drumming an anxious rhythm against the fabric.

Janice moved with deliberate grace as she extended a cup of coffee.

"Mr. Chadwick, let's not rush. Have some coffee first." A tremor ran through Roger's hands as he accepted the cup, his eyes darting between the liquid and his host.

"It's perfectly safe," Janice stated, her voice carrying a hint of amusement. "Go ahead."

Color drained from Roger's face before he finally raised the cup to his lips.

Satisfied with his compliance, Janice dispensed with pretense. "I asked you here because I'd like to learn more about your wife."

"My wife?" The cup rattled against its saucer as fear flickered across his features. "What interest do you have in my wife?"

"I'm considering an investment in Stephen White's film. In business, one must gather all possible information before taking action," Janice replied, her voice honeyed with casual indifference.

Her calculated nonchalance seemed to ease Roger's tension slightly. "Is business truly your only motivation?"

“What else could it be?” Janice’s shoulder lifted in an elegant shrug as she sipped her coffee. “My interactions with Mrs. Chadwick have been limited. This meeting is merely to bridge that gap. Better understanding leads to smoother cooperation.”

“Alright then. Truth be told, my wife is quite strong-willed.” The coffee seemed to loosen his tongue, and Janice’s carefully crafted atmosphere of comfort drew out his words. “If you plan to work with her, it’s best to follow her lead. Otherwise, things might become complicated. Not that I’m speaking ill of her, you understand. I just want your partnership to succeed.”

A knowing smile played across Janice’s lips. “I understand. Does she have any hobbies?”

As they talked, Janice carefully pieced together a portrait of Wendy. A strong-willed woman with a passion for cinema, she spent her afternoons sipping coffee in upscale cafes, exchanging gossip with her circle of carefully chosen companions.

Nothing seemed out of the ordinary for a woman of her status, yet something in Roger’s trembling hands told a different story.

“Mr. Chadwick, thank you for being so forthcoming. I’m sure this will make my future interactions with Mrs. Chadwick much more productive.”

Relief washed over Roger’s face. “Well, if there’s nothing else, I should take my leave.”

Janice gestured for him to go. She watched Roger retreat, a mix of pity and frustration crossing her face. The man was clearly beaten down, molded into a nervous wreck by whatever hold Wendy had over him. In his fearful state, he had been too cautious to reveal anything truly useful about his wife.

“The other one should be here any moment,” Janice murmured, checking her watch before lifting her cup.

A sudden movement caught her eye, causing her to spray coffee across the table.

“Janice, I see you’ve finally succumbed to my irresistible charms.” Daniel materialized before her like an overly enthusiastic peacock.

His ensemble was a sight to behold—a tank top that seemed painted on, a garish floral shirt, and sunglasses that dominated half his face. Every piece of clothing appeared to be fighting a losing battle with his muscles, as if he’d raided a teenager’s closet.

Chapter 675:

Janice descended into a coughing fit, nearly choking on her coffee.

Daniel swooped in with a tissue, striking a pose that belonged on the cover of a questionable romance novel. “Try not to be overwhelmed by my presence. I’d hate for my devastating good looks to cause you any distress.”

“Stop it!” Janice cut in, already regretting her life choices.

“While coffee isn’t my preferred poison, for you, I’d savor every drop.” Daniel lounged across the table like a self-satisfied cat, chin propped on folded arms as his gaze burned through those ridiculous sunglasses. “Tell me, when did you finally succumb to my irresistible charm?”

“One more word of this nonsense, and you can see yourself out.” Janice’s fingers twitched with the overwhelming urge to wipe that smirk off his face. “My patience wears dangerously thin.”

Daniel’s grin only widened. “Such adorable shyness! Don’t worry; we have all day to break down those walls of yours.”

He punctuated this with an exaggerated wink that made Janice’s blood boil.

Her nails dug crescents into her palms as she fought for control. The urge to slap that insufferable expression off his face was almost overwhelming, but she couldn’t, not if she wanted information about Wendy.

“I asked you here to learn about your mother.”

“My mother?” Daniel’s cocky demeanor faltered for a moment before his face lit up with renewed delight. “Isn’t this too fast? We haven’t even had our first date, and you’re already researching your future mother-in-law? Though I must say, I admire your preparation for joining the Chadwick family...”

“I’ve had enough!” The cups rattled as Janice’s palm slammed against the table. In one fluid motion, she rose and delivered a resounding slap that sent Daniel’s sunglasses flying across the room. He sat there, stunned, one hand pressed against his reddening cheek, his usual swagger temporarily short-circuited.

Janice had no patience for pleasantries. She went straight for a direct, no-nonsense approach.

Without hesitation, she pressed her foot against Daniel’s chest, pinning him down with an imposing stare.

“Start talking. What do you really know about your mother?”

“I don’t know...”

“Hmm?” Janice lifted her hand slightly, and just that small motion was enough to send a shudder down Daniel’s spine. He still remembered the sting from last time.

“I’ll talk! I’ll tell you everything!”

Holding back the impulse to hit him again, Janice listened as Daniel spilled the truth—Wendy was twisted.

When Daniel was younger, he had accidentally discovered her secret stash: an assortment of sexual items—whips, candles, and all sorts of things he hadn’t even known the names of at the time.

But what truly disturbed him was that, despite owning them, Wendy had never used them with his father.

“And how exactly do you know that?” Janice narrowed her eyes.

“Because my dad’s impotent,” Daniel blurted out without hesitation, casually revealing his father’s most humiliating secret. “It’s been years. There’s no way they’ve been together. And, well, I’ve heard that after thirty, women have stronger needs. That made me wonder—would my mom look for someone else? But after digging into it, I found nothing. No affairs, no secret lover. But if she’s not using them with my dad, then who is she using them on?”

Chapter 676:

Janice had heard enough. Her stomach twisted in disgust as the last puzzle piece clicked into place.

Wendy had turned Stephen into her personal plaything, using him whenever she pleased. The scars on his body—they were all her handiwork.

A cold, dangerous glint flickered in Janice’s eyes, her fury so palpable that Daniel instinctively shrank back, feeling a sudden, inexplicable terror.

“That’s all I know...”

“Daniel, forget this conversation ever happened. And don’t breathe a word of it to anyone.”

“I won’t breathe a word.”

It was a humiliating secret, one he had no intention of ever sharing. “Leave.”

Janice waved Daniel away and sank into her chair, hoping a sip of coffee would steady her.

Yet, the moment the coffee touched her lips, its bitterness seemed to seep straight into her heart. The thought of her brother enduring years of servitude under Wendy made her chest tighten. “Wendy, you bitch. One day, you’ll pay for this.”

Janice couldn't begin to fathom when Wendy had first claimed Stephen as her slave. Had it begun when he was an adult? Or had Wendy shackled him in her control far earlier—even when he was just six years old?

"Janice, is something bothering you?" Nina walked in and caught sight of Janice's tense expression. Concern filled her voice. "Did Wendy say something awful again?"

Janice took a deep breath, steadying herself before forcing a smile. "I just can't shake the feeling that she is incredibly shrewd. If I were to work with her, it wouldn't be a simple task."

"No doubt about that," Nina agreed. "Wendy has a strong hold over the elite social circles. She knows exactly how to use Stephen's influence to make rich women gravitate towards her. If she weren't so calculating, she wouldn't have built such a strong network."

Nina reached for Janice's hand. "Janice, you don't have to go through all this. The Green family can take care of you for life. And if you and Aiden remarry, everything he owns will be yours."

Nina's kindness warmed Janice deeply.

"Don't worry, Nina. I have everything under control."

"Alright, but if Wendy ever crosses the line, you tell me. I'll handle her myself."

"Alright."

Janice managed a smile, but the weight in her chest didn't ease.

She had suffered countless hardships during her years with the Edwards family, but at least she had made it through. Her brother, however, had been under Wendy's control since he was just six years old—there was no telling the kind of suffering he had endured.

She understood why Stephen feared Wendy. Maybe he believed that if she ever found out about his sister, Janice would be the next target. Wendy's twisted obsession with control meant she would never let anyone take Stephen away from her.

Janice knew she had to pick the right moment to show Stephen that his sister was no longer someone Wendy could manipulate.

Meanwhile, after her confrontation with Janice, Wendy was seething. She needed an outlet—something, someone—to take her anger out on. Her first instinct was Stephen, but his injuries were still severe. If she pushed him too far, his recovery would only take longer.

Chapter 677:

Her mind then shifted to Leonidas—the one locked away in the basement.

But the moment she stepped into the villa, a strange unease settled over her. The air was too still, almost unnatural, and the bodyguards who should have been lurking in the shadows were nowhere in sight.

Wendy's brows furrowed as she moved forward with caution. As soon as she entered, the sharp, metallic scent of blood hit her, thick and suffocating. "Could it be...?"

Her expression darkened. Without hesitation, she rushed to the basement.

In the dim basement, flickering lights cast eerie shadows, creating a scene reminiscent of a nightmare. The air was heavy with the putrid stench of decay and the sharp, metallic scent of blood. The spot once occupied by Leonidas was now eerily vacant, save for a few burly men collapsed on the cold floor. Nearby, the villa's bodyguards lay scattered, each meeting a gruesome end.

"Ah!" Wendy screamed, her foot slamming into the floor in a fit of rage. She was incredulous. Despite the stringent security, Leonidas had managed to escape.

A cough cut through the silence as one of the burly men stirred, his hand trembling as he reached out. "Help me."

Wendy, her face set in a mask of severity, grabbed the man by his collar. "Tell me exactly what happened."

"Ma'am, we underestimated him. We thought he was too weak after we toyed with him for a while. We released him to have more fun, but that was our mistake. He turned on us, overpowering everyone." A gurgling cough interrupted him, and blood trickled from his lips. His complexion turned ghostly, signaling his life force was waning. "Ma'am, please... I don't want to die," he pleaded, desperation warping his features as he grasped for her as his last lifeline.

But Wendy slapped his hand away. She stood up, her eyes filled with icy disdain as she looked down at the man.

"You're all useless! Why should I spare you?" Her eyes narrowed into slits, and with a swift motion, she drove the heel of her shoe into the man's throat. A gush of blood dripped down from his lips, and his eyes bulged, marking his final moments.

Taking a deep breath to calm her fury, Wendy turned her attention back to where Leonidas had been. Her eyes, cold and calculating, flickered with renewed determination.

"I underestimated you. But that's fine. Let's consider this a game of cat and mouse," she murmured. Her lips curled into a sinister smile while her tongue lightly traced the corner of her mouth. Her eyes gleamed with cruelty and madness.

Standing amid the carnage, Wendy was a ghastly figure. Her presence alone was enough to strike terror into anyone who crossed her path.

The next day, Janice made her way back to the hospital to see Stephen. Stephen appeared more spirited than the day before, yet Janice noticed he had sustained several new injuries. It dawned on her that she had severely underestimated Wendy, who had slipped past Aiden's watchful eyes and entered Stephen's room without notice.

"Costello, you're now responsible for Stephen's safety. I need you to protect him discreetly," Janice instructed with calm authority.

“Understood,” Costello replied, accepting the directive without hesitation, ready to obey her commands without question.

After stowing her phone away, Janice brightened her expression and entered the room. “Hi, Stephen, I’ve come to visit you.”

“Actually, you didn’t need to come, Janice,” Stephen remarked, his surprise clear in his expressive eyes. “We’ve only recently met. If the paparazzi see us together, it could lead to damaging rumors.”

Chapter 678:

Janice dismissed his concerns with a shake of her head. “It seems you’re quite concerned about my well-being.”

Stephen was momentarily taken aback. He then turned his head away, avoiding Janice’s bright, smiling eyes. Her eyes had a captivating quality, effortlessly drawing people in and putting them at ease.

Internally, Janice sighed. Although they were siblings, they couldn’t publicly acknowledge their relationship, a situation that was deeply frustrating for her. If Stephen couldn’t release his worries, their reunion would only perpetuate his anxiety and fear.

“If you’re worried about rumors, there’s no need,” Janice reassured him as she began unpacking the food she brought. “Here in Efrery, no one dares spread rumors about me.”

Stephen, slightly taken aback but aware of Janice’s backing by Aiden, grasped the extent of her confidence. Should any rumors emerge, Aiden’s influence would undoubtedly suppress them quickly.

“But Aiden...”

“Aiden isn’t that petty,” Janice interjected with a smile, her expression soft and warm, enveloping Stephen in comfort reminiscent of spring. “It’s more than mere acquaintanceship between us. We’ve faced adversities together, making us akin to kindred spirits.”

Stephen paused, memories of their shared ordeals resurfacing. He found it hard to argue with her point.

“Moreover, I plan to finance a film specifically tailored for you. We’re not just kindred spirits but also business partners. Do you still see any issue with me visiting you?”

“You’re going to invest in a film for me?” Stephen asked, his eyes widening with a mix of surprise and curiosity. “Why?”

Janice shrugged, her tone casual as if discussing something of little consequence. “You’re an award-winning actor with significant talent, popularity, and reputation. Investing in you is a smart move for me. If you need another reason, just remember that I am wealthy and I do what I please.”

A slight smile played on Stephen’s lips at her blunt explanation. Janice indeed had a refreshingly straightforward way about her. Yet, deep down, he felt that Janice’s pragmatic approach was also a means to strengthen their bond.

“Alright, let’s put everything else on hold for now. First things first—let’s eat,” Janice said, bringing the conversation to a halt as she handed over some food.

Stephen’s gaze flickered between the offered meal and Janice, whose sincerity was written all over her face. Turning her down would be downright rude. So, with a small nod, he accepted the food, murmured a quiet “thank you,” and began eating at a measured pace.

Janice settled beside him, propping her chin on her palm as she watched him with quiet fascination. There was something almost mesmerizing about the way he ate—unhurried, deliberate, with the grace of a refined gentleman. It was a sight easy on the eyes, to say the least.

The thought of having such a dashing and talented brother filled her with pride. And that only strengthened her resolve—she would rescue Stephen from Wendy’s grasp.

The question was—did he want to leave Wendy?

Bit by bit, color returned to Stephen’s face as the meal worked its magic.

“Janice, you didn’t come here just for a casual chat, did you?” Stephen asked suddenly, breaking the silence.

Chapter 679:

Janice smiled knowingly. “You’re right. I respect your talent, Stephen, and I believe in your potential. That’s why I’m going to invest in your film—not just as a business move, but as the first step in launching my own entertainment company.”

A spark of determination lit up her eyes. “I want you by my side, Stephen—to be the shining star of my company.”

Stephen’s fork froze mid-air. He blinked at her, stunned. “Are you serious?”

“As serious as it gets.” Janice’s gaze was unwavering, clear as a mountain spring. There was no trace of jest in her expression—only sincerity and determination.

Stephen, however, stiffened, visibly rattled. “No! I can’t accept that. Please, don’t bring this up again.”

Janice arched a brow, her voice turning firmer. “Stephen, I mean every word. I want you on my team, and I’m offering you a future far better than the one you’re clinging to. If you choose me, you’ll have a brighter future.”

Her words struck Stephen like a thunderclap, sending tremors through the fragile certainty he had wrapped himself in. His mind reeled back to that moment in the fire—when Janice had vowed he would have a better future.

“Stephen, if you’re afraid Wendy won’t let you go, then let me handle that.” Janice’s eyes narrowed, her gaze locking onto Stephen’s with razor-sharp intensity. “You need to trust me. I can make it happen! No matter how powerful or terrifying she seems to you, trust me—I can take her on.”

Stephen met Janice’s gaze, and for a fleeting moment, doubt wavered. Her conviction was like an unshakable fortress. Could she really go against Wendy?

“No.” The mere thought of leaving Wendy sent a chill down Stephen’s spine. He knew better—her wrath was not something he could afford to provoke. “Janice, I appreciate your kindness, but I will never betray Wendy. Everything I am today is because of her. I owe her my loyalty.”

Janice’s eyes dimmed slightly, though her resolve never wavered. She could see it—the war raging within Stephen’s heart, the desire for freedom locked in chains of fear. He longed to break free from Wendy’s grasp, but her psychological hold on him was a shackle too tight to escape—fear kept him firmly in place.

“Stephen, remember one thing—I never fail to achieve what I set my mind to. Wendy may be a force to be reckoned with, but so am I. My offer stands. The moment you decide to break free, call me. My door will always be open.”

With that, Janice turned and walked away. Just as she reached the door, she hesitated, casting one last glance over her shoulder at Stephen. She would wait for her brother—no matter how long it took. The moment he found the courage to take that step, she would be there to pull him to safety. No trial, no matter how fiery or dark, would stop her.

Stephen sat there, watching Janice’s figure fade into the distance, his mind a whirlwind of conflicting thoughts. While Janice was undeniably powerful, with the Green family backing her, the sheer fear Wendy instilled in him was on a whole different level.

Wendy wasn’t just a threat; she was a nightmare come to life, a force of nature who left destruction in her wake.

As Janice made her way out of the ward, a tall figure suddenly appeared in her path. Janice caught a faint whiff of his cologne, the unmistakable scent that told her exactly who it was. She couldn’t help but smile.

“Aiden, what brings you here today?”

Aiden looked down at her, his gaze soft and full of warmth. “Just checking in on my future brother-in-law. Is that a problem?”

Janice tilted her head slightly, meeting his gaze with an unspoken understanding between them. "I haven't agreed to marry you again, you know."

Chapter 680:

"Oh, it's only a matter of time." Aiden's lips curled into a confident, relaxed smile.

Janice couldn't stop the faintest of smiles from tugging at her lips as she looked up at him. "By the way, Wendy came by yesterday."

Aiden blinked in surprise, then furrowed his brow in concern. "I didn't hear anything about it. My security team didn't pick up on anything unusual. Looks like Wendy isn't just an average wealthy wife after all."

Janice nodded thoughtfully. "Exactly. She's the kind of person who can slip past your security without a trace and waltz right into my brother's ward. There's no way she's just some ordinary person. I'll have Costello stay here. No matter how careful Wendy thinks she can be, she won't be able to slip past his watchful eyes."

Aiden's expression darkened, guilt flashing across his face. Despite all the security measures he had put in place, Wendy had still managed to slip through unnoticed. It made him feel completely powerless.

"Aiden, don't carry this burden alone. It's not your fault." Janice noticed the hint of gloom in Aiden's eyes and comforted him. "We all underestimated Wendy's capabilities."

"Janice, when you show such tenderness, I find myself drawn to you like a moth to a flame." Aiden's voice dropped to a honeyed whisper, each word dripping with unbridled affection for Janice. He bridged the gap between them, his breath ghosting across her skin in shallow waves.

Janice's heart stumbled in its rhythm as she gazed at his perfect features, now mere inches from her own. "Aiden, you're such a glutton for punishment. Here you are, blameless, yet drowning in guilt. You wonderful fool!"

“What else can I do? They say love makes fools of us all.” A smile danced across Aiden’s lips, his eyes melting with such tenderness that none would recognize him as the ice-cold figure who struck fear in hearts.

“Oh, you’re hopeless, absolutely hopeless!”

“What?” Aiden froze, caught off guard by Janice’s comment.

“You’ve been poisoning your mind with those melodramatic romance novels! They’ve turned your brain to mush!” Janice said playfully. Aiden’s words died in his throat. Trying to romance Janice was like catching smoke with bare hands.

The air had crackled with possibility. With any other woman, a kiss would have been inevitable. But Janice’s words had shattered the intimate moment like glass.

Aiden gathered his composure like a cloak around his shoulders. Slipping his hands into his pockets, he retreated behind his familiar mask of cool indifference.

“What’s your next move? Will you reveal yourself to Stephen, or get rid of Wendy first?”

As Aiden reverted to his usual self, Janice released a breath she hadn’t realized she’d been holding.

His unexpected charm had been almost dangerous. If her heart hadn’t been fortified, she might have succumbed to his spell right then and there.

Who could resist such godlike perfection—towering height, chiseled features, and abs that looked carved from marble?

“Stephen’s truth will have to wait. Twenty years under Wendy’s thumb won’t unravel easily. The chains are too deep. As for getting rid of Wendy... that’s not even an option.”

With our capabilities, dealing with Wendy isn't difficult. But Stephen's real prison isn't Wendy; it's the fortress of fear she's built in his mind over decades. True freedom requires him to tear down those walls himself."