

Wrath 681

Chapter 681:

Aiden exhaled heavily, the weight of Janice's words settling on his shoulders. Disposing of Wendy would be simple. The real battle lay in helping Stephen break free from the mental cage she'd constructed around him. If Stephen couldn't shatter those invisible chains, even with Wendy gone, he'd remain her prisoner, haunted by ghosts of her control.

"Aiden, I need to head to Cloverhill next."

"Hold on." Aiden's brow furrowed as he searched Janice's face. "Tell me you're not planning to go alone."

"Uh... yeah." Janice hesitated. "A larger group would only draw unwanted eyes and complications."

"You're right." Aiden nodded decisively. "Safe travels, then."

Janice stared at him, stunned. She'd braced for his usual stubborn insistence on accompanying her. Instead, he'd casually agreed to her solo journey to Cloverhill, throwing her completely off balance. "You're not playing games, are you?" Janice narrowed her eyes, suspicion creeping in.

"Games? Whatever for?" Aiden's shoulders lifted in a casual shrug, a cunning smile playing across his lips, mischief dancing in his eyes. "Don't tell me you expected me to beg to tag along to Cloverhill?" Janice was silent.

"Rest assured, I won't become your shadow."

His newfound nonchalance left Janice oddly unsettled, missing his usual dogged persistence. She'd grown accustomed to his unwavering attention, and this sudden shift felt like stepping onto unstable ground.

"Cloverhill's a nest of vipers, nothing like Efrery's gentler waters. Watch your step when you arrive." Aiden's finger brushed her nose with butterfly-light tenderness.

“Okay.” Janice’s nose crinkled at the phantom tingle of his touch.

Cloverhill stood as the nation’s crown jewel. Tales painted it as streets lined with gold, a beacon drawing ambitious youth like moths to flame. Yet how many truly soared to its glittering heights, and how many became mere cobblestones in others’ paths to glory?

For the dreamers, it sparkled with promise. But to Janice, it was just another concrete jungle, choked with dust and desperation—no place to plant roots. She yearned for Efrery’s simple charms—a town where contentment flowed freely, even if pockets ran shallow.

“Mr. Welch, I’ll reach you in two hours. See you soon.”

Fresh off the plane, Janice’s phone buzzed with Mateo’s call. His strained tone painted a grim picture—Orson’s decline was accelerating. Without a will, the Welch family could descend into a bloodthirsty power struggle.

Cloverhill’s crisp air bit sharper than Efrery’s gentle warmth. Janice cut an elegant figure—her flowing locks framing designer sunglasses, a tailored trench coat completing her effortlessly sophisticated silhouette.

She glided through domestic arrivals, her suitcase trailing behind, leaving a wake of turned heads and whispered admirations. Men’s gazes followed her like moths to flame, some brave souls teetering on the edge of approach. Yet her regal bearing—an invisible crown of authority—kept them at bay, sparing her from unwanted attention.

Janice caught sight of Vernon near the exit, his distinctive presence impossible to miss. Pushing her sunglasses higher on the bridge of her nose, she found herself momentarily speechless. Vernon remained true to his nature—a walking masterpiece of flash and flair that demanded attention. Fortunately, not many people in Cloverhill knew him; otherwise, he would have been swarmed by admirers.

Chapter 682:

“Janice, you must have had a long journey,” Vernon glided towards her, smoothly relieving her of her suitcase.

“How long have you been in Cloverhill?” Janice inquired.

“A week now.”

“A week?” Janice raised an eyebrow, her mind flickering to Leah’s earlier assignment. “Was it Leah who sent you here for that task?”

“Yes!”

“How’s it going?”

“Everything’s unfolding perfectly. One more week should seal the deal.”

“Very good.”

A sparkle danced in Janice’s eyes, and Vernon, basking in her approval, flushed with pride.

“Keep this under wraps. Once it’s complete, Cloverhill’s elite are in for quite the revelation.”

“Understood!”

The parking lot stretched before them as they emerged. Janice’s expression soured at the sight of the stretch limousine waiting ahead. She shot Vernon an exasperated look that clearly conveyed: “A stretch limo? Really? That’s so last decade.”

“Janice, if this isn’t to your taste, I can summon an alternative immediately.” Vernon offered an apologetic smile, having chosen the limousine with only her comfort in mind. After all, it was spacious and could ride smoothly.

Yet Janice's distaste for such showmanship was evident.

"It seems you haven't learned from Leah enough."

"You're right," Vernon responded, perspiration betraying his discomfort as he absorbed the gentle rebuke.

To the world, he was fashion's kingmaker, the gatekeeper whose approval every socialite craved. But before Janice, he was nothing more than a humble follower.

A sleek black sedan materialized before them.

"I haven't even called for another car, and there's one here?" Vernon's confusion deepened as a figure emerged, opening the door with practiced grace.

Janice studied the man, her brow furrowing. Though masked and shielded behind sunglasses, his commanding presence and athletic build were unmistakable.

"Since when did chauffeurs become so refined?"

The mystery driver remained silent, merely gesturing toward the open door.

"Are you here to pick us up?" Vernon questioned, suspicion etched across his features. "But I made no such arrangements."

"Get in," said Janice. Without hesitation, she slipped into the back seat. Vernon, despite his unease, followed her lead without pause. The driver took his position, and the vehicle purred to life, gliding away from the curb.

As they merged onto Cloverhill's main thoroughfare, Janice watched the city's steel and glass monuments pierce the sky, its arteries clogged with the pulse of urban life. Their progress soon ground to a halt.

"There's a traffic jam," Vernon observed, surveying the metallic ocean before them. "They say Cloverhill gleams with glamour, but its true signature is these endless traffic snarls. Too many fortune seekers cram into too little space."

"No rush," Janice said calmly. "After all, it's others who are anxious, not us."

Chapter 683:

Vernon's face lit with sudden understanding, a sly smile forming. "The Welch family would be livid if they heard that."

"Their anger matters little. I suspect someone here is dying of boredom, though." Janice's piercing gaze found the driver's reflection. "Aiden, didn't you say you weren't coming along?"

"Huh?" Vernon gaped, studying their chauffeur with new eyes. "You mean the driver is Aiden Green?"

Aiden's sigh of defeat filled the car. Surrendering his disguise, he peeled away the sunglasses and mask, revealing features that matched his reputation. "How did you see through it, Janice? I thought my camouflage was perfect."

"That towering frame and intimidating presence? Pure Aiden Green." Aiden's rich laughter filled the car. "Should I consider that a compliment?"

"Care to explain your surprise appearance?" Janice's gaze turned razor-sharp, her eyes boring into Aiden.

Yet Aiden remained unruffled, his smile unwavering. "I said I wouldn't follow. But playing chauffeur? That was never off the table."

Janice's eyes rolled skyward. His logic, though infuriating, was flawless. "The mighty head of the Green family, reduced to playing taxi driver in Cloverhill? Surely you have more pressing matters."

"The company runs like clockwork with Braylen at the helm. Why not seize the chance to step into someone else's shoes for a change?" Aiden's tone carried a hint of mischief.

Vernon's gaze bounced between them, marvel in his eyes. Aiden's dedication was something else—the leader of an empire, willingly donning a driver's cap in Cloverhill, all to stay in Janice's orbit.

A loud honk erupted, shattering the calm. The intrusive sound caused Janice to scowl in annoyance. She spun around, spotting a luxury car close behind, the source of the relentless honking.

"Shall I address them?" Vernon asked.

"No, let it be," Janice replied.

The honking grated on her nerves, yet she understood the discretion in Cloverhill to evade complications. Janice held this belief quietly, but not everyone shared her restraint.

A man from a nearby car stepped out to challenge the noisy driver. "Are you blind? Don't you see the traffic jam right ahead?" he yelled, sleeves rolled up and finger jabbed toward the luxury vehicle. "Cut it out, or you'll regret it!"

His rant complete, the man turned to head back to his vehicle, but then a figure emerged from the luxury car. This man appeared wealthy yet bore a threatening look. Without warning, he wielded an ashtray, striking the complainant on the head. Caught off guard, the victim staggered, and before he could react, he was struck again. This second hit drew blood, sending him collapsing to the ground.

Onlookers gasped in shock, some fumbling for their phones to alert the police.

"Don't bother with the police! That's Jorge Lambert."

“Jorge Lambert?” A potential caller whitened at hearing the name and stopped dialing.

The recognition spread as others noted the luxury car’s distinct license plate, interchangeable with significant influence or wealth.

Aware of the Lambert family’s clout, bystanders knew reporting the incident would be pointless; the Lamberts would escape unharmed. Meanwhile, those daring to report could face dire consequences. Jorge’s reputation for vengeance was well-known.

Chapter 684:

In Cloverhill, Jorge’s fame as a merciless figure was common knowledge. With his family’s support, he operated above the law, a fact well-understood by locals who steered clear of his path.

“Clear the way!” Jorge menacingly waved the ashtray at the surrounding drivers. “Cross me and you’ll share his fate.”

Onlookers saw the man crumpled on the ground and hastened to clear the way, their vehicles scraping against the curbs. Jorge was a figure no one dared challenge.

Janice observed the scene with a cold smirk. “Such brazen arrogance. It’s shocking to see a member of the local elite behave like a thug upon my arrival.”

“That’s Jorge Lambert, a notorious figure,” Vernon said. “He’s well-known here for his wild lifestyle and passion for racing. He’s a dangerous man. I heard that once, he disfigured a young man from a wealthy family just because they were wearing the same outfit. Even though people know what he’s capable of, they’re forced to bite their tongues in silence. The Lambert family holds tremendous power, and only a handful of influential families here would dare to challenge them.”

As vehicles swerved to avoid conflict, Vernon looked at Janice anxiously. “Shall we make way for him?”

“Vernon, remind me, what persona do I assume in Cloverhill?” Janice asked.

After a brief pause, Vernon answered, “You are the legendary surgeon known as MO.”

“Precisely,” Janice said, then she wore a golden mask that covered half her face, leaving her eyes and red lips exposed, enhancing her mysterious presence.

Vernon was confused by Janice’s actions. Then he saw Aiden, understanding Janice’s intent, also putting on a mask and sunglasses.

“What is this about?” he asked.

Just then, Jorge marched towards their car, locking eyes with them.

“Didn’t you hear my order to move?”

“Hit the gas, Aiden!” Janice commanded suddenly.

Vernon’s eyes widened in shock as Aiden floored the accelerator. “This is insane!”

Vernon knew that following Janice would bring excitement, but he hadn’t anticipated such a daring confrontation.

They were on a collision course with Jorge, the infamous playboy of Cloverhill. This wasn’t just thrilling; it was downright daring!

Jorge was caught off guard by the sudden reversal aimed at him. He dodged swiftly, just escaping the vehicle’s path. Fury surged within him.

“You dare attack me? I’ll make you regret this!” Jorge shouted, his expression twisted in anger, his demeanor threatening. “Step out of the car now!”

Almost immediately, several imposing figures appeared from the following vehicles.

These were Jorge's bodyguards, menacing and proficient, clearly seasoned in combat.

Vernon recognized the gravity of their situation at that moment. Jorge's presence with such a heavy staff suggested he was here on serious business.

"Janice, is there an extra mask for me?"

Vernon now grasped the reason behind Janice's and Aiden's masked appearances. Concealing their faces would make them harder to identify if they incited any trouble.

Chapter 685:

"Sort it out yourself," Janice responded, her voice steady, her demeanor unruffled by the advancing threats.

Despite being cornered, she was calm. Could it be that she had a countermeasure in mind? This realization steadied Vernon.

"Vernon, I need you to handle something," Janice instructed.

"What's that?"

"Go outside and provoke them. Be as bold as you can."

A look of dismay crossed Vernon's face as he realized what was asked of him. It felt like he was being sent straight into trouble.

"Get out!" Jorge marched forward, his glare sharp as he fixed his gaze on the people in the car.

Click.

The car door swung open.

Vernon stepped out, sunglasses on, his head held high, and his chest puffed out.

Jorge's brow furrowed as he sized Vernon up from head to toe.

Vernon wore a bold outfit—a floral shirt paired with a suit—perfectly put together and undeniably flashy. His appearance exuded a daring, sophisticated charm, but there was something about his presence that commanded attention, making Jorge feel uneasy.

In Cloverhill, Jorge's fierce reputation was legendary. With his gang surrounding the car, most would have trembled in fear. But Vernon stood firm, his composure unwavering, and even seemed to radiate arrogance.

"I'm out here now. What of it?" Vernon flicked his sunglasses down slightly, just enough to meet Jorge's eyes, his gaze challenging.

"Wow, such attitude," Jorge sneered, snapping his fingers at his bodyguard.

Without hesitation, the bodyguard handed him a baton. Jorge grabbed it and pointed it at Vernon.

"You didn't just fail to move earlier, but you also tried to run me over. Are you asking for trouble?"

"Looking for trouble?" Vernon scoffed, spitting on the ground as he folded his arms defiantly. "It seems to me you're the one causing problems! How dare you block my path? I'll drive right through you, no matter who you are!"

The bystanders watched anxiously, sensing the danger Vernon was in. His arrogance was impossible to ignore, especially when faced with someone like Jorge, whose ruthless methods were well-known across Cloverhill.

Few had ever dared to confront Jorge so boldly. Did Vernon have some significant influence?

Yet, no one seemed to recall any such person with the courage to challenge Jorge. After all, someone with so much audacity would likely be famous by now.

On the surface, Vernon maintained an air of calm and defiance, but inside, he was a bundle of nerves.

If not for his strong self-control and the backing of JE, his knees would probably have been shaking uncontrollably.

Jorge laughed, though his eyes began to betray a storm brewing within him. "I've roamed Cloverhill for years, yet I've never encountered anyone like you. Speaking so boldly to me, as if you're seeking trouble. Beat him up! And if he dies, just dispose of him."

"Let's see who has the guts!" Vernon felt a surge of fear, but he shouted sharply, his defiance unwavering.

Chapter 686:

From the corner of his eye, he saw Janice and Aiden watching from a distance, their faces showing no signs of worry.

If death was inevitable, he thought, he might as well face it head-on. It was now or never, and he chose to embrace his defiance fully. As Jorge opened his mouth to speak, Vernon stepped forward and slapped him hard across the face.

Jorge stood frozen, mouth agape, his expression a mix of shock and fury.

"Haven't you heard of me? I only slapped you out of respect for Mateo Welch."

Jorge, ready to retaliate, was momentarily stopped by the mention of Mateo. His anger flared, but confusion quickly replaced it as he fixed Vernon with a puzzled gaze. "Are you somehow connected to him?"

“Feeling intimidated now? You were all high and mighty just a moment ago! You wanted to kill us, but don’t you fear that Mateo might bury you instead?” Vernon spat, his voice dripping with disdain.

Jorge was filled with uncertainty, but the confidence in Vernon’s tone felt too genuine to be an act, making him hesitate.

The Lambert family’s power in Cloverhill was mainly due to the Welch family’s support. If Mateo truly stood behind Vernon, then Jorge had undoubtedly trapped himself.

Vernon saw the doubt creeping into Jorge’s face, and his eyes lit up with realization. He had correctly guessed that Jorge’s influence paled in comparison to the Welch family’s, whose support Jorge and his gang had always relied on.

“What an ignorant fool!” Vernon sneered, his hand cocking back for another sharp slap.

The sharp sound of the slap echoed through the street, louder than the nearby honking, leaving the crowd in stunned silence.

It was unthinkable. The notorious and feared Jorge had just been slapped. The air was thick with disbelief.

On top of that, Jorge’s hesitation suggested he was being more cautious with Vernon. Could this sharply dressed man actually be someone important after all?

“You’re digging your own grave!” Jorge glared at Vernon, his eyes blazing with fury.

However, Vernon’s hand struck again, landing a sharp, resounding slap across Jorge’s face.

The three slaps brought Vernon a sense of satisfaction, though he couldn’t ignore the slight pain shooting through his hand.

“You should be grateful I’m only slapping you. If the people in the car had intervened, you’d be in far greater danger.”

Vernon shot a meaningful glance at Janice inside the car, his eyes filled with respect. The look only made Jorge more uneasy about the pair.

“Now, get on your knees and apologize. You’ve insulted the people in that car. Without their mercy, not even Mateo can protect you.”

Jorge’s eyes widened in shock as he stared at Vernon, realizing the possibility that they might be connected to Mateo and wield significant influence.

“What’s the matter?” Vernon’s eyes narrowed into slits as he advanced menacingly. “Should I summon Mateo here personally?”

“I wouldn’t dare.” Jorge fought to steady his racing heart, forcing a facade of composure. “I was out of line earlier and caused offense. I apologize.”

Vernon’s eyebrow arched in smug satisfaction at Jorge’s submission. Janice’s advice rang true—when confronting the arrogant, one must wield even greater arrogance to break them.

Chapter 687:

Such was the natural order: the weak bow before the strong.

“Sir, may I ask you a question?” Jorge ventured.

“Go ahead.”

“I’m curious about your connection to Mr. Welch.”

Vernon’s expression turned cold, and his hand struck Jorge’s face with lightning speed.

Though Jorge's instincts screamed to retaliate, one glance at Vernon's icy stare made him swallow his rage and endure the blow.

"How dare you!" Vernon spat.

"Sorry, I overstepped," Jorge apologized, his voice low.

Vernon felt a twinge of anxiety. Jorge's suspicion lingered. If this continued, his facade would eventually crack.

"Enough. We're leaving. Have your men clear the path," Vernon commanded, turning toward his vehicle. But the wall of bodyguards remained unmoved.

"What now? Do you really want me to call Mateo over?"

"Sir, you've mentioned Mr. Welch repeatedly, yet refused to tell me your relationship with him. You've put me in quite the bind," Jorge said, raising his head, his gaze darkening.

Vernon's heart stuttered. Was he going to be exposed?

But before panic could fully take root, Jorge's next words made his anxiety spike even further.

"I'm accompanying an important person to the Welch family today. If you truly have such close ties to Mr. Welch, how could you be unaware of this?"

Vernon's composure shattered like glass.

Though he tried to mask his panic, Jorge had caught that flicker of fear. "So, you're nothing but a fraud. Guys, teach him a lesson," Jorge demanded. The circle of bodyguards closed in, like wolves around their prey.

“Alright! You really are something. I’ll call Mateo right now.” Vernon fumbled for his phone, his hand hovering uncertainly over the keypad, but he had no number to dial.

Jorge’s earlier humiliation burned like acid. In Cloverhill, reputation was everything—he had to reclaim his dignity.

“Attack!”

A guard lunged forward, the baton whistling through the air toward Vernon’s skull.

But in that heartbeat between life and death, a figure emerged from the car with fluid grace, catching the weapon mid-strike and sending the attacker flying with a precise kick.

Vernon’s voice cracked with emotion at the sight of his savior, but remembering their cover, he quickly corrected himself. “Sir!”

Jorge studied the newcomer with calculating eyes, a frown etching deep lines across his forehead.

The mysterious figure commanded an undeniable presence—tall, powerfully built, radiating authority even through the shield of dark glasses and a face mask.

In that charged moment, Janice emerged from the vehicle, and the very atmosphere seemed to shift.

Beneath her golden mask, her bright eyes and subtly curved crimson lips radiated an aura of nobility that commanded the scene.

Jorge, a notorious womanizer who had seen countless beauties, could tell from just those glimpses that she possessed rare and extraordinary grace.

Chapter 688:

He sneered. “I don’t care who you are. You’ll answer for your actions today. The men die, but the woman comes with me.”

Aiden moved like lightning unleashed, materializing before Jorge in an instant.

Jorge’s eyes widened as pain exploded in his stomach, his body hurling backward through the air.

“Ugh!” He crumpled, retching violently. “Get them. Kill them!!”

“Wait.” Janice stepped forward with elegant poise, casually tossing a phone his way. “You might want to answer that first.”

Jorge was startled, a curse dying on his lips as his eyes locked onto the caller ID. The name displayed was Mateo Welch.

“Ha! You expect me to fall for some random number labeled as Mr. Welch?” Jorge raised his head, eyes blazing with murderous intent as he glared at Janice. “Even if Mateo himself showed up today, I’d still cut you down.”

“Jorge Lambert, what did you just say?”

A voice like winter steel cut through the air from the phone.

Jorge’s heart stopped as his eyes locked onto the phone, his pupils constricting in terror. “Is this Mr. Welch?”

His trembling fingers gripped the device. “Mr. Welch?”

“Jorge, you’ve got some nerve! I heard about your little threat—killing my people even if I was around?” Mateo’s voice was cold and filled with fury.

“Mr. Welch, please, I can explain. There’s been a misunderstanding—”

“Shut up!”

Mateo’s rage blazed white-hot.

He’d been counting the minutes until MO, the legendary surgeon, would arrive. Instead, he received word that someone had dared to obstruct MO’s path, potentially derailing the entire schedule.

Blood boiling, he fought the urge to destroy everyone responsible for this interference. Learning it was Jorge, the infamous playboy, only fueled his fury. The thought of erasing the entire Lambert family from existence crossed his mind.

“Get on your knees and beg Master MO’s forgiveness this instant! Or I swear, your family won’t live to see tomorrow’s sunrise,” he threatened.

“I’ll kneel and apologize!”

Jorge’s body shook uncontrollably. He knew better than to doubt Mateo’s threats—this man could and would annihilate his entire bloodline without hesitation.

Then it hit him—Master MO? The enigmatic surgical prodigy everyone whispered about?

Jorge’s gaze shot up, studying the woman before him with newfound attention. The golden mask adorning her face triggered a flood of memories—all the whispered descriptions of MO: an elegant figure shrouded in mystery, her face partially concealed behind a golden mask. The woman standing before him matched every detail of the legends perfectly.

Without a moment’s hesitation, Jorge scrambled forward and dropped to his knees before Janice.

Vernon watched in amazement at Jorge’s immediate submission, though he understood the reasoning. With Mateo backing Janice, what choice did Jorge have?

In Cloverhill's hierarchy, the Welch family stood among the top three powers, while the Lamberts were mere servants, barely worth noting. With Mateo personally involved, Jorge had to swallow his pride to protect his family.

Chapter 689:

Jorge might have thought himself formidable, but Mateo was in another league entirely. Janice was truly extraordinary!

"Master MO, please forgive my earlier transgressions. I humbly kneel before you, begging for your mercy," Jorge pleaded.

Janice gazed down at Jorge, her eyes turning to ice as she recognized his remarkable talent for self-preservation. "Forget it! For the sake of Mr. Welch, I won't hold it against you."

"Thank you, Master MO. I'm eternally grateful!"

Mateo's commanding voice crackled through the phone once more. "Jorge, ensure Master MO comes without incident—whatever it takes."

"Yes, sir!" Jorge plastered on an obsequious smile, bowing repeatedly. "Clear the way for them."

"Clear the way, but don't harm anyone, or else..."

Janice's steely gaze made Jorge shrink back, nodding frantically with a strained smile.

While Jorge directed his men to create a passage, Janice knelt beside the fallen man to assess his condition.

Though unconscious, his injuries appeared superficial—likely just a mild concussion.

“Have him transported to the hospital. Ensure all medical expenses are covered,” she ordered.

“Yes, yes!” Jorge wouldn’t dare defy her now.

The pieces had fallen into place—MO was Mateo’s guest, summoned to operate on Orson.

Her significance dwarfed the entire Lambert family’s worth, and Mateo would stop at nothing to guarantee her safety.

After the chaos subsided and the blockade cleared, Jorge gestured toward an open path.

As Jorge watched Janice’s vehicle disappear into the distance, his ingratiating smile melted into a mask of calculation.

He rushed back to his car, addressing a woman inside. “We need to reach the Welch estate before MO arrives.”

“How amusing! You just cleared their path, putting them ahead. And now you expect to overtake them? I was personally invited by Harlan Welch. How do you plan to explain this disaster?”

Jorge’s features hardened as he spoke with quiet intensity. “Dr. Newman, rest assured. We will arrive before them.”

“Fine, let’s go. Don’t waste any more time.”

“Alright.”

Meanwhile, Janice’s group had already left the congested route behind.

After some time on the road, Vernon’s brow creased with concern.

“We’ve taken a detour, haven’t we?” Janice inquired.

Vernon’s eyes widened. “How could you tell?”

Janice removed her golden mask, revealing a face as striking as it was serene. A knowing smile played at her lips. “While Jorge was making way for us, I caught his subtle signals to the bodyguards. His agenda was clear as day. Your expression now only confirms we’re on an alternate route.”

Chapter 690:

“You’re right,” Vernon acknowledged, his brow furrowing with concern. “Being new to Cloverhill, I’m still finding my bearings. This path seems different from our earlier route.”

“No worries. There’s no rush,” Janice replied, her composure unwavering. “Aiden, you’ve been aware all along, haven’t you?”

A knowing smile played across Aiden’s lips. “You read me like an open book, Janice. Indeed, I noticed the deviation from the start. I was merely curious to see what Jorge had up his sleeve.”

Janice arched an eyebrow. It dawned on her that rather than orchestrating this himself, Aiden had simply followed her unspoken strategy, choosing this path in silent understanding.

Vernon’s gaze darted between them, marveling at their wordless communication. No wonder Leah often spoke of their perfect compatibility.

Sometimes, Vernon would drink and chat with Leah.

Once, in her wine-induced candor, she declared that no man could truly measure up to Janice’s caliber.

Yet she conceded that if anyone came close, it would be Aiden.

The Welch family mansion stood proudly in the heart of Cloverhill, a testament to a century of history.

This architectural masterpiece commanded a starting auction price of a hundred million dollars. But who would part with such an ancestral treasure unless absolutely necessary?

It stood as a monument to generations of prominence and prestige. While its exterior maintained an air of understated elegance, the interior revealed breathtaking grandeur.

Every detail, from the meticulously restored brickwork to the manicured grounds, where even the smallest patch of grass represented a ten-thousand-dollar investment, spoke of unparalleled luxury. One could quite literally say the estate was gilded in gold.

In stark contrast to the peaceful mansion, tension hung thick in the air inside.

The Welch family's inner circle had assembled, including all three Welch brothers.

At the head of the gathering sat Mateo, the current family patriarch, his middle-aged features carrying an air of authority that commanded respect.

"Mateo, what's keeping that renowned surgeon you mentioned?" The speaker was a distinguished-looking man in spectacles, sharing Mateo's features but lacking his commanding presence.

This was Harlan, Mateo's younger brother.

"MO will arrive momentarily." Mateo's brow furrowed with growing irritation. He had assembled the family's inner circle to witness Orson's salvation, which would justify his upcoming request for a power transfer.

However, the prolonged wait was starting to undermine his authority.

“Uncle Harlan, why the impatience?” Alissa remarked, taking a measured sip of her coffee. “Father went to considerable lengths to secure MO’s services. Given their renowned status, surely we can accommodate a slight delay?”

“Alissa, that’s not quite right.” Harlan’s smile was gentle, but his eyes glinted with steel behind his glasses. “While we all acknowledge your father’s efforts regarding your grandfather’s condition, every passing moment dims his chances of recovery. Perhaps we should consider more dependable alternatives...”

“Harlan, shut up!” Mateo snapped, his gaze sharp. “When many physicians in the country and foreign experts have admitted defeat, who else but MO could you possibly suggest?”