

Wrath 901

Chapter 901:

He just needed to see it happen with his own eyes—to confirm his freedom.

Just then, two figures emerged in the distance.

Braylen's demeanor changed the moment he spotted them. Without hesitation, he stepped aside, granting them entry.

"Ms. Sugden, there you are!" Braylen called out, his tone warm and inviting.

Leah nodded and exchanged a meaningful glance with Liliana before they proceeded inside.

"Hey, Liliana, how did you manage to get in there?" Daniel blurted out, eyes widening in disbelief. "Isn't the fourth floor sealed, with strictly no entry or exit permitted? How did she, an outsider, breach such security?"

Leah paused, turned around to face Daniel with a frosty gaze, and stated sharply, "She's under the mentorship of my friend."

"Your friend?" Daniel's eyes widened, a spark of recognition igniting as he remembered the bond between Leah and JE, coupled with Liliana's admiration for JE. His astonishment spilled over. "Liliana, you're now JE's student?"

Liliana offered him nothing but a cold, dismissive flick of her eyes before nudging Leah to press forward.

Stung by her indifference, Daniel's frustration boiled over. "Liliana, you bitch! Even being the patient's son grants me no passage. How do you warrant such privilege?"

As his temper flared and he lunged forward, Braylen stepped in, kicking him away.

“Daniel!” Roger dashed to his aid, grasping his arm to help him to his feet. “Are you all right?”

Face burning with rage, Daniel stood, his gaze burning into Braylen with fury.

“Roger Chadwick, I strongly suggest you exercise caution. Should Mr. Green become irate, it could spell disaster for the Chadwick family.”

Roger narrowed his eyes, fixing Braylen with a piercing gaze. “Toppling the Chadwick family is not something Aiden can manage on his own.”

Braylen’s brow furrowed in confusion, unable to fathom why Roger would make such a bold assertion, yet his demeanor suggested he wasn’t merely bluffing.

“Stay here, both of you. Make sure no one else gets in,” Braylen told his people.

“Understood.”

Having issued his orders, Braylen rejoined Aiden.

By then, Aiden had made sure Leah knew exactly what was going on.

“Wait, what? Janice is the one operating on Wendy?” Disbelief washed over Leah’s features. “But...”

She was on the verge of speaking when she noticed Stephen and abruptly held her tongue.

Aiden perched on the bench, his right hand tenderly caressing the bracelet on his left wrist, his gaze locked on the firmly shut doors of the surgery room. “Janice has my full support, no matter what she decides.”

Leah blinked, taken aback. Aiden seemed more determined than ever; his commitment to Janice's decisions was unwavering.

He had changed, shedding his previous cold and ruthless demeanor to reveal a more dynamic presence.

"I have examined Wendy's medical situation," Liliana announced, acting with urgency. She extracted a crumpled medical report from the pocket of the unconscious doctor and scrutinized it closely.

"Considering the circumstances, it's imperative that Janice gets involved. Without her intervention, I fear for Wendy's survival."

Chapter 902:

"Liliana, you're versed in medicine as well?" Leah inquired, her eyebrow arching in surprise at the demure woman before her.

"I've studied the subject a little," Liliana admitted, her eyes flicking towards the operating room. "But I'm nowhere near Janice, who excels in multiple disciplines with such finesse."

Her expression intensified, a mix of reverence and awe painting her features.

If Janice had been merely competent, she wouldn't have commanded such respect. Learning about the breadth of Janice's abilities from Leah, Liliana found herself not only admiring her but also relinquishing any thought of rivalry.

Janice was someone to look up to, not to challenge.

She once thought that relentless advancement and skill acquisition would allow her to eclipse JE. But now, confronted with the stark reality, she realized the foolishness of her naivety.

"Mr. Green, the crowd outside is swelling, including Wendy's husband and son," Braylen informed him, urgency in his tone.

"Understood," Aiden responded with a nod, his reply succinct.

“And Roger made some peculiar comments earlier.” Braylen paused, a trace of uncertainty in his voice. “It may not seem important, but I felt it was worth mentioning.”

“And what exactly did he say?”

“He claimed that you alone couldn’t topple the Chadwick family.”

Aiden’s eyebrow lifted subtly, a fleeting, cold smirk dancing across his mind. Bringing down the Ramirez family would be no challenge at all for him, much less the fragile Chadwick family.

Yet, he considered Roger—a man known for his cowardice—unlikely to misjudge the gravity of the situation so severely. Perhaps there was someone backing him.

Just as Aiden was about to issue his next set of commands, the lights above the operating room door flickered and died.

All heads turned towards the door instantly.

The door swung open, and Stephen, driven by a surge of eagerness, stepped forward.

Janice emerged, clad in her surgical scrubs, and upon seeing Stephen’s tense face, a reassuring smile graced her lips. “I managed to save her, but she’s still at risk. She needs to be moved to the ICU for close monitoring.”

Relief washed over Stephen as he heard Janice’s update. “I can’t thank you enough, really, I appreciate it.”

“No need for gratitude—you’re my brother,” Janice said warmly.

At that moment, Wendy was wheeled out of the operating room.

As Stephen gazed at Wendy lying on the mobile hospital bed, a storm of emotions churned within him. Yet, beneath it all, there was a quiet sense of relief.

He couldn't quite untangle his feelings towards Wendy, but one thing was certain—so long as she lived, the day would come when clarity replaced uncertainty.

"MO, we need to transfer the patient to the ICU right away, so..."

"Do it." Janice nodded.

The medical staff rushed to wheel Wendy toward the ICU.

"Hold on." Aiden stepped forward, his sharp gaze cutting through the group like a blade. "Keep what happened today to yourself. If I hear even a whisper of this outside these walls, you'll regret it."

Chapter 903:

"Mr. Green, you have our word. We won't say a thing."

The medical staff stiffened, fear gripping them. Aiden's presence alone was enough to silence them.

"Get moving." Aiden waved his hand. The medical staff, relieved of the tension gripping them, hurriedly wheeled Wendy away.

"Aiden, you're the real deal." Janice smiled at Aiden. "I was so caught up that I almost forgot—if these people had exposed my identity as MO, it could have caused a lot of trouble."

"Don't worry, I've got your back." Aiden's hardened expression melted the moment he looked at Janice.

"Janice, you're MO? The famous surgeon?" Stephen blurted, finally grasping the weight of her identity.

“Yes, I’m MO. But that’s just one of my identities. For now, there’s more I can’t reveal. In time, you’ll understand.”

As Stephen took in Janice—so remarkable it almost felt unreal—pride swelled in his chest. “If Mom and Dad could see you now, Janice, they’d be over the moon with pride.”

At his words, Janice’s eyes darkened for a moment before she forced a smile. “I’d like to believe that too.”

“My investigation showed that Alissa and her two brothers boarded a flight back to Cloverhill this morning. And Bart has been released.” Janice’s expression hardened, a deadly chill radiating from her. “So, they didn’t dare to confront me after knowing I’m JE. Instead, they used someone else as their pawn.”

“I came to the same conclusion.” Aiden nodded. “The Welch family is using Bart against us.”

“Any word on Bart’s location?”

“I’ve already got Braylen on it. But Bart is skilled at staying hidden, and there’s no update yet.”

The memory of being wrongly tied to the Edwards family—enduring so much undeserved hardship—sent a pang through Stephen’s heart. He rested his hands on her shoulders, his gaze steady and unwavering.

“Janice, Mom and Dad were the kindest souls, especially when it came to their children. If anyone deserved the title of the most loving parents, it was them. From the moment Mom learned she was pregnant with you, she counted down the days, eager to meet you. Dad poured his heart into setting up a beautiful nursery, making sure everything was perfect for the day you arrived. And I have no doubt that from the second you took your first breath, they surrounded you with nothing but love.”

Stephen’s words carried a warmth so pure, so untainted, that Janice could almost feel the embrace of their parents’ love.

But twenty years ago, the Welch family reduced all that love to nothing but ashes.

Janice's eyes darkened, her hatred for the Welch family seething to its peak. They had torn her family apart. Now, she would make sure they paid for what they had done.

Stephen caught the shift in Janice's expression, recognizing the storm of emotions he had unintentionally stirred. He had said too much, dredging up wounds best left untouched.

"No matter what happens, I'll always stand by you."

"Alright." Janice forced a smile, burying the fury simmering beneath. "You should rest too. I'll update you the moment there's news about Wendy."

Stephen nodded, exhaustion weighing heavy on him. The relentless chaos had drained him, body and mind pushed past their limits. Only sheer willpower had kept him standing this long.

Chapter 904:

His gaze swept over Aiden and the others, sensing there were matters they needed to discuss. Without another word, he turned and left to get some rest.

Janice and her group relocated to a secluded, highly secure room. Only trusted allies filled the room. Even Liliana, though new to the group, had earned Janice's approval to stay.

"Aiden, do you have any answers?" Janice's voice was frigid. The thought was unbearable—if Wendy hadn't stepped in, it would have been Stephen fighting for his life on that operating table. "Was it the Welch family behind this?"

"No."

Aiden's response caught Janice off guard. "Not them? Then who else would dare?"

Janice shut her eyes for a moment before sinking into her chair. Her fingers drummed lightly against the table, each tap echoing in the quiet room.

“Looks like Leonidas spilled the news about Stephen.” Janice’s eyes flew open, her voice cutting through the air like a blade. “That snake is sitting back, waiting for me and the Welch family to tear each other apart so he can waltz in and take the prize.”

“Janice, how can you be certain it was Leonidas? He thrives on going head-to-head with you. Why would he suddenly hand over Stephen’s identity to the Welch family?” Leah asked.

Janice let out a low, icy chuckle. “Because Wendy has completely unhinged him. He’s like a raging bull, smashing through everything in his path.”

A sense of unease crept over Leah. Leonidas had always been reckless, but his arrogance usually led him to challenge Janice on his own. But now, blinded by madness and revenge, he had become something far more dangerous—unpredictable.

“I’ll get Prescott on tracking Leonidas immediately,” Leah said, her voice grave. “I refuse to let that lunatic sit back and enjoy the show while we and the Welch family go to war.”

“He’s probably lying low overseas.” Janice exhaled, resignation laced in her tone. “Knowing him, he won’t surface until the moment he can do the most damage.”

“What’s our next move?”

Janice’s gaze swept over the room before a slow, daring smile stretched across her lips. “We take on the Welch family. And while we’re at it, I’ll make sure the White family reclaims its power in Cloverhill.”

Meanwhile, Nina sat in the garden at home, sipping coffee as she chatted with Sierra and Nellie.

A few days had done wonders for Nellie’s mood. Settling into her work at Freak Design had given her a sense of purpose, something she hadn’t felt in a long time.

"Nellie, how's your work at Freak Design?" Nina asked, a warm smile on her lips as she took a sip of coffee.

"It's been great," Nellie answered, her smile soft yet genuine. She carried herself with a newfound grace. "Leah is incredible. She's taught me so much and opened countless doors for me."

"That's wonderful." Nina sighed, a trace of emotion in her voice. "Janice is surrounded by such talented people, and Leah is exceptional. Under her wing, I have no doubt you'll carve out your own place in no time."

"I think so too." Nellie's eyes shimmered with determination. "Right now, all I care about is work. I need to prove my worth—not just for myself, but to repay Janice. Without her, I'd still be struggling to find my way."

"Nellie..." Sierra gently clasped her hands. "The past is behind us. From now on, we stand together, no matter what."

Chapter 905:

"Yes, we will," Nellie affirmed, nodding with quiet resolve.

Seeing the deep bond between them, Nina felt a warmth settle in her chest.

She thought back to how Leonie had twisted Nellie into someone cold and ruthless. But now, she had finally reclaimed the person she was meant to be.

The downfall of the Ramirez family had been swift and merciless, their enemies ensuring they never had a chance to rise again. As for Leonie and Chuck, they were probably drifting aimlessly, remnants of a ruined past.

"Mrs. Green, Miss Payne has arrived to see you."

"Miss Payne?" Nina blinked, momentarily caught off guard. She turned to the butler. "You mean the Payne family from Cloverhill?"

“Yes,” the butler confirmed with a slight nod.

Nina frowned, murmuring, “Why would she want to see me?”

“Let’s go meet her,” Sierra said, intrigued. “I wonder what makes this young lady from Cloverhill so special?”

Nellie sighed, shaking her head. “She’s just a person, Sierra, not some mystical being.”

“I’m just curious! The Payne family’s heiress—she must be breathtaking, right?” Sierra grinned, looping her arm through Nellie’s. “Come on, let’s go check her out.”

“Alright, let’s see what this is about,” Nina said, setting down her cup before gesturing for the butler to escort the guest in.

When Minnie and Tricia stepped into the living room, Nina and the sisters exchanged surprised glances.

While Tricia had a rugged charm, Minnie was undeniably striking—her elegance effortless, her presence magnetic.

“Mrs. Green, it’s a pleasure to meet you. I’m Minnie Payne. I recently arrived in Efrery and have heard much about the Green family’s legacy. I hoped to visit and learn from you personally.”

Nina arched a brow, already forming a positive impression of the young woman. Her voice carried a quiet confidence, and her presence spoke of someone raised in refinement and prestige.

“Miss Payne, you flatter me. It’s an honor that the Payne family takes notice of us. But judging by your approach, I suspect this visit is about more than just pleasantries.”

A flicker of surprise crossed Minnie’s eyes. Nina was clearly no ordinary woman. In mere moments, Nina had cut straight to the real reason behind her visit.

“Mrs. Green, actually, I came with a question.”

“Go on. What is it?”

Minnie hesitated briefly before asking, “Have you ever heard of a man named Peter Green?”

“Peter Green?” Nina paused, her brow furrowed in thought before she shook her head. “I don’t recall anyone by that name.”

Sierra suddenly gasped beside her, her lips parting as if she were about to reveal something, but Nellie quickly intervened.

“Careful, Sierra. You don’t want to burn your tongue on that coffee.”

Sierra caught the cautious look from Nellie, offering a sheepish smile as she accepted a steaming cup from her. “Oh, yes, I just got momentarily distracted by Miss Payne’s striking appearance, that’s all.”

“Sierra, you’ve always been too swayed by appearances,” Nina chided her with a playful roll of her eyes, though her voice was tinged with fondness. “Didn’t you used to say Janice was the prettiest? Is that still the case, or are you reconsidering?”

Chapter 906:

“What are you implying, Nina?” Sierra responded, her cheeks coloring as she grasped Nina’s hand and pouted. “Miss Payne and Janice each possess their unique allure.”

Minnie’s eyebrow arched, her interest piqued. “And what exactly do you mean by that?”

“Miss Payne, you are the epitome of sophistication and poise, much like a distinguished heiress. Janice, on the other hand, radiates a celestial vibe, as if she belongs in a realm all her own.”

This lavish compliment impressed both Nina and Nellie greatly.

Having interacted with Janice, they were familiar with her enchanting presence. Janice wasn't merely another pretty face; she was a fairy incarnate—breathtaking and brilliant beyond measure.

Yet, Tricia remained unimpressed by the analogy. "That's a sweet way to put it, but aren't you just subtly insulting my cousin?"

"Mind your words, Tricia." Minnie cautioned her with a stern gaze that softened into a reassuring smile. "Sierra's observation is spot-on. Janice truly does have an ethereal quality, as though a fairy has graced us with her presence. I'd love the chance to have a meaningful conversation with her."

"I'm sure Janice would find your company equally delightful," Sierra added, her voice bright and carefree, unaware of the subtle tensions simmering beneath the surface.

Nina and Nellie shared a glance loaded with understanding, picking up on the subtle competitive streak in Minnie's polite demeanor. Despite her grace, Minnie's pride was evident—a woman of her status would not easily accept being overshadowed.

"Oh, by the way, this is a little something I picked out for you, Mrs. Green." Minnie produced a small box and extended it toward Nina. "I hope you like it."

With a spark of joy in her eyes, Nina took the box. "Oh, this is wonderfully thoughtful of you!"

Minnie smiled. "Please, have a look and see if it pleases you. It's a bracelet I picked up at an auction. Given its hue and design, I thought it might just match your taste perfectly, so I brought it especially for you."

As Nina lifted the lid of the box, her eyes lit up upon seeing the bracelet nestled inside. She was instantly captivated by Minnie's impeccable taste and her knack for anticipating others' preferences. This gift struck a chord in her heart.

“Not bad at all.” Nina snapped the box shut, her eyes softening as she looked back up at Minnie. “Thank you, Miss Payne. Even though today marks our first encounter, it feels as though we’ve been acquainted for ages. Why don’t you stay for dinner tonight?”

“There’s no need for formalities, Mrs. Green. Please, just call me Minnie.” Minnie’s smile broadened, her expression exuding warmth. “Honestly, being around you feels a lot like being with my own mom.”

“In that case, let’s dispense with the formalities as well. Call me Nina, just as Sierra and Nellie do.”

“Very well, Nina.”

Over at the side, Nellie sipped her coffee, her eyes narrowing slightly as she observed Minnie.

With a history of navigating complex social waters, she was adept at discerning underlying intentions. Despite Minnie’s seemingly gentle demeanor, there was an enigmatic aura about her.

Clearly, this woman was far from straightforward.

Chapter 907:

Even though they had just met, Nina found herself charmed by the newcomer within minutes—a testament to an elusive knack for winning people over.

“Then it’s settled. You must join us for dinner,” said Nina.

“I’d be delighted to accept.”

Tricia gazed at Minnie with surprise. They hadn’t gleaned any new information about Peter from Nina, yet Minnie had promptly agreed to stay for dinner, leaving her utterly baffled.

“Nina, do you mind telling me where the bathroom is?” Minnie suddenly asked.

“Please take Minnie to the restroom,” Nina instructed the butler. The butler hastened over and guided Minnie and Tricia towards the restroom.

“Miss Payne, the restroom is right down the hall,” the butler indicated with a courteous gesture before departing.

“Minnie, what made you decide to stay for dinner?” Tricia questioned once they were alone, her curiosity piqued. “I’m pretty sure we’ve already settled that Peter isn’t connected to the Green family, right?”

With an easy grace, Minnie stepped up to the sink, turned on the faucet, and ran her hands under the stream, washing them without a hurry.

“Believe it or not, Peter does have a connection to the Green family.”

“What?” Tricia glanced at Minnie with a flicker of surprise.

“While Nina might not be familiar with Peter, Sierra certainly seemed to recognize his name,” Minnie mused, recalling the moment Sierra’s expression changed before Nellie quickly steered the conversation elsewhere.

Unlike Sierra’s open demeanor, Nellie always played her cards close to her chest, cautious and strategic in her disclosures.

“We need to find a moment to speak with Sierra privately,” Minnie suggested.

Tricia paused, processing the idea, then nodded in agreement. “Understood. I’ll watch for the right opportunity.”

Meanwhile, Nina was preparing coffee, brewing not just for Sierra this time but also adding two more cups for Nellie and herself.

“Minnie isn’t as straightforward as she appears,” Nellie remarked, her voice tinged with unease. “Having her stay for dinner might not be wise.”

“It’s alright.” Nina set her coffee cup down, her demeanor calm and unshaken. “Minnie’s clever, but I sense she doesn’t mean any harm.”

“But she’s investigating Peter.”

“Exactly!” Sierra nodded repeatedly. “Peter is Aiden. I heard Conley mention Peter, and later confirmed with Janice that Peter is Aiden’s alias.”

At this revelation, Nina nearly spat out her coffee in surprise and amusement. “What? Aiden got himself such a simple name?”

“According to Janice, it was Prescott’s idea,” Sierra added with a grin.

The thought of her usually composed son using such an unassuming alias struck Nina as hilariously out of character, and she couldn’t help but laugh.

“Nina, what’s brought on such a cheerful mood?” Minnie inquired as she came back, her eyes lighting up at the sight of Nina’s lingering smile.

“Just reminiscing about some joyful times,” Nina replied, smoothly deflecting the question. She then turned the conversation toward the dinner plans. “Minnie, is there anything in particular you enjoy eating?”

“That’s very considerate of you, Nina. I’m quite easy to please.”

Chapter 908:

“In that case, I’ll have them whip up some local specialties for you to enjoy.”

“Thank you so much.”

“Please, try some coffee,” Nina offered, pouring for both Minnie and Tricia. “It’s brewed from the finest beans.”

Accepting the cup gracefully, Minnie savored a sip and complimented, “This is exquisite, rich, and aromatic. I have a collection of premium beans myself. I’ll bring some over next time.”

“How incredibly thoughtful of you, Minnie,” Nina responded warmly.

Watching this exchange, Nellie and Sierra shared a look, both noting how effortlessly Minnie had endeared herself to Nina with her charm and polite conversation.

“Minnie, earlier, you asked if I knew Peter. Is there a particular reason behind that?” Nina asked casually.

Minnie’s eyes brightened, a nostalgic smile spreading across her face. “Peter Green is the man who saved me. I asked about him because I thought he might be connected to the Green family, but it seems I was wrong.”

“He saved you?” Nina’s eyebrows rose in surprise, her interest deepening. “Would you mind telling me more?”

Minnie nodded and shared a brief account of her experience at White Goose Mountain.

As Nina listened, her expression shifted, a mix of amusement and contemplation crossing her features. It appeared her son had a way of leaving a lasting impact on those he encountered. From the way Minnie spoke, it was evident she held a special fondness for Peter—enough to go to great lengths to find him and express her gratitude.

Lost in thought, Nina felt a subtle tug on her sleeve. She turned to meet Sierra’s cautious gaze, which seemed to silently remind her of Janice and Aiden’s bond.

Nina nearly chuckled at the unspoken message. Did she really seem so fickle? Once she had accepted Janice as her future daughter-in-law, her stance was unwavering unless Aiden himself decided otherwise.

“Minnie, I’ll keep an eye out for any news about Peter for you,” Nina offered with a kind smile. “In the meantime, why don’t I show you around the estate? It may not match your family’s, but it has its quaint charm.”

“Thank you, Nina. I’d be delighted,” Minnie responded warmly. Nina stood up, exchanging a quiet look with Sierra and Nellie, who understood immediately.

As Nina guided Minnie and Tricia on a tour of the estate, the two women quietly stepped aside to make a call to Janice.

Meanwhile, Janice’s revelation about her plan to reclaim the White family’s power in Cloverhill left everyone in stunned silence.

“Are you serious, Janice?” Leah asked, her voice laced with concern. “The Welch family’s influence in Cloverhill is immense. Entering their circle as an outsider could expose you to significant danger.”

“Did you think I would venture into this unprepared?” A knowing smile played at the corners of Janice’s lips as she glanced at Leah.

Momentarily taken aback, Leah’s eyes soon lit up with dawning realization. “Was your strategic planning in Cloverhill orchestrated for precisely this moment?”

Janice nodded, radiating an unshakeable confidence. “Never do I take on challenges without a meticulously crafted plan. Back then, I founded JE Consortium, and within mere years, it rose to become the industry giant. That stands as my assurance.”

Chapter 909:

Admiration and pride filled Aiden’s eyes as he gazed at Janice. How could he not fall for such a woman?

“Beyond all this, I shall be your unwavering support,” Aiden said, his gaze tender and warm.

Janice asked with genuine surprise, “Aiden, don’t tell me you’ve also established plans in Cloverhill?”

A slight smile curved Aiden’s lips. “If I cannot match the strategic thinking of my woman, I scarcely deserve to stand beside you.”

“Wait a moment!” Leah frowned, regarding Aiden with widening eyes of disbelief. “Prescott informed me that beyond our carefully laid foundations in Cloverhill, another shadow force has been silently planting seeds. Although they’re discreet, their ambitions mirror ours with uncanny precision. Initially, I feared Janice’s blueprints had somehow leaked, inspiring imitators. Now I realize it was you, Aiden.”

Aiden smiled silently. His calm demeanor confirmed Leah’s suspicions. Leah couldn’t help but marvel at how perfectly matched the two were, both decisive and far-sighted, like master chess players always thinking several moves ahead.

“Before we move into Cloverhill, there are still some loose ends to tie up here in Efrery,” Janice said, narrowing her eyes with determination. “Once those are handled, it will be time to declare war on the Welch family.”

Everyone felt a surge of excitement. Challenging a giant like the Welch family was no small feat.

Leah had accompanied Janice in confronting powerful adversaries before, but the Welch family was different.

Their roots in Cloverhill ran deep, with a vast and intricate social network that controlled the city with invisible strings.

That network acted as a shield, deflecting any external attacks. To break through, they needed to find a weakness in this seemingly impenetrable defense.

But finding such a flaw in such a tightly woven shield was like searching for a needle in a haystack.

Just then, Janice's phone rang. She checked the caller ID—it was Sierra. "What's up, Sierra?"

"Janice, the Green family has two guests today—two young ladies from the Payne family."

Janice was momentarily taken aback, her thoughts immediately turning to Minnie and Tricia. "What are they there for?"

"Let me explain." Nellie took the phone from Sierra, her voice grave. "They're looking for someone named Peter Green."

Janice glanced at Aiden, her eyes dancing with mischievous knowledge. Aiden frowned, puzzled by her expression. "Janice, why are you looking at me like that? Is this call somehow connected to me?"

Janice rolled her eyes at him, her silence more revealing than words. "Got it. Tonight, Aiden and I will join you for dinner."

"Great!" Nellie hung up and turned to Sierra. "Looks like we're in for quite a show tonight."

"Really?" Sierra frowned, concern etching her features. "Janice wouldn't clash with Minnie over Aiden, would she?"

Sierra's worry was genuine. With Janice already against the Welch family, making an enemy of the Payne family could ignite a dangerous powder keg.

"I don't think so," Nellie replied confidently. "I trust Janice isn't impulsive. She likely has strategies already mapped out."

Chapter 910:

Meanwhile, Aiden was attempting to explain himself. "Janice, I truly have no idea why Minnie would come looking for me."

“What’s the point of you telling me this?” Janice retorted, rolling her eyes. “Besides, they’re asking for Peter, not you, Aiden.”

Aiden was momentarily stunned, then his lips curved into a wry smile. “If I had known Minnie would become so fixated on me, I wouldn’t have saved her back then.”

“Saving her was the only right choice,” Janice said, giving him a meaningful glance that spoke volumes. “The man I envision as my future husband must embody compassion and kindness. Naturally, when facing enemies, I grant you full permission to unleash your devilish side.”

Upon hearing Janice’s words, Aiden merely shrugged. Her words aligned perfectly with his life philosophy—excessive mercy toward enemies often proved self-destructive.

Thus, he never afforded his enemies second chances. If elimination was possible, he would execute it without hesitation.

Once it was confirmed that there were no Welch family spies around, the lockdown of the fourth floor of Auburn Hospital was lifted.

Roger and Daniel immediately located Wendy’s hospital room. Though eager to visit, they found themselves restricted to watching through the glass window, as Wendy remained in critical condition.

“Dad, how in the world did Mom end up with a bullet in her?” Daniel barked, his voice dripping with fury. “If anything happens to her, I swear I’ll make whoever did this pay—big time.”

“You got any clue who pulled the trigger? Or if they’re even still breathing?” Roger shot his son a frosty glare, barely hiding his exasperation. Sure, Daniel was the only male heir to the Chadwick family, but brains weren’t exactly his strong suit.

Daniel was built like a brick wall but not the sharpest tool in the shed—that summed him up perfectly.

“What?” Daniel blinked, his face scrunching up in confusion. “Are you saying you already tracked down the shooter?”

“Zip it!” Roger snapped, his patience wearing thinner than a threadbare shirt. He didn’t even bother dignifying Daniel’s question with an answer—his son’s thick skull wasn’t worth the effort.

Auburn Hospital was already on lockdown, courtesy of Aiden, which meant the whole mess was firmly in Aiden’s hands. Roger knew better than to stick his nose where it didn’t belong.

Still, something nagged at him. Why was Aiden even in the picture? From what Roger knew of Wendy, she and Aiden didn’t exactly run in the same circles.

Could it be...?

Roger’s eyes narrowed as a theory took root. Could this tie back to Wendy’s lover?

The same guy now tangled up with Janice? Maybe Wendy’s injury was somehow connected to him.

Years of Wendy’s icy disdain—of treating him like some expendable pawn—had left a bitter taste in his mouth. His pride as a man had taken a beating, and he was done licking his wounds.

“Why don’t you just die already?” Roger mused darkly. His eyes went cold as ice as he glared at Wendy. A sinister thought crept into his mind. If she bit the dust, all that power she’d been clutching would finally land in his lap.