

Wrath 951

Chapter 951:

And now, without his disguise, his striking features and towering presence captured her attention all over again.

“Minnie, what’s gotten into you?” Jayleen, noticing her daughter’s dazed expression, frowned.

“Nothing at all!” Minnie quickly shook her head, trying to mask her flustered state, though her mother wasn’t so easily fooled.

Jayleen’s gaze flickered towards Aiden, equally taken aback by his presence. Yet what truly startled her was Minnie’s reaction. Minnie had encountered many exceptional men, yet never had she faltered like this.

Aiden was undeniably handsome, but it was his aura that set him apart. Among his peers, finding another like him would be near impossible.

No wonder Minnie was drawn to him. If she were twenty years younger, she might have found him irresistible, too.

“Aiden, did you catch that?” Janice asked.

“See what?” Aiden stopped, confusion flickering in his eyes as he glanced at Janice.

Janice smirked knowingly, her eyes trailing after Minnie, who walked ahead. “When she couldn’t find you earlier, she looked so let down. But now that she’s spotted you, she’s absolutely glowing.”

Realization dawned on Aiden. “Janice, you left me in the car just to see Minnie’s reaction when she couldn’t find me, didn’t you?”

“Exactly!” Janice arched an eyebrow. “And as expected, Minnie is definitely into you.”

“And what does that have to do with me?” Aiden shrugged nonchalantly. “You’re the only one I care about. No other woman matters to me.”

Janice let out a small click of her tongue. Aiden was truly a lost cause when it came to romance.

Luckily for him, his devotion was directed at her.

If it were anyone else, she’d probably find such devotion irritating. Like her brother, Stephen—madly in love with Wendy despite the way she treated him. It was beyond comprehension.

But Stephen was her brother, the only family she had left, so she had no choice but to tolerate it.

Stepping into the Payne family’s estate, Janice felt transported to an era steeped in tradition and elegance.

The deep-rooted heritage of this century-old family was truly admirable—something few could ever claim.

Soon, Janice and Aiden found themselves guided into the living room.

“Master MO, I heard Minnie refer to you as Janice. Would it be alright if I addressed you that way as well? ‘Master MO’ feels a bit too formal,” Walter asked carefully.

“Go ahead, it makes no difference,” Janice responded casually, giving a light shrug.

“Then Janice it is. It feels more natural,” Walter said with a warm smile. “We truly appreciate you coming all this way. On behalf of my son, I sincerely thank you.”

“No need for all the pleasantries, Mr. Payne. Let’s just get straight to it—have your son come in for an evaluation.”

Walter gave a firm nod before instructing a nearby servant, "Bring Oliver here."

"I'll brew some coffee," Minnie volunteered.

Maybe it was because Aiden was watching, but Minnie seemed especially intent on her task, each movement as graceful as a performance.

Chapter 952:

"Minnie's coffee-brewing skills are famous in the city. Even we, her family, rarely get the chance to enjoy it. It seems we have you to thank for this rare occasion, Janice."

"Oh? Is that so?" Janice cast a knowing smile at Minnie.

Minnie exuded elegance, her every movement fluid and effortlessly enchanting.

"Janice, please enjoy some coffee." Minnie extended a cup towards Janice.

"Much appreciated." Janice took the cup, bringing it close to her nose. The aroma was invigorating, a delicate blend of warmth and freshness.

"Aiden, would you like some coffee?" Minnie asked, gracefully handing a cup to Aiden, though her eyes revealed something deeper.

But Aiden didn't even glance up. His gaze remained on the bracelet around his wrist, his disinterest evident. "No, thanks. I'm good."

Minnie's expression stiffened, a flicker of embarrassment crossing her eyes.

Walter and Jayleen exchanged surprised glances. Most people considered it an honor to taste Minnie's coffee, yet Aiden rejected it outright, without a second thought. And with such unwavering certainty.

“Aiden, whether or not you like coffee, it’s polite to accept the gesture,” Janice remarked smoothly, taking a measured sip.

“If you insist.” Aiden’s expression had been indifferent, but the moment Janice spoke, his lips curved into a faint smile.

Minnie was momentarily stunned, a twinge of bitterness creeping in. Janice’s message was clear—Aiden was off-limits.

She had heard rumors about Aiden and Janice’s short-lived marriage, followed by their abrupt divorce. Yet Aiden had regretted it almost immediately and was now doing everything to win her back.

If they were still together, Minnie wouldn’t dare interfere. But since they were now single, there was still room for her.

“Janice, you and Aiden share quite a bond,” Minnie observed with a practiced smile, her tone pleasant yet probing.

To most, Minnie’s words sounded like polite conversation, but Jayleen knew her daughter too well.

This was a calculated retreat, a subtle move to appear gracious while quietly pulling Aiden’s attention towards her.

Minnie believed that her charm and refinement would naturally draw Aiden in.

“Aiden and Janice began...”

“We’ll remarry soon,” Aiden cut in before Janice could complete her sentence. “We had some misunderstandings before—that’s what led to the divorce. But now, I know exactly where my heart stands.”

Aiden met Janice's gaze with unwavering determination. "I won't lose her a second time."

Janice shot him an exasperated look. He was direct to the point of being inconsiderate—but somehow, she liked that about him. Despite her position at the top of society, Aiden's bold and unwavering declaration still managed to stir something inside her.

But Minnie's carefully composed smile wavered at Aiden's words.

"My son has arrived. Janice, I'll leave everything in your hands." Sensing the tension in the room, Walter steered the conversation elsewhere.

Janice turned her gaze and saw two servants carefully carrying Oliver into the room.

Chapter 953:

Oliver's features were refined, his face thin, his eyes steady—an air of quiet resilience, undiminished by his condition.

"I'll take it from here," Minnie stepped forward, smoothly taking over from the servants and guiding Oliver's wheelchair herself.

The moment Oliver laid eyes on Janice, his gaze brightened, a flicker of admiration crossing his face.

Until now, he had believed his sister to be the most stunning woman he'd ever seen, but as he took in Janice, that certainty wavered.

"So, you're Master MO?" Oliver asked after a brief hesitation.

"That's me," Janice confirmed with a nod.

"I've heard that Master MO is a mystery, never revealing her face. Meeting you in person is quite unexpected."

His words carried a polite tone, but beneath them lurked a subtle doubt about her identity.

Minnie frowned, sensing the impropriety of Oliver's words. But before she could interject, Janice let out a cool, mocking laugh.

"I once kept my identity hidden to avoid unwanted complications. But now? There's no longer a reason to stay in the shadows." Janice's tone was calm, yet laced with an unmistakable authority. "You can doubt me if you wish, but please put away your pointless arrogance."

Oliver's face reddened with embarrassment. He hadn't expected Janice to respond so sharply, dismissing his skepticism without an ounce of hesitation. "I apologize for my previous remarks."

Janice chuckled, settling back into her chair, arms crossed, her gaze idly drifting over Oliver. "Let me make one thing clear—I didn't agree to treat your legs because I hold your family in high regard. I did it because your family's influence in Cloverhill makes things much more convenient for me."

The members of the Payne family stiffened, subtle hints of displeasure flickering across their faces.

As one of Cloverhill's elite families, they weren't accustomed to being spoken to so dismissively, especially by a woman.

But before any of them could protest, Minnie stepped in.

"Janice, it's our privilege to have you treat my brother's condition. We would never doubt your abilities. I sincerely apologize for any unintended offense and hope you won't take it to heart. If you can heal my brother, our family will always remember your kindness."

Janice gave Minnie a measured look, approving of her tactful response. "Alright, enough small talk. Let's begin." She rose to her feet and made her way toward Oliver.

As Janice approached with effortless grace, Oliver swallowed hard, quickly averting his gaze.

Janice, unfazed, closed the distance and placed a gentle yet firm hand on Oliver's thigh.

A quick assessment was all it took for her to realize—the damage was worse than she'd expected.

"Minnie, how did your brother sustain this injury?"

"Several years ago, my brother was in a serious car accident, leaving his legs fractured in multiple places. At first, the doctors were hopeful about his recovery, but complications arose—his spinal nerves were damaged. Now, the only way he'll ever walk again is through nerve reconnection surgery. But with his condition, no surgeon, whether local or international, dares to take the risk."

Chapter 954:

"I see," Janice murmured, pulling her hands away just as a tissue was offered to her.

Her gaze flickered to Aiden—the one who had handed it to her. With a soft smile, she accepted the tissue and wiped her hands without hesitation. To Oliver, the moment stung—his once bright expression clouded with a trace of humiliation.

"I can repair your brother's legs. Have him go through a full examination at the hospital and send me the results. Once I review them, we'll schedule the surgery."

"Janice, are you saying my son can truly recover?" Walter's voice carried a surge of hope as he shot to his feet.

"For me, it's a minor surgery—nothing complicated."

A minor surgery?

The audacity!

The world's top surgeons wouldn't even attempt this, yet she brushed it off as minor.

Then again, she had every right to be confident.

The legendary surgical genius—Master MO—had demonstrated time and again that no procedure was beyond her skill.

If she deemed a case impossible, then no power—medical or divine—could alter fate.

“Janice, if you restore my son's legs, you will have our eternal gratitude. Whatever you need—just name it, and we will give it our all,” Walter declared with heartfelt sincerity.

Janice retrieved an invitation and handed it to him. “I'm hosting a banquet after settling in Cloverhill. I would be honored if you could attend.”

Walter took the invitation, his brows lifting slightly. “Why is there no name of the host?”

Hosting a banquet usually required a host—just as the Mendoza family always held theirs under their own banner. Yet on this invitation, that space remained conspicuously empty.

Janice curled her lips into a thin line and said flatly, “I left it empty to surprise someone.”

Walter furrowed his brows, his mind racing to decipher Janice's cryptic intentions.

“Alright, we have other pressing matters to attend to, so we must take our leave now,” said Janice.

“Why not stay for a quick bite? There are many things I wish to consult you about,” Jayleen pleaded, anxiety threading through her voice.

“No, thank you.” Janice shook her head with cool detachment. “You should arrange for the examination without delay and forward the results to me so I can determine the optimal time for surgery. I presume you all eagerly await seeing your son stand on his own two feet again.”

“Yes, yes, we will arrange it right away.”

Hearing Janice’s decisive words, the Payne family abandoned their attempts to detain her. They began orchestrating a comprehensive examination for Oliver.

“Oliver, you’ll be able to stand up soon.” Minnie gazed at Oliver, her eyes glimmering with unbridled excitement.

Oliver nodded, smiling. “Yes. I never thought I would have the chance to stand again.”

“Why do you look so unhappy?” Walter patted Oliver’s shoulder and chuckled warmly. “If you hadn’t suffered that unfortunate accident back then, you could have joined the military. With your exceptional talent and our family background, you might have risen through the ranks to become a general by now. But time is still on your side. Once you stand again, the doors to the army remain open for you.”

Chapter 955:

“Yes.” Oliver nodded. “I need to go back to my room now. The prospect of standing again is truly overwhelming for me.”

“Alright, go ahead. Once the hospital schedules your examination, I’ll dispatch someone to accompany you there.”

Oliver was carefully carried back to his room by two attentive servants, and the rest of the Payne family rushed to offer their heartfelt congratulations upon hearing the promising news. However, Minnie’s spirits remained noticeably dampened.

“Minnie, is it because of Aiden?” Jayleen gently took Minnie’s hand and offered words of comfort. “That young man possesses remarkable talent, no doubt. In just a few short years, he built Forest Corp from nothing, and later, he cleverly feigned disability to root out those hidden vermin, firmly cementing his position in Efrery. A man of his caliber would be formidable even in...”

The competitive landscape of Cloverhill. But you must understand that when someone like Aiden sets his heart on a woman, the course of his affection rarely changes direction.”

“Mom, I understand what you’re trying to convey.” Minnie smiled, though her smile was tinged with bitterness. “I won’t fight, but I do believe in one undeniable fact.”

“What is it?”

“The strong will always choose the strong.”

Jayleen frowned, concern etching across her features. “Minnie, do you truly believe you can surpass Janice in strength?”

Minnie curled her lips, her eyes gleaming with unwavering confidence. “How will I know if I don’t try? Besides, I was never destined for mediocrity. I will ascend to the summit.”

Her confidence flowed not merely from her own considerable abilities but also from the weight of the Payne name she carried.

Janice was undoubtedly exceptional, distinguished not only as a surgical expert but also as the visionary founder of JE Consortium. Either identity alone could send ripples through the entire elite circle.

However, Minnie stood as no less formidable. As the anointed heiress to the Payne family, she commanded a substantial portion of Cloverhill’s vast network and resources. That gave her the confidence to compete with Janice.

Jayleen observed her daughter’s obsession with a sense of resignation.

With her years of social acumen, she could discern Aiden’s profound devotion to Janice. Even if Minnie evolved into a force powerful enough to eclipse Janice, it might not be sufficient to redirect Aiden’s affections. Yet, she kept these thoughts locked behind her lips. Instead, she recognized Minnie’s ambition as a powerful catalyst.

When Minnie elevated herself to greater heights of excellence, the Payne family would inevitably flourish alongside her. Whatever challenges the future held, they would confront them when the moment arrived.

“Minnie, what should we prepare for Janice’s banquet?” Walter inquired, holding the invitation with visible apprehension. “Our family seldom graces such gatherings.”

Indeed, the Payne family resided at the zenith of Cloverhill’s social hierarchy. Few families possessed the standing to extend invitations to them.

“Janice suddenly dispatching this invitation to us—she’s likely using it as a strategic public statement.”

“Yes.” Minnie nodded, a calculating glint flashing in her perceptive eyes. “They intend to declare a rivalry with the Welch family.”

“Declare rivalry with the Welch family?” Walter echoed with astonishment. “That cannot possibly be correct. Wasn’t it just recently that Janice performed surgery on Orson? How have they become adversaries so soon?”

Chapter 956:

“Dad, there are no permanent friends, only lasting interests,” Minnie declared with grave solemnity. “Janice was once ambushed, and the Welch family orchestrated it from the shadows. The Mendoza family was also entangled in the plot. But I suspect a far more sinister motive lurking beneath the surface.” In Minnie’s mind, vivid images of the White family massacre from years past flashed. Her razor-sharp intuition whispered that Janice’s bold, public declaration of war was inextricably linked to that blood-soaked chapter of history.

“Dad, you should investigate the incident with the White family thoroughly.”

“The White family?” Walter’s brow furrowed deeply as concern shadowed his face. “The massacre of the White family sent shockwaves through society back then. Later, the Welch family wielded their considerable influence to bury the truth. The authorities explicitly warned all families to maintain

absolute silence on the matter. If we begin probing now, we risk incurring the wrath of those who hold power.”

“Don’t worry. Just do it. I believe the veils shrouding the truth will soon be torn away.”

Seeing the steely determination in Minnie’s eyes, Walter offered no further resistance. He dispatched people to unearth details about the incident. Minnie then added, “For Janice’s banquet, our family should prepare an extravagant gift. If she wishes to make a statement, we should stand firmly behind her.”

Walter’s eyes gleamed with sudden understanding. He grasped the strategic brilliance of such a move.

If Janice indeed shared a connection to the White family massacre, Minnie might be cunningly planning to leverage Janice’s position to neutralize the Welch family’s influence.

“Alright, you can count on me. Recently, the Welch family has grown increasingly audacious, even attempting to interfere with our Hillford project. Janice’s banquet presents the perfect opportunity to apply some much-needed pressure on their operations.”

The moment Janice stepped out of the Paynes’ estate, her phone rang.

Stephen’s name flashed on the screen.

He told her they had reached Cloverhill and were on their way to the house in the city center.

Hearing that Wendy was with Stephen, Janice felt both exasperated and reassured.

She felt exasperated because Wendy clung to Stephen like a shadow, trailing him everywhere. They resembled a pair of infatuated high school sweethearts, inseparable and oblivious to the world around them.

But at the same time, Wendy’s combat skills meant Stephen was well-protected.

Without Wendy, the Chadwick family teetered on the edge. Many of their longstanding connections had cut ties overnight.

It was only then that Roger grasped the truth—their influence in Efrery hadn't come from their name, but from Wendy.

Those who once treated him with respect had only done so because of Wendy. Now that she was no longer part of the Chadwick family, their so-called allies vanished overnight, leaving the family on the brink of collapse.

In stark contrast to the Chadwick family's downfall, Wendy appeared carefree, as if a weight had been lifted. She spent her days leisurely alongside Stephen, utterly unbothered by the chaos she had left behind.

Had Janice not known Wendy's past, she might have mistaken them for an ordinary couple—despite the glaring twenty-year age gap.

"With Wendy by his side, your brother's in safe hands," Aiden assured her.

Chapter 957:

"I know." Janice exhaled, a resigned look on her face. "With Wendy's abilities, my brother's safety isn't the issue. It's whether they'll accidentally tear each other apart that worries me."

"Hmm?" Aiden frowned, confused.

"Look for yourself." Janice casually tossed her phone to Aiden, the screen showing a photo.

Aiden picked up the phone, his eyes widening in disbelief. "Damn! How do they even survive that?"

The picture showed Stephen and Wendy in front of Cloverhill's famous landmarks. At first glance, they looked normal, but the bruises on their faces and the love bites on their necks were quite conspicuous.

Aiden narrowed his eyes, rubbing his chin thoughtfully. “Interesting...”

“What nonsense are you spewing?” Janice shot him a glare, giving him a light smack. “Don’t even go there.”

“No, no, not at all!” Aiden quickly raised his hands in surrender. “I’d never lay a hand on you. People have their preferences. We may not get it, but we respect it.”

“Fair enough.” Janice rubbed her temples, sighing. “I just hope they don’t take things too far.”

She looked at the picture again. Bruised but grinning, Stephen and Wendy radiated pure joy. Whatever their dynamic was, they were clearly loving it.

“Janice, we’re here,” Liliana’s voice broke the silence. Janice lifted her gaze.

They had arrived at a large house. While it lacked the grandeur of the Payne family estate, its prime location in the heart of Cloverhill spoke volumes about its prestige.

Mateo had pulled every string necessary to secure this house. It was meant for his sons, yet fate had placed it in Janice’s hands.

“Liliana, we’ve got things covered here. Head over to the Eternity Building and assist Leah.” Janice stepped out of the car. “Before long, you two will be my strongest allies.”

“Got it.” Liliana’s eyes gleamed with a mix of excitement and determination. In her time following Janice, she had pieced together the woman’s story through Leah, and her admiration had only deepened.

Janice exceeded every expectation—an enigma of endless talents, each more impressive than the last.

Though skilled in her own right, Liliana couldn't help but feel like a mere shadow beside Janice's brilliance.

Now, with the opportunity to create a new legend alongside Janice, how could she not be thrilled?

"Keep me updated if anything happens," said Janice.

"Will do." Liliana slipped back into the driver's seat, revved the engine, and disappeared down the road.

"Come on, let's head inside," Janice exchanged a glance with Aiden before stepping into the courtyard beside him.

Stepping inside felt like crossing a threshold into a different era.

The courtyard was a world apart from the cold, gray city beyond its walls. Lush greenery thrived in every corner, breathing life into the space. Simply existing here felt rejuvenating.

Chapter 958:

"Man, now I want a place like this too," Aiden mused.

Janice shot him a playful glance, one brow arched. "Who says it can't be yours?"

"Huh?" Aiden froze, the meaning slipping past him. He could only stare as Janice strolled ahead, her ponytail bouncing with each step.

"Wait, Janice! What did you just say?"

"Nothing at all!" Janice shrugged innocently, as though she hadn't just dropped a hint about their future.

Aiden mentally smacked himself. Hadn't she just hinted that this could be their home?

He was a genius in his career, yet completely brainless in moments like this.

How had he missed it?

But now, getting Janice to say it again? Not a chance.

As Aiden watched Janice's carefree figure disappear ahead, regret clawed at him. He had just let the perfect moment for a love confession slip right through his fingers. Now, all he could do was watch her walk away.

"Janice!" Sierra rushed to Janice and embraced her tightly the moment she entered the room.

"You all got here quite early." Janice affectionately tousled Sierra's hair before looking over at Nellie approaching. "Has everything been taken care of?"

"Yes. Tricia proved to be very efficient. She promptly set up everything as you had asked."

"Your efforts are appreciated."

Looking around, Janice noted with approval that everything met her exacting standards and reflected high quality.

This venue was chosen as the new foundation for the White family's endeavors, and Janice had demanded nothing but the best to reflect their splendor. Each item, down to the vases, was a valuable antique, denoting wealth and status. Even Tricia was impressed upon reviewing the list of purchases.

"You made the right choice in delegating this task," Janice acknowledged Nellie's competence.

"I've just been doing my best. Handling some business in the past taught me a few things. If I were incapable of managing this, I wouldn't deserve to be by your side."

Janice offered a satisfied smile, looking at Nellie with approval.

Nellie's growth was evident; she was now decisive and sharp, a stark contrast to her previous self.

"When everything at the Eternity Building is ready, you'll move there to assist," Janice declared.

"Can I?" Nellie asked, her eyes sparkling with excitement and disbelief. The Eternity Building was crucial for Janice's future initiatives in Cloverhill and would serve as her main operation center.

Being assigned to the Eternity Building would not only secure Janice's trust but also position her as a pivotal player in Janice's future developments in Cloverhill.

"Nellie, forget the past. You are a different person now, and there's no need for it to hold you back," Janice said with a sigh, giving Nellie a supportive look. "Your management skills are impressive. I'm eager to see what you'll achieve next."

"I'm excited as well," Sierra added with a playful smile, grasping Nellie's hand. "Then I'll have both of you to look out for me. I couldn't ask for more."

"Sierra, are you planning to just enjoy life?" Nellie asked.

Chapter 959:

"With both you and Janice on my side, it would be silly not to," Sierra replied, lifting her eyebrows confidently.

Amused by Sierra's relaxed demeanor, Janice and Nellie exchanged a knowing glance. Sierra's lightheartedness preserved her innocence.

“However, securing the plaque you desire might pose a challenge,” Nellie commented, her expression turning serious. “Mr. Vance is quite stubborn and takes pride in his work. Even Tricia has had trouble convincing him to write for us, but she’s still negotiating.”

“Mr. Vance is entitled to his pride,” Janice responded, nodding in acknowledgment. “His handwriting is famous in the country, and he mentors many from affluent and noble backgrounds. A plaque inscribed by him would significantly enhance our prestige.”

“Let me handle this,” Aiden said, stepping forward with confidence.

“You?” Janice responded, visibly surprised. “Do you know Mr. Vance personally?”

“I spent a few days learning writing from him, so we have a connection,” Aiden explained. His travels with his grandfather had not only expanded his worldview but also introduced him to many distinguished individuals, including Herbert Vance.

“Okay, I trust you with this,” Janice responded with a nod.

In three days, their grand banquet would take place in Cloverhill. The event would draw all notable and influential personalities from the area. Without the plaque personally inscribed by Herbert, it would somewhat diminish the event’s prestige.

“Janice!”

Just then, Stephen and Wendy made their entrance.

Upon spotting Janice, Stephen quickly made his way over.

Seeing Stephen’s eagerness, Wendy frowned, clearly bothered by his warmth towards Janice.

“You’re rather late, Stephen,” Janice said with a smile, her eyes moving from Stephen to Wendy, who approached at a more relaxed pace.

“Janice, my apologies. I was engrossed in my time with Stephen and didn’t watch the clock. I hope that’s okay?” Wendy said evenly, though her voice carried a subtle sharpness.

“Even if Stephen is fond of you, don’t grow complacent,” Janice said, her eyes narrowing slightly at Wendy’s tone. “Be mindful of your actions.”

Stephen’s cheeks tinged with red, clearly catching Janice’s hint. “Janice, can I have a word with you in private?”

Certainly.” Janice directed Sierra and Nellie to finalize the preparations, suggesting that they pay no mind to Wendy.

Unbothered, Wendy took a seat on the couch, crossing her legs elegantly, her gaze fixed intently on Janice and Stephen.

“Sierra, what’s happening here?” Sierra gave Nellie’s sleeve a gentle tug, lowering her voice. “Why does it feel like there’s some serious tension between Janice and Wendy?”

“Hush, don’t bring that up. You’re still too young to get involved.” Nellie placed a hand over Sierra’s mouth, her gaze flicking towards Wendy and Janice. “There’s definitely something going on between them, but now isn’t the time for the truth to come out.”

Nellie had sharp instincts. It didn’t take her long to pick up on the unspoken tension between Janice and Wendy. However, she didn’t believe there was any romantic involvement between Janice and Stephen. They two seemed more like siblings. But clearly, Wendy didn’t see it that way. She harbored jealousy and hostility towards Janice. Nellie pushed the thought aside. Overthinking it would only lead to trouble. This was Janice’s story to tell, and until she did, the truth would remain buried.

Chapter 960:

“Janice, maybe we should just come clean to Wendy.” Stephen let out a frustrated sigh. “She thinks there’s something going on between us, and she’s holding it against you.”

Janice gave him an exasperated look. "Stephen, seriously? It hasn't even been that long, and you're already fussing over her? You're such a lost cause when it comes to love. The moment you got with her, you completely forgot about your sister."

Stephen scratched the back of his head, looking sheepish. "I just don't want things to get so tense between you and Wendy."

"Alright, alright, I hear you." Janice sighed, then casually hooked her arm through Stephen's and strolled towards Wendy.

Stephen stiffened, eyes widening in panic. Was Janice doing this on purpose? Was she trying to set Wendy off?

"Janice, let go of Stephen!" Wendy shot up from her seat, eyes blazing. Seeing them so close together was enough to set her off. "Do you think I won't call you out right now?"

"Oh? If you think you can, go ahead and try," Janice flashed a smirk, leaning even closer to Stephen. "But tell me, do you really think Stephen would choose you over me?"

"Stephen, what now?" Wendy's expression darkened, her jaw tightening. "Are you seriously going to throw me aside for her?"

Nellie and Sierra, who had been casually whispering about the trio's complicated dynamic, suddenly found themselves at a loss. The situation had escalated fast.

"Oh no! Janice and Wendy are about to go at it for real!" Sierra gasped.

"I'm not so sure about that." Nellie frowned, something in her gut telling her this wasn't what it seemed. "Let's just watch."

"Wendy, it's not what you think. Just let me explain!" Stephen looked completely lost, scrambling for the right words. "Janice..."

“It seems your girlfriend is more important than your sister.” Janice let out a deep sigh, her face the picture of disappointment.

“Janice,” Stephen fumbled for words, completely thrown off.

In a swift motion, Wendy lunged forward and shoved Stephen out of the way. “Janice, what nonsense are you spouting? If your brother won’t dote on you, I sure will.”

Janice blinked, utterly baffled as she stared at Wendy. “Are you okay? Did a ghost crawl into your skin or something?”

“Janice, you’re such a riot.” Wendy’s smile turned almost angelic, her demeanor flipping like a switch. “You and Stephen are siblings—it’s only natural for you to be close. From now on, consider me your strongest ally.”

Nellie and Sierra traded wide-eyed glances, equally floored by Wendy’s abrupt transformation.

“Nellie, what the hell is happening? I’m completely lost here.”

“If you’re confused, trust me, I’m right there with you. One second, Wendy looked like she was about to rip Janice to shreds, and now she’s acting like her biggest fan.” Unreal! Absolutely mind-blowing!

But this only proved one thing.

Wendy truly treasured Stephen. The moment she realized Janice was his sister, every ounce of jealousy evaporated, replaced by an almost exaggerated eagerness to please.