

A Life Debt Repaid Read Online Free

Chapter 1231

Every guest was staring at Cordy, convinced that she was going to declare her love for Jay because her affection for him was all too visible. And given Zoe's personality, she would want nothing less than to announce it to the whole world.

And yet, when she began, she said, "There are two people I want to thank. The first is Clara Gooding, my mother."

Clara was sitting below stage, her body obviously stiffening when Zoe suddenly mentioned her.

She was holding Yelena in her arms after she got off the stage.

"Yes, she's my mother," Zoe said. "But I never called her that, because there was a time I hated her. If not for her, I wouldn't have gone through the worst moment of my life-1 mean, who would've thought that an heiress of the great Levine family would turn out to be just a maid's daughter?"

Her words were calm, but everyone could empathize with her pain and despair of the time.

"I really did not want to acknowledge her. I really wanted to disown her..." she continued even as she looked at Clara.

Clara's eyes were red, her eyes welling with tears.

She certainly knew that Zoe held considerable grievances against her, but Zoe was too kind and ultimately kept Clara with her.

"Fortunately, I didn't," Zoe finished. "If I had done that back then. I'd regret it for the rest of my life."

Clara quietly shook her head—she was the one who had been regretting her actions all this while.

She did something in the heat of the moment and committed an irreparable mistake.

"In the end, she's the best mother in this world who has given me all her love in a way that no one else could accept," Zoe said, looking at Clara then. "The world might not understand you, but I do, Mom."

It was the first time Zoe called her that, and Clara's tears kept gushing. Seeing her cry, Yelena quickly used her little hands to dry her tears. "It's alright, Grandma. I'm here, and I will protect you."

Yelena's kind words only made Clara's tears gush further-what had she done to deserve a daughter like Zoe and a granddaughter like Yelena? "Mom, I thank you for all you have given me, and for Yelena. I would not have given birth to such an angel if not for her, and Jay and I would have gone on living our separate lives. I know you've been quietly sacrificing yourself for all our sake, telling me to rest while Yelena was sick while you stayed overnight with her, saying that you're not tired even though I caught you sleeping beside her."

"I wanted to bridge the gap between us, but in the end, I chose to walk away because it's what you're obliged to do, to atone for the years I was left with the Levines," Zoe said, her voice choking with tears just then. Jay wiped away her tears, offering her silent encouragement.

"I'm sorry, Mom. I shouldn't have hated you or kept you at arm's length. I know about your love for Yelena and for me... Mom, I don't hate you anymore. I love you, Mom!"

The hall applauded at Zoe's son's declaration, many of them left emotional by Zoe's speech.

Indeed, many of them who were laughing themselves a moment ago now had tears welling in their eyes-their feelings seemingly all grasped within Zoe's palm.

"I love you too, Mommy!" Yelena answered Zoe from beneath the stage then.

She was upset to see her mommy cry and wanted to offer her comfort, even adding loudly, "Grandma says she loves you too!"

Zoe smiled despite her tears, feeling at once emotional and relieved.

Earnest feelings always stir the heart.

With that, Zoe took a long while to compose herself

Chapter 1232

Zoe allowed herself to calm down before saying, "And the second person I wanted to thank is..."

'Your husband!' someone suddenly shouted below stage.

Everyone laughed as Zoe paused, and she could not help laughing too. '

Can't wait to start eating, can you, Bob?!

Naturally, it was Bob who shouted just now.

He was learning to let go of the past and to bless Zoe.

Everyone laughed at Zoe's outburst-it was certainly a wedding of tears and laughter.

'Sorry to disappoint you, Bob, but it's not my husband, and I have plenty to say. The wedding luncheon would have to wait.'

Bob shrugged, while the other guests chuckled before turning quiet. Zoe took a deep breath and then said, "The second person I want to thank is Nancy Levine."

Nancy was naturally present.

There were two weddings today, Jay and John's-she would never miss it for the world.

And she would be lying to say that she did not take exception to Zoe's confession to Clara.

She hated Zoe for the longest time, even now-for making her a fool of herself.

Naturally, she was surprised that Zoe would mention her at her own wedding, let alone thank her!

"I understand that my existence hurts you, just as I understand that you hate me even now-but what can I do? I'd run into you even more now that I married your brother," Zoe said smugly.

Nancy's expression darkened-she knew she should not have put her hopes on Zoe at all.

She thought for an instant Zoe would actually remember their past bond as mother and daughter...

Mother and daughter.

Nancy's heart skipped a beat as she suddenly remembered a time when Zoe was a child.

She would throw herself into her arms, calling her mommy in her tiny, adorable voice...

Nonetheless, Nancy composed herself and stared at Zoe haughtily.

Zoe returned her gaze, and said, "I don't know how to address you now. Sister, perhaps? Like Jay?"

Someone could not help chuckling at that, and Zoe turned to see that it was Bob again.

That man certainly knew how to kill the mood.

It took her so much to push herself to do this, and he would just pull the rug from under her feet.

'Go on. Pretend I don't exist,' Bob quickly said.

Zoe pursed her lips.

Fortunately, it was a basic skill for actors to replicate emotions, and Zoe soon found the right mood again. "Today, I would like to thank you for raising me."

Nancy remained silent, still looking icy.

Even so, Zoe continued, "Over the years, I don't understand a thing-when we were still mother and daughter, you had truly given me the warmth of family, and I had felt the greatness of motherly love and even thought I had the best mother in the world! She gave me confidence, courage, and resilience. If it was not for the love that I had in my heart, I would never have survived all the trauma, and I would have fallen under pressure!"

Chapter 1233

Zoe concluded, "That is why I'm grateful for you raising me, for giving me so much love so that I could survive any tribulations that may come and continue forward with determination. Much has happened between us, and though I know you still hate me, I'll still say to you: thank you."

And with that, she bowed.

Nancy pursed her lips, apparently not reacting.

However, anyone close enough could see that her eyes were glimmering with tears, and she was holding them back.

She never expected Zoe to still be grateful toward her now. After all the ruthless torment she put Zoe through, she thought Zoe would hate her back.

She suddenly remembered Zoe as a child again.

While not knowing who she really was, Zoe had been so adorable, and she always doted on Zoe-

Nancy turned away so that she did not hold Zoe's gaze.

Zoe watched her cold reaction, feeling slightly disappointed.

Nancy was a proud woman, and there was no way she could let go of such a grudge.

She had certainly been taken for a fool, and given her ego, she would remember that for life.

Zoe took a deep breath-she would only say what she wanted to say.

And with that, she would be believed.

"From now on, I'll no longer hold a grudge," she said bluntly. "You can keep hating me if you do-I would not hold on to grievances of the past. I'll greet you and speak to you on my own accord, so just bear with it if you don't like it. I'll just pretend I don't notice your bad temper."

“Pfft.”

Bob chuckled again.

“Bob Davis, could you be more serious?” Zoe snapped angrily, wondering if the man was just there to mess around. “I know you love me, but don’t sabotage my wedding out in the open like this.”

She had been a little emotional before, only for Bob to ruin everything again -was he a comedian?!

‘Look, I didn’t want to laugh, but you’re a real joke,” Bob could not help saying. “Forget it, I won’t laugh again-go on, don’t stop me from our luncheon. Most importantly, Johnny is waiting for you to finish. Don’t delay the man’s wedding now.”

“Alright, alright, I’ll cut it short!” Zoe snapped angrily and turned toward the emcee. “I’m done. You can announce that my wedding ceremony is over now.”

The emcee spaced out for a moment before coming to his senses.

He almost forgot he was supposed to preside over the ceremony, since he was busy enjoying the drama.

After all, the bride had really been putting on a show.

Still, the emcee quickly regained his professionalism. “Thank you for your stirring speech. Everyone, let’s give the bride a round of applause!”

Zoe was speechless.

That was a stirring speech?! She felt absolutely embarrassed!

Whatever-she was used to a little embarrassment, and it was no big deal.

‘Since there are two weddings to be had today, let’s allow Jay and Zoe to go offstage for a small break.”

Jay and Zoe got off the stage together and went to their tables.

Somehow, Zoe was even more nervous after she got down, and Jay noticed it. “Are you actually more worried than you were on stage?”

‘Oh, please. The next wedding is the main event-ours was just the foil.”

Jay was left frowning-the wedding he went through great lengths to prepare... was just the foil?!

Zoe noticed his reaction. “Look, I’m not saying that ours are lacking. I’m happy and emotional, not to mention that it’s a wondrous feeling to eat the luncheon of my own wedding.”

“Just the luncheon?”

‘I’m joking.” Zoe grinned at him. “I love you, Jay Parker.”

Jay did a double take-Zoe changed the subject so quickly!

Before he could react, he felt a softness on his own lips just then
Chapter 1234

As she pulled away, Zoe asked, "Can you feel it now?"

She could express her love with actions, after all.

Jay pursed his lips but did not answer, although his hand tightened over hers without knowing it.

"They're starting," Zoe quickly told him.

Jay took a deep breath, deciding that he really should get used to Zoe-her emotions lasted no more than a couple seconds before changing.

He turned toward the stage then, though he had to admit that the second wedding was actually the climax.

He watched as John walked on stage under the emcee's invitation and took center stage.

The emcee then went through a long opening monologue before announcing toward the castle arch, "Now, let's have our bride make her flashy appearance!"

The curtains slowly parted, and everyone saw a woman in a white gown standing there.

Indeed, there was no mistaking it-a gown, not a bridal dress.

After all, it was not Wendy but one of her bridesmaids.

She appeared awkward, unsure what to do just then.

Should she step onto the red carpet, or not?

The guests were feeling the awkwardness of the situation as well, gesturing and whispering when they saw that only a bridesmaid was there.

Cordy pursed her lips and glanced at John, and she saw the desolation in his eyes.

Still, anyone would feel traumatized to be left at the altar on their wedding day.

In fact, Cordy suspected that Wendy never came, since she was never one who abided by the rules.

If she was here, there would have been some commotion.

And given what Cordy knew about Wendy, it was likely Wendy changed her mind at the last moment because she had yet to have enough fun for her life, and marrying would make her behavior morally contemptible.

Just then, the bridesmaid could not help walking down the aisle a little quickly since it was not her wedding and she did not want to waste anyone's time.

She hurried to John, held out a USB stick to John, and said loudly, "This is from Wendy. She's not coming."

And with that, she fled.

John was left staring at the USB stick in silence for a while before he turned toward the emcee. "Please play this."

"Okay."

The emcee handed it to a staff member who played the video, showing Wendy dressed in casuals on the LED screen.

"Sorry, John, but I can't do this," she said. "I know you've been good to me, and I really like you too, but I really can't marry you. I thought I could because you are great in every way, but I flinched today. I don't know if I can be a good wife or a good mother because I think I'm still too young to be an adult.

I'm sorry for my irresponsibility, and I sincerely apologize. I don't know if I can earn your forgiveness, but I offer you my earnest blessings regardless... to an eternal union between you and Cordy Sachs.

Chapter 1235

Wendy paused for a few seconds just then, and the guests at the scene all turned in shock toward John and Cordy.

Cordy was pursing her lips, surprised that Wendy would suddenly mention her.

Nonetheless, Wendy continued, "I know you've been good to me and earnestly wanted to be with me, but I must say that Cordy is a better fit for you. I can also tell that you have feelings for her although you keep hiding it deliberately. Are you perhaps afraid that she would reject you?"

"Actually, as a fellow woman, I can feel that Cordy loves you too. I don't know what happened between you that you deliberately kept your distance, but I earnestly feel that you both deserve each other. I asked Dicky too, and he admitted that he liked me but he still rather his parents get back together."

Cordy turned toward Richard, who had been constantly tagging along at John's side.

His face was still a child's, but he was over five feet tall and could play the role of John's best man.

Though dressed smartly in a suit, his lips were tightly pursed, probably keeping his emotions just then.

At the same time, Wendy continued, "Anyway, I won't be here, John. But I hope you'll be brave to take that step and pursue your happiness. After

all, the one you love most is right in front of you! Don't flinch now. I'll pray earnestly for your happiness."

She pumped her fist and exclaimed, "Go for it!"

The video stopped at that.

Either way, that meant John's wedding would go without a bride since Wendy fled.

The guests were all left debating what happened, especially since most of them did not even know who John's bride was.

It was just the letters 'J' and 'W' on the wedding invitation where the names were supposed to be written-letters representing John and Wendy.

Those who knew, knew.

And now, those who did not knew as well.

What a shame that the bride was not making it to this wedding that had all everyone's attention, perhaps more than a star actress and a star director's.

And now, it was just a joke.

While the wedding hall was left in raucous chaos, the emcee was at a loss of howto proceed.

The stalemate lasted for around five minutes until John suddenly strode forward.

And once he moved, the hall was suddenly silent-everyone was looking forward to seeing what he would do!

Would he end it here, or would he do as Wendy suggested, bravely pursuing his true love?

Hence, as everyone looked on, John walked up to Cordy.

She pursed her lips and stared at him in silence.

He was not really going to marry her just because of what Wendy said, was he?!

That would be so... childish!

John probably knew very well that she would not agree to it.

And yet, she could hear John say, "Will you marry me, Cordy?"

Cordy pursed her lips.

'No' was on the tip of her tongue, but she could not say it for some reason

Chapter 1236

#Cordy stared at John, watching as tears seemed to well in his eyes.

She was not sure if he was devastated that Wendy suddenly left him at the altar or over something else.

Suddenly, she realized that she could not think straight, and her emotions were a mess.

For the first time, she had no idea what she wanted to do.

“Wendy’s right, and actually...” John said, gulping. “This wedding was prepared for you.”

Cordy’s heart skipped a beat, surprise showing in her eyes.

She thought Wendy running away from her wedding was expected, since Wendy was too self-indulgent to let go of the many vices the world had to offer.

She just did not expect John to prepare the wedding for her.

She was skeptical too, because John had no idea what Wendy was really like and therefore would never anticipate whether Wendy would come to the wedding hall.

As such, Cordy felt a little repulsed.

If John openly admitted to being tricked and asked her to help him save face, she might have agreed to it-this situation was humiliating, after all. And in polite society, he would be no different from being dead.

“Wendy and I...” John took a deep breath and continued, “were just putting up an act from the very start.”

Cordy frowned-what act?

“I thought I could get you to take notice of me that way, even sympathize with me, given Wendy’s private life...”

John trailed off, since he should at least save Wendy some dignity where there were so many others around.

“I’ve been fantasizing that you would stop my wedding. But even if you did warn me, I could feel that you did so out of moral obligation and not because of me-you were just that kind.”

John looked into her eyes then, as if struggling to restrain his uncontrollable emotions.

“I prepared a script for Wendy for that video, wanting to use your sympathy so that you’d help me out of this pickle. I know you might’ve agreed to it, but I don’t want to keep pretending or to lie to you anymore.”

“Actually, I was hurting everytime I pretended to be dating Wendy because you didn’t seem to care at all, while I had to force myself to go through the pretext of dating another woman... I don’t want to hurt my conscience anymore nor continue this act.”

“I love you, Cordy Sachs, and I’ve loved you from the start.”

“This wedding was made for you, which was why I never announced the bride... Even the bridal gown you wore that day was yours, not Wendy’s,” he said, his voice choking a little with tears. “Will you marry me, Cordy?”

As he spoke, John went down on one knee, taking out the ring he prepared.

It was made for Cordy’s size.

She stared at it, and then at him, unsure what to do with his sudden proposal.

Although she clearly felt that he had changed and really felt for Wendy, he was telling her now that it was just an act-to make her care and sympathize.

The wedding hall was silent as everyone waited, with Zoe left absolutely flustered.

Naturally, she knew John prepared this wedding for Cordy-to be precise, she, Jay, and even Richard knew who the real bride was.

From the start, their plan was to swindle Cordy into saving the day, even if it was a sham marriage.

That was why Zoe had no idea why John would suddenly admit to everything when they were just a step away from succeeding

Chapter 1237

The endless silence only made everyone anticipate Cordy’s response more.

After all, they could all tell that he was hopelessly in love with Cordy.

Still, there was no telling what she was thinking just then, and she simply stared at John while he stared back.

They were both silent while Richard stood nearby, staring blankly at them.

He knows that this was his daddy’s last chance-that he would have no more chances if his mommy still rejected him...

But he really wanted them to get back together, and honestly felt that his daddy loved his mommy dearly.

He had no idea how devastated his daddy would be to lose his mommy.

He really did so much for her, going to the extreme lengths of playing pretend lovers with Wendy so that mommy would marry him...

“I’m sorry,” Cordy suddenly said.

It was a rejection the instant she spoke.

John smiled in relief, but his eyes were tearful.
His heart really ached, but he truly gave in this time.
He knew he had really hurt Cordy too much, that she did not love him anymore.
He was just coercing her, and it was just his wishful thinking...
He rose to his feet, seemingly wobbling for an instant.
He was so tall and burly, but he seemed like he would fall over in an instant.
Zoe felt her heart numbed with pain even as she looked on.
She had never seen John looking that miserable-ever since they were children, she thought he was some sort of divine being, always haughty and lofty.
He certainly never looked this pitiful.
The only time he seemed to cry was during his parents' funeral, but it was a very longtime ago.
John was still young at the time, and feeling vulnerable after losing loved ones was only natural.
That was why he should not be looking that vulnerable and letting his agony show so much.
For an instant, Zoe thought John must be feeling the skies crashing down from above, but he still tried to stay strong because he must not let it show in front of Cordy.
Zoe could not bear to look as her tears started rolling down her cheeks.
It was supposed to be the happiest day of her life, but she felt endlessly reliable nonetheless.
She suddenly had the impulse to just kidnap Cordy and tie her to John's bed.
However, before she gave in to the impulse of trying to persuade Cordy, Cordy suddenly rose to her feet.
She was staring at John's towering figure as he walked away, wobbling as if he could fall at an instant.
Then, she spoke crisply and clearly, "I'm sorry, John. I didn't know that you still loved me."
Her voice resounded over oily green grass, beneath the bright blue sky.
Everyone was unusually silent, worried that they misheard.
Like John, they thought she rejected him.
And yet, what she said left that uncertain.

Was it a yes or no? Or was it really just an apology and not reconciliation?

John stiffened because he was the most nervous person in the hall. He had hope and expectation, just as he feared disappointment

Chapter 1239

Cordy headed to the anteroom as a bridesmaid and was now suddenly a bride.

This wedding would certainly go down as one of the more astounding ones in history!

She put on the bridal dress she tried on before, and it really seemed to be tailored according to her body's measurements.

Still, she found herself in a daze, as if it was all unreal.

Just yesterday, she felt that there was such an insurmountable distance between them, only for them to get married today.

"Wow, that bridal gown is just so gorgeous! You look so beautiful in it!"
The staff were fawning over Cordy.

Even Quinn, who was in the anteroom with Cordy, was dazzled by the dress.

She certainly looked exceedingly beautiful, and Quinn was unsure to praise her or the dress—both seemed to fuse together.

“I really doubt that the bridal dress was not tailored according to your measurement.” She could not help sighing.

As Cordy glanced at her through the dressing mirror, she smiled. “To think I’d be a bridesmaid twice in one day. Who knew?”

Cordy smiled and blushed faintly—she never expected to get married either.

“Come on. Let’s not keep your groom waiting, and the guests are looking forward to the luncheon as well,” Quinn urged.

Cordy nodded and stepped through the miniature castle arch that was supposed to be Wendy’s.

Through it and her veil, she could see John in the distance...

It felt just like a dream... To think that her wedding would be so outrageous!

She had always thought Zoe was already outrageous with a ridiculous wedding, only for her to give Zoe a run for her money.

She took a deep breath, listening as the emcee announced her and the curtains in front of her parted.

The symphony started playing a beautiful tune as guests applauded and petals danced in the air.

It was a sight of wonder, and yet, the hall was stunned as Cordy walked down the aisle.

‘Heavens! She’s so beautiful!’

‘Is this real? It feels so much like a painting!’

“I know Cordy is beautiful, but this is ridiculous. It’s like her beauty is infinite!”

Cordy could hear the gasps around her and actually felt a little nervous just then.

Zoe had kept saying she was nervous before as well, but now Cordy had the feeling that Zoe was just tricking them to liven the atmosphere.

After all, right now, she was really nervous that she had held her breath since forever, and her whole body shuddered.

As Quinn accompanied Cordy down the red carpet-the second time for the day as a bridesmaid-she could sense Cordy's nervousness.

She was surprised that someone who had seen action like Cordy would get nervous over something this trivial.

Truly, she would be lying if she ever said she did not love John.

It was all restraint and self-deceit.

John's eyes in turn never left Cordy as she walked upstage and upto him- he kept staring as if worried she would run away.

His spirit felt disembodied when she headed to the anteroom to change into her bridal gown, and it felt like he got her back when she appeared before him again.

He reached out to take Cordy's hand, though he soon lowered his hand.

He had no idea if Cordy was willing to let him take her hand or if it would irritate her.

Even if she agreed to marry him, he would not hope that Cordy still loved him.

She might have done it to save him the blushes or for Richard

Chapter 1240

When Cordy said yes to his proposal, John noticed her glancing behind himself at Richard.

But whatever the case maybe, he was rejoicing that she would say yes and would never ask for more.

In fact, he was a little flustered, unsure as to what he should do to not annoy Cordy.

On the other hand, Cordy noticed the tiny beads of sweat over John's forehead.

However, the day's climate was just right, and there was even a breeze—but he was sweating anyway.

Was it perhaps from nerves?

She also noticed that John was reaching for her hand.

She was ready to take it, but John ended up lowering his hands, his entire figure looking very stiff.

Was that nerves too?

Was he more nervous than she was?

Cordy pursed her lips and suddenly reached out to take John's hand.

John's whole body flinched visibly.

Below the stage, Zoe giggled—the dauntless John Levine was bristling from Cordy's touch!

Truly, everything has a weakness, and John was destined to be at Cordy's mercy.

That thought alone left Zoe feeling cathartic, especially since John had been so conceited when they were children, as if no one would ever size up to him.

And he deserved to fall completely to Cordy.

As Cordy took John's hand, she could feel her palm drenched in sweat, spreading a layer of wetness between their hands.

The emcee could not help teasing, "It seems that the bride is more eager than the groom! Alright, now let's have our beautiful bride and our handsome groom take a step forward."

Everyone laughed at his joke while Cordy was left blushing.

John held on to her hand even tighter then, while the priest moved to stand between them to officiate the ceremony.

“John Levine, do you take Cordy Sachs as your beloved wife? To love her and cherish her, in sickness and in health-’

“I do!” John quickly answered.

The emcee could not help chuckling. “Our groom really is impatient.”

Everyone laughed again, while John pursed his lips.

He might usually be calm as a cucumber, but he could not help exposing himself today anyway.

“I will always be with Cordy, and not even death could take me away from her,’ John said resolutely then.

“Cordy Sachs, do you-”

‘I do,” Cordy answered before he could finish too.

The priest could not help joking, “Well now I just feel silly standing here.”

Cordy blushed, the pigment on her cheeks making her appear even more attractive just then.

With that, even the emcee seemed to speak quicker. “Alright. Let’s move on to the exchange of the rings so that no one gets impatient. Over here, Yelena. Come on—run up and bring their rings.”

Yelena promptly leaped out of Clara’s arms, took the ring box from the staff, and ran onstage as fast as she could on her little feet.

Cordy’s heart could melt from the mere sight of such adorableness.

“Johnny.” Yelena greeted John just then.

John had dropped to a crouch to take the rings and was left a little dumbstruck by Yelena calling him Johnny.

Sure, Jay was his uncle, but did Yelena really have to assert herself so much?!

“I wish you and Cordy will be happy forever together and give me another brother like Dicky,” Yelena continued seriously.

Their family tree seemed to be a real mess just then