

Chapter 172 Do I Have A Choice

'Follow him.'

The voice told her to follow Nolan and find out what he had to say about Rayan.

She mustered enough self-control to not act impulsively.

Before Janessa could find a way out, a familiar voice startled her.

"Mr. Gu, could I steal away Miss Qiu for a second?" It was Gordon! He came out of nowhere, as he appeared in front of Nolan and Janessa with a big smile. Gordon firmly planted himself in the middle of Nolan and Janessa.

Gordon stood protectively in front of Janessa, and stared at Nolan.

The awkwardness of the situation made Nolan find an excuse to leave.

Janessa glanced at Gordon and their surroundings, as she made her way to the balcony.

Gordon was not far behind. He took a plate of Janessa's favorite desserts and followed her to the balcony.

Janessa leaned over the railing to get a better view of the scenery.

The moon was bright and round.

"This is for you. Your stomach was growling a few seconds ago." Gordon handed Janessa the cake, careful to keep some distance between them in case she minded. He did everything he could not to offend Janessa.

It was now clear that he and Janessa could not be together. It was only appropriate that he kept a safe distance during their interactions. This was as close to her as he could get.

"Why would you mention it, even if it was the truth? You are a true friend, aren't you?" Gritting her teeth, Janessa took the plate of the desert, looked at the cakes on it, and took a look at Henry.

"Hey, try not to make a fuss over nothing. I just grabbed the closest plate." Gordon said, in a bid to disassociate himself from the kind gesture.

Although she couldn't prove it, Janessa knew that Gordon picked each cake carefully.

Gordon knew her better than she knew herself.

"Thank you."

Although Janessa had tried to have supper that evening, her meal had been disrupted by a call from Rayan. In addition to this being so far away from home wasn't easy for her. Truth be told, she was starving!

After eating a piece of cake, Janessa felt better. She now had the energy to at least talk.

"Why did you come to this party alone?" Gordon asked. He knew that Rayan had come alone. He didn't expect Janessa to attend the party but here she was!

Since Nolan noticed her as soon as she arrived, she couldn't leave now, even if she wanted to.

"Rayan is here." Janessa didn't want to hide this from Gordon. Mostly because she could be herself with Gordon.

"I saw him inside. Do you want to go and look for him?" Gordon was secretly hoping Janessa would say no, but he knew his odds were slim.

Gordon felt pity when he realized Janessa was attending the party alone. There was nothing more he could do than being a caring friend.

"Yes, now if that's all; you can go in first. I'm going to stay out here a little longer." Janessa also seemed to be keeping her distance from Gordon. Rumor had it that he was on a blind date; it was probably best this way.

Gordon nodded and said, "It's windy out here. Better not catch a cold!"

Burdened with worry Gordon obliged and went back to the banquet hall.

"Nice chat with your ex-boyfriend? I thought you said this is the last place you want to be?" Janessa couldn't guess when Rayan had left the banquet to join her on the balcony.

It sounded as though he had been there the entire time.

Janessa didn't look back, "Do I have a choice?"

The truth was, she had no choice. Rayan knew her weakness.

"Of course you have a choice. The real question is how you should make the choice." Rayan's eyes lit up when he saw Janessa. He had bought Janessa countless dresses in the past, but the one she wore tonight was perfect.

It was a strapless dress with captivating handmade embroidery on the torso. With every breath, the flowers seemed to bloom on Janessa's chest. The hemline of the dress fluttered like a wild butterfly in the wind. Janessa's hair was casually tied in a high pony tail. She looked like a celestial being walking on earth.

Janessa turned around and met with Rayan's deep eyes.

Rayan's eyes were like a vortex, which enchanted Janessa every time.

With her eyes closed, Janessa took a deep breath and walked to Rayan's side. The two were so close that they could even feel each other's warmth.

"Just because I came to this party, it doesn't mean that I forgive you." She was nowhere near forgiving Rayan for what Edison had done to her.

"Sounds like the charity banquet is underway. Let's get back inside." Rayan walked to the side of Janessa and stopped.

Janessa had learned to control her temper and still show respect to Rayan in public.

She had to consider both their families' dignity after all.

Janessa looped her arm in Rayan's. Then the two of them made their way back to their seats.

Behind the couple was a furtive figure silently taking photos. Before long he disappeared into the darkness.

This year's charity banquet was held in a similar tradition to years gone by. All guests were encouraged to auction their most valuable and prized possessions. All the proceeds from the auction were donated to charity.

The beginning of the auction was dull, to say the least, and almost put Janessa to sleep. All the items under auction appeared unremarkable.

Without another word, Rayan took his seat next to Janessa and sipped his wine.

After several items had gone under the hammer, the auction was swiftly drawing to a close.

Finally, it was time for the last item.

All of a sudden the host's voice boomed through the room as he introduced the last item. His voice aroused interest and was like a wake-up call to the crowd.

"True to the saying, save the best for last; tonight's final item is a real beauty. Even the owner felt a tinge of regret letting it go. Everyone must be excited about this treasure. If I'm not mistaken, a number of you are here just for this item. Without further delay, bring out the pair of emerald jade bracelets!"

At the host's bidding, the attractive stage assistant carried the last auction item onto the auction stand.

These shining jade bracelets dazzled the entire audience.

The polished gems were luminous and cast light in all directions in the room, under the spotlight. The bracelets were the envy of all who saw them but only a few could afford them.

The crowd became electric with excitement.

There was no doubt that the emeralds had piqued Janessa's interest as she leaned in her chair for a closer look. She was mesmerized by the gems and drawn to them. She was not the only one.

Reluctantly she managed to tear her eyes away. She finally decided one closer look was already good enough for her.

Rayan never missed a beat sitting next to Janessa. He silently watched her then looked back to the auction table. All the while, a knowing smile crept across his face.

"This is the show stopper tonight ladies and gentleman. A pair of natural emerald jade bracelets. Bidding starts at RMB five million. Let the bidding begin!"

The fangs were out and the crowd fiercely placed their bids against each other.

It wasn't long before Janessa lost interest. Looking down at her lap, she lowered her head and played with her phone.

