

Chapter 212 Fever

It had been a week since the incident at the farmhouse, and Janessa hadn't accepted any more of Rylan's invitations, mainly because she couldn't tell for sure why he kept asking her out in the first place. Did he just want to get along well with her, or did he have other ulterior motives?

Strangely enough, she also stopped running into Rayan at random times.

They still met at the office, of course, and still often quarreled, but they had never met outside the company since the farmhouse debacle.

Did that mean that Rayan was indeed following her and Rylan around?

Once afternoon, Janessa went into Rayan's office to remind him of a board meeting that was commencing shortly.

She found him lying on the lounge, fast asleep.

Rayan never slept in the office—it was simply against his personal code of ethics. Furthermore, he should have known about the upcoming board meeting, and should be preparing for the fact.

"Mr. Lu, the board meeting is about to begin," Janessa called out from the doorway, her voice neither too loud nor too soft.

"Okay," Rayan mumbled as he slowly opened his eyes. His voice was alarmingly hoarse.

'What's wrong with him? Did he smoke too much?'

But Janessa quickly brushed her thoughts away and patiently waited where she stood.

Rayan sat up gingerly and rubbed his forehead. He tried to stand, but immediately stumbled back into the sofa.

"Mr. Lu, are you okay?" Janessa rushed over to him, the click-clack of her heels unnaturally loud in the otherwise silent room. She tried to help him up, but as soon as she touched her hand, she felt the burning temperature of his body.

She shot him a look of worry and surprise.

"I'm fine! Let's go." Rayan struggled to get back on his feet again, but Janessa pressed him down with one hand on his shoulder.

"Stay here and don't move." She reached out and placed her palm against his forehead.

She could instantly tell that he was running a fever without even having to compare his temperature to hers. How could he just lie down in his office when his fever was this high? He should be taking medicine, at least!

"You're burning up. I'll go and get you some antipyretics." Janessa left him on the lounge and hurried to one of the side cabinets in the room. It was a good thing that she had thought to replenish the medicines two days ago. They certainly came in handy now.

She grabbed the pills she needed and poured a glass of warm water before returning to Rayan. "Here, take this."

He frowned at the bottle of antipyretics in her hand and scowled.

"No, thanks. I don't need to take any medicine." Rayan pushed her offerings aside and quickly stood.

Perhaps it was because he had gotten his bearings back as he sat on the lounge, but he didn't feel as dizzy as he had when he had woken up.

"No, you have to take medicine. Otherwise, you won't be attending the board meeting. Or any other meeting today, for that matter." Janessa stood as well, and stared up at Rayan stubbornly. She might not be as tall as he was, but she could definitely win in a battle of wills.

She wasn't letting him out of this office without taking necessary precautions.

"I said I don't need it. Remember your position in the company; you're nothing more than an assistant."

"It's exactly because I'm an assistant that I'm doing this. I don't want my boss to get ill or make his conditions any worse. It would be negligence on my part. Now, please take the medicine." Even as she spoke, Janessa pulled his hand and placed a pull on his open palm.

Rayan's face grew deeper. He detested having to take medicines.

He had never done so in the past, no matter how bad his health had gotten. And yet, this petite woman dared to force him into doing something against his will. His first instinct was to just throw the pill away, but one look at Janessa's determined eyes made the impulse disappear.

Without any further arguments, he grabbed the glass of water and gulped the damn medicine down.

Janessa let out a breath of satisfaction and turned to retrieve the materials they needed for the board meeting.

Looking at her retreating back like this, an image suddenly flashed in Rayan's mind. He had once dreamed of a woman feeding him medicine in the office, though he had been worse off then. He had always thought that the woman was Gracie, but he was starting to think it could have actually been Janessa.

'Life is so unpredictable.'

Thankfully, the meeting started on time. Janessa sat behind Rayan, taking notes and recording everything for the minutes she would compile later. After taking the antipyretics, he was looking dazed and not at all his usual self.

"Mr. Lu, this is our plan for this year. Do you have any suggestions?" This came from the new general manager, who had been reporting for quite some time. He stood in front of Rayan and looked at him expectantly. Rayan, on the other hand, stared blankly ahead and said nothing.

"Mr. Lu!" Janessa called out in a hushed voice. She knew what was happening, that it was because of the medicine, and instantly regretted what she had done. Maybe she should have given him a milder drug instead, especially given how important this meeting was.

It was no wonder that Rayan had refused the medicine; he probably didn't want to be so muddled during the conference.

"Well, that's all right. Good job." He now said in a hoarse voice, though his tone was still serious.

'What the hell is happening to me?' Rayan thought to himself. He had never committed any gaffes in a meeting before.

'It must be because of those damn antipyretics!'

He cast a sideways glance at Janessa behind him, but said nothing more.

"All right," the presiding officer announced. "Next, Mr. Lu will be taking the floor to sum up the development plans of the Lu Group for the second half of the year."

'Oh, no! This is the worst time for Rayan to talk on the podium! If people realize his current condition, his enemies inside the company might start getting some devious ideas.'

Janessa didn't want to risk Rayan's position because of her blunder, but she wasn't entirely sure how to handle the situation.

Her mind raced and raced, until she finally came up with something.

'You got this, Janessa.' She took a deep breath and stepped in front of Rayan. "I will be taking the floor instead of Mr. Lu today. A man of his position doesn't need to bother with such trifling matters."

Rayan understood what she was trying to do right away, but even he had to admit that he had never encountered this predicament in the past.

The directors murmured among themselves, their suspicion of Janessa evident in their expressions.

"You are a mere assistant," one of them protested out loud. "You should consider it enough of an honor to be granted attendance to this meeting and take charge of the minutes. Don't overstep your bounds by trying to participate in the internal operations of the company. Who do you think you are?"

And as soon as someone spoke out, the others quickly chimed in. "That's right. How could an assistant have the audacity to act this way? What made you so arrogant?"

"Mr. Lu's assistant is indeed very bold. It appears that he hasn't been training her properly. If that's the case, then we might as well take over and teach her how to be professional."

They all expressed their disapproval one by one, their words vicious and mocking.

Janessa understood their side. As an assistant, she really shouldn't be getting involved in this matter.

But Rayan was practically incapable of speaking coherently at the moment, much less deliver a project plan summary. Besides, Janessa had made the presentation herself, so she was well-versed with all the data and other supporting details. Apart from Rayan, there was no one more qualified to do the report than her.

The complaints only kept coming, however. At this rate, only Rayan could settle the situation.

Janessa shot him a meaningful glance, hoping he would get the unspoken message.

Soon, the buzz died down, and time seemed to have slowed as everyone waited for Rayan's verdict.

"Janessa will give you the summary report on my behalf."