

Chapter 255 Wait For Me

Janessa continued to keep an eye on Rayan as they emerged from the bathroom. He was fine just a moment ago, but now he looked like he was about to fall into a coma.

It was a good thing that the venue for Imani's engagement was a hotel—rooms were readily available for each of the guests.

"Hold on. I'll go get my room card from the front desk. Stay here and wait for me!" Janessa pushed the disoriented man to a nearby chair. Though Rayan tried his best to keep his wits about him, the drug was too strong. He was already spiraling into a combined state of numbness and confusion.

Janessa made a beeline for the reception area and asked the attendant for her designated room. She asked for Rayan's room card as well.

"I'm sorry, Miss, but the card key for Room 211 has been damaged. Can you come back later? We are currently making a replacement. It would take a while before it is finished." The attendant was very apologetic as he handed her the card key to her own room.

Janessa glanced at it. Room 230. Rayan should be on the same floor as her.

As far as hotels went, standard rooms were practically identical, anyway. She could just bring him to her room and let him stay until he recovered. The rest could be sorted out once he woke up.

She hurried back to the spot where she had left Rayan, but the chair was empty. He had completely disappeared.

'I just went to get the room cards. How come he's gone already?'

Janessa looked around the hall yet again, but she couldn't find him—again. She was slowly getting frantic when she ran into Imani, who was in the middle of greeting a few guests.

"Oh, hello, Janessa. Are you looking for someone?"

Her tone sounded sweet and chipper, but her eyes flashed with poorly-concealed disdain.

"Oh, Imani. Congratulations on your engagement!" Janessa had already figured out what this family was up to. She didn't want to embarrass them in front of so many people.

"Thank you, Janessa. I'd like to propose a toast to you. I hope you find your own happiness as soon as possible." As she said this, Imani hailed a waiter, who was carrying a newly-opened bottle of red wine and a few empty glasses.

She poured a glass for Janessa and herself, and continued talking.

"I've been busy all day, so I didn't get the chance to speak with you until now. Engagements are such a troublesome affair. But then you wouldn't know, would you? Your engagement party was so simple and short. Lucky for you!" Imani's tone turned snide as she mentioned the engagement. She had purposely brought attention to Janessa's previous marriage to Rayan.

Indeed, their engagement party back then had been a small event. They had only invited their close friends and a few relatives, and never disclosed it to the public. As a result, majority of the people weren't even aware that they were engaged at the time.

It was a crucial phase, where all Janessa wanted was to save the Qiu Group, while the Lu family was growing desperate for a daughter-in-law. The two families had eventually come to an agreement to satisfy their respective needs.

Janessa had worn a simple, strapless dress to her engagement party.

And the food that they had... Well, it wasn't even worth mentioning.

"That's right. How can I compare with you and this lavish party? You have found yourself such a good man." Janessa shot her cousin a pointed look. She knew Imani well enough to know that her so-called fiance was either really special, or a mere stepping stone for her loftier goals.

In any case, Imani's intentions were far beyond this engagement.

Now that Janessa was aware of her cousin's plans, there was no way she would let the woman succeed.

But first, she needed to find Rayan. Where on earth had he gone to?

"You... Don't go too far, Janessa. Today is my engagement day. You'd better watch yourself." Imani was all too familiar with the kind of person her fiance was, but she had no choice. Her reputation had already taken a hit from last time. If Aydın had whitewashed Imani's reputation secretly, Imani wouldn't be able to go out now.

"You must have a lot of other things to do. I won't be keeping you any longer." Janessa turned away and resumed her search. She was getting increasingly worried about Rayan, and so did not notice the satisfaction that flashed in Imani's eyes.

"Ah, but we haven't seen each other in such a long time. Don't you think you ought to offer me a toast to celebrate my engagement?" Imani handed one of the wine glasses she had poured to Janessa.

Janessa recalled the conversations she had overheard at the balcony, and her first instinct was to refuse the wine.

But it had been poured in front of everyone around them.

Imani couldn't possibly have poisoned it right under their noses, right?

"Congratulations on your engagement!" Janessa forced a smile then grabbed the glass and took a sip.

"Now, I have something else to attend to, so please excuse me." As Janessa tried to walk past Imani, she heard her cousin mutter something under her breath. It made her freeze in her tracks.

She whipped around at Imani, doubt and disbelief written on her face. "What did you just say? Where is he?"

"He's in Room 214 upstairs. You can go and check on him." Imani's voice was soft and kind, and she even patted Janessa on the shoulder.

Janessa's mind was racing. She distinctly remembered the receptionist telling her that Rayan was designated to Room 211. After hearing Imani's words, she became more certain that her cousin was putting her scheme into effect.

"Are you sure about that?" Janessa asked sharply, pointing a finger at Imani. All of a sudden, she felt a wave of dizziness hit her. She squinted at the woman in front of her, and felt the room spin.

In the end, Janessa fainted. The moment she did, Imani caught her fall and made it look like her cousin was drunk.

"I've told you many times not to drink too much," she scolded the unconscious Janessa. "Why don't you ever listen to me? Come on. I'll take you to your room." Imani proceeded to half-drag, half-carry Janessa into a waiting elevator.

A few curious guests watched as they went through the crowd, but they didn't care enough to do anything. It was none of their business, and the two women were seen by the public as relatives, anyway.

Imani took Janessa to the third floor. She hurled her into one of the rooms and threw her on the bed.

Janessa's limp body sprawled over the sheets. She still looked beautiful even in this state. Imani's heart stirred with jealousy at the thought. She angrily snatched the phone and dialed a number.

"Come to the unlocked room on the third floor. A pretty girl is waiting for your pleasure."

"Brilliant!" the person on the other end of the line exclaimed, his voice bursting with excitement. "I'll be right there."

Imani ended the call and loomed over Janessa. She stared down at her cousin for a few seconds before reaching out and pinching her cheek. Then she looked at the rest of Janessa's body. Her dress was gorgeous and alluring enough, but she could look even more provocative with a few... alterations.

Without hesitation, Imani pulled Janessa's dress down, until most of her skin was exposed. She then arranged Janessa's hair so that it covered her chest, making her look like a tempting temptress waiting for her lover.

Satisfied with her handiwork, Imani strode out of the room with her head held high, her heels clicking on the cold, hard tiles as she went.

Once she knew she was alone, Janessa slowly opened her eyes. She had heard what Imani had said over the phone. A man would be showing up any second now, and would probably do despicable things to her.

Janessa scrambled to her feet and put her clothes back in place. She looked around the room; it looked like a presidential suite that had a mini fridge. She could work with that. A fridge meant that there were ice cubes at hand. Janessa rushed into motion, grabbing a bath towel and pouring a bucket's worth of ice cubes in the middle of it. Then, she gathered the ends and twisted them together, securing the weight inside. Finally, she hid behind the door and waited.

Sure enough, she heard the sound of footsteps not long after. They came from the corridor, and they were getting closer and closer. The footsteps ended right on the other side of the door.

"It should be this room. Pretty baby, I'm coming for you now,"

an obscene voice called out from the outside. The knob turned, and the door slowly slid open.

A robust figure hobbled into the room. Janessa wasted no time. She propelled the towel over her shoulder and brought it crashing down against the man's head.