

Chapter 278 Why Are You The One Answering

When Janessa opened her eyes, all she could see was white.

It was silent, too, except for the steady beeping of the machine beside her bed.

For a second, she almost forgot who and where she was.

She closed her eyes and tried to make sense of her surroundings. When she opened them again, her vision was clearer, and the first thing she noticed was the IV bag hanging over her head.

"Janessa, you're awake." Rylan placed a bowl of fruits on her bedside table. He had gone to wash them in the pantry, and returned to find her looking around the room.

Janessa stared at him, her brows furrowed. She was looking at him as if he was a stranger. Seconds ticked by. She said nothing and just kept staring at his face.

"What's wrong, Janessa? Don't you recognize me?" Rylan was descending into a mild panic. He couldn't tell if she was hurt internally or if she had somehow lost her memory.

That last bit was highly possible, especially after such a traumatic experience.

In the next second, however, Janessa burst into laughter. "Gotcha! Ha-ha, relax. I'm fine."

In fact, she had not been injured during the altercation, aside perhaps for a few scratches on her back. The worst damage she had incurred was to her morale.

Noble had ripped her clothes apart in front of so many men, after all.

It didn't matter that she hadn't been fully naked; those men had been just as pleased to see her in her underwear.

Even now, as she thought back on the incident, her chest tightened with fear.

"How is Rayan?" Janessa asked. She remembered him reaching for her just before she had passed out. She needed to know that he was fine. He had been hurt so badly.

"Rayan is currently in the ICU. I'm afraid he's in a very bad condition." A hint of disappointment flashed in Rylan's eyes, but it was gone in an instant.

When he had found them, Rayan was cradling Janessa against his naked torso.

Rylan's first concern had been Janessa, of course, and he had quickly scanned her body for injuries. It didn't take him long to figure out that she had merely fainted.

And then he'd noticed the bloody shirt, the only item of clothing she had on. It was obviously Rayan's.

Rylan remembered reeling from the shock of it all, his mind struggling to keep up with reality. Rylan didn't see the video recorded by the hidden camera on Rayan. So, he had no idea what happened exactly and was surprised to see Janessa like that.

"I have to go see him." Janessa was getting agitated. She was desperate to know how Rayan was doing. They had just survived a life-threatening situation, one where he had almost lost his. She couldn't be at ease until she saw him with her own eyes.

It was bad enough that he was in the ICU. Who knew what might happen to him in the next hour or so?

She pulled out the needle in her hand and gingerly got out of the hospital bed, putting on her shoes before padding toward the door.

Rylan was powerless to stop her, but he couldn't just let her go by herself. He took her hand and supported her as they slowly walked down the hallway.

On their way to the ICU, Rylan couldn't help but wonder—if he were the one lying there, fighting for dear life, would Janessa also forsake everything to come and see him?

He didn't have the courage to ask it out loud, though.

Janessa never said anything, even when they stopped at the glass window outside Rayan's ward. He was unconscious on his hospital bed, with tubes sticking out of his body. A good portion of his head was wrapped with bandages.

Her eyes welled with tears. How pitiful he had looked at the time, taking all the blows without resistance. He had endured the pain and pretended to be fine just so she wouldn't worry.

"Has he ever woken up?" Janessa asked through her sobs. She hated seeing Rayan like this.

"Not yet. The doctor said that it may take some time. Don't worry. Mr. Lu has a strong will to survive. He'll wake up soon." Despite himself, Rylan had so much admiration for Rayan. The man had beaten him yet again. But this time, Rylan was truly convinced.

Rayan was indeed the better man.

"Can I go inside and sit by his bed?" Janessa seemed single-minded in her desire to be with Rayan. Rylan could only smile bitterly and nod, then he took her to the nurses' station. After donning a protective suit with the help of the staff, Janessa stepped into the ICU ward.

It was just her and Rayan inside.

She sat on the chair by his bed and took his hand. Then she began talking gently from behind her mask.

"Are you serious going to lose to me like this? I woke up earlier than you." She stuttered to a stop. Janessa didn't quite know what to say. Not too long ago, they had spent their days going at each other's throats. There wasn't really much to reminisce.

Time could be a magical thing sometimes, breaking expectations that one presumed were certain.

It could even change the nature of relationships.

"I'm telling you, you have to recover as soon as possible. We still have a lot to settle between us."

Janessa prattled on for more than an hour, talking about anything and everything.

Finally, a nurse had to come over and remind her not to wear the patient out. She had no choice but to leave then.

"Looks like I talked too much today. You must be exhausted. I should leave you alone to rest. I'll see you again tomorrow." As Janessa exited the room, she failed to notice the slight twitching of Rayan's fingers.

Moments later, back in her own ward, Janessa sat on her bed and looked out the window with a blank face.

"Here, have some porridge. How can you take care of Rayan properly if you don't eat anything?" Rylan had been trying to coax her for a while now, to no avail. He learned very quickly that the way to make her listen was to mention Rayan's name.

It worked and Janessa finished her food in no time.

As the hours passed by, however, she returned to her daze. She was either lying down and staring at the ceiling, or sitting up and staring out of the window. She kept going over and over the things that had happened between her and Rayan, starting from the day they had met.

In recent days, Janessa suddenly heard something.

It was about her.

But Janessa didn't want to believe that.

Rylan never left her side for the rest of the day. In the evening, he soothed her to sleep before sprawling out on the sofa located in the outer room.

Janessa was given a thorough examination the next day. Thankfully, her results were good, and she was instantly cleared to be discharged. The first thing she did after leaving the hospital was ask Rylan, "Do you know any place where I can cook? I'm planning to make something myself."

Rylan glanced at her and thought about it. "There is a shop at the end of the bridge not far from here."

"Good!" Janessa exclaimed joyfully. Now that she had access to a kitchen, she would like to make some soup for Rayan.

Rylan already knew what she was thinking, so he took her to the nearest supermarket to get some ingredients.

Janessa spent most of the afternoon cooking, only to realize that Rayan still hadn't woken up. What was she supposed to do with all this food now?

She was still frowning at her dishes when Rylan appeared by her side.

"What, is there anything wrong with the food?"

"Well..." Janessa hesitated for a couple of seconds. "There's nothing wrong. Have you had dinner yet? Let's eat together." They brought the dishes to the dining area and sat down.

Rylan took one bite and paused. It brought to his mind a common saying he had often heard, but hadn't really believed.

"The food prepared with love is more delicious than anything in the world," he murmured to himself in his mind. Janessa had undoubtedly made all these dishes for Rayan. It just so happened that the man was still unconscious, affording Rylan the chance to eat them in his place.

As for Janessa, she was blissfully oblivious to Rylan's stormy thoughts, or the way his mood had dampened. She was busy thinking about ways to make Rayan wake up.

Just then, a phone inside her purse began to ring. She fished it out and thoughtlessly pressed it against her ear. "Hello, who is this?"

"Why are you the one answering? Where is Rayan?"