

Chapter 352 What A Disgustingly Small World!

On her way home, Janessa paused and sat on a bench by the side of the road for some rest.

She took the opportunity to rifle through her contact list. There were more than twenty names stored in her phone book, but she diligently called and texted them one by one. To her dismay, they all had the same response—there was nothing they could do for the Shen family.

Janessa had somehow expected this, but she still wanted to give it a try.

Finally, she only had two people left to call. One was Errol, a classmate she hadn't seen in years, and the other one was Rayan.

Errol.

Janessa looked up from her phone and pondered over the name and the person it belonged to. She wasn't overly familiar with Errol, and he had attempted to pursue her romantically in the past. This fact alone dissuaded her from even considering the man.

In any case, if she really had to choose between these two people, Janessa would rather go with Rayan.

She didn't have the details about Errol's business affairs, but she had heard through the grapevine that he had somehow done well for himself. Janessa certainly wasn't in a position to seek him out for a favor now.

Alas, it looked like she had no choice but to go to Rayan, after all.

The problem was, neither she nor Rayan was willing to concede in their little fight. How should she go about their reconciliation at this point?

Janessa felt a dull pounding at her temples. Even if she humbled herself in front of Rayan, she was almost sure that the stubborn man wouldn't give in to her request.

With a sigh, she got up and continued walking down the path. Soon enough, she spotted an old couple hobbling across the road, their arms linked with each other's. From what she saw, it appeared that the old man was fretting that his wife might not be able to keep up with his pace. He kept chiding her, his tone rather anxious. But the old woman just smiled and brushed his worries away. "It's all right. I'm okay, I can keep up with you."

Then they turned to cross the road. Their gait was slow and shaky at best, but they made it to the other side safely. "What would you like to eat tomorrow?" Janessa heard the old man ask. "I'll drop by the supermarket and buy the ingredients we would need."

His wife tilted her head and thought for a while. "Well, it doesn't matter. I will eat whatever you cook."

Janessa stared at their bent backs as they huddled close and went along their way without a care in the world. She couldn't help but imagine herself in a similar scenario. When she was old and gray, would her relationship with her husband still be as sweet and harmonious as theirs?

Without warning, Rayan's face came to mind.

"What the hell!" Janessa exclaimed before she could stop herself. "I must have gone crazy for a second there." Rayan was obviously the one in the wrong in their current cold war, yet here she was, still painting a future with him.

Her common sense apparently left her for a brief moment back there.

Nevertheless, the conversation she had overheard gave Janessa some inspiration. She could definitely make Rayan's favorite dishes, those that she was particularly good at.

It could be a peace offering of sorts. Though she wasn't sure if it would work, it was worth giving a shot, at least.

'That's settled then. I'm cooking tomorrow.' With her mind made up, Janessa's stride became firmer.

However, Rayan had to leave very early the next morning to attend an urgent meeting.

Not that Janessa was disappointed. If anything, she was relieved. This way, she wouldn't have to risk him finding out about her plan before everything was ready. She could learn a few new dishes, too.

As a matter of course, the first thing she did was to take the cook to the nearby supermarket to shop for the ingredients she needed. It didn't take long before Janessa's cart was filled to the brim.

"Miss Qiu, these..."

"It's okay, I'm using everything in here. Nothing is going to be wasted, don't worry. Now, I need you to help me choose some meat. I'm afraid I'm not good in that kind of thing." She might be an avid kitchen person, but she had no talent in distinguishing fresh produce from those that weren't.

Luckily, the cook was experienced in this matter.

The woman nodded eagerly. She had initially thought that she would have to do the grocery run by herself, so she was pleasantly surprised when Janessa had volunteered to do it instead. All the servants in the villa were aware that the young madam liked to cook, but none of them wanted her fussing around at the stove top.

After all, constant cooking wasn't good for a woman's skin.

As the wife of their master, they naturally expected her to just enjoy the service that they were more than willing to provide.

This wasn't agreeable to Janessa, of course. Yet the more she insisted on attending to mundane chores around the house, the more popular she became among the staff.

The two women took their time picking out different cuts of meat before paying the bill and heading out of the establishment.

It was just recently that Janessa had lamented how unlucky she was. She always seemed to be running into people she didn't want to meet.

And so, she wasn't all too shocked this time.

As soon as they walked out of the supermarket, she saw Imani, who was walking toward her from the parking lot.

What a disgustingly small world!

Given the scandal that had broken out during Imani's engagement party, Janessa had truly thought that her cousin would never dare to go out in public again.

As it was, the most rabid netizens had very short memory spans. They had forgotten Imani's shameful entanglement shortly after it had transpired, especially when the rumor mills started spewing out other, juicier stories. It was very likely that nobody even recognized Imani anymore. It was no wonder that Imani now had the guts to strut back out into the world.

"Well, well, well. And who might this be? I didn't expect to see you here, of all places." Imani spoke first, her eyes full of loathing even behind her huge sunglasses.

If only Janessa hadn't teamed up with Rayan back then. Not only had they ruined her plans, the pair had also humiliated her in front of the entire A City.

Nowadays, Imani could no longer share the same space as the upper class. She had to avoid their common haunts as well, afraid to be mocked by the socialites she used to call peers.

"Oh?" Janessa raised an eyebrow and looked Imani up and down. "I wonder where this dog came from. Why does it keep yapping and barking around here?" If only this cousin of hers hadn't tried to set her up again and again, Imani wouldn't have to suffer the consequences.

Unfortunately, Imani and her family were in the habit of pinning the blame on others whenever something went wrong. Never mind whose fault it was, their first course of action was always to blame someone else.

What a vile group of people.

Janessa had always felt ashamed to call them relatives.

"How dare you say that, Janessa? I'm your older cousin! Is this how your mother raised you? Did she never teach you to show respect to your elders? How vulgar." Imani wasn't holding back at all. And by the looks of it, it seemed that she still had a lot of malicious remarks in her arsenal.

Janessa stepped forward and grabbed her by the arm. "If you have something to say, then just get straight to the point. There's no point in beating around the bush and making a scene." Imani might not mind becoming a public spectacle, but Janessa did. She pulled her cousin to a secluded corner, leaving the cook at the entrance of the supermarket.

Janessa did this out of consideration for both her and Imani's reputation, but the other woman only saw her actions as a sign of guilt.

"What, are you trying to shut me up because you're scared? You're regretting the current state of the Qiu Group, aren't you? You call yourself the chairwoman of the company, but you don't care about the business at all! You call everyone asking for help on behalf of the Shen family, but what have you ever done for the sake of the Qiu Group? What were you doing just now? Just for the Shen family, are you going to sell your body? You're nothing more than a filthy bitch, Janessa!" Imani was really worked up now.

The truth was, the future of the Qiu Group wasn't looking very good. But what did that have to do with Janessa? As usual, Imani was blaming the wrong person.

"Then tell me, what were you expecting me to do for the Qiu Group? When I handed the company over to your father, the business was doing well, and there were no problems with the finances. Now, the company can't even function properly, and even the capital is at risk of being lost. Who should be blamed for that? Oh, Imani, Imani. Stop being so blind and stupid. You're only embarrassing yourself."