

Chapter 367 A Wine Party

"You knew I was there from the start, didn't you?" Alana asked, even though she already knew the answer.

She thought she had hidden pretty well. How had he managed to spot her? Despite herself, she was rather caught off-guard by his discovery.

Unbeknownst to Alana, Rayan was well-trained when it came to matters like this. In particular, he was sensitive to the sounds around him.

If Alana's bag hadn't scraped against the car when she had shifted positions earlier, Rayan would have probably remained oblivious to her presence.

"Just say what you came to say. I don't have time to waste with you." All this time, Rayan had dreaded having to see this close friend of Janessa's. But now that things had come to this, he might as well hear her out.

After all, he also wanted to gain some insight from Alana's perspective.

Most of all, he wanted to see for himself if it truly was for her that Janessa had begged him to save the Shen family.

"All right, let's clear things up once and for all. Remember the promise you gave me? You said you would treat Janessa properly. Is this how you fulfill that promise? You might be the most powerful man in A City, Rayan, but I never thought you could be so cruel as to string someone along like this." Alana spat her words out with undisguised disdain. If it were up to her, she wouldn't want Janessa to get back together with this man. But her best friend was pregnant now, and in the end, Alana only wanted what was best for her.

"Did you forget your family's current circumstances?" Rayan drawled out, as if they were discussing something mundane like the weather. "For your impertinence alone, I can make it so that the Shen family disappears from A City overnight."

Alana knew this, of course, but she still had to speak her heart.

"I am well-aware of what you're capable of. I only came here today to tell you that a man who isn't even able to trust his lover doesn't deserve to fall in love."

"You're talking about trust?" Rayan sneered. "Are you saying you want me to keep someone by my side, knowing full well that she can betray me any time?" He had put his faith in Janessa before. Even when he had his misapprehensions when she had first come to Lu Group, he had still chosen to believe in her skills and had even arranged for her to work in the CEO's Office.

She might have not been privy to the most important documents in the company, but she had been high enough in rank that everything she handled was still considered confidential.

And what had he gotten in return for his good will? Treachery.

At this point, Rayan wouldn't be surprised if it turned out that Larry starting to collect the Lu Group's shares had something to do with Janessa.

No matter how hard he tried, he just couldn't separate the two anymore.

"She might have had that intention in the beginning, but she changed her mind later on. Ever since her return from Y Country, all she cared about was you. Do you remember how you ignored her and left her hanging after you came back? Janessa never complained, but it was clear how devoted she was to you. You took your sweet time before actually expressing your love for her, too. You'll never know how happy she was when you finally confessed. She was ecstatic, to the point that I almost envied her. Janessa loves you—really, truly loves you. And what about you? You claim to love her, too, yet all it took was a few poisonous words from an evil bitch, and you kicked Janessa out just like that."

Alana poured out all her grievances on Janessa's behalf. Her best friend had done so much for this man, yet all she received was an endless cycle of pain and suffering.

"She was ecstatic, huh? Of course, she would be! Why wouldn't she be happy when she finally secured the chance to steal more of my company's trade secrets?" Rayan's eyes flashed with contempt.

"You... Don't you know that when she labored in the kitchen to cook all those dishes for you, she was already pre—" Alana caught herself and cleared her throat. "At the time, she hasn't got a decent sleep for days on end. But what did you do? You mocked her efforts by smooching with Gracie right to her face! You're a heartless bastard, Rayan." Luckily, the man didn't seem to have noticed her slight slip of the tongue. Otherwise, Janessa would definitely be furious at her for letting the secret out.

"So now she isn't sleeping properly, is that it? Ha! I don't give a damn."

"Rayan, you're definitely past redemption at this point." Alana shook her head helplessly. She had been driven to her wits' end, but nothing was getting through to this fool. What made her even angrier was the fact that Rayan was willing to believe Gracie, but not her or Janessa.

"I'm letting this go this time, Alana, but only for your father's sake. Tell Janessa to never shoe her face again, or I'll make sure she pays the ultimate price for betraying me."

As soon as Rayan finished speaking, he slipped into his car and slammed the door shut.

He revved up the engine and sped past Alana, leaving her standing alone in the parking lot.

"Rayan, you crazy bastard! I swear, you'll never find a better wife for as long as you live!" Alana screamed after him, stamping her foot in rage. In the end, however, there was nothing more she could do but leave as well.

Alana was still in a foul mood when she arrived at the apartment.

"Oh? What's wrong with you now? Why do you look so glum?" Janessa walked out of the kitchen at the sound of the front door opening, carrying a platter of fruits. She always had a good appetite, and she was fond of eating fruits as of late. As a matter of fact, except for a few cold dishes she was advised against, Janessa made an effort to eat as much as she could.

It was all for the child she was carrying, of course.

"Never mind, I'll be fine in a while. I just happened to run into a stupid fool earlier. He really pissed me off." Alana threw herself on the sofa and heaved a weary sigh.

She had gone to the mall after leaving the parking lot, thinking that some shopping would help her cool off.

"You picked a fight with someone?" Janessa frowned at her friend before turning her attention back to the TV. "I just can't understand you sometimes, Alana."

They were interrupted by the shrill ringing of her phone. Janessa glanced at the caller ID and wondered why Rylan was calling her all of a sudden.

"Okay, I'm going to go and take a shower, then I'm off to bed. Today has been exhausting." Alana scrambled to her feet and dragged herself to her room.

Janessa just smiled and shook her head as she watched the other woman go. Her phone was still ringing.

Her first instinct was to let the call end, but what if Rylan was calling about something important?

Janessa muted the TV and pressed the answer button. "What's up, Ry?"

She had been so used to calling him by his nickname that it just rolled off her tongue before she could stop herself. "I haven't heard you call me that in a long time.

I've really missed it!" Rylan's voice sounded delighted yet wistful at the same time.

Janessa rolled her eyes. "Surely, you didn't call me just for some light banter. What's going on?"

"You haven't changed at all, huh? You still don't want to make small talk with me." In the next second, Rylan turned serious. "Well, anyway, I'm attending a wine party this coming weekend. I wanted to invite you to be my partner for the event."

"Why would you even think of me? Someone as eligible as you should have a wide selection of partners at your disposal." As far as Janessa was concerned, she shouldn't even have been an option.

Rylan was handsome, rich and powerful. Any woman would drop everything to be with him at a moment's notice. Why would he go out of his way to seek her out, when they both knew that she always held some resistance to him?

Besides, Janessa was in a delicate situation at present, albeit it wasn't known to anyone besides her and Alana. With her pregnancy, she didn't dare to take any risks by going out and about to some fancy event.

"Yes, yes, I do have a lot of women to choose from, indeed. The thing is, I found out that Rayan is also going to the party. That's why I decided to ask you. We're only going as friends, anyway. Are you afraid that Rayan would misunderstand again?"

The rumors about Rayan and Gracie had run rampant these past couple of days. Thinking that it must have reached Rylan's network as well, Janessa finally understood his sudden invitation.

Well, how could she return Rylan's favor?