

## Chapter 369 It's My Duty To Look After Her

Wearing a beautiful white dress, Janessa took a step forward, stared straight at Rylan's eyes with a look of determination on her face, and said, "I'm not expecting you to give me an answer anytime soon. You can think about it as much as you want. All I'm asking is that you keep my secret safe. I really can't afford to let anyone find out about it right now."

"Uh, okay," was the only response Rylan could come up with.

Despite having an abundance of love for Janessa, her situation was simply too much to bear. In his mind, getting involved with a woman carrying another man's child would surely lead to a catastrophe.

The fact that she was once divorced already raised a few eyebrows within his family. So surely her pregnancy would cause an uproar amongst them.

'Damn it, Janessa. Your timing of pregnancy couldn't have been worse. If you haven't got pregnant, I would've given you the world. But now that you're carrying his child, I...'

With a heart full of disappointment and regret, Rylan had a hard time and kept a straight face.

When Janessa noticed his downhearted expression, she immediately understood what was going on in his mind. But instead of feeling sorrowful, she couldn't help but feel relieved. 'Don't worry, Rylan. You're a good man. I'm sure you'll find someone better than me someday,' she thought.

Thinking Rylan needed some space to deal with his emotions privately, Janessa came up with an excuse to leave. "Oh, it's been a while, hasn't it? I should probably check up on Alana. I'll see you later."

Alana was getting prepared in another room a few doors down the hall. When Janessa arrived, Amy was just about to put the finishing touches on her makeup.

"Wow! You look gorgeous, Alana!"

"Oh, Janessa, you came just at the nick of time. What do you think of the dress? Do I look good in it?" To be expected from such a thoughtful man, Rylan brought both Janessa and Alana dresses for them to wear at the party. Since the Shen family was still in the middle of quite a dilemma, he thought it was a good way to lift Alana's spirits.

But most importantly, he knew that no one at the party would be able to mess with Janessa if Alana was by her side.

"Stop being silly, Alana. I'm sure you'll look good no matter what you wear," Janessa cheerily replied. But she also had an unconvincing smile on her face.

"What's wrong? Is the ba—I mean, is something bothering you?" Alana almost spilled Janessa's secret but managed to salvage it midway. Amy was a good friend of hers. But after considering the mess going on, she knew it was better if fewer people knew about Janessa's pregnancy.

"I don't know. I feel some pain in my heart. And for some reason, I have a feeling in my gut that something bad is about to happen."

"Ah, don't worry about it! No matter what happens, even if I have to go against Rayan and Gracie all by myself, I swear I'll protect you. Blah, just mentioning that man's name left a horrible taste in my mouth. I honestly can't believe he got back with that crazy bitch. How could you ever fall in love with someone that stupid?" After finding out what Rayan did to Janessa, Alana hadn't let a chance to badmouth him pass by. And as time went on, the things she'd say about him kept getting worse. That said, she wasn't doing it to be mean. Instead, she just wanted Janessa to move on from him as soon as possible. Life would certainly not be as luxurious as it was with Rayan. But it would be a lot less complicated for Janessa and her baby if he wasn't in the picture.

"Cut it out, Alana. Someone might hear you!" On the surface, Janessa wasn't a fan of hearing such harsh and foul language. However, deep down in her heart, she couldn't be happier. 'Alana's a bit too much sometimes. But I'm really thankful to have a friend like her.

I'm feeling better now. Maybe I've thought too much.'

While they were busy chit-chatting, Amy couldn't help but feel a little worried. Almost everyone in the city knew Rayan, and getting a chance to get on his good side was too good of an opportunity to pass by. 'If by somehow, somehow, Rayan catches wind of Alana's smack-talking, I really hope he doesn't do anything drastic.'

It wasn't that Amy was planning to betray Alana for her benefit. She just didn't expect her to be so bold.

"Before I go, I'll be leaving a few of these sample makeup kits behind. They have everything you'll ever need for a touch-up, and they're small enough to fit in any purse. Pretty neat, right? Alright, see you guys later. Take care!"

After bidding farewell, Amy quickly gathered her things and walked out the door. She would've gone with Alana and Janessa to the party so she could fix their makeup herself. Unfortunately, something came up that really needed to be dealt with.

Even though the party wasn't starting anytime soon, Janessa decided to get dressed already so they could leave early.

She changed into a pair of kitten heels. They weren't the best match for her elegant dress. But now that she was carrying a baby in her belly, looks took a backseat to safety.

Simultaneously, Rylan was waiting outside their room and trying his best to sort out his feelings. 'For so long, I've wanted nothing more than to have you back. But now that you're pregnant with his baby, you've left me with no choice but to give up on that dream. Ah, what bad luck! I can't even do anything about it. I guess I should just stop thinking like this.'

"Oh, hey," he awkwardly mumbled when Janessa suddenly opened the door. And after looking at her from head to toe, he added, "Why aren't you wearing the shoes I gave you? Were they uncomfortable?" He tried really hard to find a pair of shoes to go along with the dresses he brought. So when he saw that she wasn't wearing them, he couldn't help but feel a little disappointed.

"Have you forgotten already? I can't possibly wear heels that high right now."

"Ah, silly me! Anyway, those look good on you as well!" It seemed like the more Rylan tried to forget about her pregnancy, the more he got reminded of it, causing him to think, "I guess the moment I found out that she was having a baby, I was destined to be a part of it, with or without my permission."

Alana, who was standing just behind Janessa, saw their awkward exchange and immediately understood what was going on.

"Well, Rylan, since you did so well picking out these dresses, would you like to hear a bit of insider news as a token of my gratitude?"

With a raised eyebrow, she looked him dead in the eye and waited for his response.

"What are you talking about, Alana? Are you guys hiding something, or are you just messing with me?" Alana's words seemed like the perfect way of lightening the mood.

So Janessa quickly chimed in.

"Come on, Rylan. Don't you think you deserve a reward for taking such good care of us? And besides, I have to make sure you don't feel like you're being taken for granted. I can't have you spilling the beans, you know?" After receiving Janessa's praise, Rylan couldn't help but smile. And it seemed like the burden of carrying her secret was slowly getting lighter on his shoulders.

"She's right, Rylan. I don't know how you did it. Maybe you're some sort of creep, but you even got our sizes right! I definitely can't let your kindness go unrewarded." Alana's cheeky remark caused the three of them to burst into laughter, completely erasing the tension in the air.

Once they settled down, the three of them headed for Rylan's car with smiles on their faces.

Along the way, every five minutes or so, Alana would ask Janessa how her stomach was feeling. Because for the past few days, Janessa had been dealing with a serious case of morning sickness.

"Stop worrying so much, Alana. I'm perfectly fine." After telling her off, Janessa thought to herself, 'She's getting so worked up. It's like she's the pregnant one here.'

"Fine, I'll stop asking. I just thought it was better to be safe than sorry. But if you ever start feeling nauseous at the party, just tell me right away, okay?" Since Janessa had already lost one child due to misfortune, Alana was willing to go above and beyond just to make sure everything went smoothly this time.

"She's right, Alana. If you keep acting like that, people might start thinking that something's wrong with you. Heck, they might even think you're pregnant!" "Shut up, Rylan. You're not a part of this. Janessa's my best friend! It's my duty to look after her!"

Back then, Janessa wasn't the biggest fan of Alana and Rylan's constant bickering. But now, she couldn't imagine a life without it. Despite having the advantage over Rylan, Alana wasn't done teasing him yet. "Stop acting so cool just because you know her secret. Don't make me remind you that I'm this child's godparent, not you!"

"That's enough, you two. You're being too loud!" Janessa spoke with a smile on her face. But for some reason, her right eyelid was twitching nonstop.