

Chapter 376 The Blind Date

"I have no choice but to give up. It's all for Nolan's sake." Leona knew what it was that Nolan truly needed. If she was incapable of giving it to him, then she would rather keep out of his way.

If it had been the opposite, then she would have done anything at all costs, if it meant securing his success.

Janessa was at a loss. She couldn't say for sure that she approved of Leona's decision.

This was a woman who would sacrifice everything for the person she loved. If she was asked to leave, then she would disappear from the man she loved and never show up to disturb his life again. But it was no longer easy for Leona to just up and go as she had done before.

They had a child now. Surely, Nolan still cared about his own son.

"Nolan must give me a reasonable explanation for this mess," Janessa declared.

In truth, if this had been her own affair, she wouldn't be this outraged. But she couldn't bear for Leona to suffer this sort of grievances.

"No, Janessa, please don't. Although it may not seem like it, I know that Nolan is also in a dilemma."

"As he should be! He is a man who can't even protect his woman and child. He owes us an explanation. I—" Janessa's face crumpled, and she let out a small groan. A wave of nausea had just come over her.

"What is it? Are you feeling ill?" Leona asked with concern. She had been so absorbed with her own problems that she barely noted the physical changes in Janessa.

"I'm fine. You should know better than anyone what I'm going through." Janessa might be able to hide her pregnancy to Leona, but mothers had a way of knowing. Besides, she didn't want to keep it a secret from her good friend.

Leona was the only person Janessa knew who had already gone through pregnancy and childbirth. She could ask for some advice and compare their experiences with each other.

"What do you mean by saying that I should know?"

Janessa had heard before that new parents had a tendency to become slow-minded as they shifted their focus on childcare. In most cases, they were slow to register anything else that didn't involve their children. This applied to Leona, too, apparently.

'What is she talking about?' Leona wondered. 'I don't feel sick at all.'

Janessa sighed helplessly. "Is your head muddled or something? I'm pregnant!"

Seeing Leona's situation, Janessa couldn't help worrying about herself. 'What should I do if the same situation happens to me?'

If Rayan really leaves me, how am I supposed to take care of my child if I turn into an idiot like Leona is now?'

Finally, something got through to Leona and she asked, "Did you just say you're pregnant? Is it Rayan's?"

Janessa frowned as she stared at her friend, who had jumped to her feet in surprise.

Why were so many people shocked to learn that she was carrying Rayan's baby in her belly?

Well, judging from Leona's and Alana's similar reactions, it was clear that they didn't want her to end up with him. Even so, Janessa had already made up her mind that for as long as there was the slightest hope that she and Rayan could be together, she would never stop trying.

"Yes, but I haven't told him yet. I don't want him to get back together with me only because of the baby." Janessa proceeded to tell Leona everything, including her big fight with Rayan, and how he was with Gracie now.

Leona looked every bit as furious as Janessa had been just a while ago.

"And you still want to get back together with him?" It wasn't that Leona couldn't understand. She just didn't approve of it.

"That's right. I want him to come back to me without knowing the existence of this child. That way, I'll know that he truly wants me, and that there's still meaning to our relationship beyond the sense of responsibility." As a matter of fact, Janessa had already made plans on how to execute her pursuit.

Sadly, it would all be ruined before she even got the chance to act.

She didn't know it yet, but something terrible was waiting for her in the near future, something that she would rather forget for the rest of her life.

"You..." Leona sighed. "I already know I can't persuade you not to do this. Can't you take a page out of my book? Learn from what happened to me and don't make the same mistakes I did."

It was true what people said, that one had no difficulty fixing anyone's problems but their own. An objective position really provided a more enlightened perspective.

Maybe this was why it was also said that even the most upright judge was incapable of settling fights within their own homes.

"Why is it so easy to solve another person's situation when we still continue to struggle with our own, anyway? I hope you find happiness, Leona, I really do. As for me, I know that Rayan is the man who can give me that."

Janessa was serious as she said this. Despite Rayan's initial anger, it wouldn't go on for long. She just needed to explain all the misunderstandings and ask him how she could make it up to him.

Alas, wishful thinking didn't always become reality.

In the end, the women decided to let each other be. They were both convinced that they were right, and knew that no one could change their minds once they decided on something.

By the time Alana came home in the evening, Janessa and Leona had already started cooking dinner. Leona took the helm, of course, while Janessa acted as her assistant.

"Oh, Leona!" Alana exclaimed. "So you were here. Thank goodness, I don't have to eat any more of Janessa's noodles. I was starting to think that I'll turn into noodles one of these days," she shamelessly complained.

Janessa only rolled her eyes and shook her head. She couldn't believe her roommate could afford to be picky at this period.

With her pregnant state, noodles were the quickest and easiest to prepare. She thought Alana wouldn't have problems with it, but it seemed that she was mistaken.

"Stop eating my noodles if you don't like it. I'm so exhausted. I don't even want to cook at all!" Janessa shook the vegetables she had just washed and placed them on the chopping board.

"All right, this is all you need. I'm going to go and lounge for a while, lest someone might talk my ear off with her complaints." It wasn't entirely a lie; she really was tired.

She patted Alana on the shoulder as she walked past her.

"Eh, don't be mad, Janessa! I only said it because I missed Leona's cooking. She rarely stops by, let alone cook. You can't possibly think that I actually disliked your food, right? You're the best when it comes to cooking. Your dishes are even better than those in the most famous five-star restaurant in the city. I swear—"

"All right, fine, fine. Stop talking already." Janessa rolled her eyes again. She had to admit that Alana had a talent for smooth-talking.

"No, wait! I have something to talk to you about!" Alana turned to Leona briefly. "Leona, thank you for taking care of dinner. We'll catch up later, okay?" Then she took Janessa's hand and pulled her out of the kitchen.

Just before they were through the door, Janessa looked back at the sight of Leona busying herself on the counter.

It occurred to her then that Leona must have had a hard time cooking for them while she had been pregnant.

"Okay. So, do you remember how my mother used to arrange numerous blind dates for me?" Alana asked seriously once they were seated on the sofa. She didn't care to remember that disastrous point in her life, but fate had other plans. She had met that man earlier today.

"Of course, I remember. I came to your rescue every time. Why, what's wrong?"

Why was Alana mentioning this now? Did it have something to do with the Shen family's current circumstances?

"Do you remember the guy I refused point-blank? The one I didn't even need your help with? Do you remember me telling you later that this man was not my type?"

"Yes, I do remember. Why? Tell me what's going on."

"Well, I ran into him today, just a few steps away from my company. I thought nothing of it at first, but then I had this gut-feeling that he somehow resembled that contractor who worked with Shen Group before. And when we walked past each other, Jake gave me this pointed look, though he didn't make it obvious. It was almost like a silent warning. Janessa, would you believe me if I say that this man could have possibly been involved in the undoing of the Shen Group?"