

## Chapter 377 How Is She

"Jake?" Janessa couldn't even remember the man's face.

All she knew was that this was the last man Alana would ever want to have a blind date with. Janessa did remember seeing Jake's photo and thinking he looked like a selfish and narrow-minded person.

He might seem kind to most, but her hunches were never wrong. Even if he treated Alana well, he would eventually bring harm to her, or worse, to others around her.

Sure enough, it had been less than a year since they had a blind date, and yet he had already started to take revenge for Alana's slight.

"That's very likely, indeed. Do you recall what I told you when you showed me his photo? I could tell back then that he was not a good man. He's even more suspicious now that you've run into him at this crucial time."

"Then that means that I'm the one to blame for all that has happened to my family. What should I do?" Alana was out of her depth. The moment she had seen Jake earlier today, she felt as though the world she knew had turned upside-down.

"But why is he going to such lengths over a trifle?" Alana wailed, sounding aggrieved. The fact that they couldn't tell for sure what was going on behind the scenes only added to her frustration.

When it came down to it, the person responsible for this whole mess was none other than her mother. If the older woman hadn't been so adamant about separating Alana and Eric for good, she wouldn't have resorted to arranging all these blind dates.

Perhaps this was what people called well-deserved karma.

"Well, did Jane say anything to you?" Janessa asked. If he truly was the one who did this to the Shen family, then he was bound to communicate his terms sooner or later.

"No, but he gave me that really unsettling smile."

It had been filled with unveiled malice.

It had distressed Alana so much that she was desperate to talk to Janessa and let it out of her system as soon as she could.

"There's something else. I've been having this feeling lately, that someone is always tailing me. But whenever I look back and check, I don't see anyone suspicious or familiar. I'm scared, Janessa." Alana didn't want to burden Leona with her apprehensions, as they had just met again after a long while. Besides, Janessa was the smartest one in the group. If something was wrong, the wise thing to do would be to come to Janessa first.

She had always proven to be a pillar of support for other struggling women. Maybe it was her independent streak, but Janessa's tenacity really set her apart from her peers. It was also because of this that she had so many loyal friends who were willing to do anything for her.

"No, don't be afraid. I'll find you a good and reliable private detective to get to the bottom of this. If you don't feel safe going outside, then you can just stay at home for now." Janessa's mind was already racing. 'Alana is being stalked?' Her instincts were telling her that the stalker was not Jake.

If it was him, why would he show that malicious smile at her? Wouldn't he just be giving himself away?

In that case, who else could the stalker possibly be? Who else had Alana rejected during her series of blind dates?

No, that didn't add up, either. As far as they knew, only Jake was capable of so much spite to seek retribution. If it was not him, who else could it be?

"I'm so lucky to have you by my side," Alana said, still shaking slightly from recounting her ordeal.

Just then, Leona called out to them, "Dinner is ready!"

She had always been a fast worker in the kitchen, a complete contrast to Janessa's ways.

The ladies spent the night pleasantly, and the first thing Janessa did the next day was to go to a private detective. He had been referred to her by an acquaintance, and was quite reputable in the field.

Once she finished her business with the man, Janessa went to see Nolan.

In the past, Nolan had gone to a godforsaken place just to chase after Leona. How could he break up with her now, all for the name of social status?

Janessa wouldn't stand it.

She drove straight from the private detective's office all the way to the Gu Group.

She had barely walked into the lobby when the receptionist stopped her.

"Excuse me, Miss. Do you have an appointment?" Janessa was wearing casual attire today, though her clothes were all big brands. Nevertheless, they weren't ostentatious by most fashion standards, so ordinary people couldn't really tell.

And so, it wasn't surprising that the receptionist made such an oversight.

What made it worse was the fact that she chose to act haughty on top of her foolish ignorance.

The receptionist looked at Janessa in her discreet, luxury brand clothes and sneered.

"No," Janessa answered nonchalantly, "but I'm here on urgent business."

The other woman scoffed and rolled her eyes. "If everyone who says they have urgent business is granted access, then Mr. Gu will never get his work done. Go and sit in the waiting area and pray that you can get a chance to catch him later."

Luckily, Janessa remembered having Nolan's business card. He had offered it to her when they had collaborated in the past.

She rifled through her purse and found the card in one of the inner pockets.

Wasting no time, she dialed the number, and the call connected within a matter of seconds.

"Hello?" came Nolan's deep, albeit impatient voice.

"This is Janessa. I have something to discuss with you about Leona."

A long silence followed. Just when Janessa thought that Nolan would turn her away, he spoke again.

"Come up to my office."

Putting the phone back in her bag, Janessa turned around and walked toward the elevator.

The receptionist hurried after her as she strode across the lobby, and offered her a bow.

"I apologize, Miss Qiu. I was just informed of your appointment. Please come upstairs." The woman watched until Janessa disappeared behind the elevator doors. Only then did she heave a sigh of relief.

Janessa walked into Nolan's office and took stock of the surroundings. There were pieces here and there that made the room a little lively, but it wasn't enough.

The place still felt cold and bleak.

'I suppose a cold office is only apt for a cold man,' she mused.

"What did you want to see me about?" Nolan asked, even though he already knew why she had come. He just didn't know how to broach the subject.

"You are getting married," Janessa stated.

It wasn't a question at all, and the words hung heavy in the air.

"I have no choice in the matter. Something has recently gone wrong with my family's business. This is the only way to solve our problems. Don't worry, I'll make sure to compensate Leona properly." Nolan was painfully aware of his mistakes, as well as the truth that there was no getting around them. All he could do for Leona now was to ensure that she was carefree and comfortable for the rest of her life.

Despite everything else in the company, he still had enough money to get Leona settled and make it so that she never needed to work again.

"What about the child? Do you intend for her to take him, or will you hold on to him?"

"I will keep the child and take good care of him."

"Nolan, do you honestly think it's that simple to raise a child? Did you think it was no big deal to go through a pregnancy? Leona had chosen to give birth to your son out of wedlock, and you can't even make an honest woman out of her. This is just too much. I can't begin to tell you how disappointed I am with you."

If Janessa had been furious at Nolan after hearing everything from Leona yesterday, she was definitely livid now that she had heard it straight from the horse's mouth.

"Janessa... How is she doing?" Nolan had known the second his marriage had been announced that Leona was not going to be his bride.

He couldn't help but think that if he had told her about it earlier, she could have been able to brace herself and prepare for the inevitable. But he had been far too unwilling to do even that.