

You More than Anything in the World Chapter 13

Chapter 13, You More than Anything in the World

Arissa was on pins and needles when she did not receive any reply from Ethen. *Did I offend him for being rude earlier? Is that why he's ignoring me now?* In an instant, her mind was awash with all sorts of speculations. After hesitating for a short while, she finally gathered herself to make a call. She felt uneasy as she waited, and the call was eventually picked up before it disconnected. "Ms. York?" Ethen sounded surprised. "Mr. Frank, there's something I'd like to ask you!" Arissa probed cautiously after holding in the jumble of emotions rising in her. "What's it about?"

"What is the full name of Mr. Graham's fiancée?" asked Arissa, holding her breath. "Danna Adams!" Ethen was slightly taken aback by the unexpected question. *Doesn't she know Danna?* "Oh, thank you. All right then. I was just curious." Keeping her composure, she hung up the call. The next instant, she looked up for Danna on her phone. *Danna Adams is the only daughter of Adams Group. Despite being born wealthy, she has expressed her deep interest in the film industry. She's now the hotshot movie star, and her fans call her Dani.* Upon reading that, Arissa's brows settled into a frown. *Is she the Dani that I heard at the airport?* She had her eyes fixed on Danna's photos as she continued to ponder.

Why does she look like a completely different person from what I saw? She looks pretty yet elegant, and her smile is so lovable in the photo. If I didn't meet her in real life just now, I bet I'd be fooled by her appearance too. Staring at the screen flooded with information, Arissa fell into deep thoughts. *If she was really the one who did that to me back then, it's going to take me some effort to probe further into the matter. Besides, I'm sure she must've done something to cover up her doings. Where should I start then? If Danna's truly the mastermind behind the scheme years ago, I think I've just exposed myself. In this case, I'll have to be wary from now on. Otherwise, I'd probably be dead before I even get to seek revenge!*

"Miss, we've arrived!" the taxi driver reminded as he turned his head. His voice immediately drew Arissa out of her thoughts. After taking a quick glimpse of the familiar neighborhood, she hastily paid the fare before getting off. As soon as she arrived home and opened the door, her children rushed over before hugging her thighs. Jesse was even trying to climb onto her. "Mommy, you're back!" Their sweet voices instantly lightened up Arissa's mood. Smiling, she replied, "Yes. I'm home!" Oliver also climbed, causing Arissa to lose her balance and stumble backward. Instinctively, she held them tight before closing the door. "Hey! Mommy's about to fall down. Get down now!" "No way! I want Mommy to carry me!"

Jesse's front teeth were missing, and she could barely utter a clear word. Regardless, she was cute speaking in her soft voice. Arissa patted Jesse's plump cheeks lovingly as she said, "Sweetheart, come here!" Standing still, she carried Jesse before giving a peck on her cheek. "Hehe! Mommy, I want to kiss you too!" Jesse wrapped her arms around Arissa's neck and gleefully placed a couple of

kisses. Within seconds, Arissa's face was all covered with saliva. "Mommy, I want kisses too!" requested Oliver after seeing what Jesse did. While he was trying to climb onto Arissa, his glasses slid down his nose. Arissa could not help laughing at his silly look.

The other two were glad to see Arissa, but they did not do the same. Instead, Zachary and Gavin clung to Arissa's thighs on each side. "Okay. No one will be missed!" Then, she carried Oliver and gently kissed him on the cheek. Oliver pushed his glasses up. After his vision became clear, he dropped a light kiss on Arissa's cheeks. Upon looking at her bubbly children, Arissa's heart melted as she beamed at the blissful scene before her. She squatted down before pulling Zachary and Gavin in her arms to kiss them. Nonetheless, she did not notice that Gavin's cheeks had turned red. "I'm going to the bathroom, and I'll be back to join you in a moment!" She hugged them all before running to the bathroom.

They could not help giggling when they saw her in haste. They were having fun on their own when she came out. The four of them looked exactly the same. Arissa stood at the side as she watched them fondly. *They're all my kids. It'd be great if my eldest son could be here too.* A hint of melancholy fled across her gaze as that idea hit her. *I don't even know if my son is doing well. Why did the woman take him away? If she intended to raise him as her own, is she treating him right?* Soon, Zachary and Gavin spotted the sappy look on her face. Feeling puzzled, the two exchanged glances. *What's wrong with Mommy? Didn't the interview go well?* They approached Arissa before asking in concern, "Mommy, how was the interview?"

Arissa swiftly hid her sadness behind a gentle smile. "I failed the interview!" "Huh?" Zachary was shocked as he frowned. *That shouldn't happen because Mommy's pretty capable.* He turned around and shot Gavin a doubtful look. *What's wrong with your daddy?* Earlier in the morning, Gavin was overjoyed to hear from Zachary that Arissa was going to Graham Group for an interview. He was confident that she would definitely get the offer. Upon hearing the disappointing news, Gavin questioned anxiously, "Mommy, why didn't you get the offer?" "Mommy, didn't you talk to the assistant?"

"Why did you fail the interview then?" Zachary stared at her in bewilderment. After a moment's pause, he asked, "Who was the one that failed you?" *Was Daddy the one who did that?* At the same time, Gavin had his eyes locked on her as he waited for a solid answer that could clear his doubt. Oliver and Jesse went over too. Both of them held Arissa's hands as they comforted, "Mommy, don't be sad. It's their loss they didn't hire you. We'll look for better companies and let them learn their lesson for missing out on a good candidate like you!" Arissa broke into a smile when she heard those words.

She led them to the living room and sat down. "Everything went well without a hitch, and I thought I had a high chance too. Not until I met a woman when I was waiting for Benjamin, and she chased me out!" Little did she expect such a drastic turn of events before she could meet Benjamin. Gavin narrowed his eyes with a scornful expression on his face. "Mommy, who's that woman?" *Could she be Danna Adams?* Gavin had already taken Arissa as his mommy, and the only feeling he harbored toward Danna was nothing but hatred. "She's Benjamin Graham's fiancée!"

Arisa looked at her children as she expressed her grievance. Gavin's lips slightly twitched as the name rang in his ears. *What a shameless woman! She isn't even Daddy's fiancée! Even though she thinks she is, Daddy has never acknowledged her, and he has no plan of marrying her too! If he really intended to do so, he would've done that when she brought me back four years ago. How shameless is she to go around telling people that she's Daddy's fiancée?*

"Mommy, don't get fooled! I've never heard about Benjamin having a fiancée!" Gavin certainly did not want Arissa to get things wrong. Zachary took a look at the former before he retorted, "How dare your... How dare that woman say that?" At that moment, Gavin was rendered speechless by Zachary's blunt reply that was so close to exposing him. Grinning, Arissa was touched by their protective acts.

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Arisa was pleased to see her children defending her when mistreated and showering her with care at a time like this. "Okay! It's okay. I'll just look for another job!" She wore a smile to set their minds at ease. Zachary grabbed her hand. "Mommy, don't worry. We'll take care of you!" Arissa was utterly moved by Zachary's words. She gave him a warm embrace before patting his head. "There's no need for you to do that. I'll take care of you!" *It's the thought that counts. Of course, I won't let them bear the burden of living. It's still too early for them to take on such a heavy responsibility at this young age.* "Mommy, I can make lots of money after selling another program!" Oliver assured confidently. "Mommy! Don't forget about me! I can earn a lot of money by modeling too!" Jesse hugged Arissa tightly. She also wished to help out. "Mommy, I have some money too. I can take care of you!" Gavin raised his thought without hesitation, hoping that Arissa could worry less about getting a job. Moved by their acts, Arissa held them closer in her arms. "Thank you for your kind thoughts. I've got this covered. So, you can keep the money for yourselves. Oliver, you should stop writing those programs." It took a lot of effort to do programming; she definitely did not want her child overworking himself. Oliver ducked his head timidly after getting warned. Letting out a chuckle, he replied, "All right. Mommy!"

"Jesse, you're not allowed to accept modeling jobs without my permission!" Arissa caressed Jesse's head. After all, it was not easy money. The children probably had to work harder than the adults, as they had to undergo training constantly. "Mommy, anything you say!" Jesse's lips curled into a bright smile. Her missing front teeth made her look rather endearing. Gavin cast his gaze upon Jesse, who looked fairer and more delicate than the rest. *He has the same dimples as Mommy when he smiles. The more I look at him, the more he looks like a girl to me. How good it would be if he were a girl and were my sister.*

Jesse caught sight of his attentive gaze and returned with a smile. Gavin cracked a smile as he patted her head. "Jesse's so cute!" Arissa looked at Jesse, and she thought the same too. Jesse had been raised as a little boy ever since she was born. Her hair was short, and she wore the same outfit as her brothers. Hence,

everyone would easily see her as a boy. Arissa took Jesse in her arms and kissed her cheek. Jesse was so happy that she could not stop giggling. "My baby is so adorable! Let me kiss you!" Arissa was laughing as she played with Jesse. "Hehe! Mommy, that tickles!" Jesse ducked her head in, and she was beaming with joy. The other three chuckled at the scene too. Meanwhile, Zachary went to sit at a corner and texted Jasper: *Mommy didn't get hired by Benjamin.*

Jasper could not help but scowl at the text message. *Benjamin didn't hire Mommy?* His anger spiked after knowing that Arissa was kicked out by Danna. "That's horrible!" Losing his rag, he threw the book in his hands. Edwin was dumbfounded by the former's action. *Did someone mess with him?* Edwin went over to calm him down. "Gavin, what's wrong?" Jasper glanced at Edwin and pondered for a brief moment. *Only Benjamin and I are staying in this place, and Danna's not here. I'm eager to ask Edwin about Benjamin's relationship with Danna.* Just then, the housekeeper walked to them. "Ms. Adams is here!" Danna was following behind the housekeeper. Apparently, she was there to look for Gavin.

Her sudden appearance did not help matters because Jasper was more enraged after seeing her. He then shot her a death stare. Danna furrowed when she met his menacing gaze, and she started cursing inwardly. *What a brat! Now that he has grown older, he's getting more and more disrespectful. He's even glaring at me like this! I must teach him a lesson today!* "Ms. Adams!" Edwin greeted her politely. "Edwin, go tend to your chores. I'll spend some time with Gavin!" Danna held her anger in before gesturing for Edwin to leave. Wearing a smile, she went closer to Jasper. Edwin peeked at Jasper and saw his furious expression. Despite feeling worried, he still moved aside. Danna grinned from ear to ear when she saw Jasper.

"Gavin, are you still mad at me? I'm sorry. Let me take you out for some nice food!" Edwin gave her a quick sidelong glance without saying a word. *She's Gavin's Mom, and she has been bringing him out all this while. There's nothing wrong with her taking him out this time too.* "I don't need you to do that! You're such a shameless person! I feel disgusted whenever I see you. Get lost!" exclaimed Jasper, seemingly not afraid to offend her feelings. Jasper could not care less about anyone when he was triggered. Edwin had never seen Gavin speak to Danna in such a harsh manner before.

Thus, he was stunned by the scene. There was a hint of viciousness that fled across Danna's gaze when she placed her hand on Jasper. She put on a helpless expression as though she was an unwanted mother by her son. At the same time, she was secretly exerting force and attempting to pinch Jasper's arm. However, she did not know the child in front of her was not Gavin. In fact, Jasper was not someone who would tolerate such an act. Before Danna could make her move, Jasper responded with a kick. Consumed by pain and wrath, her eyes turned red in seconds. "Gavin Graham!" Danna yelled furiously. She was caught completely off-guard by his attack. *I didn't know this brat could be so strong!*

Jasper met her sinister glare. He was startled for a bit before he burst into tears. Edwin rushed over and held Jasper in his arms. He dared not get angry at Danna but comforted Jasper instead, "Don't be afraid!" "Mr. Whitley, why did she do that? Why? What have I done wrong? She's not my mom... I don't want a mother like her. She even tried to pinch me..." Jasper wept in sorrow. Edwin's face

turned solemn after listening to Jasper. He averted his gaze to Danna. "Ms. Adams!" Danna widened her eyes in disbelief. *I didn't expect Gavin to complain about me!* She caught Edwin's skeptical gaze and went into a state of panic. "I-I didn't do anything. Edwin, don't listen to him! Gavin, how could you tell lies?"

What have I taught you? Why are you lying? I'm your mom!" "You're not my mom! Not only did you try to pinch me, but you've been scolding me too! Besides, you even told me to lie! You're a bad woman, so you're not my mom!" Jasper wailed while burying his head in Edwin's arms. *I've never expected her to try doing that to me in front of everyone. She could've done worse when no one was around.* Jasper shuddered when the scenes of Danna attempting to harm him flashed across his mind. *I feel sorry for Gavin. Danna must've done the same to him before, and he surely didn't know how to retaliate.*

Jasper made a scene on purpose only because he felt bad for his "younger brother." "Gavin Graham!" Danna's face contorted in rage. She wished she could teach him a lesson on the spot. *If I knew earlier that Benjamin wasn't going to marry me even after I brought this brat back, I would've abandoned him back then rather than having him raise his voice at me and accuse me now!*

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Jasper was trembling in fear, and his response drew Edwin's sympathy. The latter said in a low voice, "Ms. Adams, you've frightened Gavin!" "Edwin, look at him! It has only been a few days, but he's already acting out of line now. He even learned how to tell lies! I must teach him a lesson today!" Danna could no longer keep her composure. She reached out her hands, wanting to pull Jasper over. Jasper grabbed Edwin's thigh tightly and glared at her. "Do you dare say that you didn't try to hurt me?" A look of guiltiness flashed across Danna's eyes, but she soon managed to keep her cool before chiding with a straight face, "You're lying! Your daddy will be so disappointed to find out that you're telling lies!"

Jasper was about to explode with rage. He rolled his sleeve up before stretching out his hand. "Mr. Whitley, she really had the intention!" When Jasper had tried to free himself from Danna's grip before, a mark was left. Convinced by Jasper's allegation, Edwin's face fell as he stared at Danna. "Ms. Adams, I'll have to call Mr. Graham!" Edwin was burning in fury because he could not believe Danna would try to do that to a child even when he was around. *The Grahams will never allow anyone to lay their hands on their family members. Hence, she's in no position to punish Gavin even though she's his mother.* Although Benjamin was not someone expressive in his feelings, he cared a lot about Gavin.

"Edwin, don't! I didn't try to hurt him! Gavin, how could you play such a dirty trick! Once your daddy's back, I'll make sure that he educates you well!" Danna was guilty of her doings. *How would I expect him to fight back? It's better if I push all the blames on him!* "What a hypocrite! You were trying to hurt me just a while ago! Mr. Whitley, why is she such a vicious woman? I want Daddy! I want Daddy!" Jasper started crying aggrievedly again. Besides, he was also taking the chance to see if Benjamin truly cared about him. *If Daddy sides with this bad woman, we'll*

leave him behind! Edwin's heart ached to see Jasper cry, so he carried the poor boy in his arms. "Gavin, don't cry."

"I'm here, and I'll call your daddy back home now!" Danna was terrified as soon as she heard that Benjamin would be coming home. *If Benjamin knows about what I tried to do to Gavin, it will definitely affect our relationship. He has already warned me after I got rid of this brat's cotton candy yesterday.* "Edwin, Benjamin's still at work. I don't think we should bother him because of such a trivial matter." Angered by Danna's action, Edwin brushed her off in a stern manner, "Ms. Adams, I think it's better if you can talk to Mr. Graham personally regarding this matter!"

We've been doing our best to keep Gavin safe from injuries. How could she try to do that? If she dares to do so even when I am present, she'd probably go overboard when we're not around! Come to think about it, Gavin has been behaving strangely whenever she's here! I bet this wasn't her first attempt! Edwin's heart sank after fathoming the situation. The butler called Benjamin right away. The latter instantly rushed back home upon hearing the news. At that point, Danna was fully aware that it would make the allegation stick if she were to leave. She sat on the couch in the living room nervously.

If Benjamin still cares about me, he'll probably let this slide. I'm Gavin's mom, after all. Meanwhile, Jasper was still crying. Danna stealthily shot him a death glare. He has been keeping everything to himself previously. Why is he going against me today? In fact, he actually started doing this yesterday. That's such a drastic change! Danna narrowed her eyes as she thought of bumping into Arissa at Graham Group. *Did Arissa happen to meet this bastard child? Astounded by that possibility, Danna was torn between anger and trepidation. Has Benjamin already met Arissa before this?*

It's time for me to figure out a way to get rid of her forever! The evil look in Danna's gaze grew intense as she plotted against Arissa deep inside. In the meantime, Arissa was still unaware of everything happening behind her back. She spent some time playing with her children before bringing them out for a meal, and they were all over the moon. "Mommy, I want to have a lot of nice food!" Jesse, who was a foodie, could not hide her excitement as she tugged at Arissa's hand. "Mommy, what are we eating?" Oliver was delighted too. He had been waiting to try all the nice foods he saw on the internet before they returned to the country. "You can eat whatever you want!" Arissa gave them a playful wink as she fixed their hats.

Only then did she notice that Jasper's hat was missing. "Jasper, where's your hat?" "Mommy, I gave it to another kid at the airport!" Gavin played his role well as Jasper without exposing himself. He was pretty good at imitating Jasper's expression, so much so that Arissa did not notice anything out of the ordinary. Zachary cast him a glance as he ridiculed inwardly. *He's pretty good at it!* If he did not notice it earlier, he would have been fooled by Gavin too. "I'll give you my hat!" Zachary removed his hat and placed it on Gavin's head. "I don't need that." Gavin turned Zachary down, thinking it was fine not to have one. "Listen to me and take it!" Zachary wore a smile as he put it on Gavin, acting like he was the older brother.

Gavin froze for a moment. *Is he taking me as his younger brother? If Danna took me away instead of them, it's most likely that I'm the eldest kid among them.* "Let's

go! I'll buy you a new one!" said Arissa, keeping the smile on her face. Gavin was on cloud nine when he heard that. Grinning from ear to ear, he chirped, "Thank you, Mommy!" Arissa then brought her children out for a scrumptious meal. On the other hand, Benjamin rushed his way home within ten minutes. Before he made it to the door, he could hear Jasper's pitiful wail coming from the inside.

He had already heard him crying when they were on the phone just a moment ago. Benjamin's face darkened as he furrowed his brows, and his apathetic demeanor shut him off from the others. "Mr. Graham!" Edwin went toward Benjamin with Jasper in his arms, looking anxious. Jasper had been crying for a long time that his eyes were red-rimmed and swollen. His nose had turned red too. It hurt Edwin to see how aggrieved he looked. "Benjamin..." Danna went closer to Benjamin, but she stopped in her tracks when she caught sight of his sharp gaze. "Daddy! Daddy..." Jasper was so worn after crying his heart out for a long time.

He went toward Benjamin to ask for a hug when he finally saw the latter. Benjamin scooped Jasper in his arms and gently patted him on the back. "Don't cry." Even though he sounded slightly awkward, he spoke in an exceptionally gentle tone. Jasper leaned on Benjamin's shoulder, and his eyes lit up within moments. It seemed like Benjamin did care about him. Then, he complained to Benjamin with a pitiful look, "Daddy, she tried to hurt me!" Danna did not succeed in her action, but the idea of trying to do that was enough to infuriate Benjamin.

Benjamin's gaze grew darker with a sense of murderous intent as he shot Danna a stern look. It was Danna's first time to see him staring at her that way. She immediately felt a chill down her spine. Quivering, she attempted to explain herself, "Benjamin, listen to me. This..." "Get lost!" exclaimed Benjamin in a cold manner.