

# **Hard To Find Love**

**from KirahG**

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# Introduction

Janell Thomas is 21 years old and is lonely waiting for love. She doesn't understand why she doesn't have a boyfriend, and she gets discouraged. The only relative that she is living with her uncle Benny. He tries to give her some advice, but Janell thinks she still won't find anyone. When Janell finds out that a new guy name Howard is working for her uncle, she asks her uncle about him, but her uncle advises her to not deal with him, that he wouldn't be right for her. Janell blocks her uncle's words out and tries to date Howard, but he seems to be stubborn and doesn't seem to want anyone. When Janell finds out what's really wrong with Howard, she helps him out with a big surprise. Will Howard look at Janell differently and give her a chance, or will he still shy away from her leaving her still hoping to find a mate?

# Chapter 1

This story is about a 21-year-old girl named Janell who stays with her uncle and does computer work for a new company. So, let's get to her story. "What's wrong niece, you've been looking down lately like something is bothering you." Janell's Uncle Benny said. "Nothing Uncle Benny, I don't want to trouble you." "No, now speak up, tell me what's got you down lately." He said pouring him some coffee and grabbing the Cheerio cereal from the top of the fridge. "Uncle Benny I'm tired of being lonely. I mean I've been single for 3 years and no one ever notices me. I try to be nice, but I don't know what I'm doing wrong. Am I ugly?" "Now hush up Janell. You're my niece and you are not ugly at all. My sister made a beautiful daughter." "Then what's wrong." "Nothing about these young knuckleheads is just not good enough for you. You're perfect in every way. You deserve a great man that will cherish you, but all these men around here just want to use a woman and they are not strong enough to be with you. You just need a strong man, and you will get one." "But when? No one wanted me in college." "So? did you know I was single for 2 years before I met your aunt, and I did her wrong because I wanted to hang out in the streets. When she had enough of my foolishness, she divorced me and now she is happy and doing well. I was the one messed up, but I had something good. Nobody but your aunt wanted me. She had put up with me for 10 long years. Now I have to date gold diggers because I messed up something good, I had. All these women now date me for the money, and it doesn't feel good that's why I'm lonely again now myself." "But Uncle Benny. I'm too young for it to be over for me." "Janell your prince will come, and you still be the sweet person you are right now. And maybe your prince won't be the nicest guy, but he will love and protect you. You might even have to work on him a little first. He is coming but it might not be easy." Janell still felt a little sad. She always saw couples in love everywhere she went, and she was the only lonely woman without a prince. "Where is my prince?" She whispered. While her uncle was going to work Janell had a little work, she had to do herself. She logged in on her desktop computer and started on her work website to get started. She worked from home for a company called Kitchen Lovers which did cookware advertisements. All the new and old cooking utensils she had to set up online for the shoppers and put a price range and coupons. She got paid pretty well. \$400 every week and she helped her uncle out with his bills and groceries. Her uncle Benny sold lawn equipment and wood, and he made a lot of money. He had his own company called Benny's Basics and Janell was so proud of her uncle. That night, Uncle Benny rushed in to talk to Janell. "Now Janell I got a lady friend outside. If you don't mind, could you maybe stay in your room tonight and act like you're not here." "For what?" "Because I'm trying to handle my business, if you know what I mean." "Yuck Uncle Benny. Please, I don't want to hear that." "Well, you won't if you close your door." He said laughing. "Now stay in your room until I tell you to come out. So, if you have to go to the bathroom go now." "Wait? ... Uncle Benny, I'm not a child." "I know that just do what I say. Here is \$100 to stay in your room." He said handing her the money. "Fine, but I'm not doing this anymore. This is the 5th woman you brought here this week." "Look I'm not paying you to be in my business, don't hurry and go to the bathroom if you have to and then go to the room." "Fine!" Janell said, and she hurried to use the bathroom and

then went into her room. That night Janell heard all kinds of inappropriate noises. She was so irritated. Uncle Benny is having a ball. He is getting his groove on and here I am? ... no man and no love.? She said, rolling her eyes in bed. She picked up her cellphone and looked at it until she fell asleep.

## Chapter 2

The next morning, Janell woke up to smelling sausage and waffles and syrup. "Good morning niece. It's a beautiful day." Her Uncle said joyfully. Janell knew her uncle always got like that after a one-night stand with his lady friends. "Good morning, Uncle Benny." She said sitting down. "Here I made us some breakfast, and today I want you to come to work with me. I need your help putting up some for-sale signs." "Alright." She said, rubbing her eyes. The two quickly ate breakfast and Janell got dressed wearing her tacky blue jeans, her blue care bear shirt, her blue flips flops and her hair was in a curly ponytail. When they got to her uncle's business, he gave her some markers and some boards to make the for-sale signs and then told her where to put them. "Now Janell, while you do that, I'm going to be working with my new employee that I hired. I need a helping hand." He told her. "Okay Uncle Benny." She said and then he walked off. While she was over by the lawn mowers, Janell noticed a guy talking to her uncle, and he was dressed in a nice fitted turquoise and white suit, and he wore glasses, he had a short beard, low haircut, and he was 6'1. "Oh, wow he is cute!?" She said excitedly. Hearts formed in Janell's eyes, and immediately she felt like she was bitten by the love bug. Janell could not help but stare and smile, but when the gentleman looked over to her noticing her stares, she quickly darted her eyes back to what she was doing. "Well son you can start tomorrow morning, you got the job." Uncle Benny said, shaking his hand. "And Mr. Maple's how much does the job pay?" "I will pay you \$10.50 every hour, and you get paid every Friday." "Okay, that's fine with me. Thanks again for this opportunity." "No problem, Howard I will be glad to work with you." Uncle Benny said. After Janell and Uncle Benny left the workplace, Uncle Benny ran a few more errands with Janell, and they went back home. During dinner, Janell could not stop thinking about the new guy she saw. "What's wrong Janell you're not touching your dinner." "Nothing Uncle Benny I was just thinking?" "About what?" The fried chicken disagrees with you. You used to love my fried chicken and macaroni." "No Uncle Benny, it's good, but I wanted to ask you a question. Who was that guy you were talking to earlier?" "When?" "At work, the one in the suit." "Why?" "Uncle Benny who was he?" "He is the new guy I hired. His name is Howard Banks." "How old is he?" "He is 26 why?" "I was just wondering." "He seems ready to work, and I think he will do a good job. He is an honest young man." "Well, that's good. He seems handsome too." Uncle Benny took a sip of his beer and then looked strangely at Janell. "Janell, I know you're not thinking about jumping to flirt with my new worker?" "No? ... what? I was just asking about him because he seems nice. You never know, maybe something could happen." "No? ... I won't let my niece date my worker. Forget it. Plus, I don't think you should mess around with him. Y'all wouldn't be right together. The boy seems too perfect, and I haven't worked with him yet." "Well Uncle Benny if he does turn out to be good. Would you let me know?" "Yeah, now eat your dinner it's getting cold." He told her. That night Janell had a dream about Howard. She dreamed she was just about to kiss him when her uncle pushed her out of the way. She woke up and was thinking what could the dream mean, then she brushed it off and went back to sleep. She then dreamed that her and Howard were laughing and talking, and her uncle was standing from a distance frowning with a bow and arrow pointed at them. She woke up in a panic, and she got out of

bed and went to the kitchen to get a glass of apple juice. Her throat was dry. She tried to think about the dream meant, but she was too tired to dwell on it. She then went back to her bed and slept the rest of the night peacefully.

## Chapter 3

The next day, Janell was counting some blocks of wood for her uncle and noticed Howard coming walking in a tank top, blue long work pants, timberland boots, work gloves, shades, and a hat. "Wow he looks even better in his work clothes." Janell said to herself. "Alright Janell you go in the building and cool off, take a rest and me and Howard will begin moving this wood on a truck for this man." Her uncle said. "Okay Uncle Benny. Hey, my name is Janell. I'm his niece." She said, holding her hand out to Howard. Howard shook her hand but wasn't too amused by her. "Okay Janell let us get to work and you take a break in the shed there. Come on Howard, let's start loading this wood." "Yes, sir I'm ready." He spoke. Janell noticed she was wearing her yellow care bear outfit. She felt so embarrassed he probably thought she was a teenager looking like that. She went into the building and got water from the cooler. It was 95 degrees outside, and she was really sweating. "I hope my armpits are not sweating out." She said she was worried. After an hour of being bored in the shed, her uncle called her back out. "Okay Janell, I need you to take this for sale sign down away from this weed hacker because I just sold it, and the man is on his way now to pick it up. Then I want you to go and get me and Howard some water." "Okay." She said, looking at Howard and smiling, but he turned his head nervously. She did as her uncle said, and then she went and brought both of them water back. "So, Howard, how are things going so far working for my uncle?" She said cheerfully. "It's fine." Howard answered quickly. "Alright, enough chatting. Janell goes help that customer over there while me and Howard rest." "Okay." Janell said. When it was time to leave, Janell waved at Howard, and he waved back but didn't say much of anything. While riding back home with her uncle, Janell's Uncle started asking questions. "I noticed you were eyeballing Howard pretty hard. You like him?" "Yes, I think he is cool." "Well, I hate to burst your bubble but niece you don't even know if he has a girlfriend, I wouldn't get my hopes up. And another thing, Janell you can't be distracting him at work. Now you can speak to him, but if it becomes a problem where you distract him, then I will have to leave you home." Janell was confused but she nodded her head. A week had passed, and Uncle Benny and Howard were getting along. They worked great together like they'd been best friends for years. Janell did start to notice though that every time she came around her uncle would try to isolate her from Howard, but she wasn't going to let him do it this time. She was determined. While her uncle was helping a customer pick out what hose pipe, he needed for his garden, she sneaked over while Howard was on his lunch break and started a conversation with him. "Hey Howard. I know you are glad to finally rest. You and my uncle worked hard today." "Yeah, I'm tired." He said dully. "Well, soon you will get some rest. What are you doing after work?" "Sleeping." He spoke. "Well, you need the rest. So, what are you having for lunch?" "A tuna sandwich, pringles, and a strawberry soda." "Sounds good." "Would you like some of mine? I'm having peanuts, an apple, some chicken tenders, and cranberry juice." "No, thanks, I hate peanuts." "Are you allergic?" "No, I only eat walnuts." "A nut is a nut." "I know, but I don't like certain nuts." He said, rolling his eyes. All of a sudden, Uncle Benny came up and spoke. "Alright you two lunch break is over. Janell, what are you doing over Howard?" "I was just chatting with him and???" "Go count that wood over there. And Howard, you go unpack the

lawn sprinklers. "Okay." Howard said, getting up. Janell was getting really aggravated by her uncle. On, Uncle Benny told Janell to wait in the car for him and Janell noticed her uncle and Howard were talking for a long time. "Howard, I think my niece has a crush on you, so if she aggravates you let me know, and I will put her in her place." "No, she's not bothering me, but I'm not looking for any relationship right now. I have a lot going on. Nothing bad or serious to affect work, but I just can't focus on that right now. She's nice, but I'm not looking for anyone." "Well good son, stay focused. I will get on to my niece because she is getting obsessed. By the way son, do you have a girlfriend?" "No, I don't. I have been single for a month now." "Okay just wondering. We'll have a good day." "Yeah, you are too." Howard said. When Uncle Benny got in the car, he tried to lecture Janell. "Now look at Janell, Howard doesn't want to date. He told me he noticed you looking at him and he just was not ready. He said he got a lot going on, and he wanted me to ask you to stop. I told you're making the man uncomfortable. He doesn't have a girlfriend, but he just focuses on work." "Uncle Benny, I was just being nice. I wasn't trying to make him run from me. What else did you say to him?" "I didn't say anything now enough about that boy. Tonight, I'm inviting Avery over again, so you will have to be in your room." "What? Uncle Benny, I'm tired of that!" "Well get you a date, and then you won't have to be in my crib to be tired of that. Now I'm paying you." "Keep your stupid money!" Janell said, angry. When they got to her uncle's house, she went into her room and slammed the door. She was so mad about everything. She knew her uncle had to tell Howard something, but she still liked Howard and was going to show him kindness anyway when her uncle wasn't around. That night while her uncle and his lady friend made a lot of nasty noise. Janell was thinking about how to get Howard's attention. She would wear her purple crop top short spring-like dress that went 5 inches above her knees, and she would wear her natural curly Jerry curl like hair down. When she finished getting dressed, she went down to fix her some cereal for breakfast. Her uncle was still in bed. She poured her some apple jacks and some apple juice and quickly ate her breakfast. She then washed her dishes out and waited for her uncle to get up. She put him on a pot of coffee and got his cereal out also. When he got up, he walked in the kitchen yawning and rubbed his eyes. "Good morning?". Janell? What are you wearing?" "A dress." "Oh no? ... that will distract Howard. I'm sorry niece, but you will have to stay here today. Why don't you work on your online job." "Uncle Benny, I'm going okay. You can't stop me. Now I won't bother Howard, but if Howard does talk to me, it's nothing you can say about it. I'm a grown woman, and he is a grown man." Uncle Benny rolled his eyes and frowned. "Whatever, just stay out of the way and do what I ask of you." He told her. That morning it wasn't busy at all, no customers had come in and Howard was running late. When Howard did come in, Uncle Benny was yelling. "Boy, where have you been?" "I had to take care of something important. It's my dad." "Well next time can you call?" "Were we busy?" "Nope but you're still supposed to be here. Now go clean the pollen off the lawn mowers." "Yes sir." Howard said. Janell thought this was the perfect time to come out and do something, so he could see her dress. "Janell go help Howard clean those lawn mowers off." "Okay." She said without resistance. "Good morning, Howard." She said cheerfully. "Oh, hey Janell. Nice dress." Janell was flattered that he noticed quickly. "Thank you." That afternoon, while they were having lunch, Uncle Benny had gone to go buy him, Janell, and Howard a sub at the subway for lunch and Janell was glad he had left. He kept aggravating her and Howard the whole time and barely doing work himself. "So, Howard, what's your favorite sub?" She asked him.



?I like chicken bacon ranch, you?? ?That?s my favorite! So, you also told my uncle to get you one?? I did. Your uncle is a cool dude, but he is trying to give someone heatstroke out here.? He said laughing. ?Yes, I know. So, Howard, where did you work before here?? ?I worked at a bookstore for a little while. I was the assistant manager, but then I got fired for not coming into work one day.? ?Oh no, what happened?? ?Something personal with a family member. Anyway, I worked there for only 7 months and the pay was not good at all because it was a small bookstore. \$8.00 an hour.? ?Well, there's nothing wrong with starting over again.? ?Yeah, so where do you work besides here?? He asked her. ?I work for an online kitchen advertisement website. I made the website.? ?Oh, that?s cool.? ?Yeah, it is I get paid well, but I help my uncle out here too.? ?Wow, so he told me y'all live together.? ?Yes, we do. My parents live in another state, my uncle moved here, and I wanted to move here, so he said I could live with him.? ?Okay well that?s cool.? He spoke. ?You are handsome, so you must have a girlfriend or wife.? Janell said, then she threw her hand over her mouth. She couldn?t believe she said that. ?No, I actually don?t. I have been having my mind on so many things I haven't thought about trying another relationship. And right now, is not the best time.? ?What about you?? ?I've been single for a long time, Howard. Maybe one day I will meet the right guy.? ?You will.? He said sincerely.

## Chapter 4

During the car ride back home, Uncle Benny kept silent. Then he spoke when they got in the yard. ?Janell you and Howard were talking and lollygagging all day. Normally, he moves faster than that. Now I'm going to have to keep you two apart temporarily. I know you like him, and I don't know if it was that purple dress, you wore, but his mind was not focused. For a whole week, you will not be working with us.? ?What? But Uncle Benny, that's not fair! ?Oh well, now when we get in this house?? ?You know what. I don't even want to work for you anymore. Just forget it. You don't pay me anyway, and I might have to depend on you for a ride, but not for long.? Janell said, stumping away. Janell was sick and tired of her uncle treating her like a 15-year-old like she couldn't talk or do her own thing. Janell decided to go on her computer and look up used cars for sale. One car she saw was a gray color SUV that was only \$7,000 for the whole car. She thought and calculated knowing she made \$400 each week for her online job. She would have to save her \$800 every 2 weeks and pay like that. The down payment was not that much money, and she was glad she knew in no time she could pay this vehicle off. For a whole week, she didn't work with her uncle, and she asked a neighbor for a ride to go pick up her new vehicle. She decided she wasn't even going to tell her uncle about her new vehicle; he was just going to be surprised. When she picked up the vehicle, she paid the neighbor for taking her, and then she drove downtown to the KJ's supermarket and bought lemon cupcakes and decided to drive down to her uncle's business. When she got there, she saw Howard putting out rakes in the front. She didn't see her uncle around, so she knew this was her opportunity. She ran up towards Howard and greeted him with the cupcakes. ?Hey Howard. How are you today?? ?Oh, hey Janell. I thought your uncle told me you would not be working with him for a while.? ?Yeah, I'm not, but I want to stop by quickly to say hi. Where is my uncle?? ?He went with some man to get more wood. He said he would be back in an hour when he just left.? Janell was glad to hear this news. ?What's those cupcakes for?? Howard asked, looking like he was getting hungry. ?Oh, I bought them for you just to be friendly.? Howard looked shocked. ?Me?? ?Yeah, I don't know if you like sweets so?? ?No, I love sweets.? He said gladly. ?Thanks.? He said, taking them from her hands. ?So, Howard, in your spare time, what do you like to do?? ?Not really anything, but I love to play some basketball with my friends.? ?That's cool, I used to be on the girls' basketball team in high school. Maybe one day you could show me your moves on the court. How about this Sunday?? She said cheerfully. Howard's expression turned from nice to cold. ?No, I can't!? ?Why not?? ?I just can't be okay! I have a lot to juggle at home.? ?Howard I? ?Look, you're a nice girl and everything, but if you're trying to date me it's not going to work. I have a lot on my plate. Now if you will excuse me, I have to go back to work. Thanks for the cupcakes. I appreciate it.? He said and walked away. Janell's feelings were hurt, but she didn't show it. To her, it was like Howard feared relationships. She wanted to find out more and why he shied away from people. Just before she got ready to leave, she saw a young woman approach Howard; she was hoping that was not his new girlfriend. She hid behind the shed to eavesdrop on the conversation. ?Howard, your dad is not getting any better. I took him to the doctor, but it's nothing they can do about his depression and his paralysis. I'm only a temporary nurse. I have another job and

3 kids, so I can't watch your dad for you all the time. I love your cousin, but we will have to find way to help him. I'm having issues of my own. ?But Gloria, I really need your help. It's hard taking care of him, working, and paying all the bills. I'm stressed and drained. ?I know, your dad doesn't like me anyway, he doesn't want me doing anything for him. He needs someone that he will feel more comfortable with. ?This is terrible, so who will I get to help him?? ?I don't know, maybe it's time to put him in a nursing home or another facility. ?NO! He will not go there! I'm not going to let those people neglect and mistreat him. ?Well, I don't know what to tell you. He is barely eating and sitting up. He won't even talk. ?Howard was frustrated and Janell felt sorry for him. If only she could help in some way. Maybe she could even find out where Howard lived, so she could visit his dad while he was working and help him. She walked away and went back to her car, and she got on her phone. She looked up Howard's name on Facebook and saw his information. He was single, finished college, worked at her uncle's business, she saw his age, and she saw he lived in the next town, Wrightsboro Grove, and the address was up there. She decided while Howard would be working, she would take care of his dad until his dad got better.

## Chapter 5

That night, while Janell was eating some take out from the barbecue place, her uncle approached her on the sofa to talk to her. "Niece, I want you to come back and work at the business." "I can't Uncle Benny. I have got a new job now besides working on the computer and I won't be able to come down there like I did." "What? Why didn't you tell me you got a new work, and another thing why you didn't tell me you were getting a car?" "Because I'm an adult, I don't have to tell you everything. Besides, I thought Howard was enough at work." "He is doing good, but the boy is letting his home life get in the way of his work. He is not moving fast like he did before, and he is clamming up and not speaking to me much. When I asked him what was wrong, he would not say. Anyway, what new job do you have?" "It's a surprise. I will tell you soon." She spoke. "Oh, okay well I'm happy for you. And maybe that special guy you want is on that job." "Yeah, I have a feeling he is." Janell said chuckling. The next morning, Janell got up and dressed in her orange care bear shirt, khaki shorts, and she let her curly hair hang down. Her uncle had already left for work, and she was glad about that. She got in her car and typed in on the GPS how to get to Howard's house, and she drove all the way to the next town to get there. Once she got there, she noticed a cream - - color car outside, and she got out and knocked on the door. The woman that she saw Howard talking to last time answered the door holding a bowl of rice and gravy. "Yeah, who are you?" "I'm Janell. I'm here to help take care of Howard's dad. I will be helping him for now on." "Oh, okay well come on in. My cousin hasn't mentioned you, but I'm glad you came because I have to pick my kids up from school soon and my husband and I have planned this afternoon." "Okay." "So, I'm going to leave you two alone and if you need anything call me or my cousin. Some numbers are on the fridge. I made his dad some rice and gravy, but he won't eat it. I'm not a good cook, so maybe that's why, but perhaps you can get him to eat. He already had his medicine, and he can talk, but he chose not to." "Okay thank you for letting me know." Janell said. "Well, I got to go, I hope everything works out, and please take good care of him." "Yes, I sure will, things will be fine." Janell said. When Janell got in the kitchen, she saw Howard's dad. "Hi, I'm Janell and I will be your new nurse." The old man looked at her sadly but didn't speak. "I know you must be hungry, what would you like to eat?" Janell said politely, but the old man just stared in space. "Well how about I make you a bologna and grilled cheese sandwich? I used to love those as a kid." She told him. She had already brought a bag of things with her, she brought food, and some magazines and a puzzle for him to do. "She took out the bologna and cheese and went to the stove and started to grill it. She made him and her one, and then she poured him some flavored sparkling water and sat the plate down. At first, he just stared at the sandwich, and then he slowly moved his hand and picked it up to eat. She then ate her own sandwich then pulled out a few magazines and began reading to him. After reading, she thought of something to get him a little more excited. She put on New Edition Mr. Telephone man and started singing and dancing, and she noticed Howard's dad started smiling, and he clapped his hands as she danced around. After that, she was trying to get him to sing Heard It Through the Grapevine, and she heard him singing a little. Janell and he were having a good time. Within 2 hours, Howard's dad fell asleep in his wheelchair. Janell

already knew what time Howard was getting off, so she could leave just in time. She put a blanket on dad, and she gathered her things to go. For a whole week, she was taking care of Howard's dad, and he was doing much better. He was still weak in his body, but he was starting to smile and talk a little. The next week Janell started helping him to exercise his limbs. He was paralyzed on one side of his body and Janell was trying to help that side to function again. Janell was glad her uncle never suspected a thing, and she wasn't going to tell him anything until it was over. It was Thursday and Janell did want to see Howard, so she asked her uncle, could she stay on the job for an hour and then leave and he agreed? She put on a red and white polka dot dress that came to her knees and was a spaghetti strap, her white wedges, and her hair was in a ponytail. ?Niece why are you dressing up. You have work to do when you get there.? ?I know Uncle Benny, but I still like to look nice sometimes.? ?Are you still chasing that boy?? He said, shaking his head. ?So?? ?So, you haven't found anyone at your new job?? ?Nope and why are you worried?? ?Niece Howard does not want you or anyone else. I even offered to hook him up with??.? ?Wait? What? You knew I had a crush on him, and you were going to go behind my back and hook him up with someone?? ?No Janell it wasn't like that, I just figured maybe he likes older women and??.? Janell ran out the door and jumped in her car, speeding down the road. How could her uncle do that? She decided to go to her uncle's business and just wait until Howard got there. When she saw him pull up, she jumped out of the car to speak to him. ?Hey Janell, I haven't seen you in a while.? ?Yeah, I've been kind of busy lately. How are you doing?? ?Good, things are starting to look better.? He said, smiling. ?That's good.? ?So, Janell how about we hurry and get started on this work because I might ask your uncle to let me have the day off tomorrow.? ?Yeah, you need a break, he has you working hard in this sun.? ?Yeah, I know. I will be glad when summer is over.? He said, smiling. Janell loved his smile. Janell and Howard quickly worked and got most of the stuff done before her uncle got there. Then she said bye to Howard and went straight to his dad's house. There once again Howard's cousin was there, and she left, and Janell took care of his dad. Janell must have overstayed her time because while she was reading a magazine to Howard's dad, and they were laughing, Howard had pulled up in the yard. When Howard got to the door, he heard laughing. ?Huh? I thought Gloria already left.? He opened the door and went in and walked to the kitchen to see Janell and his dad at the table laughing. ?What in the heck are you doing here?? Howard hollered. ?Oh no, Howard, I wasn't expecting you to come so early.? ?What? This is my house, why are you here? I didn't tell you where I stayed! Are you some kind of stalker?? ?Howard, I overheard you and your cousin talking at work about your dad and I came to help him. I felt sorry for you and knew you were stressed.? ?So, you mean to tell me you did all of this just to get a date with me. You're really twisted.? He said, puzzled. ?Get your things and get away from my dad you wacko.? ?But Howard??.? Howard's dad looked sad, and he spoke up. ?No son, she's helping me.? ?Dad, she's aggravating you.? Howard said angrily. ?Get out before I throw you out! He yelled. ?Son, stop, this young lady is nice. I'm feeling stronger and happier now since she came.? ?Howard, your dad does not have a problem with me, so why do you?? ?Janell I'm going to count to 3 and if you're not gone, I'm calling the cops. I should expect this out of a woman who wears care bear shirts.? ?Excuse me? You know why I see why you're alone.? Janell said, gathering her things. ?And Janell, I will be sure to mention this to your uncle, so you won't be able to work with him anymore.? Howard said, upset. Janell was on the edge of crying after all she did to try to get this man's attention, he was

still ungrateful. ?But soon I can move my paralyzing side. She helped me.? But Howard ignored what dad said. To him, Janell was disrespectful for coming into his home without permission. ?Howard you won?t have to see my face again, but you could have at least said thanks.? Janell said, stomping out the door.

## Chapter 6

Janell cried that night wishing she would have never bothered Howard. She made herself look desperate and crazy. She knew that she did take it far and her uncle was right Howard wasn't the one for her. She decided that next time she would let the man like her and go out his way for her instead of chasing him. She turned over and went to sleep still broken-hearted. Meanwhile, Howard was still lying in bed awake. He did notice that Janell helped his dad get better, and he felt bad for yelling at her, but it scared him at first. He thought about how if Janell didn't come to help his dad, then he would have still been depressed and not able to move his left side. Howard thought about how nice Janell was that she wasn't like other girls. She was caring, loving, and easy to get along with, but he had been through enough with relationships, and he was scared to let Janell in. Howard started to think how Janell had not only helped his dad, but she shared food with him at work, brought him those cupcakes, and even dressed up for him just for him to notice. She even offered to hang out with him. Howard was lonely, but he didn't know if it was the right time for him to start a relationship. That night he had a dream about Janell that she was standing in a fancy dress, and he was standing in a nice suit, and they were walking towards each other, but then he saw Janell's uncle in the dream and her uncle had a gun pointed directly at him, but before he could fire the shot Howard woke up. Howard didn't understand exactly what the dream meant, but he wasn't going to trust Janell's uncle, and he was going to thank Janell somehow for being kind to him. He woke up that Saturday morning and decided to go down to Jewelry City Line's jewelry store. They had rings, bracelets, watches, and necklaces that were silver, or gold and the prices ranged from \$50 to \$1,000, but the only thing was they did not take payments. You had to pay fully in cash. Howard went in and looked around. He wasn't a big fan of silver, but he liked gold jewelry. He looked around for 10 minutes, and then he found the perfect gift. A gold bracelet with diamond looking gems in it and on the inside, it said, "To a beautiful person". He knew that Janell would love it. He saw that the bracelet was exactly \$50, and he told the people who owned the store to wrap it up nicely in a gold box, he paid, then went on his way. Howard didn't know where Janell and her uncle lived. So, he had to think of something to go over there. He decided to call Janell's uncle and ask him if he could come over and talk to him about a day off. Something simple and not suspicious. He called Uncle Benny, and he answered the first ring. "Hey Howard, how is your weekend going. You know Sunday, I might need you to come in." "Umm I wanted to talk to you about something. Could I come over?" "Is it bad? Why can't you say it over the phone?" "Because I'm around some people right now, and I don't want them in my business. Where do you live?" "I live on Pine way 702 street. When you turn on the street, my house will be the first one you see. It's pretty big. You will see my truck out here and some lounge looking chairs and patio tables out front in the yard." "Okay, I'm on my way." "Alright." Uncle Benny said and then he hung up. Howard took off towards Uncle Benny's place. He was nervous and hoping Janell was there and that she would forgive him. Meanwhile, Janell was on her desktop putting up a new advertisement for waffle makers and her uncle barged into her room. "Janell Howard is coming over to discuss something with me. I need you to fix up some snacks for us because I'm going to try to butter him up,

so he can work for me also on the weekends.? ?Uncle Benny, don?t you think you're working him too  
?Nope.? ?And how much are you going to pay him? Extra on the weekends?? ?Girl are you crazy. I?m  
not paying him anything, it's free labor.? ?Uncle Benny, that is cruel. You can?t expect someone to  
work for nothing and what if he says he doesn't want to?? ?Then I will cut his pay. Instead of \$10.50  
an hour, he will be getting paid \$8.00.? ?Uncle Benny, that man has to live just like me and you. You  
can?t mishandle people who are hardworking.? ?Look, stop chattering and go fix up some snacks, and  
you try to be extra kind to him.? Janell just shook her head. She couldn?t believe her uncle was acting  
like that. Janell got up and opened 3 cans of chicken meat and made a quick chicken salad with  
crackers then she put some cheddar popcorn in a bowl and took out 2 beers for her uncle and Howard.  
She sat everything on the coffee table and waited in her room. When Howard got there, Uncle Benny  
greeted him by shaking his hand and motioned him to sit over on the couch. ?My niece made some  
snacks for us to sit and take a load off.? ?Thanks.? Howard said. ?By the way, where is Janell?? ?In  
her room. Janell got out here, Howard is here.? He called out. Janell was wearing an over big light  
gray t-shirt and her hair was down in her natural curls. ?Oh hey.? She said dully. ?Hey Janell, how  
have you been?? ?Fine, you?? She said short talking to him. ?I?m doing well.? He answered, happy to  
see her. ?Here Janell, you can have this.? He said, standing up and giving her the box. ?What is it??  
She asked, surprised and nervous. ?Look at it when you get the chance.? He said, smirking. Uncle  
Benny frowned and rolled his eyes. ?I will go open it in my room.? Janell said. After Janell left, Uncle  
Benny asked Howard what he came over to talk about. ?Well sir we have been busy lately, and I was  
wondering because I know I will be off tomorrow, but can I be off Monday because I have some  
things I need to do.? Uncle Benny looked at Howard as if he cursed him out. ?What? Son, you can?t  
have Monday off and I been meaning to talk to you. I was wondering if you were available to work  
weekends too.? Uncle Benny said eating some chicken salad on some crackers. ?What? No sir, I can?t  
do that. I have a life of my own. Unless you pay me extra.? ?No Howard, it's free labor. I wouldn?t  
pay you anything. I just need more help and?? ?Look, I like working at your business and I appreciate  
you giving me a chance and opportunity to work, but I refuse to work weekends. That?s my time to  
relax, plus I have my dad to take care of and other important matters.? ?Howard, if you don?t work for  
me on the weekend, I will have no choice but to cut your pay to \$8.00 an hour.? ?You can?t do that.  
Have you lost your mind?? Howard told him. ?No, I haven't, it's my business, and what I say goes.?  
?Well, maybe I will quit. Either you let me have weekends off, and I work every day of the week, or I  
just quit, and you find help elsewhere.? Howard said, angry. ?I?m sorry Howard, but I guess I will  
have to deduct your pay.? Uncle Benny said chuckling. ?Well, I got news for you, I quit!?' Howard  
said. Standing up and marching to the door. ?Wait? ... what? Howard you can?t quit!?' ?Watch me.?'  
Howard said and stormed out the door. Meanwhile, Janell was in her room, and she laid on the bed  
staring at the box. She wondered what made Howard want to buy her something. She was thankful,  
though. She opened the box and she almost screamed out. The beautiful shining gold bracelet amazed  
her. ?This is so beautiful; how could he afford this?? She said, feeling her heart racing. She looked  
inside the bracelet and said the words ?To a beautiful person?. Janell was so flattered the bracelet  
brought a happy feeling to her. She then looked at the bottom of the box and saw a small piece of  
paper that looked like it had a phone number on it. And it said call me. She called the number and  
thanked Howard. ?Howard, that was so nice of you. I love the gift, but why?? ?Because Janell you



have been kind to me, and you helped my dad, and I'm thankful for everything. ?It was no problem, time.? She spoke. ?Janell I was wondering could I take you out to dinner tonight and see where it goes from there? I want to get to know more about you.? He spoke. Janell was finally getting a date with the guy she wanted, and she was nervous but excited. ?I would love to.? She told him.

## Chapter 7

For 4 weeks, Janell and Howard were dating. The two enjoyed each other's company and both of them were happier than ever. Howard had quit Uncle Benny's job and found him a job at a gas station. It was much pay, but he was happy with it. His dad was starting to now walk with a cane and things were looking up. Janell, on the other hand, didn't even tell her uncle yet about her and Howard dating. Janell was having fun with Howard, and he seemed like a genuine guy. He was charming and intelligent, and Janell was really getting close to him. Everything was looking up for her love life. The only thing was Howard always hugged but never kissed her yet. She wondered if he was too shy or was, he not that attracted to her, but she didn't want to worry about it too much. Today Howard was taking Janell to the zoo in another town. Howard said he was going to pick Janell up, so she was trying to get ready. She decided that if Uncle Benny did find out she would tell him the truth. When Howard came to pick Janell up, Uncle Benny was looking out the window and saw both hugging and kissing. This was the first time Howard kissed Janell, and she was shocked and yes, she felt fireworks when he kissed her. Then her uncle ran out the door and was hollering. "Oh, so I caught both of you. Both of you have been dating this whole time behind my back." "Uncle Benny!" "Don't uncle Benny me, so that's why you quit working with me. You've been seeing my niece. I thought you wanted to be alone Howard. What made you change your mind for my desperate niece." "Excuse me?" Howard said, offended. "Uncle Benny, what is your problem?" "My problem is my niece. You would not stop until you got that man. Do you know whether he really wants you or not? Maybe he feels sorry for you like how I feel sorry for you, and he decided to give you a chance." Janell could not believe her uncle was saying that. "Janell pack your things for now you will be staying with me." Howard told her. Janell looked at her uncle with hurt in her eyes. "Uncle Benny, just because you ruined everything with my aunt does not mean you can trash my dreams of finding love. You will always be miserable, that's why you have a different woman every week." Janell said, then walked past him to go in the house and pack her things. Howard walked up to Uncle Benny and looked him straight in the eyes. "You won't be seeing your niece for a long time so say your goodbyes now." Uncle Benny was speechless. He didn't have any words to say. When Janell came back out with her bags, she took one last look at her uncle. "Of course, I was never going to find someone because I was living with a negative person who didn't want me to be happy in the beginning. You were wrong, Uncle Benny. I'm glad I kept trying with Howard. He turned out to be a good man." She said and then put her bags in the back seat of Howard's car and left. 5 months later, Janell and Howard got married. They didn't have a huge wedding, just a courthouse wedding, but everything was looking up for them. Now Janell was pregnant with her first child, and she was happier than ever. She hadn't heard from her uncle in so long, and she wasn't thinking about it until today when she went to the grocery store and saw a man who looked just like her uncle, but he was wearing not so nice-looking clothing. His hair had grown out into a not so healthy afro his beard was long and matted. He had bags around his eyes and his clothes had stains all over it. "Uncle Benny is that you?" Janell asked. "Hey Janell?". I miss you so much. How are you doing?" "I was good. I'm married and pregnant now." "Really? ... still to that

Howard boy?? ?Yes sir.? Uncle Benny looked sad; he was ashamed of Janell to see him like that. a great niece. I'm happy for you and proud of you.? ?So, what's been going on with you?? ?Janell, I lost my business, people stopped coming and money got tight. I couldn't afford the house anymore, so I live in a crummy filthy raggedy apartment, that place has so many issues even a homeless person would not live there. No heat, brown water, leaking roof, bugs, and broken house equipment. I was unable to find another job and now no women want anything to do with me. All I can afford to eat is sandwich meat and cereal and just drink that horrible water.? ?Oh my goodness Uncle Benny, I'm sorry to hear that.? ?Janell I thought about you after everything went down for me. I did you dirty niece. I have no right to mess with your love life. You're a good person and I do miss you. Can you ever forgive me?? He asked her with tears in his eyes. ?Yes Uncle Benny. I still love you even though we don't talk. I want you to take care of yourself.? ?Yes you too, so are you having a boy or a girl?? ?I don't know yet. It's only been a few days but Howard and I are hoping for a girl.? ?That's great. My niece keeps being a good person. And if you ever want to visit me, I live in Clarks Avenue apartment 229.? ?Okay.? She gave him a hug and then went to go check out her groceries. Janell felt sorry for her uncle, but she knew he was getting paid back for how he treated her and Howard. She wished the best for her uncle, but that's all she could do. She knew she made the right decision by leaving and meeting the love of her life.