

When There Is Nothing Left But Love Chapter 1078-1082

Chapter 1078

As expected, he soon said in a low voice, "Ashton must be progressing well in A City."

His abrupt topic made me sit transfixed for a moment. Then, I frowned. "You can be straightforward with me, Mr. Murphy."

He snorted, "You know what I want. Scarlett, honestly, I like you a lot. My mother asked me about you a while back, talking about how your stomach will be bigger soon. She even asked me when I'll be preparing for the wedding and when I'll marry you. To be frank with you, if you're meeker and more obedient, I'll be more than willing to let you keep the baby. However, you're too cheeky; you registered that girl, and you even adopted her. What you've done upsets me. Once I'm upset, I'm prone to do bad things. So, I'm sorry, I could not stop myself from getting rid of that baby in you. You won't hate me for this, will you?"

For a moment, his nonchalant tone made a murderous urge sprout in my mind. At that second, I wanted to strangle him to death; in seconds, I had already murdered him in a hundred ways in my mind.

However, I did nothing but look at him, waiting for him to utter all those words I despised. However, he did not continue. "You don't need to record what I've said. These things are useless to you. Scarlett, for me to be in my position, I can't be a fool, so stop those pointless things you're doing, okay?"

My heart skipped a beat as I tensed. In the next second, I schooled my features to look calm. "What are you talking about? I don't understand what you're trying to tell me. I'm not doing anything pointless for those disgusting acts of yours. I know karma will come for you soon."

He raised a brow at my reply before rising to his feet. Walking to my side, he leaned his face closer to mine as he smiled menacingly.

When I saw his bony fingers reaching toward me, I could not help but hold my breath. Swiftly, he removed my earpiece and mocked, "Don't worry. I won't do anything to you. There isn't any need for you to wear these unnecessary things. It'll only affect our conversation."

With that said, he threw it out of the window. My mouth was set in a hard line, feeling rage boiling in my gut, but still, I looked at him calmly.

He soon returned to his chair. "I know you hate me, but that's fine. If I can't get you to love me, it'll be equally thrilling to have you hate me. You shouldn't blame me for what happened to the kid; you should be blaming yourself. If you didn't appear, no one will do anything to you. But, Scarlett, you were too stupid to save someone who's completely unrelated to you. That's why your kid's dead. This is the ending you've brought upon yourself, and the only thing you can blame this on is how you've stuck your nose into someone else's business."

"Shut up!" I roared. "Armond, have you never thought about how you'll end up? I used to think that you're a gentleman, but boy was I horribly wrong. You're a scum that has no morals nor principles. No one will ever love you. You want that box, don't you? I'm going to tell you now that I'll never give it to you. I'd rather burn the box myself than hand it to you, so stop thinking of getting it. I want to see you destroy the Murphy family and yourself."

Unfortunately, it seemed like he was not as angry with my words as I was with his. His gaze on me remained tranquil, but it took him a while before he said, "Scarlett, you know I don't want to do anything bad to you. I hope you'll be good and give me the things I want. That way, I won't hurt you or those that you're concerned about. If not, I can't guarantee your and their safety. You must be curious about what this villa is for. Have you heard of a snake's nest? I've loved them since young, but my grandfather did not like them. So, I could only secretly keep them. The third floor is where they reside. If I press on the switch, those upstairs will be together with my pets. As for whether they'll live or die, I won't know. After all, I'm not quite sure whether those pets I have are venomous or not."

My eyes were wide as I stared at him in disbelief. "Armond, you shameless man!"

He nodded in agreement. "I, too, think of myself as shameless. But Nora's with me. Say, why do you think she loves me that much? At the start of our relationship, we didn't like each other that much, and I never have any romantic feelings toward her. Why is she enamoured with me?"

My hands clenched into fists as I scavenged through my brain for what I should do. I knew nothing about how many snakes Armond had kept. Since young, I was deadly afraid of these soft creatures. I was not sure whether we could escape the place in time if those creatures were released. If the worse did happen, he could easily dismiss his responsibility in the matter by claiming that it had only been an accident. All he needed to do was pay for the medical fees and remove the snakes. He would lose nothing in this.

Chapter 1079

At that thought, anger curled in my chest.

"At the very least, Nora truly likes you. How can you possibly use her to threaten me? Armond, you're shameless beyond imagination," I snarled as I tried to look for my phone in the pocket.

He sneered, "Truly likes me? What's the use of that? If she isn't the one I want, what's the point of her true feelings? She's still useless. Am I right?"

I was sure that the man was insane. To him, everything he did not like, did not want, and did not care about, was nothing but a burden. He would never cherish those things.

Has Holden realized that something is off? At that thought, I was about to call my father with the phone in my pocket.

However, before I could, a hand stopped me. A wide, emotionless smile was on Armond's face as he leaned close to me. "I wouldn't do that if I were you. Isn't the sandalwood box useless to you? Why are you stubbornly holding on to it instead of giving it to me?"

Retracting my hand as I clenched my jaw, I then moved away from him and sneered, "Will you let them go if I give you the sandalwood box?"

He raised a brow. "Of course. You know my aim is a simple one. Furthermore, I don't really want to hurt them. Scarlett, no one is born a villain."

As I stared at him, I knitted my brows. "All you need is Nora if you want to threaten me. Why did you invite Sasha's parents here? They're old people who are useless to you. Why do you have to torment them?"

He lowered his gaze. "I'm not using them to threaten you. It's a mere coincidence that they're here. Shane owes me too much, so I'll have to invite his parents over so that he'll pay up soon."

I pursed my lips. "Why don't you just kill him?" He's destroying someone's family, but he won't even stop at that. Why can someone like him continue to live in this world?

He shrugged and said instead, "Give me the box. You know I really need the things in it. If you give it to me, you can take the people away."

I muttered, "Let them come down here first. The box isn't with me right now. Also, you know that even if I want to take Nora away, she won't come with me."

He narrowed his eyes. "So what are you trying to tell me?"

"I'll give you the box, but you have to let them go first. You know well that Sasha's parents are useless to you. That b*stard Shane has no morals to speak of, so he won't care about his parents. That's why you

should just let the two go and let them enjoy their last decades peacefully. Leave Shane to the police. Let them stop him from making society worse.”

However, he sneered, “These things are out of my control. Scarlett, honestly, I don’t trust you much. You’ve fooled me once, so no matter what happens this time, you have to give me the box. It’s fine even if you don’t have it with you now. I’ll give you a chance to go back and get it. Once you get it, give it to me, and I’ll let them go.”

My brows furrowed. Ashton had swapped the box once, and I had no idea where it was now. Looking at him, I confessed, “It’s not that I don’t want to give you the box, but that I don’t know where it is. When I gave you the box back then, I didn’t even know it had been swapped.”

He narrowed his eyes again, the upset evident on his face this time. “You mean, you don’t know where the box is?”

I nodded. “Yes.”

Immediately, a scowl grew on his face. “Then, I’m sorry. Since you don’t have the box, we’ll have to talk again when you find it. You might as well stay here for the next few days. Don’t worry; I will treat you well.”

I froze before frowning. “Armond, what do you mean? Are you trying to lock me up here?”

He shook his head before smirking at me. “No, of course not. How can this be considered as locking you up? I just want you to stay here for a few days. Ever since the villa was revamped, no one has come for a stay. It’s quite dead in here. Since you’re all here, it’s a good opportunity to liven up the place.

As he spoke, he reached out to press the call bell. Soon, someone came upstairs—a middle-aged man. When Armond saw him, he said, “Spencer, I’ll have to trouble you to take care of my friends for the next few days. Thank you.”

With that said, he stood up and walked out of the room.

I hastily stopped him. "Armond, this is illegal. Let us go."

"We'll talk again when you find the box. I'm tired now. Spencer will lead you to your room. You don't need to think much about anything; you just need to stay here. I'm sure Ashton will help you with the box."

Chapter 1080

In my fury, I glared at him. However, he ignored me and left without sparing another glance at me.

The only ones in the room were Spencer and me. When the man turned to look at me, he smiled. "Ms. Stovall, your room's on the fourth floor. You..."

"Take me to the third floor," I interrupted. Then, I walked out of the room. Armond's villa was massive to the point one would take minutes just to go from one end to the other end of a floor. Spencer frowned, seemingly hesitant about leading me there.

Hence, I said, "Take me there. Since he wants to keep me here, he can't possibly stop me from going anywhere."

Spencer was taken aback by my words for a moment. A beat later, he nodded.

The layout of the third floor differed from the second floor; the third was locked by a steel door. At the sight of that, I grimaced. "Where are my friends? Have you locked them all in there?"

Spencer smiled before answering, "Of course not. Your friends are all on the fourth floor, Ms. Stovall. This floor is where he keeps his pets. They used to come out from there and scare the rest, so he locked them all in here."

I nodded. "Are they all snakes? Does he keep anything else?"

The smile remained on Spencer's face as he replied, "Mr. Murphy likes to collect rare animals, so he almost has all kinds of creatures. He has had them for years now. Ms. Stovall, would you like to take a look?"

As I could not see anything from behind the steel door, I dared not answer him immediately. It would be fine if the creatures were locked up as the animals in the zoo, but it would be dangerous for me to enter if they were free to roam anywhere they pleased.

After brief contemplation, I replied, "No need. Spencer, please take me to the fourth floor instead."

He nodded before leading me to the floor above ours. The villa was huge, and the structure of it was reminiscent of a noble castle of ancient times. It was grand but empty.

The stairs looked complicated. I did not know whether it was built that way to display the designer's capability.

The moment I entered, I saw a lavish living room decorated with statues of Venus and saints. I was startled when I realized there was even a statue where one of the saints was breastfeeding a baby.

Perhaps it was because I knew not how to appreciate art, so I felt nothing when I looked at the statues.

There was a couch and a table in the living room. Holden was by the window, staring outside. For a moment, I wondered what he was thinking about.

However, I breathed a sigh of relief when I saw him. It seemed like Armond had not done anything to him. When he heard my footsteps, he turned to look at me. "Armond's house is built weird."

"Huh?" I froze in my spot for a moment. "Like how?"

“Do you see that greenery there? Don’t you find it odd?” He raised his arm to point at the green patch downstairs, but no matter how long I looked at it, I found nothing odd about it.

Thus, I looked at him, perplexed, and asked, “What’s odd about it? It looks fine to me. Is it some kind of Fengshui setting? When have you learned that?”

He gave me a look before replying, “Nope. It’s the growth of the plants. Can’t you see any problems with them?”

I looked back at the spot, but still, I could not see anything strange about it. It was winter then, and most of the plants had wilted. The only ones that did not wilt were the pines, which thrived in all seasons.

He sighed. “The growth of the pines is all different from each other. Don’t you see it?”

His words made me look closer again. He was right, there were dozens of pines in the courtyard, but the ones in the middle had wilted. Meanwhile, the ones planted by the sides were still fine.

“Is it because the soil isn’t as healthy in the middle?” I asked.

He shook his head. “The soil here is all the same. The courtyard is enormous, and it’s far from the villa. It’s unlikely that the villa has blocked the sunlight from reaching the plant. In other words, either there isn’t enough soil in the middle, or something is buried there.”

“A cellar?” The villa had no underground parking lot, so the only thing I could think of was a cellar.

He turned to stare at me in silence for a moment. “I don’t think a villa like this needs a cellar. It should be a warehouse, meant to store something.”

When I thought about Abe and Armond’s relationship in Venria, I could not help but say, “For example, kyanine? Armond was quite close to Abe back in Venria. However, K City has strict rules about kyanine. How is he planning to sell them?”

Holden rubbed his nose, seemingly speechless for a moment. "What in the world is in that skull of yours? A huge villa like this usually has basements built for refuge from disasters. Even normal villas have them; they're just converted into underground parking lots."

After Holden tapped my head, I frowned. "You were so serious about your observation, so that's why I thought about kyanine instead. What else did you think I was going to think about when I saw that solemn look of yours?"

Chapter 1081

He sat back down and threw a casual glance my way. "Judging from the way you look... let me guess, we're being held captive by Armond?"

My brows knitted into a frown after seeing him so unbothered. What the heck is he doing? "How are you taking this so calmly? We're literally trapped here, yet you seem relaxed. Aren't you afraid of being killed by Armond?"

He chuckled as he looked back up at me. "So Armond is now a bloodthirsty murderer who kills anyone in his way? Well, you're probably refusing to give him something he wants then."

At this, my shoulders tensed. How does he know so much?

No point lying then. I pursed my lips and replied, "It's just a sandalwood box that my grandma gave me. He wanted it, but I said no, so he locked me here. The rest is history."

Deep laughter rumbled from him while his gaze met mine again. "Is it important?"

I nodded and explained, "A little. The sandalwood box holds a contract between my grandma and a major gasoline-producing country. That contract allows the Murphys to take advantage of the low oil prices and bulk purchase petroleum, which they'll make a profit out of later on."

"I see." His eyes narrowed at me before he advised, "I think you should give it to him since there's no sentimental value behind it. Plus, it's not like the Murphys are the only ones benefiting from this. The whole country will benefit from the petroleum deal. So why the hesitance?"

"I don't mind giving the box to the Murphys, just not to Armond!" I stifled a growl at him. "Ashton visited A City to dig up all of Armond's past dirty businesses, so Armond will get what's coming to him. I know the Murphys are involved in the competitive gasoline market, but Armond isn't the only Murphy capable of running the business. I'll eventually hand them the box once Armond is locked up behind bars."

He frowned, trying to comprehend the reason behind my actions. "So, you're not giving it to Armond because all of his bad deeds will be forgiven if he secures a gasoline deal with Meudari; Because then, Ashton's evidence will mean nothing as people will adore Armond for boosting the nation's fuel economy."

I nodded, "That kind of sums it up."

An understanding look flashed briefly on his face before he stared off into the space. "You hate Armond that much?" I heard from Nora that he and you used to be close, so how'd you two end up as enemies?"

"Life had different plans for us," I shrugged.

"So you're gonna ruthlessly force him into a dead end?" a voice startled me from behind. My head whipped around to see who it was; it was Nora, whom I haven't seen in a while. She looked more elegant now in her fox-fur shawl as she glared at me with disappointment. "He already surrendered A City to you Fullers. Since then, he returned to his turf here in K City and hasn't done anything bad. Why won't you let him live?"

When did she get here?

I brushed my shock off and spoke casually, "What are you doing in K City? You didn't even call to let me know you were coming."

That prompted a sharp retort from her. "There's nothing to say between us. I just happened to bump into you. Speaking of, why are you here? Don't want to return what rightfully belongs to the Murphys?"

My lips twitched with disdain at her. Rightfully theirs? "This doesn't belong to the Murphys," I snarled. "I don't know why you're here, Nora, but I'm sure you know that Armond doesn't love you and that he's only using you to get what he wants. Must you continue to lie to yourself?"

"That's none of your concern. I don't need you to explain whether he truly cares for me," her gaze flickered in another direction. "You should give him that contract because he really needs it. I know that he wronged you guys in the past, but getting that contract is a matter of life and death for him. Can't you give it to him?"

She wasn't making sense at all. I couldn't help but sigh at how blinded she was in helping Armond. "You should get your facts checked before telling me what to do. And Nora, don't forget who you are and your values as an individual. It's not wise to lose yourself whilst chasing after some unrequited love."

I didn't know what else to say after seeing the harsh determination in her eyes.

Sure enough, she refused to give in. She looked at me and softened her voice, "You Fullers have already gotten all the glory in the world. You don't need what's in that box, so there's no point holding onto it. Why won't you hand it over to Armond and help him out?"

"Scarlett, we'll always be friends, so can't you do this favor for me? I know Armond hurt you guys in the past, but those times are over now. And you guys turned out fine anyway, so why not let bygones be bygones? Help him out just this once. I'm sure that Armond will get along with Ashton once he gets past this hurdle. We'll do anything you ask after this, hmm? Please, Scarlett?"

Chapter 1082

Nora drooped her shoulders and stared glassy-eyed at me.

My lips pressed into a thin line. I averted her stare by looking over to Holden, who was staring back at me with an uninterested expression. His eyes bore into mine, hinting that he wanted no part in any of this.

Then Nora's hand clamped around my wrist, and her nails tore my flesh apart like a bear trap while she wailed, "I'm begging you, Scarlett. I'll do anything you ask me to; I'll even convince my grandpa to hand over the Oberick family business to you and Ashton. Please, Scarlett, I'll do whatever it takes as long as you promise to help Armond. Just this time."

An oncoming headache pounded at my temples, drawing my brows into a deep frown. "What are you thinking! Do you even know what you're saying? How could you sacrifice your pride and get on your knees for some heartless, uncaring man?"

Nora's eyes swelled and darkened into a deep red. "Scarlett, you've misunderstood Armond. He's not the villain that you say he is. You've got it all wrong. I'll call him over, and he'll explain how things actually went down."

At her bold correction, that annoying headache grew into an electric pain behind my eyes. I couldn't help but bark out, "How dare you expect me to forgive him? You think you know everything, huh? Well, your loverboy orchestrated the car accident and abducted Ashton, then almost froze him to death in the refrigerating chamber. He did all that to obtain trading rights to the Taylor family's port. Do you know that? How would you feel if you were in my shoes? If you knew that Armond did all that to Ashton, what would you truly do? Here you are, preaching to me about how he's misunderstood and asking me to forgive him... but have you ever considered my feelings?"

"You say that we're best friends, yet you put me through the pain of losing my child. All because you called me, saying that you were drunk at Imperial Hotel. You knew that I would go to you. Then you used my kindness against me and caused my miscarriage... Do you even know how much the baby that you murdered meant to me? The doctors say that I'll never be able to conceive again, and it's all because of your phone call, that one dreaded call that stole my child from me. Tell me, Nora, do you not care about the lives of others? Because as long as you're not the one suffering, then none of it matters? Because only your problems trump over anyone else's?"

I never blamed her for my child's death as I was equally responsible. However, she shouldn't have pointed fingers at me and said that I misunderstood the whole situation and acted so condescendingly by telling me what to do. Her shamelessness ticked me off so much that it reddened my ears.

Hence, I couldn't bite back my burning resentment any longer. The woman before me was no one worth saving, even if she was once my dearest friend.

Nora's eyes swelled as if they were going to fall out at any moment. She gripped white-knuckled onto my clothes and begged, "I know what I did was wrong, but it's too late to change anything now. Scarlett, please, I don't know what to do anymore... Tell me, what do I do for you to give Armond the contract? All I want is to help the man I love to get through this hardship in his life. That's all I ask..."

At that moment, I could no longer recognize my cheerful and carefree friend. Her tear-strewn face felt so foreign to me. It felt like I had never really known the real her, and now her facade was peeling away to reveal her green and hideous nature.

This wasn't the Nora that I knew. Something lodged at the back of my throat as I saw her begging pathetically. Can a so-called love really change a person that drastically?

Oddly enough, I found myself asking a question that even I couldn't comprehend. "Nora, do you love Armond that much?"

She paused before admitting with a solemn weight, "Yes. He's all I want, and I'd rather die than live in a world without him."

"You're certain that he loves you? Because love isn't one-sided, nor is it unrequited. Are you absolutely sure that he loves you back?" I shot a sharp gaze at her.

My question had taken her by surprise. Her vision blurred, possibly confused as to why I asked her this.

It took her a moment before she eventually regained her focus. Despite this, there was a hint of insanity laced in her voice, "He loves me. He told me that himself, and I trust him. Why do you ask this, Scarlett? He really does love me. He does."

I raised my chin and let out a dry, humorless laugh. "Even friendships have their limits, and you've crossed all of them, Nora. So you can quit your miserable begging because we're not friends anymore. However... let's make a bet since you're so certain about his feelings for you. Come over tonight, and I'll show you his true colors."

Bitter laughter throbbed from my chest as I held her gaze. "Armond still hasn't touched you anywhere intimately, has he?"

"Y-you," Nora stammered. She took a moment to calm her bright pink cheeks before she muttered, "You know that his health doesn't allow for it. Plus, you have no right to use that against me. He treats me well enough, and not all couples need that kind of intimacy to be in love."