

When There Is Nothing Left But Love Chapter 1253-1257

Chapter 1253

"You can't blame him for that. You can take the rat out of the sewer, but you can't take the sewer out of the rat. Why would he care about these sort of technological innovations?" Mocking others felt very good indeed. I let out a sigh of relief, feeling more relaxed than I had ever been. The fearful feeling in my heart had disappeared completely.

Armond's expression changed again, this time to a very ugly one. His humiliation gave way to anger, and he stood up abruptly.

At that moment, the other bodyguards were approaching the conference room. There were more than thirty of them, and they took out nearly a third of the room space, blocking the exit from view.

"I hate it when people trick me. You brought this upon yourselves." As soon as he finished speaking, Armond nodded at the bodyguards, and they quickly got into formation, preparing to attack

"The Interpol and the special forces of Chanaea are already downstairs. I advise you to think carefully about what you're going to do next. Are you going to stay here and bicker, or are you going to take the opportunity to escape now? You love making people choose, but it's finally your turn to make a decision now."

Ashton's voice wasn't very loud, but it reverberated through the quiet room. The bodyguards looked rather stunned.

Ashton would never forget his grudges. Armond had tried to trick us so many times, and it was time for him to get a taste of his own medicine.

He could go with the Interpol, or be extradited back to his country. Either way, he would be rotting in jail for many years to come.

Armond and the bodyguards exchanged a glance. After confirming that Ashton's words were true, Armond gritted his teeth and shot us a rancorous look, before leaving under the bodyguards' protection.

The large crowd created quite the commotion as they left the room. The room only returned to silence a full two minutes later.

"They won't be able to get away this time," I said, looking at the direction they were heading towards.

The Interpol would be guarding every single building exit, and searching every floor for a sign of Armond. Unless he had invisibility powers, Armond's fate was sealed.

"If we were in K City, he would have left this building as a corpse!" John spat, his expression full of dislike.

Ashton didn't reply. Putting his arms around me and the child, he said, "Let's get out of here first."

On the plane home, I couldn't help but feel like everything had been settled once and for all.

As I gazed at the child in my arms, I remembered the numerous babies in that house, and thought of Marcus immediately.

"Where's Marcus?" I asked Ashton.

I didn't exactly want to be his reason for redemption, but we had known each other after all, and I didn't want his fate to be unknown to me.

"We've struck a deal. He will never return to the country again," Ashton replied blandly.

"Was he involved in the successful execution of our plan this time?"

"Yes," Ashton said, cocking his head to the side as he looked at me. His eyes were dark as ink. "He was the one who tricked Armond into thinking that I had been lured to the wrong side of M Country. That was how I managed to follow you guys to his hideout from the airport."

"I never knew that. Then, why did he need to work with Armond back then, and lure me to M Country?"

Ashton suppressed a smile and looked at me haplessly. "Do you want me to say that it was because you were simply too attractive?"

"Huh?" I was rather confused.

"Marcus had no wish to see us together, but he didn't want you to die either. When he heard that you were deathly ill from Armond, he found me and offered his services. He had only had one condition, and that was for me to save you," Ashton said.

I suddenly felt a little unhappy.

Marcus had gone too far. He had taken the wrong path in life and hurt the people who meant the most to me. The moment he joined hands with Armond, he had struck off the debt we owed each other.

However, he never harmed me all this time. For that reason, I would never be able to forget him.

Ashton sensed my unhappiness and enveloped me in a hug. Patting me comfortingly, he said, "Don't worry, you don't owe him anything. I've already returned Marcus his wife and children."

I was just going to scold him for being inappropriate with what he did, but Ashton said quickly, "It wasn't me. It was Joseph who saved them while searching for our son. Anyway, Marcus thinks he owes me now."

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I would never wish my past suffering upon others. Luckily, the man I loved followed my wishes and drew the line at revenge.

A sense of uneasiness still permeated my relief. "Marcus may not appreciate our actions."

In Marcus' eyes, Camelia and Toby were just burdens. I doubt he would see them as fit bargaining chips for my safe return.

"Well, that's on him. We're basically even now, so you shouldn't feel bad for him in the future."

"Quick, come over here. Let's get rid of any bad luck that's still on you."

I didn't know where Cameron had heard about this old wives' tale. She had arrived bright and early at the Stovall residence, insisting on burning sage to get rid of any ill omen.

Amused, I gave in to her wishes.

A group followed my children and me into the living room. It seemed as lively as Christmas.

After I sat down, I spied an unusually lonely figure out of the corner of my eye.

Emma was standing at the foot of the staircase, smiling awkwardly but not daring to approach the crowd. She played with her hair from time to time to cover up her hesitation.

"Emma," I called out to her. "Are you not happy that I'm home?"

Emma seemed shocked at the mention of her name. She replied happily, "Of course not! I've been waiting for all of you every day!"

I laughed. "Well, don't you want to come here and see how the babies look like?"

A radiant smile appeared on Emma's face. She came over excitedly and took the baby from my arms. She cooed to him, "Hello sweetie, your Aunt Emma is always going to remember how you look like. What a cutie pie!"

John must have given Emma a hard time over the kidnapping incident. She must have been suffering almost as much as we have. Now that it's all over, we should just try to get on with our lives and make some happy memories.

"Hey, your kids are almost a month old, and you haven't even named them. Some parents you are!" Emery teased, her usual tactlessness on full display.

Ashton and I exchanged a glance. He hinted for me to take the lead.

Actually, I had already thought of their names when we were in M Country.

I announced confidently, "Since they were born in winter, their nicknames will be Greg and Dee!"

"Greg? That's a great name. Sweetie, oh, I should be calling you Greg now. I hope you'll grow to become a strong man!" Emma cooed at my son happily. The baby boy wasn't scared of strangers, and he had taken to Emma immediately as if they were truly related.

"Dee..." Emery said as she carried my daughter. "What about her full name?"

I pursed my lips before smiling at Ashton. Then, I turned to Emery. "She'll share a surname with Summer, so her full name will be Audrey Stovall. As for our son, we'll name him Gregory, as in Gregory Fuller. Since they were born during winter, we chose the name Gregory, hoping he'll become a person capable of beating all odds in harsh situations, while Audrey represents the noble strength that will support both of them through the ups and downs of their lives."

“Those are great names! Here, I bought matching anklets for them. Shall we put it on for them?” Cameron produced a jewelry box containing the two anklets before Emma and Emery placed them on the twins.

Once the anklets were secured, the man who had followed Zachary here suddenly stepped toward the center of the living room. He opened his briefcase on the table and took out two folders.

“Hello everyone, please allow me to announce some news.” The man cleared his throat as he commanded our attention. “As the legal counsel for the Moores, it is my pleasure to announce on behalf of Mr. Moore that Ms. Audrey Stovall and Mr. Gregory Fuller shall henceforth be assigned ten percent each of shares from the Moore Corporation. The net worth of said shares is approximately three point five billion.”

We all exchanged looks of delight after the lawyer’s announcement, ecstatic for the twins.

The lawyer then laid out the documents before me. He addressed me courteously, “Mrs. Fuller, the contract will go into effect once we get the thumbprints of the children on the documents.”

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He presented an inkpad to me as he waited for my next move.

I nodded my acknowledgement.

Glancing at the table, I couldn’t help but zero in on the ten percent and three-point five billion listed on the documents. My eyes burned at the sum.

After a moment of consideration, I lifted my hand and closed the contract before handing it back to the lawyer.

“Mrs. Fuller, what are you doing?” The lawyer’s smile was frozen in place.

As the lawyer-in-charge, I knew he would earn a hefty sum once the contract was finalized. I felt sorry for depriving him of his windfall.

I didn’t answer him but instead looked at Zachary. “I’m sorry, Mr. Moore. I’m grateful for your gesture toward my children, but we can’t accept this.”

Zachary frowned in confusion. Cameron cut in before he could speak, “Please don’t feel pressured. It’s just a small gift for the kids.”

A small gift of three-point five billion? It seems that Cameron’s sense of money is getting distorted by her wealth.

“No,” I insisted. “They’re still young, and I don’t want them to feel weighed down by such a large inheritance.”

If the twins grew up with such an exorbitant inheritance looming over their heads, I was sure that they would burn out under the pressure and the expectations.

They may choose to go down this path in the future, but as their mother, I don’t want to impose this without them having a say.

“We’ll just see how it goes,” replied Ashton lightly. His decision was, however, firm like mine.

We were coaxing the babies to sleep that night when Ashton hugged me from behind. He muttered reluctantly, "I've forgotten how it feels like to wake up next to you."

I remembered what I had promised him earlier and blushed. "Then you can stay here tonight. This bed is big enough for two."

Armond was on the radar of Interpol, so he would be laying low for a while. As such, K City was a lot safer for us now. We no longer needed to pretend that we were separated.

I looked at Gregory and Audrey, who were both sleeping beside me. And with Summer sleeping right next door, I wished that the moment could last forever.

Ashton suddenly loosened his hug and gently turned me around to face him. "I can't. Now's not the time."

I knitted my brows, confused.

Ashton continued, "Don't forget, Armond isn't our only enemy. Do you know where Armond brought you to earlier?"

"Wasn't it his old residence overseas?" I asked.

"If only it were that simple." Ashton shook his head. Just then, Audrey kicked off her blanket in her sleep. Ashton turned to tuck her in before he spoke. "Armond was already wanted by the Interpol for his involvement in the underground organ trade. He could never have founded a company that easily. The place you were at was the headquarters of Illiad International in M Country."

"Wait, isn't that company owned by Bill Young? Isn't he a philanthropist famous for donating billions every year?" To say I was shocked was an understatement. Why is a philanthropist working with someone like Armond?

“The donations are real, though I’m not sure where the money comes from.” Ashton stared at me intently. “Dealing with Bill is going to be a lot harder than dealing with Armond. So I think it’s better to keep up our facade.”

He paused before dropping a kiss on my forehead. Backing out of the room slowly, he murmured, “Take care of yourself. You’re still sick, after all.”

He left the room after giving me a smile.

I replayed his words over and over in my head. When I finally collected myself, he was already gone.

Ashton’s right. I’m not just dealing with poor health after my pregnancy; there’s also the toxin Armond injected into my body.

It was a slow-acting toxin targeting my internal organs, and there was no available cure. I could only control its spread via medication. While it wasn’t fatal or particularly dangerous at the moment, there might be severe effects as time passed. There was a distinct possibility of organ failure as well.

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As these thoughts crossed my mind, I couldn’t help but stare at my babies in the stroller. The pain in my heart intensified.

I wasn’t scared of death itself, but the thought of its imminent approach frightened me because it meant that I wouldn’t be able to watch my children grow.

If only God could hear my prayers and just give me a couple more years to live.

Since the kidnapping of his child, John had upgraded the security system in his home. He ran extensive background checks on all of his staff, making sure that strangers could not infiltrate the Stovall residence again. This way, everyone in the house could finally let down their guard.

A week after my return, I caught wind that Rose had given birth. Since Nick and Rose had always treated me like their older sister, I knew I had to visit her.

Emma tagged along on my visit to the hospital.

“The baby’s so pretty. He looks just like you.” Rose’s son was born after a nine-month-long pregnancy, and he appeared much healthier than my twins. I was genuinely pleased for her.

“Thank you,” Rose rasped weakly as she sat against the headboard. She was being tended by an older lady who appeared to be the Harrisons’ maid.

“Is Nick still busy with work?” I asked.

Rose lowered her head as she bit her lips in acquiescence.

This seemed to invoke the anger of Rose’s caretaker. She snapped, “No matter how busy he was, he should at least be there when his wife is giving birth. Mr. Harrison’s really too much.”

“Margaret...” Rose interrupted Margaret’s rants to no avail.

“You know I’m right. Mr. Harrison took one look at the baby and hasn’t come by again since. He didn’t even arrange for someone to take care of you after the delivery and you had to beg me for help. Why

must you speak up for Mr. Harrison when he's mistreating you like this? I watched you grow up, my dear... I can't let them bully you like this!"

It almost seemed as if she might add me to her rants as well.

Nick had always been an organized person, so I couldn't believe how careless he was when it came to Rose's delivery. He really crossed the line this time.

"Rose, is she telling the truth? That Nick is neglecting you and your son for his work?" I've always had a great impression of Rose, so I was on her side in this ordeal. At the same time, I wanted to clarify some misconceptions in case I got the wrong idea about the situation.

"No, of course not." Rose gave me a weak smile before continuing, "Margaret just misunderstood the situation. She's been taking care of me since I was young, and I would feel uncomfortable if I had to deal with another stranger. That's why I brought her here from the Walker residence. It has nothing to do with Nick."

"Mrs. Harrison..." Margaret appeared to have more to say, but she zipped her lips under Rose's stern glare.

"Scarlett, let's not talk about me. What about you? I heard you gave birth to a pair of twins! I'm so jealous right now."

It was obvious that she was trying to change the topic. Since Rose didn't want to talk about Nick anymore, I followed her lead and progressed to safer topics.

As I was waiting for the elevator after leaving Rose's ward, I heard a visible sigh from Emma.

"What are you sighing about?" I asked with a laugh.

“Can’t I sigh? I just think that being a woman is a tough job,” Emma explained.

“Why do you say that, Mrs. Stovall?” I teased her as we entered the elevator.

Emma and John’s relationship was still on tenterhooks. As such, she was always surprised whenever she was addressed as Mrs. Stovall.

As I Mrs. Bauman expected, her easygoing demeanor disappeared into a frown at my words. “Mrs. Fuller, can you drop that title?”

I laughed as I pressed the button on the elevator. “I didn’t know you’d be so easy to tease.”

“Fine, don’t say I didn’t warn you, I won’t hang out with you anymore.” Emma made a gesture of turning her head away.

“Ok, ok, I won’t joke at your expense anymore. Come on, at least tell me why you don’t want to be known as Mrs. Stovall?” I rearranged my face into a serious expression before asking my question.

“Why wouldn’t I mind? Just look at Rose. Nick obviously dumped her but she’s still defending him. It’s almost as if our only job as women is to satisfy a man’s wishes. What a tiring way to live.” Emma sighed.

I didn’t agree with her statement. “To be fair, what if Nick’s really stuck in an impossible situation at work? Rose’s only making excuses for Nick because she loves him. I don’t think it’s a matter of men or women at all. It’s being in love that’s exhausting.”

This seemed to strike a chord with Emma. She remained in silent contemplation for the entire duration of our elevator ride.

“Hey Emma, we’re here.” She jolted from her thoughts at my gentle reminder, and she left the elevator in a jog.

“Thanks for the reminder. I almost got caught between the doors.” Emma patted her chest in relief before she suggested, “Since we haven’t been out in a while, shall we go shopping? We can visit the mall.”

I remembered Summer’s pleas for some new stationery, and I agreed. Women were born shopaholics. The impulse to shop sustained itself on the never-ending introduction of newer products to the market.

I had initially planned on visiting the kids’ section, but Emma had different ideas. She dragged me into a luxury goods store once we reached the mall. She tried on no fewer than ten outfits but wasn’t impressed by any of them.

“This set looks good. John would like it.” Bored, I decided to tease her a little.

“I didn’t say I was wearing this for him.” Her lips had hardened into a flat line, but she was obviously checking herself out in the mirror. I could tell from her eyes that she was imagining John’s amazement at her appearance.

Women will always doll themselves up for men that they love. I guess this saying holds even now.

I smiled to myself but didn’t call her out on her behavior. I walked to the men’s section.

Ashton was now in the upper echelons of K City society, but his stylists couldn't keep up with his image requirements. They always dressed him in formal suits. While his build and features could easily carry off such a get-up, it made him seem stiff and unapproachable.

I took a turn around the men's section but nothing caught my eye. Just as I was thinking about hiring a dedicated fashion designer for Ashton, I spied an impressive sample display in the distance. I picked up my pace as I walked toward the display in excitement.

Just then, the phone in my purse began ringing. I stopped as I rummaged for my phone. The number seemed familiar, but I couldn't recall who the caller was at that very moment.

When I lifted my head again, I saw an elegant-looking lady summoning a salesperson to help her pack up the outfit I had had my eyes on.

Oh well, I guess I was just a bit too late.

I answered the call in a fit of impatience. "Hello, who is this?"

"Ms. Stovall, it's me." Zander's Koandrian accent gave his identity away.

His call reminded me of the apprenticeship. "I'm sorry I haven't called you back. I've been busy lately, so I forgot all about the apprenticeship."

"That's ok. I'm calling you now to remind you about it. I hope you didn't forget how I made a grand promise to my superiors to keep a precious talent in our apprenticeship program. They even agreed to keep your slot even though you would be going on maternity leave. Please don't tell me you're backing out now?"

I could tell that his goodwill was a front for his urgent hope of my confirmation.

Since becoming a lawyer was my lifelong dream, I chose not to call him out on his attitude. I confirmed my participation as well as the reporting time and date for my apprenticeship.

After I hung up, I thought back to the outfit I had seen, feeling a tinge of regret at the missed opportunity.

I walked toward the cashier in a poor mood, curious about the person who had snagged such a great outfit.

When I saw the couple paying for the outfit, though, my heart sank.

Emma had just come over as well, and her eyes followed my gaze. "What are you looking at?"

When she saw them, her reaction was stronger than mine. She took in a few deep breaths to calm herself down.

Our eyes followed Hunter in utter disbelief as he entered the elevator, holding hands with a mysterious lady as he held a large shopping bag in his other hand.

Under our watchful gaze, it seemed that Hunter felt a twinge of guilt at his actions. By chance, he glanced in our direction and met our stares. Awkwardness flashed across his features before the elevator doors closed.

"Letty, please pinch me and wake me up from this nightmare. I must be seeing things, right?" Emma's jaw had dropped at the scene.

I frowned, my emotions a chaotic mess.

Emery and Hunter's relationship had always been the envy of many. Emma herself was always going on and on about Hunter's penchant for romance and humor. What we had seen today was a huge blow to her fantasies.