

When There Is Nothing Left But Love Chapter 1273-1277

Chapter 1273

The moment those words left my lips, the nosy employees behind me started gossiping again.

"Assistant supervisor? Is Ms. Stovall being serious? Doesn't that mean that Stella will get a pay raise? Is Ms. Stovall that kind-hearted?"

"Tsk, tsk. Dream on! Once Ms. Collins is transferred to the Logistics Department, she'll never be able to come back to this floor. What hope does she have when she has to face a bunch of old and rough men each day?"

"I think that's not too bad. As long as I can get a good pay, I don't mind working with a bunch of ugly people every day."

"Don't be silly. Don't you have any pursuit in life? Once she leaves, she'll never get the chance to marry up."

Brushing off these comments, I kept the smile on my face and stayed calm.

Many years later, Emery would recall that day's incident and say, "At that time, when I saw the fake smile on your face, I finally understood that deep down, you're as ruthless as Ashton."

She was right. I indeed wanted to give Stella a hard time.

The Logistics Department was on the lowest floor of Fuller Corporation and the furthest away from the president's office. If everything went smoothly, she would never be able to see Ashton again. Working in the same company without meeting each other was even more disheartening than kicking her out of the company. She would lose hope as she watched other women approach and seduce Ashton.

I suppressed my feelings and compassion. The only thing I wanted now was to let Stella reap what she had sown.

"It's up to you," Ashton answered without a second thought. "Leave once you get it done. There's no place for monkey business in the office." With that, he turned around and walked away.

Before long, his towering figure slipped into the president's office. Perhaps the conflict between us annoyed him.

Emery and I exchanged glances, and meaningful smiles spread across our faces. Soon, we redirected our gaze back to Stella, who was still in a daze.

"Ms. Collins, you heard him. Can you help me out now?" I raised my voice deliberately.

It was confirmed that Stella was going to be transferred to the logistics department.

Just like the way she addressed me as Ms. Stovall, my voice sounded cheerful as I glanced down at her triumphantly.

None of her colleagues dared plead for her. In the end, Emery and I took her to a small conference room on the lower floor.

Previously, Emery was better at tormenting people, but now, I had become a self-taught expert.

"Ms. Collins, please head to the eighth floor and get the records of this year's projects..."

"I forgot to tell you that I need the information about the investment plans in the coming year. Please go to the eighth floor again."

"Is that all? How about going to the branch office and get our customers' information? Ashton is one of the shareholders of Emery's company, so it's fine to share our resources with her. Come back within two hours, because we're in a rush."

Throughout the afternoon, I lost count of how many times I bossed Stella around, giving her no time to take a seat or rest.

As soon as the door closed, Emery could no longer hold back her laugh. "Look at you! You're the new king of torture in K City. You've made a beautiful woman so miserable."

"Thank you. And same to you! Now I know Ms. Moore has much compassion for others." I made fun of her.

Emery poured two glasses of warm water and handed one to me. "Stop mocking me. The way you handled the matter today is rather brutal, but I like it. Good job!"

She froze for a second, pursing her lips. After drinking half a glass of water in one gulp, she stared into space and said, "Perhaps Hunter and I wouldn't have ended up this way if I had staked my claim in our relationship earlier."

I rarely saw this side of her. She appeared so forlorn, like a traveler who was heading home alone at night, worn out and desolated. For a moment, I was at a loss for words.

Fortunately, Emery didn't dwell on her emotions. In the blink of an eye, the loneliness within her faded away, and she asked inquisitively, "When are you and Ashton going to stop pretending to be divorced? Luckily, I reacted fast enough just now. Otherwise, I would've slapped Ashton to teach him a lesson after seeing his attitude."

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"I don't know. Perhaps it has to go on for a little longer." I heaved a sigh, feeling dejected all of a sudden.

No couple would want to pretend to be enemies if they could show off their affection openly.

There would always be women around Ashton. Most of them might not have compatible family backgrounds or capabilities. But the possibility of an outstanding woman coming along one day was never zero. Once that happens, what should I do then?

The moment I finished speaking, I heard the sound of my phone buzzing in my pocket.

I fished out my phone right away and saw that it was a video call from Ashton.

“Will you look at that, the big boss is checking on you now. I’ll give you guys some space,” Emery poked fun at me before she stood up and walked away.

It required connections with the influential and reputable people for Emery’s company to gain a foothold in the corporate world. However, her relationship with Zachary had always been lukewarm, so she asked for Ashton’s investment. That was also why he was present for the ribbon-cutting ceremony previously. Since then, Emery had always joked about herself working for Ashton.

Feeling helpless, I shook my head with a smile before picking up the phone.

“Why did you ignore me for so long? Are you still mad?” Ashton raised a brow and gave me a devilish grin.

“Are you feeling bad for her?” I teased.

“I’m just worried that you might be exhausted. You had to stay outside and didn’t get to rest the entire day. How are you feeling now? Is there any uneasiness?” Ashton chose not to banter with me. Listening to his gentle tone, I couldn’t bring myself to keep speaking sharply to him.

“No, I’m fine enough to get mad and mock people. Actually, I felt as if I’ve been reborn. I look nothing like a sickly person.” I bet there was no terminally ill patient who was as optimistic as me.

“Well, your happiness is more important than anything else.” He gazed at me. His expression was unusually solemn as he spoke.

I knew he was genuinely concerned about me, yet his gaze made me felt like he was seeing through me at my soon-to-be-dead face.

All the terminally ill patients had one thing in common. We loved making jokes about death, but when it struck us that death was actually on our way, we lied to ourselves and refused to accept it.

“Of course I’m happy, but that might not be the case for you, since you won’t be getting those lunchboxes made with love anymore.” I changed the subject, avoiding talking about death.

“What lunchbox are you talking about?” Ashton seemed puzzled.

“Huh?” I narrowed my eyes and stared intently at him. “Are you trying to play the fool? Stella sends you a lunchbox every day. Didn’t you eat it?”

The entire company knew about it. So how could it be fake?

“When did she send it?” His expression looked innocent as if he was completely clueless about it.

“Whatever.” It seems that I did it again... getting jealous after hearing some baseless rumor. In fact, Ashton had never seen any lunchbox all this while. Yet, the rumor about him and Stella still spread like wildfire. This showed that she was quite the scheming woman.

Ashton, however, wasn’t going to let it slide. Keeping the conversation going, he said, “By the way, it’s been a long while since I last had your cooking. I really miss it.”

“What?” I was engrossed in my own thoughts that I didn’t hear him. A few seconds later, I finally recollected myself. Is he trying to hint at me to prepare a lunchbox with love for him? With that thought, I teased him intentionally. “Oh, I don’t do lunchboxes.”

Disappointed, the gleam in his eyes became dimmer as he stared helplessly and dejectedly at the phone screen.

“But... it’s the weekend tomorrow. If you’re coming to see the babies at the Stovall residence, I don’t mind cooking for you.”

“Haha... Okay, see you tomorrow night, then.” Ashton chuckled. His mood was already lifted as he hung up the phone.

I found that it was rather easy to console him. Like a cat, I only needed to stroke his head a few times, and he would be tamed right away.

Long after I ended the call, Emery came back in. When she saw that I wasn’t on the phone with Ashton anymore, she walked over to my side, took her bag, and was about to leave.

“Something came up in my office, so I have to go over there now. Do you want to come with me?”

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“But Stella isn’t back yet. What should we do with these piles of documents?” I asked.

Holding out her hands, she shrugged. “Just leave it. Let her clean up this mess when she’s back. It seems that you haven’t mastered the art of torturing people. You should never be considerate to your enemy.”

She was right. Having mercy on my enemy was akin to being cruel to myself, and what was more, Stella was so guileful. She totally deserved this.

After chewing on her words, I stood up, held her hands, and walked out of the room. “You head on over to your office. As for me, I’m going home since I haven’t spent much time with Audrey and Gregory. I miss them.”

Emery let out a snort of contempt. "Children will more likely be successful if you train them to be independent. They're going to become spoilt brats if you pamper them too much."

I don't mind. I'm fine with it as long as my children stay safe and healthy."

The Stovall residence was quite a distance away from Fuller Corporation. I looked out the car window blankly as the children and my terminal illness occupied my mind.

At a crossroads, the car stopped in front of a traffic light. There were several bars in the commercial district by the road. While waiting, I noticed a commotion in front of the entrance of a bar nearby. It seemed like a woman had offended the head of a group of men. She was probably going to face the music soon.

The scene reminded me of Yvonne. If the child was still around, he would know how to speak already.

After two minutes, the light turned green. The chauffeur slowly drove away, and I watched indifferently as the bar vanished out of my sight.

Half an hour later, the car drove into a residential area where the government officials in K City lived and made a turn. I spotted an eye-catching blue sports car in front of the Stovall residence from afar. As the car went closer, I saw Zander standing right beside the sports car.

I was surprised, as he gave me the impression that he wasn't someone who would do this. There was no association between Zander and the Stovall family. So I guessed he was here for me.

Once the car pulled over, I opened the door and walked toward him.

Zander seemed to have seen my car much earlier. He came over and greeted me first. "Ms. Stovall."

“Mr. Hoffman, I remember that I’ve made myself quite clear the other day. I don’t want to have anything to do with Tinsel Group. And yet, here you are, waiting for me right in front of my house. What do you want from me?”

I had written down the Stovall residence address without much thought about it because ordinary people would avoid a government residential area. If Zander hadn’t had an influential background, he wouldn’t have come over.

Staring at me, he hesitated for a moment before he spoke with a foreign accent. “I’m here to ask for your forgiveness.”

“What?” My forehead puckered. What is he trying to do?

“Chanaeans say that one must be humble and admit his fault if he has done something wrong. I mulled over what happened the other day and I shouldn’t have been so stubborn and restrained you and your family with that attitude of mine. I hope you can forgive me.” Zander then took two tickets to a concert out of his suit jacket. “My colleague said that the women in Chanaea love this idol group from my country, so I asked someone in K Nation to buy these tickets. Please accept this as my way of apologizing.”

For some reason, the way he spoke in my native language was weird, but I simply couldn’t tell why I felt that way.

Lowering my head, I glanced at the tickets in his hand. It was indeed a rare opportunity, but I was not a fan of any idol group.

I reached out my hand to push the tickets back to him. However, before I could touch them, a big hand appeared out of nowhere and grabbed the tickets away.

Glancing up, I saw Ashton stood on my left with a sullen expression. His sinister gaze was fixed on Zander.

“I remember you’re the man who accompanied Ms. Stovall to take her exam. Nice to meet you again.” Zander seemed oblivious to his sulkiness. With a friendly smile, he held out his hand for a handshake, just like the first time he met us.

“No,” Ashton said curtly. “I’ll speak in your language since you can’t understand mine well. Not only do Chanaeans admit their faults, but we don’t covet others’ loved ones as well. Scarlett is my woman. Even though we’re divorced, she’s still the mother of my children. Whatever you’re planning in your head, you’d better not do it.”

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Astonished, I stared at Ashton with widened eyes. I felt as if I just knew him today. Since when did he learn a new language?

It was only then that Zander noticed Ashton’s hostility. His hand froze in the air for half a minute before he withdrew it in silence. He appeared embarrassed when he spoke again. “I’m sorry for the misunderstanding. I just feel that Scarlett has the potential to become an excellent lawyer. Tinsel Group is my father’s blood, sweat, and tears, so I yearn to recruit more talents. I sincerely hope that Scarlett can work with me to uphold my father’s legacy.”

This reason didn’t sound valid to me.

Judging from how well he could speak our language, he knew our culture deeply, but he didn’t understand what Ashton meant. Hence, I wasn’t convinced when he said that he meant no harm, even though he often tried to cozy up to me.

Meanwhile, Ashton was showing his aversion to Zander brazenly.

Lifting the tickets in his hand, he tore them right in front of Zander and threw the pieces onto the ground. Right after that, he took out a checkbook, scribbled on it, and tore it off the book. Marching over to Zander, he slipped the cheque into the pocket of the man's shirt and patted it.

"There. You can leave now."

Zander turned to look at me. His brows snapped together, and his gaze was full of grievance. Nevertheless, he could do nothing but accept the cheque and leave.

As soon as he got into the car, Ashton turned around and headed toward the house.

He quickened his steps. Thanks to his long legs, it only took him a few strides to leave me far behind him.

"Ashton, wait for me."

It wasn't until he reached the room upstairs to see the babies that he finally stopped and I was able to catch up to him.

Gregory was asleep. On a couch in the bedroom, Ashton was holding and playing with Audrey, gazing at her affectionately. The one-month-old baby looked tiny in his arms. The corner of my lips curled up as I looked at his gentle demeanor, acting as if the baby was made of porcelain.

The second I stepped into the bedroom, the grin on Ashton's face vanished. With a poker face, he turned to glance at me indifferently as if I was a stranger. Meeting his gaze, I shuddered instinctively.

"Didn't you say that you're coming over tomorrow?"

He remained silent, but his expression turned grimmer. His forehead creased as he asked sternly, "Are you trying to say that I came at the wrong time?"

Unexpectedly, John's voice sounded behind me just then. "There you are. Come to the study. Uncle Louis has something to say."

With that, he didn't linger around and disappeared behind the door.

There was pin-drop silence for two seconds. Then, Ashton gently put Audrey on the bed and strutted past me out of the bedroom.

What's with that attitude? Why did he give me the cold shoulder all of a sudden? What had I done to offend him?

Whatever. Everyone was bound to lose their temper once in a while. Perhaps he's dealing with some problems at work. I decided that I would talk to him after meeting with Uncle Louis.

When I arrived at the study, everybody had taken a seat. The three domineering men looked in my direction in unison. If I were an ordinary person, I would've gone weak in the knees.

I was supposed to sit by Ashton's side. However, he averted his gaze on purpose. I could tell that he didn't want to be close to me, so I sauntered over to the single-seat couch beside John and sat down.

"Uncle Louis, John said that you have something urgent to discuss with us."

"Yes." Louis nodded. He then turned to look at John, who immediately understood him. "Armond told Holden that his men had developed the antidote. He guaranteed that you would be healed, providing that we return the petroleum exploration agreement to the Murphys."

Louis then added, "What I mean is, Armond's reputation is in tatters, overseas and locally. Even if he gets the agreement, Meudari might not want to work with a man with many criminal records. As such, it probably doesn't hurt to give it to him. Besides, the toxin in Letty's body is like a time bomb and we can't afford to wait any longer."

He heaved a long sigh and asked Ashton, "What do you and Letty think?"

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The moment he finished his sentence, the study room fell into an awkward silence.

Armond had revealed his trump card. Now, everyone was aware of his ambition to make a comeback by leveraging on petroleum.

"No," I replied in a serious tone. "Armond's reputation is in tatters, but how will we know if he won't somehow reinvent himself and make a comeback? If he gains control of the oil, that would be equivalent to getting the backing of all the countries within Meudari. By then, the shockwaves he may cause won't be something that we can handle."

It doesn't matter if I die. If my death could guarantee my family's safety, then it would be well worth the risk. Even if I could somehow survive by a stroke of luck, I still couldn't bear letting everyone else fall into such a dangerous predicament.

Armond had gone crazy. Since that was the case, he should be imprisoned for life instead of allowing him the opportunity to recover.

Louis and John remained silent. All they did was furrow their brows and looked at Ashton skeptically, waiting for his response.

It was obvious that they were considering Armond's demands, or else I would not have heard about it. The Stovall family was only concerned about my survival and not about how great the risks were.

"Ashton." I gave him a pleading look and shook my head solemnly. "We can't do this."

Pursing his lips in silence, Ashton remained expressionless, making me wonder if he could read the look in my eyes. After a long while, he turned around and answered Louis. "I agree with Letty that being controlled by someone is bad. Armond's greed is boundless. Even if we give him the contract, we might still not get the antidote. Separately, I have contacted the most advanced medical researchers in the world and invested huge sums of money for them to analyze her disease. I believe we can look forward to some positive news soon."

"Huh?" I was surprised. "Why didn't you tell me about it before?"

"I did." Ashton's expression remained distant. "I told you that you can trust me. And that you won't die without my permission."

I was stunned by the look he gave me. It was true that ever since I knew I had a terminal disease, I was always worried about my death despite claiming otherwise. Hence, I was mentally prepared for it to occur at any time because I knew how vicious Armond could be.

Before I could reply, Ashton's tone grew more solemn. "Don't tell me you're considering nobly sacrificing yourself? Thinking that your death would somehow grant us some ridiculous form of 'stability?'"

Feeling my heart sink, I furrowed my eyebrows as I had nothing to rebut him with. He didn't care whether I believed him or not. Instead, he was more concerned that I subconsciously wanted to leave him by dying.

With his eyes fixated on me, his gaze felt like a bottomless lake, ready to drown anyone that fell into it.

Sensing the tension in the atmosphere, John quickly eased the situation. "Alright now, since we already have a solution, let's just ignore Armond. Anyway, it's getting late. So let's go down and have dinner."

Ashton's cold stare swept across the room as he scowled. "How can you still have any appetite? I'm not hungry at all, so I'll take my leave first."

Just as he spoke, he stormed out of the room without even saying goodbye to Louis nor turning back to take another look.

It was a long while before everyone else regained their senses.

"What's up with him?" John asked curiously. "Did you two argue again?"

"Huh? Uh... yeah, you can say so..." I pursed my lips, unwilling to explain further.

A few days later, John suddenly picked Emma and me up from the mall, saying that he wanted to take us somewhere.

After driving for less than five minutes, the car entered the basement carpark of the most glamorous skyscraper in the city center.

Upon entering the elevator, Emma asked curiously, "Why are you acting so secretive? Where are we going?"

Whirling a key around his finger, John smiled smugly as he continued to keep us in suspense.

As Emma's face grew red in anger, I could only try and calm her down.

Ding!