

When There Is Nothing Left But Love Chapter 1353-1357

Chapter 1353

I heaved a long sigh of relief, feeling grateful that the ball was no longer in my court.

Ashton was unmoved by the flattery and replied flatly, "I prefer not to discuss business during meals."

I stifled a laugh at his outright rejection.

From the moment Marshall had arranged for Elliot to sit next to me, he was destined to fall on the wrong side of Ashton. It seemed that he would never get his hands on pie for the real estate and properties industry.

Marshall was caught by surprise as his hand was still hanging in mid-air; his smile froze awkwardly on his face.

Coming from a prestigious background himself, he was usually on the receiving end of adulation. It was no wonder that he looked as though he had just swallowed a hard pill.

The air in the room once again turned frosty.

Thora furrowed her brows. She didn't want to offend Marshall, but she couldn't go against Ashton too. At last, she decided to just keep her mouth shut.

Just as Marshall seemed like he was about to blow a fuse, Elliot intercepted, "Mr. Tiedemann, I think Mr. Fuller is tipsy. It would be wiser to continue the discussion about the land another time. Why don't we talk about the financing plan for your company?"

Upon Elliot's timely rescue, a broad grin crept across Marshall's face as he turned around and said, "Mr. Jacobson, I appreciate you getting straight to the point. I'm willing to absorb another extra five percent on the prior agreed amount."

"That's fine by me, as long as it's a win-win solution."

Before long, Elliot seemed to have the situation under control while he cultivated the image of a reliable business partner.

Nonetheless, just as the two men were about to drink to a deal successfully struck, Ashton intervened, "If I may, Fuller Corporation might not be the best in the city, but we have a team of top analysts. Those companies they deem as having no potential to grow may not submit their proposals in the president's office."

Marshall's body stiffened at his sudden snide remark. His expression was now as dark as thunderclouds.

Even though Ashton did not spell out any names, his intention was clear. Despite being a reputable company, the Tiedemanns thought too highly of themselves to think that they could have the resources to collaborate with Fuller Corporation. One might consider his words to be a warning for Elliot to be cautious when choosing a business partner.

It looked like Ashton was determined to interfere with Marshall's business plan.

A clever man like Elliot understood Ashton's subtle hint for him to cut ties with Marshall. However, he was completely unfazed as he raised his wineglass and clinked gently with Marshall's. "Mr. Tiedemann, you heard the man. It's time to pull up your socks and show your real capabilities to the public."

Upon hearing his business partner's reassurance, the tension on Marshall's face eased up instantly. "Thanks so much for your confidence in me. You won't regret this."

Ashton's attempt to sabotage the business deal fell flat. It allowed Elliot to gain an upper hand over the situation without engaging him head on.

Clink!

Following the toast, Ashton stood up nonchalantly and announced while buttoning up his coat. "Excuse me. It's pointless to stay for the meal since we don't share a common view."

Before Thora and Joe could respond, he left the room without another word.

The remaining guests in the private room exchanged puzzled looks with one another, wondering what was wrong.

I shrugged and teased playfully, "He's still that same eccentric man. I suppose I just couldn't help myself from falling for my ex-husband's charm again and again."

Emery shook her head in exasperation to show her disdain at my very public declaration.

Her disapproval didn't concern me since I was no longer having depression. I now had a newfound understanding of exerting my sovereignty over things. And in this case, a person who belonged to me.

Chapter 1354

Marshall was obviously vexed at Ashton's sudden exit. His face grew stern as he hurled a cup to the floor and sneered, "It's great for youngsters to have dignity these days, but he's going to be taught a lesson sooner or later for being this disrespectful."

My lips curled into a thin smile as I glanced in his direction. "Well, that will have to depend on the man's capability if he wants to teach Ashton a lesson."

At least for now, you don't look like you are the man.

Of course, I kept the last remark to myself. However, my downcast gaze was enough to express my derision.

Marshall snickered and said nothing further. A shrewd businessman like him would not risk offending his two benefactors on the same day.

Thora took the liberty to speak on behalf of Ashton. "Mr. Tiedemann, Ashton is not in the best mood today, but he means well. You're the senior, please forgive him for his manners."

“Hah...” I snorted and got up after taking my bag. “It seems that Ms. Ziegler still does not know Ashton well enough to make this statement. With his domineering demeanor, he would never bow down to others. You’re too naive to think that he would apologize.”

Emery took her coat to leave with me. She paused for a moment when she reached the door and headed back to the table with a wide grin. “Ms. Ziegler, don’t forget to foot the bill before you leave. Even though I’m quite close to Mr. Fuller, I still think it’s better for us to draw the line, no?”

Thora came from a noble family, and she had always enjoyed privileges in all of K City, except in the Ziegler family. Even though Emery was from the Moores, she was superseding Thora by using her identity as The Jade’s owner. Fuming with the obvious attempt to embarrass her, Thora and said through gritted teeth, “Don’t worry, Ms. Moore. I will ask the manager to put it all on my tab.”

“Thank you so much.” Satisfied with the response, Emery beamed with delight as we headed out of the room together.

I nudged at her and muttered, “Thanks for that.”

“For what?” She feigned ignorance.

“Drop the act. There are so many people in the room, yet you called Thora out to foot the bill. I know you’re retaliating against her for mocking me just now.” Emery was one who would always stand up for her friends.

Without batting an eyelid, she added, “I’ll ask the manager to put the bottle of DRC on her tab too.”

I paused in my tracks and eyeballed my friend. “You really are something else. How did you manage to learn all the trickery of those evil businessmen in such a short time?”

“Well, I’ve never been a conscientious businesswoman anyway,” she smirked. Her lips formed a devilish grin as she led me to the elevator.

I had almost forgotten that Emery had concealed her true nature and transformed into the perfect trophy wife after marrying Hunter. However, the woman before me was indubitably the proud daughter of the Moore family, a conglomerate and one of the richest merchants in Chanaea.

We exited the elevator and reached the basement car park.

She noticed Ashton’s car before I did and nudged me toward his car as she stood ground.

I staggered for a few steps before I steadied myself. How did she know that I’m not out here to chase after Ashton?

“Go on, I can only cover you till here.” Emery went straight to the point, waving her hands as she immediately turned on her heels to head to her car.

Her silhouette suddenly reminded me of Macy. Since she knew me better than I knew myself, she could read my thought with one glance.

Beep! A honking sound rang in my ears, yanking me back to reality.

I turned around. Ashton was watching me with a cold, hard stare. I snapped out of my thoughts and got in the passenger seat hastily.

I thought he had something to say to me, but he simply cocked his head aside, saying nothing.

I inched myself closer to him and asked, “Are you jealous?”

“No.” He sprung upright and set his gaze out front with the curt reply.

Chapter 1355

Not buying his indifference act. I explained further, “I’m actually here to celebrate with Emery. However, we bumped into Elliot and decided to celebrate together since it’s his first day being a boss.”

The explanation was redundant, given Ashton’s intelligence.

Marshall was a troublemaker. When matchmaking Katharina and Elliot, he started getting ideas about me. Fortunately, Ashton made it in time and nipped his idea in its bud.

His face remained impassive even after listening to me. “Alright, you may get off the car now. I should be leaving.”

Just when he reached for the gear, I stopped him.

“Ashton, you are jealous.”

“I am. That’s why we cannot stay in the same space any longer.” He tried to suppress the anger in voice as he retracted his hand.

The best thing about being with Ashton was I never felt apprehensive or insecure after we survived the minor squabbles when we first got together.

A naturally aloof man, he had hated the world with his every fiber before he met and fell in love with me. I knew he didn't have it in him to accommodate another human being in his heart

He knew I valued fidelity above everything. It was impossible for me to fall for another once I set my heart on my chosen one.

I guessed his sudden tantrum was because I had contacted Elliot on my own, and he was also mad at me for sneaking out and disregarding my health.

Dealing with his enemies, looking for my cure, and dealing with the company's losses was exhausting him. Should anything happen to me, he would break down without a doubt.

My heart ached for him at the thought of it, and I leaned in closer, cupping his face in my hands. As I forced him to make eye contact with me, I planted a kiss on his lips before he could react.

It became my second nature.

He relished in the soft sensation and edged himself closer for more. Before things got out of hand, I dodged his touch, got back to my own seat, and left him hanging.

His hands paused momentarily in mid-air for two seconds before he retracted them with a bitter smile as he leaned back in his seat, disheartened by my withdrawal. "You're the only woman who could take advantage of me repeatedly like that."

Wow. The way he's putting it sounds as though every woman in the world is dying to have him. Are we competing to see who's more charismatic right now?

It did not matter who would win the race. The most important thing was Ashton was smiling.

As long as he was not mad at me, he was quite an easy man to talk to.

Unwilling to concede defeat, he narrowed his eyes as if he was contemplating for a way to give himself the upper hand. "It looks like I have not invested enough in Emery's company. I should buy some of The Jade's shares to keep you guys in line."

"Is it really necessary?" When did Ashton become so controlling?

"Definitely." He nodded solemnly. "I'm exercising my husbandry obligations to ensure my wife's safety by knowing her whereabouts at all times. It is a very heavy responsibility. Do you have any problem with that, Ms. Stovall?"

Feeling a chill down my spine at his smug look, I retracted myself slightly.

With his eloquence, I was starting to think that he had studied alongside me when I was preparing for my bar exam.

"No problem." I shook my head innocently. Do I really dare to object?

Ashton's expression darkened afterward as though he was mad at someone. I wondered who he was directing his anger at.

After a long bout of silence, he looked right into my eyes and sighed. "I could not get hold of more information on Elliot as of now. But from what I've gathered, he's not a decent man at all. Look at the way Cameron and Zachary were trying to matchmake the two of you. I'm really worried that something might happen to the Moore family, or worse."

His car was parked in a dark corner. The dim lights on the ceiling peeked through the car windows, illuminating the grim look on his face right then.

Chapter 1356

“Mr. Jacobson came back on the pretense of returning to his roots because Elliot has conspired with several conglomerates in M Country to take over the government-linked companies in Fander state. Not only did they fire numerous grassroots employees with no prior notice, they also ruined thousands of families. They’re only moving back here because their reputation was down in the dumps for being unethical and despicable. If the Moore family really backs their development here, the family might be nourishing a viper in their bosoms...”

Not one cent in Elliot’s hands was clean. Although he knew handing his money to Marshall was akin to flushing it down the drain, he did not mind at all.

How could he take others’ hard-earned money blatantly and claimed it as his own wealth? What a terrifying man.

If Ashton could get his hands on this information about Elliot, I suspected Cameron and Zachary’s involvement in this. They couldn’t be this clueless. What exactly were they trying to pull by matchmaking me with that man?

Still, something did not quite add up.

They were indebted to me. It was unlikely for them to stand idly by, let alone set me up on the path of destruction. There was only one viable explanation. They were being threatened.

Then again, what hold did the person had over Cameron and Zachary to incite such fear in them and the Moores?

As I looked at Ashton, a notion popped into my mind. Not only was it necessary for me to know the man's background, I should also look into my so-called birth parents.

No matter what their reasons might be, the scales were never in my favor from the moment I was born. They always chose themselves over me.

"Alright, I'll stay away from Elliot." I nodded and subconsciously brushed against his shoulders. "You really need to take better care of yourself. It doesn't matter if we have the antidote to my poison. I wouldn't be able to live by myself should something happen to you."

We live together or die trying. If you're not by my side, living would be meaningless.

Ashton cast a gloomy glance at me, as if he could read what was on my mind.

"What do you mean?" His voice was dangerously low.

"I meant exactly what I said." I avoided his gaze and fixed my eyes on his chest to straighten his shirt.

Sensing something amiss, he was about to probe further when we heard hasty footsteps approaching in the silent car park.

We lifted our heads and saw Thora and Joe step out of the elevator, headed in our direction.

I immediately returned to my senses and opened the door to get off the car. "I should get going."

“Scarlett.” Ashton grabbed my arm suddenly. He was whispering, but there was no mistaking the urgency and fury in his voice. “I don’t care what you used to think. From now on, I want you to live your life to the fullest, whether I live or die. Promise me!”

He stressed the last two words with such emphasis and squeezed both my arm affectionately before letting me go. I hid behind a pillar just in time to avoid Thora and Joe.

Ashton left the two standing as he drove out of the car park. The duo was accustomed to his behavior. They waited for their chauffeur to pick them up and finally disappeared into the distance.

I only emerged from behind the pillar after making sure everyone was gone.

For a few seconds, I stood and stared dazedly at the exit sign. A sudden wave of apprehension hit me as I recalled Ashton’s words.

A voice at the back of my head told me he was leaving me forever.

For a man who had loved me more than he valued his life to lose all hope and arrive at such a distressing decision, only something drastically tragic could cause this. What could have happened that he was willing to die?

I called Millie anxiously and arranged to meet up at the nearest café.

The Jade was located right at the heart of the city center with many famous cafés nearby. Millie arrived in fifteen minutes with a companion.

The man had a trucker hat on. He deliberately kept his head low when he passed by the reception to evade the surveillance cameras.

Millie had mentioned once during one of our casual exchanges that due to the handsome pay that came with the high-risked nature of their jobs, they had to put their life, blood and sweat on the line or die while they were executing their mission. It became their second nature to keep watching over their own shoulders, even when they were sleeping.

For me, I was just striking a deal with the man. I could not care less how much bloodshed he had caused.

As soon as they took their seats, I cut to the chase. "I want the reports on Ashton's most recent medical records and his whereabouts right now."

"But you promised to give him three days' time to investigate," Millie reminded me.

"No problem." The man kept his head low. From where I was sitting, I could only see the lower half of his face. His chin was stubbled, and he looked slightly darker than most native K City citizens. His thin lips were oddly protruding, bearing the ruggedness of the desert people.

"The figures on his health records, his schedule, and the list of persons he has been in contact with are all simple numbers. I can send them to your phone right now. However, I cannot provide you with more detailed information," the man muttered as he fished out his phone.

Soon, I received a WhatsApp notification. It was a message with an attachment.

I clicked on the file, which took mere seconds to pop open.

I scrolled through the document, zooming in and pinching out, and noticed the “In good health” remark at the bottom of his health report. No major health conditions were detected.

I heaved a long sigh of relief at the health report. He’s alright.

Ashton had always been a cautious man. He could lose a tail easily. Although I held little hope on the leads of his whereabouts, the box highlighted in red in the report still stumped me.

J City family home was imprinted on the report.

Ashton would go back and forth from K and J Cities in the evenings, to the family home left behind by George.

Ever since the headquarters of the Fuller Corporation had been moved to K City, the family home had remained vacant. Even Uncle Charlie hardly went back there. I knew Ashton had been swamped lately. So how, or rather why, did he go back and forth between two cities so frequently?

I furrowed my brows, puzzled. No wonder I could not reach him these days. It must have something to do with this.

The answer was right in the family home.

Noticing that I was deep in silence, the man reminded me, “My pay is only to locate Ashton Fuller. If you want to know what happens at the family home, there’ll be extra charges.”

“I understand. Please continue to find him; leave the rest to me.” Money was not my concern. Moreover, the family home was not a dangerous place, so it made no sense for an outsider to poke around, especially when there might be some huge secrets in the house.

The man nodded and said nothing else. He cast a sideways glance at Millie before getting up to leave.

I was about to call out after him to ask him for more details, but Millie stopped me. "Ms. Stovall."

I sat right down in my seat.

"There are forces shaping K City, ones we cannot afford to cross, especially since we're not from around here. It's not safe to put yourself out there."

She was right. Private investigators were discreet and perfect for this kind of work. I steered the topic in another direction and asked, "I've booked two tickets to J City. I want you to follow me."

"No problem."

I received a call from a stranger right after I was done talking.

It was a middle-aged man with a hoarse voice. "Are you Ms. Scarlett Stovall?"

"Yes, speaking. How may I help you?" I tried to register his voice to the people I knew, and only Bryson came to mind.

"I am calling from Coldbridge police department. Your client is detained in our custody for being allegedly involved in a criminal assault. We request your presence at our station."

I received a few cases on economy disputes recently. Both parties were prominent figures, seeking to solve the dispute amiably. I was certain that they would not resort to violence.