

When There Is Nothing Left But Love Chapter 1578-1582

Chapter 1578

"The room was specially soundproofed. Our men tested it out. We couldn't hear anything from outside, not even a grown man's shouts," Joseph explained, shooting Yuna and James a withering glare.

Ashton rested his chin on his hand and ran a finger over his lips. Unsmiling and grave, it seemed as if he had returned to his former merciless self.

Meanwhile, James and Yuna clutched each other tightly and trembled in fear. Although we were in an air-conditioned room, they were drenched in sweat.

Emery was enjoying the unexpected turn of events. Fanning the flames, she said coldly, "They're just wolves in sheep's clothing. How despicable."

The suffocating atmosphere soon became too overwhelming for the couple. James grabbed Yuna's arm, and they fell onto their knees with a thud. At that moment, they wished that a hole would open up in the ground and swallow them whole.

In that silent court of justice, they had already been nailed to the cross to bear their sins.

Everyone held their breaths as they waited for Ashton to speak. Nonetheless, he merely gazed at the couple expressionlessly, sitting still and silent. After a long, awkward pause, he finally turned around and beckoned at Audrey. "Come here."

Still teary-eyed, Audrey was momentarily stunned. She raised her hand to wipe the tears from her face before walking over to Ashton calmly and stood before him. Only her pouting lips showed that she was still angry.

Look at her blinking her large eyes without a shadow of fear. It really shows that John brought her up.

Ashton reached out and pulled Audrey nearer to him. Rubbing his palm over her small, chubby hand, he looked straight into her eyes with a gentle gaze and asked, "Are you scared?"

Audrey glanced at James and Yuna before turning back to Ashton and shaking her head blankly. "No."

Ashton nodded slightly. After pondering for a moment, he asked, "What if I told you that this couple inflicted those injuries on Shaun? Do you think I should give them a chance to turn over a new leaf?"

I could not help but frown when I heard those words. How can he involve a child in that decision? Isn't that taking it a little too far? The decision to give them a chance or not will drastically impact their lives! But in Audrey's eyes, it's probably no different from playing house. How can she possibly understand the implications of her answer?

As I worried over what to do, Audrey's voice rang out loudly. "No way!"

Her answer was firm and clear as if she had already known what to say for a long time. When she spoke, she seemed calm beyond her years.

Audrey continued, "Uncle John said that we can only give second chances to those closest to us. We can't simply forgive strangers. Otherwise, it could hurt our family and friends. They're bad people. I don't like them, so I don't want to forgive them!"

With John's character, it's indeed likely that he would've said something like that. After escaping from the jaws of death so many times, he has already lost all hope in humanity. Apart from those closest to him, he won't allow anyone to hurt him. He's a clear-headed yet heartless man.

Almost as soon as Audrey spoke, Ashton narrowed his eyes slightly. His eyes gleamed, and he calmly turned toward Joseph with a slight smile. "Did you hear what she said?"

"I did," Joseph replied with a respectful bow. When he straightened up, he shot a glance at the men outside the ward. Several bodyguards in suits came in immediately and forcibly escorted the couple, who were struggling to hold back their sobs, out of the room.

As soon as they left the room, blood-curdling cries filled the hospital's hallways. Gradually, the cries moved further away and grew fainter.

Why did they have to do all that? Moreover, they're highly educated people. For someone of Ashton's age to have tens of billions to his name, it's clear that he's no saint. It doesn't take much to know that. To err is human. It's not a crime for one to possess some peculiar fetish. What's despicable is when one imposes it onto others. After all, there are differences between humans and beasts. Humans should know the limits of their actions. What goes around comes around, so one can't blame the heavens.

Just as I expected, based on Audrey's calm expression, she had no idea about what would be in store for the couple that had just been taken away.

As a mother, I was happy to a certain extent. However, I couldn't shake the feeling that something was wrong at the sight of my child being so at peace and unruffled.

Ashton couldn't be bothered by what had happened either. After the despicable couple had been brought away, he began coddling his dear daughter. "Can you forgive me now? Daddy just punished the bad guys that hurt Shaun."

"Hmm..." Audrey clamped her tiny mouth shut as her bright eyes started looking around mischievously. Clearly, she was up to no good once again.

Ashton straightened up and frowned slightly. "Do you still have to think about it?"

"Yep!" Audrey yelled out happily. She was obviously in a much better mood now. With a bright smile, she held onto her father's fingertips with her own small hands as she whined, "Daddy, let's take Shaun home with us. We can't just leave him here alone! Pretty please?"

The smile on Ashton's face dissipated slowly at the sound of Audrey's request. He glanced over at me helplessly before looking at the child on the hospital bed. Then, he stood up and walked toward him with Audrey in tow, staring down at him from above.

"Why didn't you call for help?" Ashton asked.

Shaun was silent for a little while before answering hesitatingly, "The people who left me in the past never showed up again."

It was more than heartbreaking to hear such words coming out of a six-year-old child's mouth. He was so young, and yet he already knew how fickle relationships could be.

Behind every nonchalant expression lay layers upon layers of pain and bitterness.

No matter how suspicious he had been in the past, I knew this came straight from Shaun's heart. It was probably because I could resonate with him, having been left behind myself.

I suddenly found myself warming up to Audrey's suggestion.

After those words left his mouth, the remaining life in him seemed to drain out of his body and left him even weaker than when we first found him. He now seemed like a sack of mere skin and bones. I knew that any consolation would pale in comparison to the pain that he was feeling on the inside. After all, we had no idea what he had experienced. All we could do was sit there quietly and let him know we were there for him.

Ashton finally broke the silence after a long time. "From now on, you will be part of the Fuller family. Mrs. Fuller will be your mother, and our children will be your siblings. Are you willing to accept that?"

Shaun jerked his head up violently. His eyes were shining with indescribable emotions, but most obviously, he was in disbelief.

Before waiting for his reply, Ashton let go of Audrey and walked toward me, slinging an arm around my shoulder. "Still, I'm not the boss of the house. If you want to stay, you'll have to convince Mrs. Fuller over here," he said lightheartedly.

"You!"

He's clearly playing good cop, bad cop! If I were to say no, that would obviously make me the bad cop.

"Mommy, please say yes! Please, pretty please!"

Before I could say anything else, Audrey ran over and started shaking my arm as she pleaded with me.

It wasn't too big of a hassle for us to have a new member joining the family, and I had no reason to say no. Still, I kept feeling like Ashton had just played a trick on me and couldn't put my words together for a long time.

Suddenly, Shaun swung aside the blanket and stood up on shaky legs as he stared at me in determination. "Mrs. Fuller, I want to live. I want to keep living on. Since you were the ones who saved my life, I want to repay both you and Mr. Fuller. Please take me in! I will not disappoint either one of you, and I promise I won't be a burden. Please, I'm begging you!"

As he spoke, he lowered his torso into a deep bow. It was a simple bow, but it was hard to say no to his sincerity.

All he wanted was to keep living, and who was I to say no to giving him a chance to grow up without trouble?

"Yes to everything except the part about you being a bother," I said. "If we're too courteous with each other, we won't really be a family now, will we?"

After deciding to take Shaun in, we checked him out of the hospital that very night and brought him home.

Chapter 1580

We sat in three cars on the way back. Ashton and I naturally sat in the same one, and he kept playing with my fingers the whole way home. Somehow, I felt anger rise up in me at his nonchalant demeanor.

I pulled my hand out of his and sat up straight with my hands folded on my lap. I might as well have written the words, 'Don't touch me' in marker pen on my face.

It may be true that he have gotten rid of his prejudices about Shaun, but he also tried to make me look like the bad guy. Solving one did not mean I could forgive the other issue.

Traditionally, women were known to be detailed and have a practically perfect memory, so there was no way he was going to fool me.

Ashton turned around instinctively at my harsh reaction and paused at my impatient expression. He smiled casually. "If you're still angry about me making a decision about Shaun on my own, you can pretty much stop now."

"Really? Go ahead then, what's your excuse?" I said as I folded my arms over my chest. I was interested to see what arguments he had cooked up this time.

He had his own ups and downs when it came to business, but when faced with his wife's temper, he knew exactly what to say and do to get me to forgive him.

"Haven't you realized Audrey's feelings?" Ashton asked me with a hint of a smile hovering on his lips.

"Feelings?" I asked, surprised.

Right as the word left my mouth, I discovered what Ashton was talking about.

Audrey clearly had some different feelings toward Shaun.

I had always been purposely avoiding the topic. For starters, I was under the impression that even though she had been influenced by media from other countries, that didn't mean that she would mature so quickly. Secondly, since we were talking about Shaun right now, there were so many uncertainties that I had to take into account. If I didn't think about it, it wouldn't happen... or so I thought.

To me, a child's idea of love was fickle and unstable. I knew she would eventually change her subject after her feelings reached their peak.

Obviously, the only exception was a kid's love for their parents.

Ashton looked away without answering me. He shifted into a more comfortable position and said casually, "Being a father has taught me a lot of things, and I've been thinking about a lot more things as well. Audrey's only six, but I've already thought about her marrying out of the family, of how she might meet a*sholes in the future. I haven't been able to relax since thinking about the things she could go through. That's why, when Shaun started becoming the target of her affection, I wasn't willing to give him a chance even though he saved her. Even if I became the bad guy, I didn't want to let anyone hurt my daughter."

I felt like laughing as I wondered when Ashton had suddenly become such a sentimental person.

Still, I did relate with him when it came to worrying about Audrey.

"Then why did you change your mind, Mr. Fuller?" I asked jokingly.

Ashton looked at me and took a deep breath, displeasure evident on his face. "Haven't we settled everything by now? You've been calling me 'Mr. Fuller' for a few days now. Is it really appropriate?"

“Why wouldn’t it be?” I shrugged with an innocent look on my face.

It had always been rather fun to mock Ashton a little from time to time. Appropriate or not, I felt like I should have been allowed to have some fun once in a while.

“So you’re saying I can stop calling you ‘honey’ and start calling you ‘Ms. Stovall’ then?” Ashton shot back huffily.

“Hmm...” I hummed, genuinely thinking about it. It sounded rather interesting, so I nodded. “Sure!”

Ashton fell back into his seat as he pinched his brow and unbuttoned the first button on his shirt. He then began taking big breaths as he pretended to feel faint.

I couldn’t believe how much of a jokester Ashton was becoming, what with the whole childish act even at his age. I burst out laughing and said, “What? Are you feeling sick?”

Ashton shook his head around, looking a bit helpless. “Oh, definitely. I think it’s pretty bad, too.”

For some reason, his simple joke scared me badly. My smile immediately froze on my face.

The car fell into an awkward silence and Ashton realized soon enough. He opened his eyes and turned toward me. At the sight of my pale face, he placed a hand over mine and said seriously, “I’m just kidding. Don’t take that seriously. I’m as fit as a fiddle. I haven’t paid you back for all I’ve done, remember? I’ll be fine.”

The minute Ashton became more serious, his tone changed and became much calmer. He looked down in sorrow. "I'm just fighting a battle with myself, aren't I?"

I didn't know what he meant, but I still found his sudden sorrow interesting and looked up subconsciously.

After successfully diverting my attention, he smiled and said self-deprecatingly, "Do you want to know about the ridiculous ideas I've been having recently? I started thinking about going back to the past and making different choices. Funny, isn't it?"

I smiled and didn't reply.

Sometimes, being imaginative was a good thing. At the very least, it meant that Ashton was beginning to let go of his dark past. Whether it was realistic or not was another story, because all I could ever really sense were whatever perverted thoughts he was having in his head every night.

"You should get a new hobby," I said absentmindedly. He clearly had way too much free time on his hands.

Everyone was the same. The moment someone became too free, they would begin to overthink. The more one overthought, the more one would lose control of their emotions, and that was dangerous.

His smile became even brighter. "I'm happy with the life I'm leading right now. Having a wife and kids is my favorite hobby."

His words were so pure it was almost as if I could see the altar and the priest asking us to exchange our vows.

I started to suspect if he had gone anywhere recently, like a sweet-talking 101 class, perhaps. He had recently become much too smooth with his words.

I was certainly touched, but based on what I knew about him, there was an underlying innuendo directed at me. The moment I agreed, I would have to pay the price.

I decided not to do that.

Instead, I pulled my hand out of his grip again and became serious. "Let's talk about the actual issue right now. It'll be hard to do it at home."

I silently gave myself a pat on the back for getting rid of the lovey-dovey atmosphere that was beginning to develop.

Ashton sat up straight, slightly disappointed at his failed plan. "It's not like we can stop Audrey from ever falling in love and getting married, right? Since we'll have to go through this sooner or later, then we might as well keep an eye on him since young. We'll be able to get a proper look at him and lower any risks. It makes sense, doesn't it?"

Something sounded a little bit off with what he was implying.

Wanting to raise the boy who was going to marry our daughter in the future sounded pretty strange to me.

"Are you kidding me?" I said in surprise. "Kids are fickle creatures. Audrey's only six! Are you going to adopt every boy she gets interested in?"

"Well, I must say I haven't thought about that," Ashton said seriously. He actually started thinking about it out loud with a frown on his face. "I guess it's not a problem to have ten, or maybe twenty. Ah, but if

Audrey gets John's bad habit of falling in love with everyone he meets, then I'd need to recalculate where my money is going."

"Hold on now!" I stopped him hurriedly. "Are you thinking of raising a harem or something? Ten or twenty? What I meant was that you're wrong for thinking that you can reduce the risks of her getting hurt by doing this. Kids grow up and they change throughout their whole lives. How could we force her to marry someone simply because it's the safest option?"

Ashton looked at me before nodding seriously. "You're right. We'll have to keep it a secret from her, then."

My mouth fell open.

That was definitely not what I meant!

Ashton suddenly started to look more and more like a dragon, and Audrey had become the treasure trove he was protecting from pirates and princes alike.

Danger had helped the human race evolve, but it seemed to have the opposite effect on Ashton.

Everyone was their own individual. Even if we gave them clothes, food, and a roof over their heads, that still didn't give us the right to decide their whole lives for them. It seemed more ridiculous the more I thought about it.

I really hope he was just joking out of concern for Audrey.

"These are all secondary," Ashton said again. He had gotten rid of his previous attitude and sat with his fingers intertwined on top of his lap. His stare pierced through the gap between the door and the driver's seat as he glared at the car in front of us, which Shaun happened to be inside of. "That kid is determined. He's not going to take the easy way out, but he's also extremely versatile. What happened

today might leave a mark on him. Both you and I know that the seed of hate flourishing in him is only a matter of time. There are two ways to settle this: first, we could make him disappear forever.”

Chapter 1582

At this, Ashton paused. When he turned back to look at me, the piercing gaze had already mellowed out into a gentle smile. “But I know you wouldn’t want that, which is why I decided to bring him home. It’s less of a problem whether they actually fall in love or not. Rather, it would give us the opportunity to see whether he would grow up to become a threat to us, no?”

The need to have a perfect plan for everything had already been carved into Ashton’s bones, but I had to say, he successfully convinced me.

One could never predict how sly and cunning the enemy could be. The only way to win in a battle of wits was to be more cunning than everyone else.

There was no such thing as a completely unselfish hero. Everyone, regardless of who they were, always subconsciously looked out for themselves. It was simply human instinct to think about the ways something could benefit or harm you.

At least, from today onward, Shaun now had a home as well as proper protection. Under the Fuller family, no one would ever treat him differently from our kids again. Both Ashton and I would make sure of that.

I was still unsatisfied at being so easily convinced by Ashton. Even though I was already agreeing deep inside, I purposely started to argue, “How sure are you that you can control him?”

Human beings were ever-changing. Not even God could anticipate how something might turn out, much less us.

Ashton suddenly lay down on my lap and closed his eyes. At ease, he murmured, “Even the strongest hero falls to temptation.”

As he spoke, he even stretched out languidly like a cat basking in the sun. Even though I started trying to get him off, it was practically impossible to move him.

I couldn't do anything. The very moment I looked up, I noticed Joseph looking at us through the rearview mirror as he studied us secretly with a devious smile on his face. My cheeks heated up and all I could do was turn away and look at the passing scenery, deciding to leave Ashton be.

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We finally got home and met the people we had been missing for so long.

“My dear Scar! I've missed you!”

Someone dressed in a floral suit with gold-rimmed sunglasses strutted toward me with open arms.

I instinctively stepped back and Ashton reached out to press a hand against the other's chest. “Excuse me, who are you calling Scar? In this house, there's only Mrs. Fuller. If you make the same mistake next time, I'm kicking you out.”

After he spoke, he pushed lightly and the man stumbled back a few steps.

He pulled a face and took off his sunglasses as he ranted, "I've been wondering why you've become so sensitive recently. Don't you know what manners are? I was already polite enough since she was your wife! If not for that, I'd already been hugging her!"

I finally got a proper look at him.

Holden really never changed. His actions and fashion sense were still as flamboyant as ever. As always, he was also extremely loud.

I had only heard about him from John. For example, he ganged up with the Hawen mafia to get rid of some disrespectful and huffy seniors. I also heard about how some big donations in his name had suddenly turned him into some angel of two small neighboring countries. He worked with both the dark and light sides, and he had a steady grip over his place as the head of the Taylor family.

"No, thank you," I said with disdain as I walked past him and gently coaxed both kids to go upstairs first.

Holden looked at me with an ambiguous smile as he mocked, "The two of you must be baby-printing machines."

His tone led me to believe that he almost definitely had misunderstood things.

He was so talented at babbling on and on that I felt like I had aged ten years by the time he finished prying. I decided to just change the subject and move into the main topic. "What brings you here, Mr. Taylor? I know you're a busy man, so just come out with it. I would hate to waste your precious time."

Holden chuckled evilly before following me to the living room and sitting down with one leg idly crossed over the other. "It's been six years and yet you're still so sharp with your words. I guess the saying of time mellowing out women really doesn't apply to you."

"The same goes for you, too." I chuckled. "Your skin looks just the same as before."

“Really?” Holden actually lifted a hand and caressed his own cheek and chin.