

When There Is Nothing Left But Love

Chapter 179-182

Chapter 179

This was my first time in K City. Being the country's capital, it came with rich historical background. Not only did it pay homage to its rich past, but it also served to usher in its even brighter future.

However, such a large city meant that it came with its own set of problems, namely traffic. Ashton had one hand on the steering wheel while his other drummed impatiently against the steering wheel.

I looked at the scenery outside the car window distractedly. I may have seemed calm on the outside, but I was actually quite nervous.

I had never met Ashton's aunt before.

The city center was a glorious sight. In an area where every square inch of land was worth a lot of money, they had also developed natural green pockets and parks. The people who lived here were super-rich with their cars dotting the parking lots.

When I got out of the car, I noticed that even shrubs and trees in the area were exotic. There was also an eye-catching lily pond in the center, where pink and white lilies were in full bloom.

Ashton took me along a cobblestone path. As we walked up the stairs, we soon reached another stately-looking Oriental-style villa.

In the two years that I'd been with Ashton, I'd seen plenty of luxurious villas. The property in front of me was particularly outstanding and overwhelming.

Standing at the gate was a very composed woman who looked to be in her thirties. She wore a dress the color of ink, embroidered with daisies.

As soon as she saw us, she greeted us with a joyous smile. "Well, I'd been expecting you both for breakfast instead! Since you took so long to arrive, we can only have lunch."

"I apologize. The traffic was terrible!" replied Ashton, looking sheepishly at her.

His gaze returned to me. All this while, he hadn't let go of my hand yet. "This is my wife, Scarlett."

The woman looked at me indulgently as her smile widened. She pulled me towards her for a closer look. "So she is the woman father chose? She has an elegant and good-natured air, plus she also looks beautiful even though she's with child!"

I grinned and said, "Hello, Aunt Sally."

George Fuller only had three children in his lifetime. Out of the three, two were sons. The eldest died young, leaving only one other male in his wake. The second son was more carefree and wasn't particularly interested in corporate affairs. Little else was known about his daughter, Sally Fuller.

With all the introductions out of the way, Aunt Sally then led us both into the villa. With its white walls and black tiles, the building had a simple color palette. However, there was no denying that the materials and overall design were top-notch.

Next to the villa was an open-air yard area. From here, I could see someone sitting under a sunshade, drinking tea with a book in his hands. Next to him lay a large gray Tibetan mastiff. I wasn't particularly fond of dogs, especially large ones like this intimidated me.

I couldn't help but lean against Ashton, instinctively clutching his elbow.

Having noticed my reaction, Ashton paused to glance at what triggered it before looking away.

"That's your Uncle Benjamin's son, Marcus," said Sally with a smile. "You're both of the same age, Ashton."

Ashton nodded and said nothing else.

I had been feeling odd since I entered the villa. Sally looked to be only a few years older than Ashton, yet when she introduced Marcus, she referred to him as 'your uncle Benjamin's son'.

Ashton had never even mentioned anything about Sally Fuller. Although I had my doubts, I couldn't just blurt my thoughts out and ask questions. That would've been tactless.

As we entered the foyer, I couldn't help but glance at Marcus, who was still lounging on the deck. He was dressed in an off-white shirt and gray slacks with white household slippers. Marcus exuded an air of elegance and gentility, despite the attire he was clad in.

A man like this would've been the perfect catch for any woman.

Suddenly, I heard my name being called in the distance. Putting aside my thoughts, I hastily continued down the foyer.

"You're pregnant, dearest," said Sally with a gentle smile. "You should watch your movement."

I nodded. My scalp prickled as I had the feeling that someone was watching me. Instinctively, I turned around.

Marcus had been looking at me, his gaze clear as day. As our eyes met, I was stunned. I smiled on impulse and nodded slightly, hoping that it would pass for a greeting.

He furrowed his brows at me for a moment and went back to his book.

The foyer leading into the living room was bright and luxuriously decorated. An expensive and well-maintained grand piano was placed near the staircase, further highlighting the sophistication of the decor.

Sally instructed her staff to set about preparing lunch before inviting us all to have a seat in the living room. 'Your Uncle Benjamin is at the office, but he'll be back soon.'

She then directed her gaze at me before asking, "You're seven months pregnant, right? Do you know when the baby is due?"

I smiled at her gently before glancing at Ashton. "Yes, he's had everything arranged."

Sally nodded. The grin on her face was enough to warm anyone's heart.

After a brief chat, Sally ushered us into the backyard for some tea. Although the two were family, Ashton did not speak much, so Sally had to fill in most of the gaps.

She asked about all sorts of things. From the Fullers to the company and of other updates, but the one thing she hadn't asked about was Old Mr. Fuller.

Ashton's responses were brief and made for sufficient banter as he answered each of those questions. A cursory glance in Sally's direction made me notice that she had red-rimmed eyes. I gingerly got up and said, "Why don't you both catch up, Aunt Sally? I've been sitting for too long, and my back feels a little uncomfortable."

Sally got up as well, with some concern etched on her face. "We have a personal doctor employed here. Shall I ask him to take a look at you?"

I quickly shook my head. "There's no need, really! I'll just take a walk. Please, continue."

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Ashton glanced at me and said, "Alright, but do be careful."

Seeing this, Sally smiled at me with gratitude in her eyes. If Ashton were unwilling to discuss the Fullers, I couldn't just interject on her behalf. As such, this was a private matter within the family. A person as elegant or composed as Sally would definitely not want me around to witness her impending faux-pas.

I decided to take a stroll, marveling at the size of the yard. I followed a cobblestone path and soon found a shady place to sit in silence and observe my surroundings.

However, Marcus's arrival immediately shattered the silence that I had been enjoying.

A tall and slender figure loomed over me with a condescending look in his eyes.

For the sake of maintaining decorum, I got up and greeted him with a smile.

He furrowed his brows again, still clutching the book he was reading earlier. His gaze fell onto my swollen belly before asking, "A Fuller child?"

I was a little taken aback by how abruptly he had asked about the child in my belly. I paused to collect my thoughts before nodding at him. "Well, I'm Scarlett. Nice to meet you."

He nodded and didn't say much, but there was no mistaking the hostility beneath his lowered gaze.

His reaction made me feel puzzled. I wonder why he was so hostile towards me, seeing as we've never met?

Fortunately, he simply grunted a response at me and left.

By the time we had lunch, it was already two in the afternoon.

There were only five of us present at the table. Apart from Sally, Ashton, and myself, there were two others, Marcus and Benjamin, both of whom were formally introduced then.

At a glance, Benjamin appeared to be in his fifties, at least. He also seemed to be surprisingly warm and gentle despite being a middle-aged man in an industry as ruthless as business or finance.

For people like Benjamin and Sally to appear together in public as husband and wife, I'm assuming they were prone to gossip. After all, the visual image they both conjured was startling. Benjamin looked much older than the more youthful Sally.

However, all other queries I had instantly vanished the moment a woman named Sharon appeared.

What was initially a quiet and harmonious meal was disrupted by the arrival of this middle-aged woman who clearly meant to start a fight. Her eyes were full of tears, her voice hoarse, but that did not stop her. "Listen here, Benjamin White. I can ignore your dalliances with your mistress and still put up with you being with her, but this is going too far. Why did you will the company to this woman instead of your flesh and blood? Yes, have you forgotten about him? Our son? Are you hell-bent on making him the joke of K City?"

The woman shuddered and looked venomously at Sally. "Sally Fuller, just what have you done? I know that I haven't been able to compete with you for the last ten years! You've already ruined my marriage and my family, so why are you now targeting my son?"

Sally was quite surprised at the revelation. She turned to look at Benjamin with a frown and asked, "When did you will the company to me?"

"Sooner or later, they will be yours. I'm getting older and won't be around for much longer." Benjamin sighed dejectedly and looked at Sharon. "I have not neglected our son. Marc will inherit all of my other assets, so he'll have a promising future in M Country when the day arrives."

Sharon was still unsatisfied with the explanation and could only see red. "This company was something we built and managed together over the years. Why are you giving it to an outsider?"

"Sally is not an outsider. She is my wife." As he said this, his tired gaze fell on Marcus. Warily, he said, "Take your mother home."

Marcus arched a brow with an impassive yet dangerous look on his face. "Home? Doesn't she live here?"

"You—" Before he could finish, Benjamin lapsed into a coughing fit. In a panic, Sally immediately rushed to his side and tried to ease his discomfort. "I don't want to have anything to do with the company," said Sally, seemingly distraught. "Please stop forcing him. He's already in poor health! Just go home and leave us be."

This was directed at both Marcus and Sharon.

Sharon could only stare resentfully at the couple. In a huff, she quickly grabbed Marcus's hand. With a shaky voice, Sharon asked him to take her home.

Marcus observed Benjamin and Sally with a grim expression on his face. He sat there unmovingly for a while, contemplating his actions. If not for how upset Sharon was, he would've likely taken out more of his anger on the couple.

Ashton and I weren't meant to witness this. This was a private family spat, after all. I released the breath I had been holding instinctively. Having seen what just happened, I now understood why Grandpa did not want to acknowledge Aunt Sally's presence.

All three generations of the Fullers made a name for themselves by joining the army and have received praise for their meritorious service to the nation. They were raised with good values, but things took a different turn when Grandpa led the family. He didn't want the future generations to be living such dangerous lives anymore. Thus, he left the army and founded the Fuller Corporation, steering the family towards business ventures instead.

I wasn't blind to why Sharon came here and kicked up such a big fuss. From what I gathered, Benjamin's son was in his thirties, yet Sally was only thirty-five years old. I could tell that their marriage was definitely not a simple one.

The unfortunate incident suddenly made the atmosphere deeply uncomfortable for everyone present. What was supposed to be a pleasant meal turned into a disaster in the end.

The doctor employed at the villa was later called into Benjamin's room as Sally accompanied him.

With that, evening had already approached. Benjamin was already feeling better and was fast asleep. Sally breathed a sigh of relief and looked guiltily at Ashton. It was evident that she blamed herself for this. "I apologize for my oversight. It's my fault that lunch was ruined."

Ashton didn't respond immediately but merely studied her for a brief moment. Coolly, he asked, "Do you regret it?"

Sally could only smile bitterly at the question. "Regret? It's too late for that. It's been so many years now and life goes on."

Ashton pursed his lips and didn't have much else to say. Tugging my arm, he looked at Sally and said, "Well, I think it's about time for us to head back."

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Based on their interaction, there was no mistaking the fact that they did care about each other. However, it was getting late, so Sally didn't try to hold us back from leaving. What they had left unsaid would have to wait.

I got into the car and stared at the scenery outside the window. As Ashton drove, he asked, "What do you feel like eating?"

I shook my head. "I am not feeling particularly hungry."

My meeting with Sally a few hours ago left a deep impression. She seemed as majestic as a phoenix and commanded a sense of awe from the people around her. This, together with the worldliness she possessed, was a force to be reckoned with, making her very desirable as well. A woman like her could've had any man she wanted, so why did she choose such an

old spouse? Given their age gap, people would've also spread nasty rumors about her as well.

I glanced sideways at Ashton and found that his eyes were fixated on the road. The expression on his face was unreadable. Wishing to break the silence, I said, "Aunt Sally must really love Benjamin."

If you are willing to shoulder that much of a burden for someone, surely that means you love him dearly.

Hearing this, Ashton furrowed his brows and pursed his lips as he looked at me. "What is love?"

I was stunned at the question and couldn't answer that immediately. What is love? Come to think of it, I had no earthly idea.

It was dark by the time we reached home. Despite my exhaustion, Ashton still managed to get me to eat something. After that, I immediately went to bed.

When I awoke the next day, it was already noon. Ashton was nowhere to be seen.

As I made my way downstairs, I found out that Ashton had made arrangements for Molly to tend to me. "You're awake, Mrs. Fuller! Mr. Fuller is currently out on business, but he left instructions asking me to take care of your needs. Are you hungry?"

I nodded. I gingerly massaged my temples, trying to soothe the dull ache that I felt around my head. I must've slept too much.

After a simple meal, I was informed that we had a visitor. Sally had decided to drop by.

The weather in K City was hot today, so it was no surprise that she was appropriately dressed. Sally wore a long skirt with her hair pulled up in an updo. Having noticed that I'd just finished my meal, she smiled and said, "Well, I was thinking of asking you to grab a quick bite with me if you hadn't eaten yet! We're going out!"

"Have you eaten yet, Aunt Sally?" I asked. Glancing over at Molly, I asked her to prepare something for Sally as well.

"It's alright. I've eaten at home," replied Sally, who waved the request aside. She then tugged at my arm gently and asked me to get dressed. "Let's go on an outing! I'm assuming you're not too familiar with K City, and we should fix that."

I wanted to refuse but found it hard to do so. After all, she was merely being kind. A blatant refusal would have reflected poorly on me. In the end, I just nodded and gave in.

As I contemplated what to wear, I couldn't help but marvel at Ashton's fastidiousness. My closet was full of clothing for pregnant women. After rummaging about inside for a bit, I pulled out a white sundress to wear. With that sorted, Sally led me out of the villa.

Because I couldn't drive, she brought her driver along as well.

Sally sat with me in the back seat. As we chatted, she held my hand. If I were to be perfectly honest, the gesture was too intimate for my liking and made me feel uncomfortable.

Fortunately, it didn't take long to arrive at the shopping mall. Situated in the city center, the atmosphere was quite vibrant.

As we both exited the car, she instructed the driver to find a place to wait and dragged me into the mall. "Since you've just arrived, I think you'd have quite a bit of shopping to do! Besides, you're pregnant now, and movement might be inconvenient for you soon, so let's buy everything you need today!"

I nodded and did not say much.

Just then, I received a message from Ashton asking me where I was.

I sent him the address and obediently tagged along as she prattled on about products that she would be selecting.

After about an hour, I started to feel weary. Pausing momentarily, I blurted, "Aunt Sally, I don't have that much more to buy. Let's go home!"

The weather in K City was too warm for strolling about.

Sally was still staring at the baby bottle in front of her, not knowing what to choose. She heard what I say and turned around to face me. "What's wrong? Are you tired?"

I smiled a little bashfully at her in response. "A little!" I knew that if I didn't say anything, I'd be stuck there for another hour. The very thought made me shudder a little.

That was when Sally decided to call her driver and ask him to bring our purchases to the car. She then dragged me to a nearby cafe. Excitedly, she said, "Then, we'll rest when we're tired. After this, we still have to look at maternity supplies. You're due in three months! A pregnant woman's needs must be meticulously looked after, so the products you choose for postpartum use are important too. After all, Ashton is still a man, and some things are still best handled by ourselves."

I nodded, but truth be told, I was exhausted already.

The cafe wasn't crowded at all. She had picked a quiet and elegant place away from the hustle and bustle of the crowds outside. After we found a seat, she proceeded to order some coffee.

"Letty, can you tell me more about the situation between you and Ashton? You know how cold he is. I used to sneak over to J City to see him, but he'd constantly avoid me." Sally sighed, clearly exasperated. "It wasn't till his last trip here that he mentioned his intention to bring you over for a few days."

I noticed the hint of bitterness in her expression as she said this. "I thought that this was going to happen every time for the rest of our lives, this game of hide and seek. I didn't, however, expect that he'd come to me on his own and bring you with him."

Seeing that her eyes were red with the hint of tears, I was a little flustered. "The Fullers are still your family, Aunt Sally. If you're willing to return, I'm sure they'll welcome you with open arms."

She looked at me and smirked. "After so many years, I doubt father wants to see me."

Did she mean Grandpa?

I was stunned but looked her straight in the eye. "Grandpa passed away a few months ago. Were you not aware of this, Aunt Sally?"

She was about to take a sip of coffee when she paused abruptly. With an incredulous look on her face, she asked, "He what?"

The expression she had on her face shocked me into silence. Sally lowered her head for a few moments, but when she looked at me again, I saw that her eyes were red and puffy. "W-what happened to him?"

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"Grandpa had been in poor health these last few years. He passed away from rectal cancer..." I trailed off, unsure of what else to say.

The coffee cup she was holding fell, and a loud crack was heard as it shattered on impact. In a panic, she got up to pick up the shards, but a waiter quickly stepped forward to handle the mess.

Sally's voice trembled as she apologized profusely for her carelessness.

The waiter hurriedly shook his head and tried to calm her down. "It's really nothing, ma'am. I just need to clean this up."

I stretched out my hand to help her up, not knowing how to comfort her. I knew that her apology was not actually meant for the waiter but her deceased father.

Soon enough, Sally was able to regain her composure. Ever the elegant woman that she was, she was able to recover quite quickly from the earlier mishap.

However, her expression was no longer as composed as it was when we entered earlier. Even though she was smiling, it was strained.

"It's getting late, Aunt Sally. Let's head back." I figured that after this revelation, she'd likely not be in the mood to continue shopping.

Sally nodded. "Yeah, let's go. You should be resting after a full day out."

Since I was fumbling around with my bag, I also failed to notice that Sally had stopped in her tracks on her way out. I looked up immediately, only to be surprised by what I saw.

It was just our lucky day.

Sharon, of all people, happened to be standing at the entrance of the cafe. Behind her was Marcus, who presumably just parked his car and entered the building.

"Marc, let's go somewhere less filthy," said Sharon cruelly. The expression on her face was truly a nasty sight.

Marcus glanced at me and frowned before nodding in response.

The pair turned around to leave but were stopped by a well-intentioned waiter. "Are you here for coffee? Where would you like to be seated?"

Sharon barely glanced at the waiter but kept her eyes on Sally the whole time. "Well, your establishment seems to be more suited to entertaining notorious maneaters." She sneered and continued. "A popular hangout spot for mistresses, perhaps, but definitely not for me."

The waiter was taken aback and turned to look at Sally as well.

The cafe was initially quiet, but the commotion had attracted the attention of the other patrons. Soon, whispers were heard among everyone present.

"What the f*ck is wrong with that woman?"

"Oh, haven't you heard? That's the ex-wife of Benjamin White. The one standing next to the lady in white is a scion of the Fullers, a prominent family here in J City. I think her name is Sally or something like that. I heard that she was his mistress for a good number of years but only became his official wife in the last two years or so."

"That explains it! No wonder the ex-wife is so unhappy about this. How can such a prominent family let the heiress be another man's mistress? What is the family even thinking?"

"Who knows! Maybe it's true love after all?"

"I've heard that the couple are about twenty years apart. Doesn't this age gap seem....a little too extreme?"

The sound of gossip was far from subtle. Sally glanced pale-faced at Sharon but did not say much else. She turned around and prepared to leave.

Sharon was quick to move in Sally's way, thus blocking her path. "What's the rush? Everyone is curious about your little love story, so why not tell everyone what happened?"

"Ms. Bauman, just because you enjoy airing your dirty linen in public, doesn't mean everyone else likes it too." I was aware that I was being a little harsh, but I could not let this slide. "You failed to retain something valuable and let it slip through your fingers. I'd suggest having some self-awareness and self-respect."

"Are you sure I'm the one without self-respect here?" Sharon was angered by my words, and her voice immediately went up by a few octaves. "Just who the hell do you think you are? What gives you the right to be pointing fingers at me?"

Sally immediately pulled me behind her, concerned that Sharon might hurt me. "Nobody is pointing fingers at you, but if you'd like us to, just keep going as loudly as you can. I dare you. By tomorrow, you'll be the talk of the town."

Sharon was so angry that she was nearly foaming at the mouth. She grabbed Marcus by the arm and gestured at both of us wildly. "Marc, it is clear that they are ganging up on me here! They're trying to humiliate me!"

I frowned. This woman clearly had no qualms about picking a fight, but this was still, by and large, a problem for the White family to sort out. Because of that, whose fault it was

remained unclear to me. However, her appalling behavior was embarrassing. Was the display she gave us yesterday not enough? Why did she have to cause a scene so publicly today as well?

Looking at Marcus straight in the eye, I said, "You seem like a reasonably smart person, Mr. White. I'm sure that you're not going to continue blocking the way and turn us all into the joke of the century, right?"

Marcus raised a brow and did not say much. Instead, he stepped aside a little and muttered, "By all means."

The episode that happened earlier was a particularly exciting spectacle and it was definitely not a pleasant sight. With that, Sally hurriedly pulled me aside and tried to leave without bumping into either of them.

However, the entrance to the cafe was not spacious enough. Sharon, in her rage, refused to give way. Sally was reluctant to engage with her and marched out of the cafe.

I followed Sally closely from behind and couldn't help but steal a glance at Sharon. There was something quite pitiful about the state she was in right now. Having gone through a divorce at her age just meant that her marriage was far from perfect.

What I wasn't expecting was for Sharon to stumble in my direction and bump into me. Sensing that I was about to fall, I instinctively covered my belly in a feeble attempt to cushion myself.

My heart stopped for a moment as a chill overcame my body. The only thing I could think of was...

Having seen that I was about to fall, I felt my arm being pulled upwards by force. Another hand came around my belly and tried to keep me stable. The motion immediately snapped me out of my thoughts.

"Are you okay? Are you in a shock?" Sally held me by the arm and was now fussing over me in a panic.

I was alright, but the thought of falling gave me a cold sweat. I stood still and shakily drew in a breath while shaking my head at her. "I'm fine."