

When There Is Nothing Left But Love Chapter 1818-1822

Chapter 1818 Secret Meeting

Glee glowed in Nathaniel's eyes, and his lips instinctively curved into a smile. That was when I realized that he had a ring on him as well.

At first, I didn't think he knew what it meant to have the ring on, so I deliberately ignored it. I actually felt guilty and worried that he was forcing me to kick Ashton out of my heart. That was why I looked away and pretended to not have noticed anything.

"Alright then, let's go and have some food now. I'll take you to a meeting tonight," said Nathaniel. I couldn't tell if he was deliberately teasing me, but the hand he offered me was the one where he had his ring on.

He looked rather at ease, though, so I didn't have my guard up. I simply reached out to hold his hand and walked down the stairs with him. By the time we reached downstairs, John and the others had already left.

Nathaniel and I had a quick meal. I went to take a shower after that and changed my clothes. Then, he brought me out.

My previous experience in the poor village taught me to hold no hope for the trip that night. It was probably just a quick inspection, and he likely only brought me over because he worried that I would flee otherwise.

However, the car soon drove up to a luxurious resort, and I realized that I made a wrong guess. Again.

I remained confused when we got out of the car, and Nathaniel had to circle around to me. He draped his arm over my shoulder and led me into the long corridor. As we walked, he said, "I will show you how sincere I am."

It made no sense, and I wondered what game he was playing at the time.

As we ventured down the corridor, I noticed that no other guests were present there. A few servers would show up every now and then, but no one else was within sight. The land in K City was expensive, so that resort likely wouldn't last long if business remained that stagnant.

Nathaniel knew every inch of that private room, though. He had an earpiece on and was talking into a microphone. All it took was one word from him to get a beefy bodyguard to stand by the door. Security cameras were installed everywhere, and they recorded everything that happened there.

The bodyguards must know Nathaniel because they didn't budge, even as Nathaniel brought me over. Their eyes remained alert, and they looked almost as stiff as a robot.

The room's decoration differed from the rest of the place. It had modern furniture, and the design was minimalist yet luxurious. A few paintings hung on the wall, and they were obviously the work of famous painters because they truly stood out.

We had to walk past another door and take a turn before we reached our destination.

A long table and a few chairs were the only things in that room. Every single seat was taken, and among them were a few elderly individuals who had a scowl on their faces. Sitting right across them were a bunch of younger men and women, and Ashton was one of them.

We were the last ones there. Nathaniel let me take the most prestigious seat and stood at the side to apologize. "Sorry, there was a slight delay, and we were late."

He then had a server get another chair over and sat beside me.

My first instinct was to shoot a look at Ashton. He rested one arm on the table while having his other arm at the backrest. A quick glance would suggest that he was relaxed, but the way his fingers tapped against the table revealed that he was anxious.

Nathaniel noticed that as well. His tone was hostile when he barked, "Oy, who said that you're allowed to be here?"

An elderly man with a head of white hair spoke up before Ashton could. The former pointed out, "You have been missing lately, and Ashton has been managing everything, so the few of us made a decision. We appointed him as Leslie's temporary replacement."

Another elderly man, who was balding, spoke up as well. His tone was off, but he insisted, "This is only right. Everyone knows how skilled Ashton is. Besides, Leslie was so young, and he only died because someone leaked the information to the police. There were so many loose ends, and we wouldn't have regained our footing if Ashton hadn't worked so fast and so well. Nat, you don't wish to deal with minor matters like these anyway, so just outsource it to Ashton. He can do it well."

When the guy said that the information was leaked to the police, he probably meant the incident where Ashton was shot. If that were true, then everyone there was Nathaniel's business partner.

At first, I thought that Ashton was simply ambushed. I didn't know that someone had died. It means that this whole thing is much more dangerous than I initially imagined.

Chapter 1819 Venturing Into Domestic Market

Looking at the current situation, Ashton seemed to have won a lot of support in the company through Nathaniel's blackmailing, which could be considered a blessing in disguise.

A faint smile played on Nathaniel's lips as he threw a question back at the two condescending old men. "What are you trying to say?"

Although he maintained a calm demeanor without making a fuss, the chilling aura he was exuding seeped silently into the bones of every person in the room.

As soon as he spoke, the few people who had been aggressively demanding him to hand over power immediately stopped talking.

No one dared to be the first to speak up.

Right then, a sharp voice of a woman rang out. "Mr. Warner and Mr. Chadwick were merely speaking the truth. You can go ahead and indulge yourself in romantic bliss, but don't delay the group's progress."

It was then that I noticed the only other woman at the table. She was the perfect embodiment of an ice queen, with attractive features and a far more imposing aura than Freja. Her dark-red lips gave her the impression of a femme fatale.

She shot me a cold look when she caught me staring at her, but then she shifted her gaze away immediately afterward.

Nathaniel seemed fazed by her words, judging by his lips curling into a mocking smile. "Okay. I accept all your opinions. I'll spend more time on the group's affairs in the future."

Everyone fell silent, looking dubious but making no move to reply.

Seeing the lack of response, Nathaniel leaned back in his chair and crossed his arms in apparent nonchalance as he said, "Let's discuss your thoughts on venturing into the Chanaean market."

Hearing this, Desmond Henley, who had remained silent while sitting next to Nathaniel, cleared his throat. "Let me say a few words. I think that the risks are too high alongside great uncertainty. The Chanaean police are far stricter than those in any other country. We'll lose everything should things go wrong, so it's not advisable to take risks."

Vincent also voiced his agreement, "We joined the group back then on the premise that we won't venture into the domestic market. We should be content ourselves with earning money from foreigners and having peaceful lives. Don't leave us nowhere to turn to in the future."

The elderly Theodore was naturally on their side as he nodded vigorously to their words. "That's true. Look at those who are doing businesses in the gray areas in the legislation. Hardly any of them can afford to conduct affairs openly like us. Men cannot be too greedy."

Nathaniel nodded his head before turning to look at the indifferent woman. "Do you agree with them?"

Without missing a beat, she replied nonchalantly, "I abstain my vote."

“All right, then. I hereby announce that Ramona Sutton will take charge of the domestic market. My assistant will liaise with you later. Any questions?” Nathaniel ignored Ashton as he directly made the decision.

After he finished speaking, the faces of the elderly men darkened as they fidgeted uneasily in their seats.

“Whatever.” Ramona got up and left right after she said that.

After that, Ashton followed suit.

There was only a young man with no right to speak left in the room, exchanging glances with the senior members. Despite being furious at Nathaniel’s decision, they did not dare speak their mind.

However, the young man was more perceptive than the others and knew who was in charge, so he immediately plastered on a flattering smile. “Mr. Hall, Chanaea is such a big market, and it’s way too stressful for Ramona to manage on her own. Perhaps I can share the burden?”

Nathaniel gave the man a once-over and nodded soon after. “Okay.”

“Wonderful! I’ll be sure to do a splendid job!” The man broke into a huge smile, not forgetting to hand me a name card as he added, “Mrs. Hall, you’re the only woman that Mr. Hall has ever brought to a meeting with the higher-ups. I’m Teddy Barker. Don’t hesitate to look for me should you need my help in the future.”

Nathaniel shot him a death stare. “Do you have a death wish?”

“Mr. Hall is so protective...” Teddy beamed as he hurriedly put away the name card. He then placed his hands together in an apologetic gesture. “My apologies to you both for the slip-up. Please be magnanimous and don’t harbor any grudge against me.”

Chapter 1820 Dispute

“Get lost!” At Nathaniel’s bellow, Teddy hurriedly gathered his things and left without making a sound.

Only when he had left did Nathaniel turn to look at me. “Are you all right?”

I shrugged to indicate that it was not a big deal, but that did not stop me from roasting him. “He does look like a teddy bear dog.”

It was originally said as a joke to liven up the atmosphere. However, several senior members seemed to take offense at it, as they left the room one after another the moment those words left my lips. I raised my brows in self-mockery. “They don’t seem to like me very much.”

Nathaniel’s lips curved upward slightly. “They don’t have to. It’s enough that I like you.”

“Speak properly, will you? That’s cheesy.” I ducked to avoid his face as he drew closer.

Nathaniel seemed to be in a good mood as he let it slide. He got up and led me out through a different door to a viewing platform at a high point of the villa.

The winter night of K City had always been chilly, especially on that night, as there were signs of incoming snow. Feeling the strong breeze on the mountain top, I instinctively wrapped my arms around myself as I stomped my feet to keep warm.

Nathaniel was still quite gentlemanly, seeing as he immediately draped his jacket over me.

I stood still when my body was finally warmed up. Then I began to survey the surroundings.

We seemed to be standing on the highest point of the viewing platform. Looking down, I noticed that other than the brightly lit villa in the distance and the dim lights of the viewing platform on the mountainside, the rest of the surroundings were pitch black.

While blowing warm air onto my hands, I asked, "What are you up to?"

For some reason, Nathaniel let out a chuckle as he walked over to a wooden bench at the side and sat down. While still maintaining his silence, he tilted his head to look at the sky with a blissful expression.

It's already late. Did he bring me here to have a heart-to-heart chat? He's pretty good at making my life difficult, isn't he? But of course I'll willingly go along with it if it were Ashton.

To avoid making him think that I was easy-going, I stubbornly stood at the side, fidgeting as I waited for him to grow weary of me and leave.

"What do you think of Ramona?" Nathaniel asked abruptly.

As I expected. He really knows the perfect place to talk. I petulantly replied, "Pretty. Can't afford to offend her."

He smiled. "You're my woman, and she's merely a subordinate. It is she who cannot afford to offend you."

"What are you trying to say? Are you telling me that I can bully whoever I want, and you'll back me up?" I said with a grin.

And become a heartless and vicious evildoer who is scorned by the whole world, just like him.

I did not say the last sentence out loud, of course. After all, it would be exhausting to argue at a place like this.

Nathaniel admitted without hesitation, "I suppose you can put it that way. You wouldn't want to be the person that is always being bullied, would you? In a world where only the fittest survive, you have to let others fear you to protect yourself."

"That's pure sophistry," I spat, unable to bear his words any longer.

"You always think that I'm wrong, but you never tell me what you think is right, and you refuse to communicate with me," he complained, sounding like a grumpy old lady.

I could not deny that he was good at reasoning, but I had no excuse to avoid it, so I argued back, "Your perception is fundamentally wrong. The cruelty that you speak of only exists in the uncivilized world. There is harmony and warmth in the world we're living in now. Of course, provided that there aren't any troublemakers like you. You don't have to bully others to protect yourself. As long as you protect yourself without hurting anyone, you can still live a good life."

"Do you think what you said will come true? So many people all over the world have died of various man-made causes. Even when they've done absolutely nothing, they still end up dead. This is the consequence of only knowing not to hurt others." Nathaniel narrowed his eyes with an unusually contemptuous look.

To him, the lives of those people were meaningless.

"Those were accidents, and it only happened to one out of millions of people. It's because of people like you who don't follow the rules and do whatever you like that such incidents happen. You're one of those culprits. I don't understand how you can sound so righteous!"

“Scarlett!”

My face was flushed red by the time our yelling had stopped.

See? I’m wasting my breath trying to advise an incorrigible man.

For a moment, our breaths were erratic as we stared at each other, becoming archenemies once again.

Bang!

A loud noise sounded in the sky. I instinctively turned and watched as the dazzling fireworks exploded at the highest point, transforming into colorful flowers for a brief moment before disappearing completely.

One after another they came as the sky became a stage for the display with no signs of stopping.

They reminded me of the festive season in J City. With no explicit orders to ban fireworks, they could be spotted in the sky at any point throughout the night of new year’s eve, illuminating the entire city as a symbol of welcoming the new year.

Ashton was still with me at that time. Summer was also very clingy, and the Fullers had not met with any mishap. The family I had then is the only family I know.

Those were beautiful memories. However, alongside the flow of time came sadness that raged like a torrent. The brilliance of the fireworks only served to amplify the desolation in my heart, and the cause of it all was Nathaniel.

I gritted my teeth as my hands curled into fists. The smile that I had on my face due to those memories gradually turned into a scowl of resentment.

However, Nathaniel thought that I was engrossed in the fireworks. He came forward and hugged me from behind. "I may not know what love is, Scarlett, but I know for sure that at this moment, I am reluctant to leave you. Although I don't believe that relationships can last a lifetime, I swear that my feelings for you are like these fireworks. Even if they're short-lived, they're still intense and passionate."

I flared my nostrils as I said in a cynical tone, "There's no need for the sweet talk. What you're trying to say is that you're currently interested in me, so you'll do anything to make me stay. Once you've lost interest, you hope that I'll learn from the fireworks and vanish from your sight."

Nathaniel chuckled. "Maybe."

As he said that, he released me and led me toward the guardrails. "Stand closer so you can get a clearer look."

However, as we drew closer, we could clearly see the situation on the viewing platform directly below us. The sight rendered us silent instantly.

Under the warm light of the pavilion on the viewing platform stood a man and a woman.

It was not hard to tell from their silhouettes that they were Ashton and Ramona.

From afar, they looked like a perfect couple.

The two failed to notice us, as they were also looking at the fireworks.

“Ashton and Ramona are both outstanding within this industry. I think they’ll achieve great things if they’re together,” whispered Nathaniel.

Upon hearing that, I turned my face away and glared at him with narrowed eyes. Just say it straightforwardly that you wish to frame them on the pretext of having an affair. Don’t beat around the bush.

However, I still feigned ignorance. “What do you mean?”

Nathaniel looked down to meet my eyes, his lips curling upward as though he was gloating at the situation. “Just the literal meaning. The old me would have also chosen a woman who is evenly matched to be my other half. Would you take a guess as to whether Ramona would be Ashton’s choice?”

I smirked as I walked up to him and said through gritted teeth, “Nathaniel, you’re truly a despicable man.”

Right after saying that, I reached out and shoved him hard, causing him to stagger back a few steps.

He grabbed hold of the guardrail and proudly answered as soon as he steadied his stance, “Thank you. I have always been a despicable man.”

“Indeed. A gentleman would never defame his opponent to advance his agenda.”

With that said, I removed the jacket and threw it at him before making my way down the mountain using the same route we came.

Nathaniel followed closely behind me while still adding fuel to the fire. “No matter where you go, whatever that happened is already the reality. Hiding won’t change anything.”

“Says who? Tell them to stay there forever. If I don’t return and can’t see it, then I’ll reckon it never happened!” I exclaimed as I quickened my pace.

Chapter 1822 Spare Key

After returning home, I ran into the bedroom and locked the door when Nathaniel was not looking.

Knock! Knock!

“Open the door, Scarlett.”

Nathaniel came over not long after and knocked on the door several times.

“I won’t.” I leaned against the door, refusing to sleep on the same bed with him no matter what. “You have yourself to blame for leading me to see Ramona and Ashton. I don’t feel good, so I won’t let you get away with this. Go and sleep in the study!”

“You’re one smart girl,” he said softly with a slight tease in his tone.

It’s not because I’m smart, but his horrible acting betrayed him. While pretending to bring up Ramona, he led me to a position where I could clearly see the foot of the mountain. His motives were simply too obvious.

However, he came up with another argument in no time. “It’s true that I didn’t make it up out of nothing. They are indeed very close. If this wasn’t the case, you wouldn’t have witnessed it despite my schemes. Isn’t that so?”

Refusing to listen to his twisted logic, I retorted, "But I have the right to choose, and I can choose not to look. You need not worry about making decisions for me. That's it. Our conversation ends here. I don't wish to argue with you. I'm going to bed, and I wish you a sleepless night!"

I took off my shoes and jumped onto the bed before burying myself at the spot where Ashton had slept the night before. Then I turned over to stare at the ceiling.

I should be able to sleep soundly in our room tonight while smelling his distinct scent.

At the thought of Ashton, I could not help but wonder about his intention to approach Ramona.

From what I saw today, it's not hard to tell that Ramona isn't a conservative person. In some aspects, she may indeed get along very well with Ashton. He managed to reach his current position in such a short time, and there's hardly any room for advancement. In order to further divide Nathaniel's criminal group, he must win over his opponents. The attitudes of those senior members toward Ashton are apparent. However, as they're old, I bet they won't be of much help. The key person is still Ramona. Getting her onto his side might be the crucial factor in breaking down the organization. She doesn't seem to care much about love, so I wonder what he would do to move her.

I drifted off to sleep while still pondering over the matter.

While I was half asleep, I had the feeling of being engulfed in a warm embrace.

Thinking that Ashton had entered my dream, I did not reject it. Instead, I relaxed and let down my guard.

However, when I opened my eyes the next day, I was startled to find Nathaniel sleeping beside me. I jumped out of bed immediately and stood at the side barefooted.

Although he was awoken by the noise, he took his time to sit up, stretch his limbs, and lean against the bed frame. "Morning. Are you refusing to acknowledge this after waking up?"

I took one look at his expression and instantly boiled with rage, knowing that he was up to no good. "I was sure that I had locked the door. Why are you here?"

"There's an item in this world called the key. I'm not stupid as to not know how to use it. Besides, the spare key was in the study, and you even told me to go there. So, it's not my fault." Nathaniel gave me an innocent look, spreading out his hands as though he was speaking the truth.

"You dirty sc*mbag!" I rolled my eyes at him in disgust before fleeing into the bathroom and locking myself in it.

As soon as I closed the door, I rushed to the basin and splashed water on my face to try to calm down. After that, I stared blankly at my reflection in the mirror.

I hope I didn't do anything I shouldn't have done last night.

Knock! Knock! Nathaniel leaned against the bathroom door as he teased, "I didn't see you acting shy when you were curling into my arms last night."

"Get lost!" I bellowed.

He let out a few chuckles before his voice slowly faded into the distance.

Unwilling to bump into him downstairs, I loitered there for some time before heading down slowly.

When I reached the stairs, I even scanned the living room to make sure he was not there before heading to the kitchen in search of food.

However, I immediately caught sight of him checking his phone at the dining table as soon as I turned.