

When There Is Nothing Left But Love

Chapter 244-247

Chapter 244

After all, she is everyone's precious princess.

She pursed her lips as her features contorted with rancor. The tone in which she spoke to me was especially uncongenial. "I thought you hated Ash? Why are you back here?"

Amusement filled me as I countered, "No matter how much I hate him, we're still a legally married couple. Besides, I own half the rights to this house. If I don't come back, wouldn't that be an act of surrender?"

She curled her lips in disdain. "Oh, quit the snarky act. I'm not interested in fighting with you over money."

I raised my brows. "I find that hard to believe. After all, you've even set your sights on my husband."

Faced with her venomous glare, I turned and headed toward the yard before she could say something nasty to me and further dampen my mood. Realizing that it was already autumn in K City, I sighed at how time flew.

Perhaps Ashton had heard our voices outside. After a while, he came out. When he saw Rebecca, he frowned as his lips flattened into a line. "What are you doing here?"

Seeing her lover, a soft smile replaced the angry scowl on Rebecca's face. "Ash, I heard my father say that you'll be going to a border town next month to discuss the development project, so he told me to pass the collaboration contract to you."

Then, she signaled her nanny with her eyes, to which the latter took out a file and respectfully handed it to Ashton.

"Pfft!" I failed to stifle my laughter and ended up attracting their gazes to me.

Ashton pursed his lips as he ordered, "It's cold. Go in and put on a coat."

Rebecca shot daggers at me and gnashed her teeth in anger.

I ignored her death stare and walked up to Ashton, holding his arm to complain, "You were too rough earlier, so I don't really feel like walking so much. Can you go get it for me?"

To emphasize, I deliberately tilted my head slightly, revealing the bite mark on my neck.

My skin was delicate, so he would always leave a mark no matter where he bit me.

Perceiving Rebecca's increasingly vexed expression, I broke into an incredibly sweet smile at Ashton. "Please?"

Ashton was no fool, so he easily saw through my little trick.

An indiscernible frown appeared between his brows before he glanced at Rebecca. "Just get your father to look for me at the company for matters like this in the future. You don't need to come here."

"The weather's cold. Go home earlier," he added after a brief pause.

"Ash, I..." Rebecca wanted to say something but was cut off by Ashton.

"Send my regards to your mother," he said in a voice that had dropped a few octaves lower.

The hidden warning in his words was clear. Rebecca instantly tensed up, an aggrieved look taking residence on her face.

Ashton wanted to tug me back into the living room, but I released his arm at that time and said to him, "Go get me a coat. I'll send Ms. Larson off."

His brows drew together.

Seeing his hesitation, I reminded him, "You promised that you wouldn't question me no matter what I did."

After a short pause, he relented, "It's cold outside, so don't take too long."

I nodded and watched as he went back into the living room. Then, I turned back to Rebecca with a faint smile. "Let me send you off, Ms. Larson."

"That's not necessary!" Rebecca was upset after being given the cold shoulder, and seeing me only made her more displeased. "You couldn't even protect your own child, so stop gloating, Scarlett."

There was a cobblestone path that extended from the front door to where we were standing, and beside it lay a small pond.

Because of the cold weather, the fish inside were relatively inactive and the lotuses that bloomed on the water's surface had withered by now. To ensure that the pond stayed visually pleasant, snapped branches and leaves were frequently cleared away. Hence, the water was considered quite clean.

Having already shooed off the nanny, Rebecca supported her waist with the contempt on her face clear as day.

I couldn't help but sneer at her. "What is there for me to gloat about, Ms. Larson? Indeed, I failed to protect my child, but why don't we see if you can?"

Her eyes widened, seemingly just realized that she was standing close to the pond. I took a few steps toward her and grabbed her arm before yanking her to the edge of the pond.

Forcing her to look at the still surface of the pond, I said, "You won't drown even if you fall in. You'll only suffer a little bit. Why don't you jump in and see if you can protect your baby?"

"You..." she shrieked. "If you harm a hair on me, my father will give you hell!"

"Let's give it a try, shall we?" I smirked slightly and felt the urge to roll my eyes when she shivered.

"Don't you dare!" She raised her voice. "My father will never let you get away with it if you push me in!"

I felt bored listening to her yapping away about her father in an attempt to intimidate me, so I casually shoved her slightly in the direction of the pond.

She screamed in fright and instinctively pushed me away.

Splash!

Holy sh*t. The water during the cold seasons was really freezing. After thrashing in the water for a while, I was abruptly hauled out of the pond.

As the chilly air kissed my skin, I shivered violently.

Ashton wrapped the coat he had brought out around me before turning to Mrs. Eriksen who had anxiously followed him out and ordered, "Call Dr. Crest over now."

Mrs. Eriksen nodded profusely and proceeded to make the call.

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Ashton scooped me into his arms and shot a cold look at Rebecca, who was still dumbstruck.

Then, he snapped, "Next time, please refrain from setting foot in our humble abode. My wife has a frail body and can't handle your aggressive ways."

He was indirectly implying that Rebecca wasn't welcome here anymore.

As Rebecca slowly regained her senses, her eyes reddened while she anxiously tried to explain herself, "Ash, it wasn't me. I didn't touch her!"

Ashton scoffed, "So, are you saying that she fell in on her own?"

Rebecca once again defended herself, "She was going to push me in, but when I resisted, she fell in instead. It has nothing to do with me. She..."

"So, she couldn't even defend herself against you, a pregnant woman?" Ashton questioned. With his lips pressed into a tight line, he exuded a chilly aura.

"Rebecca, you should be well aware of why I've always indulged you. It was a privilege bestowed on you in return for Parker's kindness, but within these few years, you've completely exhausted that privilege." These words were admittedly brutal.

Rebecca's face had turned pale, and her eyes were red when she choked out, "My brother died because of you back then. How can you casually dismiss that just because of me? What's the meaning of this, Ash?"

"Do you need me to spell it out for you?" Ashton's breathing grew heavy as he suppressed his anger. "Go back and tell your mother that one of these days, we'll settle the scores between us."

With that, he carried me into the living room. After making the phone call, Mrs. Eriksen came out with an infuriated look on her face. Glancing at the pregnant woman standing outside, she said in a clipped tone, "I think it's time for you to leave, Ms. Larson. The Fullers are a simple family and can't keep up with your flair for drama."

Without waiting to see Rebecca's reaction, she shut the door in her face.

As my clothes were soaked through, water dripped onto the floor all the way to the bedroom.

Ashton directly carried me into the bathroom and placed me by the bathtub. Then, he turned on the hot water and reached out to remove my clothes, but I quickly dodged his hands.

"I'll do it myself!" I snapped.

Thereafter, I peeled off the coat around me and started undoing my clothes when I noticed that he was still standing off to the side. With a frown, I asked, "Do you like watching me undress?"

His frosty face broke into a smile. "Can't I?"

I stopped fiddling with my clothes to meet his eyes. "I'm sorry, Mr. Fuller, but I don't share your sentiment, so I'll have to ask you to leave."

He pursed his lips, but fortunately, he did as I said without any protests.

When I came out of the shower, there was a glass of milk on the nightstand while Ashton was nowhere in sight.

Casting a fleeting glance at it, I settled in front of the vanity mirror to blow-dry my hair. I was already frail to begin with. After falling into the pond, I wouldn't be surprised if I caught a cold.

Feeling lethargic but reluctant to sleep, I crawled under the sheets to warm myself.

Without Ashton here, I felt more relaxed. After reading a book, I fished out my phone to entertain myself.

Ashton came in with some documents in his hands, seemingly here to check up on me.

When he noticed me looking at my phone on the bed, his forehead creased. "Looking at your phone so often is bad for your eyes."

I flicked my eyes toward him and nodded brusquely before placing my phone on the nightstand.

After that, I burrowed underneath the blanket.

The bed sank slightly as Ashton sat beside me. "Finish the milk, then sleep for a while if you're tired."

"I don't want the milk!" I rejected as I had never been a fan of milk.

"Be a good girl, Scarlett. Get up and drink it," Ashton ordered. This was the first time I felt so annoyed by someone.

I flipped the blanket off me and stared him dead in the eye for several seconds. Then, I rolled out of bed in anger and grabbed the glass of milk before walking into the bathroom.

After pouring the milk into the toilet bowl, I came out and put the glass back down with a dark look on my face. "Please take the glass with you when you leave. Thanks!"

"Scarlett!" he growled. "Do you think this is funny?"

Flummoxed, I cocked a brow at him. "What's funny?"

Faced with my reaction, he seemed to be at his wits' end. After staring at me for a while, he sighed and said in a deflated manner, "Get some rest."

Watching him get up and leave, I pulled the blanket over myself and decided to do just that since I was indeed feeling a little tired.

Unfortunately, I couldn't fall asleep even though I was very sleepy. This feeling was torturous, to say the least.

After a few hours of rolling around in bed, I finally began to doze off.

Right then, the bedroom door was opened from the outside. Ashton walked in and stood beside the bed, his gaze landing on me. "Don't sleep too much during the day. Get up and eat something. You can continue sleeping after that."

It had taken me a painstakingly long time to finally drift off into sleep. Now that he had awoken me, I felt rather speechless. Paying him no heed, I kept my eyes shut and tried to let sleep take over me once again.

He walked up to me and pulled me up from the bed, saying in a stern voice, "Get up and eat something."

Anger tore through me, and I opened my eyes, shoving him away as I glared at him. "What's wrong with you, Ashton? Do you know how hard it is for me to get a good night's sleep? How many f**king times are you going to barge in on me? Have you ever considered my feelings?"

Perhaps I had reacted too violently. He frowned as a cold glint entered his eyes. "Fine, let's sleep together."

I was taken aback when he climbed into bed. Deep down, I was aware that there were certain things that could not be avoided forever.

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No matter how hard I struggled, he ignored it and coaxed me in a semi-domineering manner instead.

I dug my nails into his skin, scratching him wildly as I cursed, "You're a b*stard, Ashton!"

"Yes, I am!"

I began to suspect that he hadn't touched a woman at all during this period of time as he acted like a starved beast, ravaging me without restraint.

After the deed was done, he leaned against the headboard and lit a cigarette.

Under the dim light, I could discern the scratch marks on his sturdy chest. There were even faint bloodstains in a few spots.

I wanted to get up and wash my body, but his arms were wrapped around me, forcing my head to lie against his chest.

The smell of tobacco permeated the air in the room. When he finished smoking his cigarette, he said in a deep voice, "Let's set a date and time. I'll accompany you to see a psychiatrist."

I was dumbfounded for a moment, arching my neck to look at him. After he stubbed out his cigarette in the ashtray, I finally came to my senses and pursed my lips. "No!"

Besides finding me unresponsive, I couldn't think of any other reason he would suggest something like that right after we had sex.

I had never thought of getting treatment after my pregnancy. When there were already so many problems with my body, one more wouldn't make a difference.

Leveling my gaze with his, I said nonchalantly, "If you can't feel anything from me, you can look elsewhere from now on."

Ashton's brows snapped together, and he scooted down on the bed expressionlessly, then pinned me with a savage gaze. "Look elsewhere? Scarlett, you really don't know when to stop, do you? I want you to go for treatment because I don't want you to hurt anymore. And right now, you're unwell both physically and emotionally."

As I was enveloped in his arms, most of the light was blocked by his body. I frowned, not liking this cramped enclosure one bit. "This isn't the first day you know about my health problems. In fact, I have so many. How are you going to treat them all?" I challenged softly.

Without waiting for him to reply, I wriggled out of his embrace and went to the bathroom.

When I came out, he was sitting on the bed with the blanket covering his lower body and his phone in one hand. He looked at me and instructed, "Jared is downstairs. Change your clothes and go down to get yourself... treated."

What?

I threw the bath towel aside and replied coldly, "He can't treat me."

Ashton frowned. "Why not? He's a doctor."

I narrowed my eyes at him. "If I tell Dr. Crest that I'm unresponsive, what do you think he'll say? That I'm the problem? Or..." I trailed off.

He knew what I was implying perfectly well.

Seeing his brows furrowed together, I kindly reminded him, "I'm only unresponsive to you, so Mr. Fuller, I suggest that you find some time to get yourself checked."

When his face darkened, I immediately walked out of the bedroom because challenging a man's limits had consequences that I couldn't handle.

Sure enough, the moment I stepped out of the bedroom, a furious roar reverberated from inside. "Scarlett!" Following that was the sound of glass shattering.

I made sure to close the door behind me, lest his outburst disturbs the others.

When I went downstairs, I saw Jared sitting in the living room. Mrs. Eriksen had prepared a lot of sweet snacks for him, which he barely touched, only drinking a few sips of English breakfast tea.

Come to think of it, men usually don't fancy sweet snacks.

Upon hearing some shuffling sounds behind him, he looked back at me. His brows raised toward his hairline. "You've lost weight!"

Well... he's quite good at flattery.

I sat beside him and replied, "I didn't know you were so good at flattery." Girls always liked it when others said they had lost weight.

He took a sip of his tea, furrowing his brows slightly. "Did I sound like I was flattering you?"

"Yep!" I continued, "At least that's what I think." After all, no one wanted to be called fat.

He didn't speak anymore after that, perhaps finding it hard to continue the conversation.

Just then, Mrs. Eriksen came to me and said, "Letty, I cooked some food earlier. Come and eat a little bit first before letting Dr. Crest take a look at you."

"It's fine. I'm not hungry." With that, I looked at Jared and asked, "Do I look unwell to you?"

Jared arched a brow at me. "You do. Go eat something first."

I shouldn't have asked him...

I frowned when Mrs. Eriksen remained standing where she was. "Mrs. Eriksen, I'm really not hungry. You..."

"Does it mean you don't have to wear clothes if you're not cold? Go eat something." Ashton descended the stairs with a broody face.

The corners of my mouth turned downward. Well, someone seems to have improved in comebacks. He's even using analogies now.

I was about to snap a retort when my phone rang. The caller ID displayed on the phone screen was John's.

Seeing both Ashton and Jared staring at me, I said placidly, "Excuse me. I have to take this."

Ashton had caught sight of John's caller ID flashing across my screen. Narrowing his eyes a little, he said, "Just answer it here."

How childish!

I rolled my eyes at him and picked up the call. "Hey John, what's up?"

"Ashton seems to be interested in the OrbitTech project as well. We've been fighting in secret for so long now. If I give up this project, it'll very likely fall into his hands. What you need to do now is convince him to give up acquiring OrbitTech." John's voice wasn't loud, but given the silence in the living room and our close proximity, Ashton and Jared were able to hear everything he said.

I glanced at both of them before speaking into the phone, "Got it. I'm hanging up now."

"Wait!" John said hastily. "News about Uncle Louis accepting you as his goddaughter will probably become a hot topic in K City in the days to come. It's best if you and Marcus keep a distance from each other. Also, you should return to J City to settle the matters regarding OrbitTech as soon as possible. After Uncle Louis comes back from his inspection in other provinces and officially takes you into the family, you can proceed with your plans."

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Ashton looked at me, his lips curving up into a smirk.

I ignored him and said into the phone, "Alright, I got it. I'll hang up now."

After I ended the call, Ashton's eyes were still on me while his face seemed to have become a few more shades darker. "What plans do you have in mind? Even Louis Stovall is involved?"

"I'm planning to..." Divorce you!

However, I stopped myself halfway when I remembered that I still had to persuade him to give up acquiring OrbitTech. If I provoked him now, it would be difficult to get his cooperation later on.

Glancing at Jared, I asked, "Dr. Crest, would you like to eat together?"

Jared's eyes darted toward Ashton, and his mouth tugged upward slightly upon seeing the sullen look on his friend's face. Then, he nodded. "Sure. I'm actually quite hungry now."

We went into the kitchen together to find that Mrs. Eriksen had prepared quite a spread. A short while later, Ashton joined us in the kitchen as well.

Both men sitting beside me were brought up in similarly strict households, so their lessons kicked in and they kept silent throughout their entire meal.

After eating, Mrs. Eriksen tidied up the kitchen. I automatically extended my hand toward Jared, who was beside me. "Recently, I've been experiencing insomnia, headaches, and anxiety. Take a look and see what's wrong with me."

Jared's mouth arched up as he glanced fleetingly at the silent Ashton before raising his brows at me. "Alright."

After doing the routine procedure of examining me, he reported in a solemn tone, "You have too many health problems. Firstly, you have severe gastritis, so pay attention to your diet from now on. Your insomnia has led to a weak heart rate, so your heart isn't in very good shape now. Your poor blood circulation is probably because you didn't focus on recuperating after giving birth. You have to take good care of yourself to recover from all these health problems."

I nodded and withdrew my hand. When he lowered his head to prescribe the relevant medicine, I turned to Ashton with a faint smirk. "Aren't you going to let Dr. Crest take a look at you?"

Ashton pursed his lips. "You think it's funny?"

I raised my brows and shrugged to end the topic.

Jared kept hesitating while he was supposed to leave, so I figured that he had something to say to me and offered to walk him out.

At the villa's entrance, he spoke up before I could, "Scarlett, did Macy contact you lately?"

I was stunned for a split second before shaking my head. "No." When I thought about her child, I couldn't help but ask, "You haven't seen her recently?"

He nodded. "Please contact me if you see her."

I hummed in response, wondering if he knew that Macy had a child. Since I was occupied with my own matters recently, I didn't have time to think about Macy and wondered how she was doing now.

After Jared drove away, I went back into the living room, where I saw Ashton reading a book on the sofa.

Hearing me come back in, he only sent me a cursory glance without saying anything.

After hesitating for a while, I went to make him a cup of tea and walked over to his side to place the cup in front of him. "Drink some black tea for better digestion."

He looked at me, then put down the book in his hand to reach out and pull me into his arms.

Peering at me with his abyssal eyes, he asked, "So, when are you planning to bring the matter up?"

Even though I was taken aback, I managed to control my voice. "You know what they say. Men are the most compliant when they're sated in bed."

He raised his brows. "So, were you planning to bring it up when you're lying under me?"

I nodded. "But if you're in the mood to agree right now, then there's no reason for me to wait."

"Hah!" He leaned his forehead against mine and scoffed, "What do you want OrbitTech for?"

"I can't very well be a meek little housewife. I think it's good to be a strong and career-oriented woman." My expression was serious as my gaze landed on his Adam's shoppingmode apple. Then, my eyes traveled down to the top button of his white shirt.

He raised my chin and grazed the corner of my mouth with his lips. There was a mirthless smile in his voice when he said, "If OrbitTech was so easy to acquire, do you think John and I would've let it drag on for a year?"

"I know, that's why I implore you to give up acquiring OrbitTech. If both you and John give up, it'll make things much easier for White Corporation."

He squinted his eyes at me and said in a calm voice, "Scarlett, should I feel blessed to have such an intelligent and money-minded wife?"

Hearing the sarcasm in it, I nodded with a deadpan expression. "Working together as husband and wife is better than fighting alone, no?"

"Hah!" he scoffed. "You're quite bold to say that."

I pursed my lips and ignored his jab, bringing us back to the topic. "So, do you agree?"

He lowered his gaze to look at me with a cold glint in his eyes. "Didn't you say you were going to ask me in bed?"

What the...

Hah!

Indeed, his mind was constantly in the gutter.

We were bound to get into an argument if this went on, but I didn't feel like fighting with him just yet.

To diffuse the ticking bomb, I simply asked, "What are you and the Moore family collaborating on?"

Actually, I wasn't that interested in knowing the details and merely asked out of curiosity.

His eyes dimmed a little as he replied, "A development project." I could hear a dangerous undertone in his words.

Fine. I guess it's not an appropriate topic.

Hence, I stood up and was about to go upstairs, but he held me down in his arms. "Let's watch some Korean drama."

What? Korean drama? Is he serious?

After being apart for a while, he seemed to have become rather eccentric.

"No thanks." With that, I tried to get up again. However, his arms remained tightly locked around me. Just then, the sound of a phone ringing reached our ears.

It was his phone.

He glanced at his phone screen. Seeing that it was Sally, he turned to me and asked nonchalantly, "Can you pick it up for me?"