

When There Is Nothing Left But Love

Chapter 235-238

Chapter 235

I looked at Jared and forced a smile. "See? If you think this isn't enough of a reason for me to hate him, I can tell you more. He's like a brother to you, so I can understand why you feel the need to defend him, Dr. Crest. Perhaps to you, I merely lost a child, and no matter how you think about it, it just doesn't seem like such a big deal. Well, I'm sorry to say this, but this is how I am. I must get my revenge at all costs. Not to mention, that child was my life!"

No one in this world could truly empathize with others. Some couldn't even bring themselves to feel sympathy, and most would only stand on the sidelines to watch the show.

After leaving the hospital with Marcus, he sighed with a contemplative gaze. "John really went over the top this time. It'll be difficult for you to do anything from now on. There's no doubt that the Moore family will have their guard up."

I nodded and released a tired sigh. John had directly played the video in the hospital so that Ashton would feel anguished upon watching it.

Whatever. Since things have already been put into motion, there is no reason to stop now.

As he started the car, I looked sideways at him and asked, "Did you take a photo of the child?"

My voice was calm, but his body visibly stiffened. He glanced back at me and said, "Didn't you say you didn't want to see it?"

My breath caught in my throat as I looked out of the window, struggling to breathe through the pain in my chest. "Mm, I don't. Send it to John. Tell him to hack it into Rebecca's phone discreetly. If possible, do it at midnight."

He nodded and drove for a while before changing the subject. "Is there any news about the AI project?"

I nodded. "John is a computer expert. There's a tech company in J City. Many of their researchers are geniuses, but they have poor management. We're planning to make a trip there one of these days and find a way to acquire it."

He raised his brows. "A company like that exists?"

"Yeah!"

"Alright, it seems like you don't have to risk HiTech anymore." He smiled faintly with a subtle tease in his tone.

My eyes dipped to my lap before looking at him again. "If it fails and I lose HiTech, I'll have to live off you."

He bellowed with laughter at that. "Sure!"

By the time I reached home, it was already past midnight. Fortunately, there were many rooms in the house. He found a random one to sleep in while I went to my bedroom. With so many things on my mind, it was yet another sleepless night.

Sharon would be celebrating her 56th birthday on the fourth of November.

The Baumans were considered scholars in K City. Sharon had stayed with them after her divorce from Benjamin. They weren't a large family, and among them were two elderlies who were close to a hundred years old.

Sharon had two older brothers; one was in politics while the other in business. They both had a son each, who had moved abroad and settled down with families of their own there. Hence, they rarely came back to visit.

Sharon was the youngest daughter in the family, so she was rather spoiled and arrogant. Marcus was aware of his mother's temper and would occasionally advise her on it, but he eventually gave up.

When Marcus said he was taking me to her birthday banquet, I refused flatly. After all, I had rubbed elbows with Sharon before, but the outcome wasn't very pleasant.

Marcus smiled. "The Baumans are scholars. The two elders will be holding a birthday banquet for my mother, and they've invited many business and political figures. The Moore family will be attending too. Don't you want revenge? Well, this is the perfect time to strike."

I was stunned for a while and came back to my senses after his words registered in my mind. If I was really serious about bringing the Moore family down, I had to become their equal or perhaps superior to them. Only then would I be able to overturn them. Otherwise, everything I did would be insignificant, and I would never achieve the desired effect.

I glanced at Marcus and nodded. "Fine. I'll go!"

The world's social structure looked simple. All of us were human beings living on the same planet.

However, no human was the same. We were all divided into different categories, like a pyramid. Some people would never be able to climb from the bottom to the top even if they were given a few lifetimes.

Poor people could rely on education to climb up one level at most and live a relatively comfortable life, but to climb another level higher, they would need talent and wisdom.

However, when you reached a certain level, talent and wisdom were no longer valid. The next thing was to rely on connections and blood relations. Gaining a firm foothold in the upper-class circles at the pyramid's apex depended on how tactful you were at garnering admiration and respect from others.

The reasons Cameron was shunned by the Moore family for many years were her family background and lack of wisdom.

It was only because of Zachary's persistence, the discovery of their long-lost daughter, and the wealth Cameron had accumulated over the years that the Moore family begrudgingly accepted her.

Rebecca's instant boost through the ranks was solely because of blood relation, and such was life; no one could control the direction in which it flowed.

Marcus informed me the plan for that day, "I'll come to pick you up at 6 p.m., which is an hour earlier. Then I'll take you to shop and get your makeup done."

I nodded since doing it myself would probably be a bad idea. Seeing how compliant I was, he grew slightly worried.

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It was still early when I got home. Bored out of my mind, I called Macy.

To my dismay, her phone was still switched off. It's already been three months. She should've been done with her confinement by now, but why is her phone still turned off?

Helpless, I called Jackson instead. The call rang for a long time before it connected, and he sounded quite busy when he spoke. "Scarlett, I'm taking care of the baby now. What about you? What are you doing?"

I blinked in surprise. It must be quite difficult for a grown man to take care of a baby.

"Are you still with Macy in the countryside?" I asked while making myself comfortable on the sofa.

There was a momentary pause on the other end of the line before he answered, "Yeah. And you? How are you doing? Good?"

I nodded even though he couldn't see me. "Yeah. I'll return to J City around the end of the year. Are you two planning to come back to celebrate the new year? Or are you going to stay in the countryside?"

"We're not too sure yet!" He seemed busy, so I quickly asked, "Where's Macy? Is her phone broken? Why isn't she answering her phone? I haven't been able to get through to her for quite some time already."

"Yeah! She's quite busy. Anyway, I gotta go now. Let's talk again some other time." With that, he hung up the call.

I froze for a moment before putting my phone away.

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At C Hotel, an international five-star hotel.

After parking the car at the hotel's entrance, Marcus got out. Then, he gracefully walked to the front passenger side and opened the door for me before helping me out.

The train of my royal blue gown was too long. When I got out of the car, I couldn't help but express my concern, "To be honest, this is my first time wearing a dress with such a long train. I'm worried that I might fall."

He smiled faintly. "Then you'll have to follow me closely, lest you fall."

Besides this, I didn't see any other way to prevent myself from tripping.

I shrugged my shoulders and followed him toward the hotel. There was already someone standing by the Roman columns at the hotel's entrance to welcome the guests.

It was Sharon.

Having not seen her for quite some time, she seemed to have aged quite a bit. Today, she was wearing a burgundy gown with an ink-colored shawl to match, making her look incredibly elegant.

Older women tended to exude an elegance that was accumulated over the years as time had the ability to polish off the rough edges of women, giving them a gentle and alluring aura.

"Marc, you're finally here! The guests should be arriving soon. Your grandparents are already here. Hurry up and go say hello to them, then come out to welcome the guests." Sharon pulled Marcus toward the hotel.

With that, her gaze landed on me. She smiled. "And who might this beautiful young lady be? Why haven't I seen her before?"

I was dumbfounded. Seeing as she couldn't recognize me, I was at a loss for a moment and instinctively looked at Marcus.

Marcus chuckled and answered, "Mom, you've met her before. This is Scarlett."

Sharon froze, her eyes dipping down to look at my stomach. After a transient moment, she exclaimed, "It's you!" She frowned and chided Marcus, "Marc, why did you..."

Marcus cut her off, "Mom, you said that no matter who I brought today, you wouldn't intervene. You'll respect my choices, won't you?"

Parents would always relent whenever it came to their children. Sharon obviously hated Sally and looked down on the Fullers.

However, she was willing to put up with me, the daughter-in-law of the Fuller family, for Marcus' sake.

With a soft sigh, she glanced at me and warned, "Just make sure you don't stir up trouble."

Marcus smiled lopsidedly before leading me into the hotel lobby.

There weren't many people in the lobby yet. Refreshments were arranged on both sides, and the two Bauman elderlies were chatting with some guests who had just arrived.

Marcus tugged me forward to greet them. Perhaps it was because they hadn't seen their grandson for a long time that they were overjoyed.

Even though they were close to a hundred years old, they looked as spirited as ever.

"Marc, you brought such a beautiful lady with you. Which family is she from?" Anthony Bauman asked as his slightly glassy eyes fell on me.

Marcus pulled me to the front and said with a smile, "Grandpa, she's the project director at my company. She's my date for today."

"Ahh, so she's an employee from your company. You're not getting any younger, boy. You should start thinking about marriage. Stop delaying it," Sophia Carter, Marcus' grandmother, piped in.

Marcus nodded profusely before saying, "Grandpa, Grandma, I'm going outside to welcome the guests with Mom. I'll leave Scarlett here to accompany you."

His grandparents nodded and motioned for him to go ahead.

As soon as Marcus left, Sophia pulled me to sit beside her. "How old are you this year, girl?"

I arched my lips into a polite smile and answered, "Twenty-six."

"Are you married?" This seemed to be the billion-worth question for the entire older generation. Maintaining the smile on my face, I said, "Yes, I am."

She was taken aback, glancing at Anthony beside her. Then, she chuckled. "That brat Marc seems to get more complicated the older he gets."

Anthony released a chuckle of his own as he looked at me. "By the way, what was your name again?"

I remained courteous and replied, "Scarlett Stovall."

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The old man nodded and remarked, "Ah, like the color. A beautiful name for a beautiful lady."

"You're too kind, Mr. Bauman." I smiled broadly.

His turbid eyes lit up slightly. "Since Marc made the effort to introduce you to us, it means that he cares about you. It's very rare for a woman to catch his eye."

"Shush! What nonsense are you spouting, old man?" Sophia castigated him with a stern expression. "You think you're mister know-it-all, don't you?"

Anthony grinned sheepishly. "The younger generation have their own way of thinking. Even if we can see through their thoughts, we have to keep it to ourselves, or we'll end up embarrassing them."

Sophia huffed, "Good that you know!"

Even though I couldn't fully understand what they were talking about, I found their conversation intriguing. They were almost a hundred years old, but they could still banter back and forth, seemingly younger than they actually were. It was truly a blessing.

In life, not many managed to stay together until the end like them. Instead, most people would separate at some point, then walk their respective paths as they tried to forget the past.

Initially, I didn't understand why Marcus wanted me to accompany his grandparents. Later on, I realized that every guest had to come up to greet them.

Naturally, they would engage in small talk. As I was lounging with the two elderlies, many of the guests were curious about my identity. Hence, I was introduced to them one after another.

With that, I was able to know which guests were invited.

Zachary attended the banquet with Cameron. It was evident that both of them took great care of themselves. The man looked handsome and dignified, while the woman was gentle and sophisticated. Together, they were a charming middle-aged couple.

Upon greeting Marcus' grandparents, both Zachary and Cameron noticed me. They stiffened at the same time and looked at Anthony. "Mr. Bauman, this lady beside you is?" Zachary asked.

Anthony smiled and said, "This is Scarlett Stovall. An employee at my grandson Marc's company. She came here with him today."

Zachary and Cameron exchanged glances, unable to conceal their shock. "Scarlett?" Their gaze landed on me as mixed emotions flickered in their eyes.

"Mr. Moore, this girl looks really similar to your wife during her younger days. If your family hadn't already found your daughter, I would've mistaken this girl for her," Louis Stovall, who was almost the same age as Zachary, joked.

Many people agreed with his remark. Even Marcus' grandparents were slightly stunned and started to study Cameron and me more closely.

Shortly after, Anthony exclaimed, "It's true. The girl's eyebrows are shaped very similarly to Cameron's, and her nose looks like Zachary's, high and dainty. If you both hadn't already found your daughter, I would've thought this girl is your biological daughter."

Everyone laughed good-naturedly at this comment while Zachary peered at his wife, then at me, with his brows knitting together into a frown.

Marcus walked in with a smile after he was done entertaining the guests. "Since everyone thinks they look alike, why don't you take Scarlett as your goddaughter, Mr. Moore? This way, we'll have two causes for celebration today. Isn't that great?"

My limbs froze up, and I couldn't figure out where Marcus was going with this.

As soon as he suggested that, someone in the crowd chimed in, "Yeah, that's a good idea. You're so lucky, Mr. Moore. You're going to have another beautiful daughter."

No one knew about the strife between the Moores and me, so they assumed that this was something worth celebrating. However, Cameron and Zachary's faces became slightly stiff.

A moment later, Cameron smiled and said, "We appreciate everyone's good intentions, but as you all know, our daughter Rebecca is a very emotional child. She has endured a lot of hardship all these years. As her parents, we feel that we can never make it up to her. If we were to take in a goddaughter now, I'm afraid she might get the wrong idea."

What she said inevitably caused everyone's expressions to change, especially Marcus, as he was the one who suggested it.

The atmosphere instantly turned awkward.

Feeling relieved, a small smile stretched across my lips. I glanced at Cameron and Zachary before saying, "I'm sure many of us envy the love you both have for your daughter. It's a shame I'm not blessed enough to deserve the same."

"Now, now. Don't say that," Louis said heartily, "Why are you so harsh on yourself, girl? Since Marcus brought you here, it means he sees something special in you that others haven't. And for some reason, I have a good feeling about you. I only have one son, and everyone knows my late wife didn't give me the daughter I've always wanted. Now that fate brought us here today, my family is your family if you're willing to accept me as your godfather."

I blinked rapidly, rather baffled by this turn of events. Louis Stovall was a well-known official in K City and was a model of rectitude throughout his entire political career. Nowadays, very few in power were able to maintain their integrity and morals. Hence, he was a truly rare plain-spoken and virtuous city official.

Having someone like him compliment me this way caught me by surprise.

"Look, the girl is so happy that words have failed her. Louis, what are you going to do now that you've scared her?" Anthony teased with a bright smile on his face as pride shone in his eyes.

Marcus patted my shoulder gently and said, "Well? Aren't you going to thank your Uncle Louis?"

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I finally found my voice, saying a little too emotionally, "Thank you, Uncle Louis. It is my greatest honor."

"See? Fate works in mysterious ways. Louis has always wanted a daughter, and now he finally has one. What's more, they have the same surname!" Anthony beamed.

Then, he continued, "Since she's a Stovall, you can practically consider her as your biological daughter!"

Louis let out a loud belly laugh, then picked up a champagne flute and looked at me. "Follow me, girl!"

He led me toward the stage at the front before raising his voice, "May I have your attention, please? First of all, I'd like to thank Mr. Bauman for hosting a birthday banquet for his daughter, Ms. Bauman, because it gave me a daughter in return, fulfilling my long-time wish. Today, I'd like to use this opportunity to announce that soon, I'll invite all of you to my home so that we can celebrate the addition of a new member to my family."

As soon as he finished speaking, all the guests were astonished, then they swiftly applauded.

Louis had a straightforward and cheerful personality. Since he wholeheartedly accepted me as his daughter, he also brought me around and introduced me to the guests present tonight.

Before long, I remembered all the upper-class socialites here. Halfway through the banquet, Louis excused himself to chat with a few friends.

Since I was free, I went looking for Marcus. Having just finished doing his part, he led me to the pantry.

"See? This wasn't all in vain," he pointed out.

I smiled and said with gratitude, "Mm, it wasn't. But why did you suggest Zachary be my godfather earlier? You know that after what Cameron did, I would never agree to that."

He boiled some water, preparing to brew some tea before glancing at me. "For many years, Louis has been yearning for a daughter, but he didn't have any intention to marry. This is a known fact in K City's upper-class circle. Since he pointed out the resemblance between you and Cameron, I thought I'd just go along with it. I knew for a fact that Zachary and Cameron wouldn't want you as their goddaughter and vice versa. So, I already expected them to refuse. Louis has been a man of virtue his whole life, not to mention he wants a daughter. All I did was get the ball rolling and voilà. Everything worked in your favor."

I stared at him in awe. Sighing softly, I said, "I thought you just suggested it mindlessly, but after listening to your explanation, I'm starting to doubt my IQ level."

Even if I had ten brains, I probably wouldn't be able to come up with such an intricate scheme.

He raised his brows in return. "What? Scared of getting close to me now that you know how frightening my mind works?"

"Of course not!" A smile formed on my lips. "I'm grateful more than anything. You spoke to your grandfather about this beforehand, didn't you?"

Otherwise, why would Anthony have played along so enthusiastically?

Marcus nodded in response and placed a teacup in front of me. With raised brows, he commended, "Not bad. At least you got that right."

I giggled softly before falling silent. "Louis is an honorable man. In the future, if I were to ask for his help to go against the Moore family, I'm afraid..."

Marcus smiled. "The Moores have extensive connections in the underground world. It's too bad they cover up their tracks too well because, truth be told, there are many people who'd like to see them completely uprooted."

My brows lifted toward my hairline. Indeed, rich and famous people would always have a target on their backs.

Marcus' phone rang just then. It was Sharon on the other end of the line, probably needing him for something. Before he hurried off, he told me to sit here to rest and to call him if I needed anything.

After he left, I sat in the pantry and spaced out. As an orphan, I guess I was lucky to have stumbled upon Louis who wholeheartedly accepted me as his goddaughter.

I sat for a while before getting up to use the washroom.

At the washroom, Cameron stood in my way and said, "Ms. Stovall, shall we have a chat?"

Taking in her slightly sagging cheeks, I nodded. "What exactly is it that you want to talk about, Ms. Anderson?"

She smiled placidly. "There's a lounging area outside the hotel. Let's talk there."

I followed her to the back of the hotel and came to an open-air lounging area. After finding a seat, she gracefully lowered herself into it, motioning for me to do the same.

As I settled myself on the seat across from her, a waiter came for our orders. I asked for a glass of water, while she asked for a cup of coffee without sugar.

Then, I fixed my gaze on her, waiting for her to speak.

However, she didn't seem to be in a hurry, waiting until her coffee was served and taking a sip from it before saying, "You don't drink coffee, Ms. Stovall?"

I nodded. "The bitter taste doesn't sit well with me."

She smiled and took another sip. Perhaps because she found it too bitter, a small frown appeared between her brows. "That's actually a blessing." Her eyes fell on me before she smiled again. "To be honest, you really do look like me when I was younger. If I didn't personally get a DNA test done, I would've really thought you were my daughter."

I replicated her smile, but there was a hint of animosity in it. "It'd probably take a lot more than bearing a resemblance to you to be your daughter, Ms. Anderson. I'm not worthy."

The smile on her face faded as she narrowed her eyes at me, then released a long sigh. "Thirty years ago, I'd just turned 20. As I was from an ordinary background, I knew since young that in order to live my dream life, I had to work for it. When I was 23, I'd just

graduated from university and met Zachary. Being able to capture his attention is probably the luckiest thing that occurred in my life. He's noble, charming, and gentle; basically what all women look for in a man. Fortunately, both he and I love and admire each other."