

When There Is Nothing Left But Love Chapter 535-540

Chapter 535

Roughly an hour later, Ashton was out. He was in his usual poker face.

“Sorry to have kept you waiting.” There was a gentle twitch at the corners of his mouth.

I shook my head and held his hand. “Does it hurt?”

I heard that it’d be awfully painful.

“So what if it does? What are you gonna do?” He gave a cheeky grin.

I closed my eyes and brushed my lips on his. “Will this work?”

Cough! The doctor tried to make his presence felt. “You’ll need to come back for a check-up in a week, and try resuming intercourse only after a month’s time.”

“Thank you, doctor.” It was pretty awkward to be seen smooching. My face was still blushing after saying my thanks.

We lingered at the hospital for another hour till the pain subsided.

It was already nightfall when we got back to the villa. After having dinner with Ashton, Emery called.

“Hey, remember that sandalwood box that I wanted to mail to you? I’ve been swamped, and it slipped off my mind. You free tonight? Let’s grab a drink.” She didn’t sound happy.

“Okay. I’ll see you later.” It didn’t take me long to say yes. Ashton was in his study. He had been warm and sweet recently, but I somehow felt that he had something in the back of his mind.

I went to his study only to see him flipping through a large pile of documents Joseph brought back.

He looked up when he heard my footsteps. “Are you bored?”

“Nah. Actually, Emery asked me out for a drink.”

He nodded and closed the folder in front of him. “Right, what’s the address? I’ll send you there.”

I didn’t budge. “You still have a lot of things to do, and I can get there myself. Don’t think you should be moving around much after the operation, anyway.”

“Okay. So how long will you be there?” He raised his brows, waiting for my answer.

“Two hours.” I guessed that Emery must’ve been caught up with some relationship troubles.

His puckered his lips. “One hour. Give me the address, and I’ll pick you up after.”

“B—” He cut in before I could voice my discontent. “You being away for too long worries me.”

Since he’d put it that way, I dipped my head, gesturing submission.

I put on my coat, took the car keys and headed out.

Emery and I would be meeting at her club in Imperial Hotel situated in the city center.

As usual, the club was crazily buzzing. I saw her looking out from the second floor and a bottle of red wine on her table.

“Scarlett! Right here!” She waved. It seemed like she had been here for quite a while.

I sat myself down, snatched her glass of red wine, and got the attention of the waiter. “Excuse me, a cup of hot milk, please.”

“Hot milk? In a club? Stop joking, Scarlett.” She laughed, but her squinted eyes and droopy brows said otherwise.

The waiter obviously knew who she was. He left briskly after taking the order.

Emery rested her chin on the back of her hand as she gazed at the girls on the dance floor. “Scarlett, I’m not happy.”

I felt a pinch in my heart.

As I took a sip of the red wine, I looked at her. “Is it about Hunter? Or is it about your mother-in-law?”

If someone’s complaining only after a few days of marriage, these were probably the only reasons.

She looked back with her eyes slightly shuttered in a teasing manner. “Have you ever seen parents who insisted on living with their son after he got married?”

“Well, both Ashton and I don’t have parents, and George barely interferes in our affairs. So, no.” Those were my honest two cents.

She tittered. "You see, life always goes against our will. If only I didn't get married."

It was normal for a pregnant woman to experience fluctuating emotions. "Maybe they just want to help out and to take care of you since you're preppers."

"Umph. Let's talk about something else."

The waiter came and placed the milk on the table. She bulldozed it out of sight. Nope, not her kind of drink.

"You want some juice?" Those who were up the duff got nauseous easily. It must've been the fishy smell that turned her head away.

She bobbed her head. I looked at the waiter and ordered a glass of mango juice.

"How did you know I like mango juice?" Emery asked.

"I've seen you drinking it." And I looked towards the first floor.

"Is there someone you know?" She traced my gaze and asked.

"The young lady seated on the lounge sofa looks familiar." I shrugged my brows and looked down while supporting my chin with the back of my hand.

When Emery got a clearer picture, she clicked her tongue. "Look at the man beside her, and you'll know who she is."

Both of them had their backs towards me. I tried to get a glimpse of their side view.

"John?" I froze.

“You siblings have quite an uncanny connection, don’t you?”

As I looked more closely, I noticed that the lady next to him was scantily clad. I still couldn’t figure out who she was, though.

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Taking a closer look, I realized that it was indeed Yvonne and I furrowed my eyebrows. Even now, she’s still pestering John?

Emery noticed my confusion, she shrugged as she explained, “It’s normal for a playboy like John to have a random woman on his arm at all times and happily welcome any girl who comes onto him. Don’t worry too much about it. He’ll dump her as soon as he gets tired of her.”

I didn’t care about John and Yvonne’s relationship. I was concerned about Hannah, who had given birth barely a month ago and had grown scarily frail when I went to visit her today.

Does she know what John was doing?

I tried to get up from my seat, but Emery stopped me. “Where are you going, Scarlett? Even if you kill him, his ghost will still come back to try and hook up with these women. Just let him do what he wants.”

“I don’t want him to regret his actions.” I stared at the couple on the first floor who were already exchanging heated kisses.

Emery pursed her lips. "I think you just feel bothered because of Hannah. Back then, you thought about leaving Ashton because of his feelings for Rebecca, and then left without another word when you learned that Ashton had set you up.

"Hannah is also a woman. Once her patience hits its limit, she'll likely leave and take her child with her too. If that happens, John won't be the one panicking, but Louis. After all, the child is a Stovall."

I nodded. "That's why I wanted to remind John to do everything in moderation."

"What for?" scoffed Emery. "Are you trying to get close to Hannah because you want to help her when she eventually leaves? You already know that her kid will be staying with her. Just let the guy get estranged from her and his child for a few years so he can suffer," she growled out through gritted teeth, as if she was the one getting hurt in this situation.

I turned to look at her, my eyes narrowing. "Are you thinking of doing that too?"

She raised an eyebrow. "If Hunter dares to upset me, I'll leave with the baby in me. After all. I have the money to raise him by myself anyway!"

I huffed in amusement and gave her a big thumbs up. The couple below looked like they were going to leave.

We quickly got up from our seats and went downstairs so as to not lose them.

"Wanna stay with me tonight, Johnny?" What a waste of the good looks she has.

Only men would ever fall for her saccharine-sweet voice, while women would only feel sick at the sound of it.

I walked forward and pulled them apart, linking my arm into John's.

“Who the...” Yvonne started to screech, but instantly turned her angry expression into a polite smile as soon as she recognized me. “Oh! It’s you, Ms. Stovall!”

Nodding, I lifted my chin to look at John. “Mind having a drink with me, brother dearest?”

He pursed his lips and grunted in affirmation, letting himself be dragged upstairs by me.

Noticing that Yvonne was still following behind us, I turned back to glance at her. “Where do you live, Ms. Wilde? I’ll call a taxi for you.”

She did a double-take, seemingly upset as she looked towards John. “Mr. Stovall...”

“Go home. I have business to attend to with Scarlett,” he responded coldly.

“I...”

“Do you plan to listen in on secrets shared between the two of us?” I hummed, stopping her short.

“No, Ms. Stovall, of course not.”

“Then, please go. I need to talk about some familial matters with my brother. As you know, my sister-in-law just gave birth, and my brother will have to head home soon to accompany his wife and son. If you have anything more to say to him, I’d suggest you do it at the office rather than here of all places.”

Yvonne’s cheeks flushed red.

Ignoring her, I continued to pull John up the stairs.

Emery was leaning against a wall, snorting at the sight of us. “If she knew that you’re not John’s real sister, she’d be pulling your hair out by now.”

I looked over my shoulder at Yvonne, whose expression was dark as she fled with her tail between her legs.

On the second floor, I shoved John onto a chair and stared him down, cutting to the chase. "Are you only going to stop being a playboy after your wife and son both abandon you?"

He raised an eyebrow, meeting my glare head-on. "Since when have I become a 'playboy'?"

"Hannah is still in the middle of receiving postnatal care! She just gave birth to your child! Wooing other women while she was pregnant was bad enough, but now you're drinking with girls at a bar while she's recuperating. If you really enjoy being a piece of trash that much, then I'm cutting off all contact with you. It'll save me the annoyance."

John massaged one side of his temple, one leg crossing over the other. "Did Hannah send you here?"

I felt rage flare up within me, along with the violent impulse to punch him in the face. Spotting a bottle of wine out of the corner of my eye, I picked it up and dumped the dark liquid over his head. "If she'd sent me here, I wouldn't have come so late. She's had to endure so much indignance and disappointment, and you still think it serves her right? You deserve to die alone," I spat out.

Suddenly, emotion flashed across his face, his dark eyes narrowing as he spoke slowly in a low tone. "So you also think that I should die alone?"

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The abrupt change in attitude took me aback for a second before I remembered. John's deepest, darkest fear was to live alone for the rest of his life, with no one to rely on.

"This is all consequences of your own actions," I scolded him. "You say that you're afraid of being left alone, but think about Hannah. She has stayed with you for more than ten years without any complaint

because she knows you're scared to be alone. She even took the risk and gave birth to a child for you knowing that her body might not be able to handle a pregnancy.

"She might not come from a good family and or have high social standing, but with her personality and looks, it wouldn't be hard for her to find someone who treasures and cares for her genuinely. If she didn't love you so much and didn't insist on staying with you, could you imagine what a better life she could be living right now? Which woman doesn't dream of marrying a man who loves her with all his heart? Who the hell do you think she's torturing herself for?"

John seemed to be rendered speechless, so I continued on, "You can go on and continue fooling around with other women for all I care. When Hannah has had enough and wakes up from her daze one day, she will realize that she deserves more than this crappy life. She will leave with her child and start a new and better chapter of her life. But what about you? Do you think that you'll be able to meet another woman who's willing to sacrifice her own dignity for your sake, just like Hannah? That'd be impossible! You will only ever meet women who are after your wealth and influence. Do you think that Yvonne girl truly likes you for who you are? Are you really so stupid to think that she would even bat an eyelash in your direction if she didn't know that you were a son of the Stovall family?"

John's face had turned a sickly shade of green by the time my tirade was over. I didn't want to deal with this any longer, so I tugged Emery along as I left.

Emery tsked at me as we exited the nightclub. "I always thought you are slow-witted and meek. Who knew that you could go off like that?"

"He's my brother," I sighed. "I can't let him continue like this. Hannah is a kind girl and she deserves better."

Emery nodded in agreement. "Well, to be honest, Hannah is quite a nice lady. If she were born in the country, Louis wouldn't mind as much regardless of whatever background she came from. But she hails from Southeast Asia; once she marries John and becomes a part of the Stovall family, her true identity is more than enough to make Louis renounce his position. John's concern isn't without reason."

I already knew of all of this. “But she’s already given birth to his child. John just can’t abandon her now of all times. Even if they can’t get married legally, he is responsible for taking care of her and the child. What does he think he’s doing, hanging out at bars and flirting with other women?” I lamented.

She shrugged. “You have a point.”

There was a brief pause before she reached into her bag and took out a sandalwood box, handing it to me. “Here. Cameron asked me to give this to you. It’s only been opened once, and the key is with Ashton. So, if you want to look at its contents, you’ll have to ask Ashton for it.”

I sighed at the familiar sight of the box, holding it up. When looking closely at it, I realized that the design of the keyhole was strange. “This keyhole looks unique.”

“I heard from Cameron that the box isn’t unlocked with a normal key,” explained Emery. “Ashton might know more about it. The box does have quite a fascinating design.”

It was getting late. I had no time to be standing around studying the box any further.

Slipping it into my bag, I asked her, “It’s nearly midnight. Aren’t you going to head home?”

“Honestly? I don’t want to.” She pursed her lips.

“Arguing right after the wedding is normal for newly-married couples,” I said. “You’re already married. You love Hunter, and that’s all that matters, no?”

Emery groaned. “I know, but his mother is so annoying. She thinks the world of herself for raising Hunter to become a professor of a reputable school, and she constantly nitpicks at me, thinking that I’m trying to take advantage of her son.”

Parents' involvement in their children's marriage was truly a recipe for disaster. No matter how strong the couple's love for each other was, it was bound to end in disaster sooner or later.

Pondering over the idea, I suggested, "Do you want to come over to my place?"

She chuckled, looking more upset than if she were crying. "I refuse to see Ashton's stone-cold face for a second more than I have to."

"Should I call Hunter and ask him to pick you up?"

"It's fine. Just hurry on home; I'll go back to the Moore Residence and stay with my brother," she answered after a while, shaking her head.

There was a brief pause. "Do you want to come with me to the Moore Residence?"

It was my turn to shake my head, laughing. "Ashton will get mad if I arrive home too late."

Fed up with me, Emery dug out her car keys and waved at me, walking away. "Whatever. Drive yourself home; I won't be sending you. Goodnight!"

"Goodnight!"

I watched her car speed off into the distance before getting into my own, sighing. It looked like life gave everyone lemons, regardless of whoever they were.

All we could do was try our best to turn those lemons into sweet, thirst-relieving lemonade. Sometimes, by some stroke of luck or maybe fate, someone would offer you their own lemonade as well.

The sky grew darker as I drove towards the villa. There weren't many cars on the road, and it was a smooth, uneventful journey home.

Pulling up to the suburban villa, I noticed that the lights were still on inside the building. It seemed that Ashton had waited up for me.

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Outside the villa parked a sapphire blue Tesla sports car. This car was clearly not Ashton's.

The hard, unyielding pride of a soldier was engraved into Ashton's DNA. As a result, his garage was filled with mostly off-road vehicles, such as SUVs, and he detested short and flashy sports cars.

I was about to drive into the villa premises when the Tesla's headlights switched on, nearly blinding me.

Stopping my car, I saw a man getting out of the sports car. It was Marcus.

He wore a fitting black suit that complemented his tall, slender frame. If he were to walk on the streets, there was no doubt that everyone would be drawn by him.

He stood in front of my car, his dark eyes silently staring me down.

Through the glass of the car window, he seemed to have gotten skinnier and stiffer than I last saw him.

There was no use staying locked in a staring competition like this.

Sighing slightly, I got out of my car.

"I'm really sorry about the money!" I apologized instantly. It was my fault for not expecting that things would come down to this.

He ignored my apology, his voice deep as he said, "Ashton was right. It doesn't matter if a stolen fruit is sweet or not. What matters is that it quenches your thirst."

Before I could react, he pulled me into his arms, the foreign smell of his cologne overwhelming my senses.

I did my best to push him away with all my might, but he tightened his grip around me. "There is a long life ahead of me. Why should I give up anything to anyone? Whatever love Ashton can give to you, I'll shower you with twice that amount. I'm never going to give you up again, Scarlett."

"What the hell?" I tried to catch my breath, tired from struggling to escape his hold. "Why do you insist on making every one of us suffer?"

He chuckled heartlessly. "Why not? Why does it have to be me whose love is never returned? Why does it have to be me who places someone else's needs above my own? Why can't I just take what I want? Huh?"

He's gone mad!

I glared up at him. "You can pursue true love, and you can try your best to obtain the things that you want. But I'm telling you right now, I'm not an item. I'm my own person, and I have the right to choose my life and my lover."

"Then, why can't you choose me? Do I not deserve your love? What does Ashton have that I don't? He's abusive, toxic, and bloodthirsty! What in the world do you like about him?"

I didn't know what Marcus had been through recently, but right now, he was acting like a demon, foaming at the mouth while trying desperately to crawl his way out of hell.

I felt terrified yet sympathetic.

“We all have our own fates, Marcus. I think you deserve to be loved, but regardless of what you think Ashton is like, it doesn’t change the fact that I’m in love with him, and it has been the same for the past seven years. I’m not sure how I fell in love with him, nor how I grew to rely on him, but I know now that he needs me and I need him. I want to warm his heart, and I want to stay with him forever.”

Marcus refused to listen any further, scoffing coldly, “I’m not giving up. As long as I’m alive, I’ll never let go of you. I don’t believe in ‘the early bird gets the worm’ or fate. I only believe in myself.”

The corners of his lips twisted up into an evil smirk before he pressed his mouth to mine.

I couldn’t dodge his kiss in time, and the action gave way to a wave of disgust and hate within me.

Suddenly, there was a sharp gust of wind, and Marcus was pushed away from me.

I fell into another warm embrace, the familiar tobacco smell calmed my nerves instantly.

“Are you alright?” Ashton asked me, an undertone of anger running through his voice.

I shook my head, meeting his stern gaze. He was obviously pissed off.

Helping me stand upright, Ashton walked towards Marcus and threw a punch at him without saying a word.

The two men quickly got into a violent brawl, but it wasn’t long before I heard Summer calling for me from inside the villa.

Ashton stopped in his tracks, as did Marcus. They narrowed their eyes, both doing nothing to hide the venomous wrath they harbored towards each other.

“I’m taking Scarlett, Ashton,” declared Marcus.

Ashton let out a low, dangerous laugh. “You don’t deserve her.”

“Just you wait!” With that, Marcus got into his car and sped off.

I quickly went back into the villa and located Summer through the sounds of her crying.

Her sobs grew louder as soon as she spotted me, clinging onto me when I entered her bedroom.
“Mommy... I had a bad dream that you didn’t want me anymore...”

A chill ran up my spine. I bent down to look her in the eye, reassuring, “Oh, sweetheart. How could Mommy ever not want you? I’ll always be with you, okay?”

I held her as she cried herself to the point of fatigue, eventually falling back to sleep.

After making sure Summer was alright, I came out of her bedroom. Ashton was sitting in the living room with a dark, gloomy expression on his handsome face.

He was furious.

I knew that, just like any other man, he was upset to see his own wife kissing someone else. Even if he was aware that I hadn’t consented or done it on purpose, the sight had undoubtedly left a bitter taste in his mouth.

If anything, the incident had likely upset him more than if someone slapped him across his face.

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After silently observing Ashton for a while, I turned around and went upstairs.

I decided to let him have some space. Some things could be discussed civilly, but there were some other things that couldn't.

In the bedroom, I stripped and entered the shower, the cold water chilled me to the bone.

Since when did Ashton and I start walking on eggshells caring for each other's feelings?

I had yet to finish watching the content on the USB drive that Camelia had given me. I had been emotionally unstable and mentally weak during that one month, and had spent every day with Marcus. Developing a physically intimate relationship with him was unavoidable.

There were some scenes in the USB drive that looked unfamiliar even to me when I watched them, so I couldn't imagine how they must have made Ashton feel. His suppressed anger for the past few days must have been because of the video.

Emery told me that, knowing Marcus, whatever he told Ashton at the wedding ceremony could not have been good news.

PlayvolumeAd

Deep in his heart, Ashton was harboring resentment towards me. Resentment that he didn't want to discuss with me.

I was drained of all energy after my shower, leaning my weight against the wall as I made my way to the bed with much difficulty.

Maybe this would all go away with a good night's rest.

Just as I'd expected, Ashton never returned to the bedroom. I guessed that he didn't want to affect me with his negative emotions, and the last thing he wanted was to start another argument with me.

One argument was more than enough.

The next day.

I descended the staircase. Summer had been sent to school, so only Flora, the housekeeper, was at home.

Flora approached me as soon as I came downstairs. "Mrs. Fuller, Mr. Fuller left not too long ago. He told me to prepare soup for you because he said you like it. Come have a taste."

She served me a bowl of soup, then smiled warmly as she gave me a note. "Mr. Fuller didn't want to wake you, so he asked me to pass this to you."

The note read: Make sure you eat your meals. Wait for me to get home tonight so we can eat dinner together.

As if everything was perfectly fine. Except we both knew the truth: we were lost, blindly stumbling around as we tried to figure out a solution to this situation.

I nodded and smiled politely back at Flora, thanking her for the food as I sat down to eat.

Unfortunately, I had no appetite for breakfast and was starting to feel nauseous after a few spoonfuls.

I forced the soup down, but ended up throwing up in a toilet half an hour later.

K City was always freezingly cold during this time of the year, and going out was not a viable option.

I headed for the study to take a proper look at the sandalwood box that Grandma had left me. If Emery said that it couldn't be unlocked with a key, then what could it be unlocked with?

The working and design didn't seem to be of modern work. It resembled closer to a woodworker's handiwork from the sixties.

I grew impatient after fiddling with the box for a while but to no avail, resorting to picking up a random book in the study to read.

My gaze accidentally swept over some documents left out on Ashton's desk. I had seen them a few times before; they were all acquisition contracts of White Corporation.

I drifted over to the table and picked the documents up, flipping through them. Mergers and takeovers were very common in the business world.

Regardless of how this case was going to end, I could not get myself involved in it.

Sighing slightly, I closed the file and was about to keep it in the drawer when an album in the drawer caught my eyes.

I was a little stunned. I'd thought that Ashton had kept all our pictures from the past in his villa in J City, but apparently, he'd brought some here with him.

Guess it wouldn't hurt to take a look and walk down memory lane.

I lifted the photo album out of the drawer, noticing that there had been a few baby pictures hidden under the album.

The baby looked familiar to me. Even though I had never seen what he looked like right after birth, I had seen him in my dreams.

There was a purple bruise on his forehead, caused from his desperation to meet me.

The infant couldn't open his eyes and his skin was red and wrinkly, but his features looked extremely similar to that of Ashton's.

How does Ashton have these photos? When Marcus had asked me if I wanted to see the baby, I had refused. I was scared that if I saw him, I would never be able to forgive myself for the rest of my life.

The sudden sight of him made me feel like a knife had been stabbed through my chest, slowly twisting in the wound.

I put everything back where I'd found them. There was no way that these photos belonged to Ashton, which left only one other possibility—Marcus had given them to him.

Ashton was suddenly hellbent on wiping Marcus out of the market because he had said something to deliberately provoke him.

I returned to the bedroom, curling up under the covers as my mind wandered.

Marcus had asked me why I insisted on staying with Ashton. I didn't know who else I could be with other than Ashton.

We were all ready to welcome love and happiness into our lives when we were born.

But then life made us go through so many twists and turns, and we forgot what we used to dream of, merely clinging on to dear life in order to survive.

After not getting much rest last night, I drifted off to sleep under the covers. When I woke up, it was already dark outside.

There was a knocking on the door. I got up to open it, and Flora greeted me. "Are you feeling hungry, Mrs. Fuller? Would you like to go downstairs for a snack?"

Reflexively shaking my head due to my lack of appetite, I suddenly recalled that Ashton mentioned that he wanted to eat dinner together. "I'll wait for Mr. Ashton to come back and then eat with him."

Flora cleared her throat uncomfortably. "Mr. Fuller is already home. He's been waiting in the living room and smoking for a while now. Would you like to go and check on him?"

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He's back?

"When did he get back?"

"Around five o'clock."

I wasn't sure whether to cry or to laugh from the sheer absurdity.

If he had come back so early, it meant that he was anxious to have dinner with me, as was written on the note. If he had never once come upstairs to the bedroom, it meant that he still felt resentful.

Forget it.

I smiled weakly at Flora. "You guys go ahead. I'm not hungry."

Maybe it would be easier on both of us if we didn't see each other.

Flora opened her mouth as if to say something, but kept quiet and went back downstairs.

I went back to the bed and stared at the ceiling, trying to fall asleep but to no avail.

The room gradually grew darker and darker as I stared blankly into space.

The bedroom door swung open, and I instantly shut my eyes closed. I heard heavy footsteps and breathing, and I knew it was him.

There was the sound of water coming from the bathroom as I kept my eyes shut, knowing that he had just exited the bathroom.

He sat down on his side of the bed. I assumed that he was going to sleep in the study tonight.

But soon after, I felt the weight of the mattress shift below me and heard the sound of the bedside lamp being switched off.

His even, shallow breathing slowly filled the bedroom.

Time slowly ticked by. I couldn't fall asleep, but by the sound of Ashton's soft breathing, I guessed that he was deep asleep.

I turned over and opened my eyes, freezing in place when my gaze met his.

I barely got a word out of my mouth when he reached forward and wrapped me in his embrace. "Flora said that you threw up your breakfast this morning, and that you didn't eat anything for the rest of the day," he stated, concerned.

"I wasn't hungry," I argued, my body stiff in his arms.

His dark eyes looked like they were staring into my soul. "Scarlett, I'm a man. You can't blame me for losing my temper when I saw him kissing you."

He was talking about last night.

I nodded silently.

He inched closer to me, pressing his face into the crook of my neck as he sighed painfully.

His fingers massaged the small of my back, slowly but surely working the stiffness out of my body. "What did Marcus tell you at Emery's wedding?" I asked.

When I felt his breathing stop, I went on, "If it was about the baby, then you can ask me. No matter what it is."

"Good girl." He raised his head and kissed the corner of my mouth. "That was in the past. As long as we're together, nothing else matters."

He didn't want me to continue talking for fear that the pain would eat both of us up.

I fell asleep that night listening to his heartbeat.

It was rare for Ashton to do anything romantic. When I came to the next day, there was a large bouquet of balloon flowers on the bedside table. The faint fragrance that wafted from it lifted my spirits.

There was a handwritten card placed carefully among the flowers: Eat your meals. Wait for me to come home tonight.

When the heart has a home, the person will always return no matter how far they stray.

I giggled, setting the card down and crawling out of bed to wash up. Downstairs, Flora seemed to be in a good mood.

Breakfast was already prepared and set out on the table. I didn't want to eat it, but Ashton was probably going to call Flora to check if I had eaten or not.

So, I ate a little bit of the food.

Noticing that I was heading out, Flora scurried after me. "Are you going out, Mrs. Fuller?"

I nodded.

Slightly apprehensive, she said, "May I ask where you're going? Mr. Fuller said to inform him when and where you are at all times."

"I'm going to pay a visit to Aunt Sally, so she won't worry too much about me," I chuckled.

I couldn't determine if I liked or hated Sally. But she was still Ashton's aunt, and one of his few living relatives.

He had already lost his parents. I didn't want him to grow distant from Sally because of me, in case he would grow to regret that decision.

Sally lived in the suburban house that Ashton had once bought. She had left the White Corporation to start her own business.

As a woman raised in the Fuller family, she was used to the first-class life and had an odd temperament. However, that didn't take away from the fact that her aesthetic in art appreciation and sense of romance were more in-tune than the average woman. At the same time, she had a uniquely stubborn tenacity.

Managing the flower shop alone wasn't particularly tiring, but there were bound to be times where things got overwhelming for her.

Sally's yard was full of various types of flowers and plants, with some vegetables and fruit trees planted in the back yard as well.

It was the peak of autumn, and many of the flowers in the garden had taken the brunt of several snowstorms.

Sally had tied an apron around her waist and was busy tending to the damaged plants when I arrived.

Glancing around, I took off my coat and picked up a sickle to help her.

She looked surprised to see me, a faint expression of disdain on her face. "What are you doing here?"

I kept my head lowered as I pulled some weeds, feeling sorry for the flattened chrysanthemum flowers. These chrysanthemums only bloomed after the beginning of winter. They would definitely be able to bloom for much longer if this were J City.

But, unfortunately for these flowers, the snow had arrived early in K City this year.

"Ashton said that you were feeling a bit under the weather recently, so I came to pay you a visit." Both of us knew that we weren't particularly pleased to see each other, and I didn't bother to sugarcoat the truth.

She huffed and went back to fixing up her garden.