

When There Is Nothing Left But Love Chapter 541-546

Chapter 541

After all, she was old and had been living a comfortable life, so it was only natural that she suffered backaches after being out in the yard for too long.

She was clutching her waist while sitting limply on the bamboo chair in the yard, frowning in pain.

After clearing away the few weeds left in the yard, I washed my hands and handed her the pain-relieving medicine.

She frowned, unwilling to accept it.

I pursed my lips. "These are painkillers. They are not harmful."

Having said that, I put the medicine in her hands. Then, I went inside and fetched a cup of warm water for her.

She seemed stunned. Perhaps unable to bear the pain, she accepted the cup of water and took the medicine.

As I kept the rest of the medicine aside, I said, "This medicine has few side effects. If the pain is intolerable, you can take one or two tablets to relieve the pain."

She glanced at me with her lips pursed and turned her eyes upon the yard, saying, "Your voice sounds so nasal. If you have a cold, please don't pass it to me."

I couldn't help letting out a laugh. She was obviously concerned about me, but she just had to put up a mean front.

Forget it.

She is, after all, an arrogant lady of a privileged upbringing.

Being childless and way past half her life, perhaps she was thinking of spending her twilight years alone in peace.

"Yeah, I'll go back and take some medicine." It was commonplace to get the flu during the winter months.

She then got up and went into the house. When she came out, she held a bag of *Isatis tinctoria* root in her hand. "Make drinks with this using hot water, twice a day. You'll get better in a couple of days. It's not bitter."

Nodding, I took it and smiled, saying, "Thank you, Aunt Sally."

She grunted in reply without saying anything.

It had stopped snowing in K City. The sun was out, and most of the snow had melted. With the sun high in the sky, it was not very cold.

Besides, Sally had started a fire in the yard, which warmed up the place.

At noon, she looked at me and asked, "Would you like to stay for lunch? It's been snowing for a few days, so I only have some dry rations."

I nodded. "Anything would do!"

A person's life could be refined or simple. Although it was only dry rations, it wasn't going to stop us from enjoying ourselves.

There was already a fire in the yard, so she brought out some potatoes and sweet potatoes for me to peel. Then we cut up some meat and washed some vegetables.

In no time, we were having a barbeque in the yard.

I always felt that a barbeque for two was too quiet. However, when she brought out some red wine from the cellar, the atmosphere of the meal was elevated.

Silence was the best way of interaction for some people. Although there was not much conversation between Sally and me, some things need not be said as long as we understood each other.

Lately, I had not taken any proper meals, so my tummy felt bloated as I had eaten a lot of snacks today.

When Ashton arrived, fresh charcoal had been put into the fire. Seeing the cutlery, his handsome face displayed a smile as he held my hand, asking, "Did you enjoy the food?"

I let out a faint smile. Truth be told, I did not really like it, but I ate some nonetheless since I was in a good mood.

"Why don't you try it?" My taste buds were not the same as his, so he might not enjoy what I liked.

With a smile, he took the half-eaten baked potato from my hand. After taking a bite, he raised his eyebrows and said in amazement, "Good cooking skills!"

I laughed. "Aunt Sally barbecued it."

Sally looked at him and said, "Okay, there is some more. Go home quickly after eating. You guys are causing a racket here."

When people get old, they tend to keep their true thoughts to themselves.

Both of us understood that.

Exchanging glances, we smiled. Ashton took a chair from the house and sat by my side, holding my hand. Then, he asked Sally about her health.

Sally gave curt replies while passing the barbecued meat to him. While handing over the sauce to him, I explained, "It tastes better with this sauce."

He smiled and did as he was told., then nodded and appraised, "Yes."

As dusk approached, Sally asked us to leave, "My home is too small to accommodate the two of you, so please leave when you're done."

Ashton merely let out a faint smile and after bidding her goodbye, he led me by my hand to his car.

On the way back to the villa, I stared mindlessly at the passing scenery outside the windscreen.

Before I knew it, I blurted out, "Ashton, thank you."

As he drove along the dimly lit road, he smiled. "That's not good enough. Can I have something more affectionate?"

I laughed. As I tilted my head to come up with the right words, my eyes fell on his face, which was illuminated by flashes of light.

I have to come up with something better, or he won't be satisfied.

Soon, the car stopped at the door of the villa.

After I got out, he turned off the engine and walked toward me. "Got it already?"

I smirked. "No, not yet. I always feel that you're making things difficult for me. You know I'm not poetic."

"Just try!"

I thought for a while and looked up at the sky before shifting my gaze to him. "In the journey of my life, Mr. Ashton is my steadfast dream."

He was stunned for a moment, and then he grinned and took me by the hand into the villa, overwhelmed with emotions.

"Where did you pilfer that from?"

Obviously, he was asking me about that cheesy line I just said. I looked up and pointed at the starry sky as I replied, "From the sky."

Chapter 542

If you could love, you must do so with all your heart and make your loved one happy so that you would have no regrets in the future.

...

The next day, Sally called, and the first thing she asked was, "Taken your medicine?"

I thought for a while before I remembered that yesterday, she had said I sounded nasal and that I should take some medicine.

I nodded and said, "I have."

"December is just around the corner. Since it's the festive season, we must have some decorations. Later, you must go out with me to do some shopping."

She sounded domineering, leaving me with no option.

Nodding, I promised her that I would.

Ashton was busy with work, and I could not tag along with him all the time.

Since Flora was not around, I tidied up a little and drove to the mall.

Sally was waiting at the entrance. When she saw me, she started ranting, "It's not that far. If you didn't want to come, you could have told me."

As I took the trolley from her, I took a glance at the supermarket nearby. "Are we shopping there?"

Pursing her lips, she nodded and went straight in.

I followed her in. She was not very ladylike, looking more like a nagging middle-aged housewife. After shopping for some necessities, she looked back at me and said, "Are you good at making dough?"

I shook my head. "No, I'm not!"

She frowned. "We have tacos every year on New Year's Eve. If you are not good at making dough, how can we make the tacos?"

"We can buy the tortillas and make the tacos with them," I replied, but then I saw her with a bag of flour, so I guessed she wanted to prepare the dough herself.

"Homemade tortillas taste so much better." At that, she did as I thought she would, putting the bag of flour into the trolley.

I was about to say something but decided against it.

Oh, fine!

I'll just play by ear!

Two hours later, we arranged for the delivery staff to send all the stuff back to the villa. Then Sally took me to a Thai restaurant.

The reason was that she wanted to reward me for going shopping with her.

After we were seated, Sally started chatting, "In K City, it is hard to find authentic Thai food. This restaurant is really good, though. You shall soon try the real thing."

While ordering food, she said to me, "Before I came to K City, I liked the Thai restaurant on University Road in J City the most. After I came to K City, I never went back there anymore. I've searched the entire

K City for so many years, but I haven't seen any authentic Thai restaurants except this one. You should give it a try."

From her words, I could feel her longing for home.

Indeed, after she turned eighteen, she spent her remaining life in K City, and her memories of home had faded by then. Whenever she tried to reminisce it, only the tastes from her childhood would come to her mind.

It was just like how my love for candy was influenced by my childhood memories. Grandma always had different types of candies in her pocket. Whenever I felt upset, one piece of candy from her would dispel all my distress.

Now that those people in my memories were gone and I could never see them again, the only thing that remained for me to reminisce was the sweet taste of candies.

When the waiter brought the dishes, I got up. "Aunt Sally, I need to go and wash my hands."

After shopping in the supermarket for some time, we dirtied our hands a little, so she got up and went with me.

On the way back, I went to the washroom while she returned to our table.

When I came back to our table, there was an old acquaintance seated there whom I had not seen for a long time—Rebecca.

"Aunt Sally, I've been busy lately. That's why I didn't have time to visit you. You seem to have lost weight," Rebecca said.

With her were two others who were strangers to me, most likely her friends.

Being cordial, Sally smiled and replied, "My dear, you are so good at flattering. I haven't lost weight or gained any. I'm still the same."

Rebecca smiled. "When I am free later on, I'll go and visit you."

I knew that my presence would destroy the harmonious atmosphere.

After hesitating, Sally said, "Letty, come here. The food is ready."

Letty?

Other than my close friends and relatives, nobody addresses me by this name.

I walked to the dining table, and my eyes met Rebecca's icy gaze.

It was evident that she was jealous.

Ignoring her, I seated myself.

Sally placed some scrumptious-looking food on my plate, saying, "This place serves the most authentic dishes. Come on, give it a try. You'll love it."

I nodded without saying anything.

Seeing that Rebecca did not intend to leave, Sally remained smiling while she said, "Ms. Larson, do you want to eat with us? I ordered a lot. If you don't mind, you can stay."

Her words were carefully thought out. She started with 'Ms. Larson,' which was polite but distant to indicate that they were not close.

The second part of her speech sounded like a sincere invitation and not just courtesy, but there seemed to be a hidden meaning.

Rebecca was slightly taken aback, but she accepted her offer without hesitation. Then she sat next to Sally and said affectionately, "Aunt Sally, since you like Thai food too, we can come here together when you have time in the future. I like it very much as well."

Hearing that, Sally smiled and served her some food. Then she put down the ladle, and with her slender fingers, she patted Rebecca's hand gently and said, "My child, it's my honor if you call me aunt like Ashton does. However, you and I are neither family nor related. In the future, it's better that you address me as Ms. Fuller!"

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These words were gentle but firm.

Rebecca stiffened a bit but kept her smile and said, "Ashton and I have been close like family all these years. Since he calls you aunt, that makes me close to you as well. Addressing you as aunt is a show of my admiration and love."

Judging from her ability to use someone else's words to her own advantage, Rebecca seemed to have advanced a lot since those days when she could only bring up her deceased elder brother, Parker, to arouse sympathy.

In response, Sally merely smiled and did not pursue the matter any further. "Oh, it's fine then. If Ashton treats you like a younger sister, you can naturally address me as Aunt Sally. My dear, counting those years, you should be about thirty years of age and ripe for marriage. Is there anyone in mind?"

Obviously, she was using this sibling-like relationship between Ashton and her to stress that the two cannot be in a romantic relationship.

Spoken like a true veteran!

I wonder how Rebecca is going to deal with this tricky question since we all know what's on her mind.

She had just said that Ashton was like family to her, so it would make no sense if she suddenly said that she was interested in Ashton.

Rebecca's expression stiffened slightly, but she still managed to put on a smile and said, "No, I'm fine with living alone now."

However, we all knew that those words were merely a lie to console herself.

Sally nodded and said emphatically, "Oh, no. A woman must get married. It doesn't matter whether you end up getting divorced or living happily ever after. However, a wedding is something you must have if you do not want to end up with regrets."

After a pause, she continued, "I just recalled that in Ashton's company, there is a Mr. Quinn who takes good care of you. I think he is caring and motivated. Besides, he's handsome and comes from a good family too. Why don't you give him a chance?"

Joe Quinn?

The conversation had drifted to this point, and Rebecca was at a loss for words, so she faked a laugh and said, "Aunt Sally, I hope you won't pressure me to get married. Since you said that all of us have our own destinies, no one knows how things will turn out eventually, especially when it comes to marriage. If there is no chemistry, we can't force ourselves to love someone. So we should let nature take its course."

"Oh! My dear, what do you mean by letting nature take its course?" Sally held Rebecca's hand as she said in a serious tone, "You are wrong because that would only work if two people are in love. If the love

is one-sided, it's just wishful thinking. Just look at Letty and Ashton. They have been together for seven years, constantly talking about their wedding. If this is not fate, I don't know what is."

Sally was, in fact, reminding Rebecca not to wish for things that weren't meant to be hers. After all, they would not belong to her no matter how hard she tried.

Of course, Rebecca understood what she meant, and it was difficult for her to keep her composure.

But with more than thirty years of experience in society, she was able to continue smiling.

After taking a few more bites, she finally spoke up, "Aunt Sally, my friends are still around. I'll leave you both now and see you another time when I am free."

Sally nodded without making any attempt to make her stay, saying, "Sure, please drop by at my place when you can!"

The relationship between adults was complicated with truths and lies between shades of grey, neither friend nor foe.

Even when there was much fighting and hurting, they would still plaster a smile on their faces.

The price for growing up was hypocrisy.

After Rebecca left, Sally glanced at me before chiding, "I really don't know what Ashton sees in you. It's been seven years, but you cannot even handle a rival."

I was rendered speechless.

But I had to admit that she was right.

After a while, I replied, "She is Parker's younger sister. Before Parker died that year, he entrusted Ashton with Rebecca, so he's responsible for her. It's not like Ashton can just cut off all ties with her, right?"

Hearing that, she cast a sidelong glance at me with a tinge of exasperation. "But does that mean he has an obligation to take care of her for a lifetime? Even her biological father cannot be responsible for her forever, let alone Parker. So please don't force Ashton to take on such a heavy burden."

"Besides, this woman is already thirty years old. She can be independent and live her own life. If she wants the company of a man so badly, she can go ahead and pay for one."

This was the first time I heard Sally speaking so harshly.

Yet, what she said was true. I pursed my lips and then took in some food.

Even though Parker had asked Ashton to take care of Rebecca, he was not her parent, so there was no obligation for him to be responsible for her all of his life.

After lunching with me, Sally left as she had other errands to run.

Since I had nothing to do, I decided to go home. However, I bumped into Rebecca again at the entrance of the mall. Apparently, it was not coincidental, but rather, she had been waiting for me.

"Scarlett, do you really think you are so special that everyone likes you?" She blocked my way.

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Obviously, she wanted to stop me from leaving.

With so many passers-by around, it would be unwise to create a scene and attract unnecessary attention.

After a pause, I looked at her calmly and asked, "Are you actually infatuated with Ashton or are you just refusing to accept defeat?"

For a moment, she was frozen in place, probably wondering why I would suddenly ask such a question.

Receiving no response from her, I took my car keys out of my bag and said, "Come on, let's go. Since you are unable to give him up, take a trip with me!"

After all, humans need closure.

She looked around at the crowd of passers-by, then followed me into the car with a gloomy face.

Throughout the whole trip, the grim expression on her face remained, and it was apparent that she was unwilling to talk to me.

As I drove, I broke the silence nonchalantly, "I got my driving license six years ago, which was the year after I married Ashton. I remember that he took care of you well throughout that year. By that time, Fuller Corporation had been under him for two years, and he was busy with meetings every day. Sometimes, Joseph was away, but he did not like taking cabs or hiring drivers, so he urged me to get a driving license. He said it was pointless for me to wait for him at home, so I might as well learn to drive and attend meetings with him. That way, I could drive him back too.

She sneered. "He only treats you as a member of his staff. No one attends meetings with his wife."

I smiled calmly and nodded. "Yeah, I thought so too at that time. I felt that he didn't love me at all but treated me as a subordinate. But later on, I realized that I was wrong. After I learned how to drive, he did not go to meetings with me. Instead, he gave me a car for my convenience so that I could drive anywhere I like."

Her face stiffened upon hearing that, unable to come up with a retort.

I let out a faint smile. "Ashton's love is not conspicuous. He was concerned that it would not be safe for me to take cabs everywhere, so he had me learn to drive because he knew he would not be able to fetch me all the time due to his hectic schedule."

"You're overthinking!" she spoke with a sneer.

I smiled, unperturbed. "You can perceive it as such if you want. If that were all, I would have had the same opinion too."

At that moment, the car stopped at a traffic light intersection, and I continued to speak, "I was just a fresh J University graduate when I entered Fuller Corporation. Do you think I learned a lot in university? No, I didn't, but it took only two years for me to attain the position of a project director. Do you think it was Grandpa who helped me?"

"Wasn't it?" she replied with a question of her own.

That was hilarious to me. "Fuller Corporation has always been in the hands of Ashton. Although Grandpa was an elder, it was not up to him to do whatever he wanted. Besides, Grandpa was also an expert in management., so he should have known the importance of a project director."

Her expression darkened upon hearing that. As the lights turned green, I resumed driving. "In a relationship, the love has to be mutual between two people. When I entered Fuller Corporation, I was incompetent in terms of both professionalism and presentation skills. Ashton gave me a hard time in the company for two years before I was promoted to the position of a project director. In order to make me more professional, every time he went to inspect the projects, he would ask me to tag along. Although he was very strict with me, he was constantly training me so that my capabilities would be improved."

Seeing Rebecca's ashen face, I continued, "In fact, he had been helping me grow into a better version of myself. As for you, yes, he did promise to take care of you and watch over you, but think about it carefully. During those years before I showed up, what kind of feelings did he actually have for you?"

"If he really had any romantic feelings for you, would Grandpa have been able to influence him to marry me? Do you think Ashton would be so easily manipulated? Both of you are considered childhood friends, but why has he shown you nothing except concern for a friend?"

"That is because you are shameless, and you stole him from me!" She was infuriated.

I smiled gently. "Rebecca, think about it carefully. During those days when he took care of you, did he plan your future for you or teach you anything? The love of parents is shown when they prepare their children for the future. The same is true between lovers. If he loves you, he would definitely consider your future as well. But why hasn't he taught you the important things about survival in the world like courtesy, integrity, and life skills?"

"He was not spoiling you by taking care of you. He was just fulfilling his responsibility, so he never taught you or even let you learn anything. Instead, he allowed you to go wild and let you fend for yourself. Do you think that is love?"

"You're lying!" If we were not inside the car, Rebecca would have attacked me.

I sneered, "Why are you so angry? Surely you know the type of person you are, don't you? You should also know very well how you ended up with two children."

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"You're lying, Scarlett! You're lying!" She seemed to be in great agony as she buried her face in her hands.

I pursed my lips and kept quiet. Those two kids... Ashton has never addressed the situation directly, nor has he ever admitted to anything. He says he never laid a hand on her, but he never questioned how the kids came to be. I'm guessing he's trying to protect her dignity or something. Judging by Rebecca's reaction, I think she knows Ashton didn't touch her too.

As the car pulled up outside Serene Villa, I glanced at her and noticed that her eyes had reddened, evidently suppressing her emotions.

"Would you like to go for a tour?"

She looked at me and asked coldly, "What are you trying to do, Scarlett?"

"Have you give up on Ashton," I said. For seven years, I've let Rebecca stay around Ashton because I couldn't bring myself to get rid of her, nor was I capable of getting rid of her. But since I've started to do so, there's no need to stop now!

She shot me a cold glare and sneered. "You seriously think that's going to happen?"

I arched an eyebrow at her. "We won't know unless we try!"

She shot me a disdainful look as I got out of the car.

Looking up at the villa, I saw that the plants in the yard had all wilted.

"Ashton and I stayed in this house when we first came to K City. I was going to show you the other villa in J City at first, but... I figured it was unnecessary as you've already realized that the interiors of Ashton's villas are the same."

“So? You think showing me this is going to make me give up on him?”

“I don’t really know much about Ashton’s villa in K City. The only thing I know for sure is that our fingerprints are the only ones that can get the door open. He said this house belongs to us, you see,” I said with a shrug as I opened the front gate using the fingerprint scanner and motioned for her to have a look inside.

The look on her face turned ice-cold as she followed me into the house without saying a word.

I then pointed at the barren trees in the yard that were covered in snow and said, “He was the one who grew the plants here so that I could enjoy the view throughout my pregnancy. You see that peach tree over there? We planted that when we first moved in here so that we could see the flowers bloom in spring and enjoy its fruits in autumn.”

“What does any of this have to do with me?”

I nodded. “Indeed, it has nothing to do with you. I’m only showing you this to let you know that Ashton was the one who planted everything in this yard for me.”

Noticing her grim expression, I carried on walking over a pavement made of cobblestone and asked, “You’re probably wondering why we have this pavement here instead of a proper driveway that leads right up to the front door. Am I right?”

Rebecca bit her lip and kept quiet.

Hearing no response from her, I continued, “I asked him that same question as well. He said he was often under a lot of stress from work and would probably bring all that negativity into the house if his car was parked right outside the front door. As such, he had this pavement constructed to remind him that the heartwarming love of his wife is what awaits him inside that house and that he has to rid himself of all that negativity before he reaches the door.”

From the look on her face, I could tell that she wasn't too happy about what she heard. However, the fact that she didn't just turn around and walk away indicated that she didn't want to give up on Ashton yet.

Looks like she's still obsessed with Ashton...

Right then, I opened the door to the living room with my fingerprint. It had been vacant for a very long time, but there wasn't a speck of dust anywhere as a housekeeper would clean the place up every now and then.

"You've probably been here quite a few times, haven't you? Do you still remember how Ashton likes his decor?" I asked with a smile while looking back at her.

Her face went pale as she seemed to have recalled something. "Practically everything he owned was black or white in color. His house, his car, his clothes, and even his underwear... However, I renovated the villa in J City three years ago. You said he decorated it according to your preferences, but isn't it depressing to live in a completely black and white house? Look around you and feel the warmth of this place. This is what you call a home. When I came back from R Province, he hugged me and said he had been living here during my four years of absence because it had my scent, and he couldn't fall asleep without it," I continued.

"Scarlett, you shameless b*tch!" she shouted at me with reddened eyes.

I chuckled. "You call that shameless? If only you saw how gentle his gaze was when he looked back at me while cooking in the kitchen... You know what he whispered in my ear when he hugged me?"

She was starting to lose it, clenching her knuckles tightly as she spat the words out, "How could you be so shameless, Scarlett?"

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I grabbed her by the wrist and dragged her toward the bedroom on the second floor. "It's funny how you call me shameless when you've been clinging to him for so many years and testing my patience time after time with your petty little tricks. See this bed right here? It's where we spent countless nights. It's

where I've experienced his gentle and passionate side up close and personal. I still remember him telling me how he wished he could die while lying on top of me!"

That pushed her over the edge, and she raised her hand to hit me, but I caught it in time and pointed at the entrance to the wardrobe. "You see the clothes and jewelry in the wardrobe? He handpicked them all for me. In fact, he even went as far as investing in hundreds of jewelry stores and bringing home collections worth millions for me. Has he ever done that for you? I don't think so!"

Seeing as she was on the verge of breaking down, I sneered and shoved her onto the bed. "Why don't you lie there and think about what Ashton has ever done for you, hmm? Think about how much love and affection he has shown you!"

"So what? My brother already handed me over to him, so there's no way he can ever get rid of me! I could haunt you like a phantom all your life if I wish to! If I can't live a happy life, then neither will you!"

Hearing that from her came as no surprise at all. "You know he doesn't love you, and yet you stubbornly cling to him? Listen to yourself, Rebecca, and tell me who the shameless one really is! Ten years have passed, and the only thing you've managed to accomplish is disgust him further! Nothing happened between you two even during my four years of absence. On the other hand, a single glance at me in R Province was all it took for him to miss me dearly!"

I let out a chuckle at the sight of the increasingly cold look on her face as I continued, "You had plenty of chances to win him over, and yet you've failed to do it. Do you realize how much of a failure you are, Rebecca? You lost your dignity and pride as a woman, only to have him find you repulsive! Heck, you don't even come close to Nancy, who at least gets to attend events with him! To say he's practically forgotten all about you wouldn't be an overstatement."

"You're lying!" Rebecca broke into tears. "Nancy is just an escort, so why should I have to compete with her?"

“I’ll take that as a compliment. You know, I would give you a chance if you’re actually confident in winning Ashton over, but that isn’t the case. Otherwise, you wouldn’t have come to me countless times just to insult me. Heck, Ashton wouldn’t even have looked at you if it weren’t for Parker’s sake! You’re only coming to me because it makes you feel better about your pathetic self.”

That’s right... Had Ashton developed even the slightest bit of feelings for her, he would’ve at least shown her some signs of affection. However, all Rebecca has achieved is wasting ten years of her life. She’s obviously not too happy about it, but she won’t go to Ashton for fear of the look of disgust he’d give her.

“Okay... Fine...” Rebecca stopped crying all of a sudden and broke into a bitter smile. “Since it has come to this, I might as well get rid of you for good! Since Ashton loves you dearly, losing you would be hell on earth for him! If I can’t have him, then neither can you!”

She then pulled out a knife from her purse and held it up high as she charged at me.

Wait... I wasn’t expecting this. Why does she have a knife on her?

It all happened too quickly, so it was too late for me to move out of the way.

I instinctively closed my eyes and braced myself for the worst, but nothing happened. When I slowly opened my eyes a few seconds later, I saw Ashton standing before me.

He was dressed fully in black and looked as handsome as always, except his forehead was covered in sweat.

He came running all the way here?

He had grabbed Rebecca by the wrist and stopped her from plunging the knife into me. “I told you, your fate would be a hundred times worse if you so much as lay a hand on her!” he shouted coldly, his voice filled with rage.

Ashton then shoved her away and shielded me from her as he gave Joseph a call. "Call the police, Joseph!"

It was obvious that he had already told Joseph to be on standby before coming over.

After hanging up the phone, he looked at me worriedly and asked, "What are you doing here?"

"I brought her over to make her give up on you," I replied.