

When There Is Nothing Left But Love Chapter 678-682

Chapter 678

“Mr. Fuller, I didn’t know you were into young married ladies!” she joked.

Then she turned to look at me. “Scarlett, we should get going. If Nora and the others know about you and Mr. Fuller, Mr. Murphy is bound to find out. We wouldn’t want that to happen, would we!”

I felt uncomfortable at her words, and I stared at her with a frown. “Do you always speak so recklessly?”

“Y-You...” This seemed to piss her off, though she appeared to hold back her temper to save face.

I was planning to leave anyway, and I tried to pry Ashton’s arm from my waist. “It’s late. I should get going!”

Instead of loosening his arms, he tightened his hold on me with a scowl on his face. “Mr. Murphy?”

We were in a nightclub after all. Tessa’s words also did nothing to help my predicament. I could feel everyone’s stares boring into me.

I felt uneasy about the whole situation. I don’t want people to think of me as some married whore who goes around seducing other men! That’s just sick!

Suddenly I blurted in a fit of anger, “Ashton, what the heck do you want?”

I guess my voice had been louder than I'd expected. Even those who'd just been glancing at us from time to time were full-on staring at our exchange now.

Using all my strength, I tried to get up despite his unyielding hold. At most, I'll just fall while trying.

He seemed to anticipate my movement and stood up with me.

He looked at the others and announced, "Thank you for hosting me today. It's late, and I should get going."

Derek appeared anxious since they hadn't reached an agreement on the issues they had meant to discuss. He rushed forward to stop Ashton from leaving. With a brown-nosing smile on his face, he said, "Mr. Fuller, you've only been here for a while. You haven't even enjoyed any of the drinks yet! Why don't you stay and have a bit of fun before you leave?"

Ashton had an annoying habit. Even if he knew from the start that he didn't want to work with someone, he would bring the person on a merry goose chase before telling them his decision.

At that moment, he looked at Derek with a warm smile on his face. "We can always get drinks again some other day. It's rather late today and seeing as we're not young men anymore, we should catch up on some rest and take better care of our health."

Derek's gaze landed on me at his words, and he shot a loaded smile at Ashton. "Of course, Mr. Fuller. We do need to get some more rest and take better care of ourselves."

He continued, "Mr. Fuller, where are you staying? I can arrange a driver for you."

Ashton raised his brows and replied, "No need. Please enjoy your drinks!"

He dragged me out of the room with him, calls of polite farewells following in our wake. Tessa left the room with us, and she urged me several times to leave with her.

I wanted to go back with her, but I couldn't escape from Ashton's grip of steel.

I pinched his waist hard in a fit of anger. He seemed utterly unaffected by my actions and merely lowered his head to give me a patronizing smile.

When we reached the pool hall, Ashton turned around to address Joseph, "Please send Ms. Dixon home."

Joseph nodded wordlessly.

Tessa started fretting when she saw Ashton dragging me with him. She blocked his path and confronted him. "Mr. Fuller, Scarlett came here with me. I don't think it would be appropriate for her to follow you home."

Ashton arched a brow and replied sardonically, "I don't think there's anything wrong if my wife goes home with me, is there?"

Stunned, she paused for a moment before asking, "Your wife?"

Ashton just stared at her silently.

Just then, Joseph interrupted the conversation. "Ms. Dixon, where do you stay? I'll send you back."

Ashton had never been a patient man, and he began pulling me away with him.

If I go with him now, our lives will become irrevocably tangled once more.

As these thoughts crossed my mind, I couldn't help but look back toward Tessa. I called out, "We're just acquaintances; I'm not really his wife."

This caused Ashton to furrow his brows. His grip on my waist tightened further as he turned his searching gaze on me. "Just acquaintances?"

I nodded. I felt a bit disconcerted, and I chalked it up to the alcohol I had drunk earlier.

Tessa seemed to let out a breath of relief when she heard me. She said to Ashton, "Mr. Fuller, you won't enjoy yourself with an unwilling woman. Plus, you don't know Scarlett that well, and it's kind of inappropriate to be together at such a late hour. You can always get to know her better first before deciding if you want to hook up with her."

An unpleasant feeling rose in my chest when I heard her little speech. Is she really helping me, or is she just picking on my faults in front of Ashton?

I couldn't discern her true purpose, but I knew that I couldn't let myself go back with Ashton.

I used all my might to pry Ashton's arm away.

Utterly exasperated, I glared at him. "Ashton, y-you..."

"You really think I'll let you go?"

I replied fiercely, "I'll sue you for kidnapping!"

"Oh, I wasn't aware that bringing one's missing wife home is counted as kidnapping."

Dumbfounded, I stared mutely at him. My head continued to spin. It must be the drinks; after all, I haven't had alcohol in a long time. That must be why I'm feeling so woozy now.

Chapter 679

Ashton continued dragging me with him. Tessa tried to chase after us, but Joseph blocked her.

I was kind of a lazy person by nature. As he half-carried me to his car, the thought of just giving in and following him began to take hold of my mind.

My thoughts petered out for a while as he settled me in his car. Soon, I started feeling uncomfortable.

I leaned heavily into the car seat and shut my eyes, falling into a hazy sleep.

The sound of my phone ringing reached my ears, and I frowned involuntarily. As I patted around weakly for my phone, I heard Ashton speaking to someone. "She's drunk, and she is asleep."

Groggily, I opened my eyes. I saw him talking to someone on my phone as he drove with one hand on the steering wheel, his eyes focusing on the road before him.

I made a face at him. How can you just answer someone's phone without asking for their permission? He mumbled an acknowledgment and hung up a moment later.

He placed my phone beside me and seemed to realize that I was awake. Surprised, he asked gently, "Are you feeling very uncomfortable?"

I shook my head. I was a bit groggy, and my limbs felt like they were made of jelly, but I was still conscious.

“Where are you taking me?” Looking out the window, I could tell that we were still in A City. He doesn’t have a house in A City, so he’s probably going to a hotel.

He raised his brows and said, “If you’re uncomfortable, just close your eyes and rest for a bit.”

I pouted, just as thoughts of the early days of our marriage flooded my brain. I couldn’t help but laugh when I recalled how stubborn and dumb I’d been back then. It had gotten me into a lot of funny situations.

He frowned slightly and looked at me. “What are you laughing about?”

“When I first graduated from university, I’d planned to bring my Grandma with me to R province. I didn’t have any grand plans about what to do. I thought that maybe I’d just return to R Province. Spend some time with Grandma in the yard gardening, and get a stable nine-to-five job in town. I’d be happy enough with that.”

I paused and looked at him out of the corner of my eye. I burst into a fit of self-deprecating laughter as I continued, “I never thought that my Grandma would beg your Grandpa to take me in as your wife. Now it seems like our lives are destined to be entangled together. At first, I thought I’d hit the jackpot, though I couldn’t help but feel that I would never match up to you. That’s why I asked Grandpa to let me work at Fuller Corporation. Even a position as lowly as a shop assistant was good enough for me. I believed that as long as I worked hard enough, I’d be a fitting partner for you one day. When I first joined the company, I got dragged by my supervisor to entertain some guests. He said it was my contribution to the company on account of my low rank. I didn’t want to go at first, but then I thought I would have taken forever to reach a position close enough to you if I rejected him. My tolerance was horrible back then, but I kept forcing myself to drink with those old hats that I barely knew. I was basically chugging drink after drink mindlessly.”

He reached over to hold my hand, though I pulled it out of his grasp and let out a resigned laugh. “Actually, I didn’t feel like I was suffering back then. Not even now when I think back to the incident. I thought that the experience was good in the sense that I could work hard and prove myself in my youth, so I don’t regret it one bit. If I’d stayed at home like a trophy wife, I don’t think I would ever know how it felt like to slowly get to the Director position or the sense of accomplishment that came with it.”

In contrast, I seemed to be deteriorating over the past few years. I've never felt more like myself than during those years of building my career.

I turned my head and looked out the car windows. I felt overwhelmed with a sense of failure. I don't know why I insisted on leaving when I knew that Ashton wouldn't let me go.

It seemed that I'd been struck with an epiphany. When I first met Rachel, I was impressed with her credentials. It's because she's a spitting image of the old me who fought hard for her career and romance.

But living a sheltered life under Ashton had gradually turned me into someone like Rebecca. Ashton had taken such good care of her that her world only revolved around Ashton and no one else.

I upped and left K City because I was worried that I would end up like her. I came to A City in search of the old me. Even if I couldn't find her anymore, I could at least live life on my own terms and become the person I wanted to be.

But alas, life is unpredictable. I didn't think I'd end up in Venria and almost lose my life. Despite so, I don't have to live in a gilded cage under Ashton's care or rely on him to chase my dreams. I can still get there myself. I can still live the life that I've always dreamed of.

The car came to a stop before a hotel. Ashton got out and came to the front passenger side. He lifted me straight out of his car.

Everything happened so quickly that I could barely react. I found myself being carried into the hotel.

"Ashton, what are you doing?" I asked indignantly, trying to push away from him. Unfortunately, the alcohol had made my limbs weak and my head dizzy, and my weak shove did little to deter him.

He carried me into the elevator and had me up against the walls before the doors had closed completely. He caged me in with his arms and cupped my face, desire burning in his eyes. "Don't hide from me, and don't say no to me!"

Chapter 680

I froze in shock, taken aback by his behavior. Just as I thought of lifting my arms to push him away, he'd caged me in against the walls of the elevator.

Luckily there's no one else in the elevator, or we'll all be in an awkward situation.

His closeness suffocated me, and I felt myself relaxing into his arms.

He swept me off my feet as the elevator doors opened, and he carried me straight to his room.

He switched on the lights in the hallway as he sat me down on the floor, pressing his body into mine. His gaze bored into mine as he said, "I'm not letting you go again."

His words seemed to be directed at both himself and me.

I opened my mouth and replied breathily, "Ashton, I—"

"Shush, I don't want to hear a single word!" He placed a finger on my lips.

I scrunched my lips and frowned at him. "Ashton, you jerk!"

Silently, he lifted me and strode towards the huge bed in the room.

He loomed over me on the bed. I turned my head away to avoid his gaze.

He turned my head back to face him. Staring intently at me, he sneered, "Trying to hide somewhere?"

I glowered at him since I couldn't turn my head away. "What exactly is happening right now? Are you planning to sleep with me before we go our separate ways? Or what else do you have planned?"

His voice hardened as he replied, "Go our separate ways?"

I raised my brows at him and said defiantly, "Or what? I told you before that I didn't love you, yet here you are forcing me to stay, so isn't that exactly what you want? I mean, that's usually what happens anyway when people pick up chicks at clubs, right?"

He scoffed and tightened his grip on me. "You seem to know a lot about these things, don't you?"

I pursed my lips and refused to meet his stare. "I can't help if I hear about it from the others."

I seemed to have pushed him too far as he suddenly got up, taking a deep breath to calm himself down. He headed straight for the bathroom without a single word.

I could only stare after him, perplexed at his behavior. I didn't know what to do next.

I sat on the bed absent-mindedly. I felt overwhelmed with exhaustion, though it was of an emotional nature. It always seems like I'm trying to run away, like some headless chicken running around in circles because I don't even know what I really want.

Just then, I received a phone call from Nora. Her booming voice came through the receiver. "Scarlett, did you fall into the toilet bowl or something? How could you just disappear after a brief trip to the restroom?"

Her loud voice made my headache worse, and I moved the phone further away from my ear. I replied a while later, "I'm already home. Something cropped up so I decided to leave earlier. Sorry, I forgot to let you all know."

Nora was incredulous as she asked, "You went home? With whom? Aren't you living with Mr. Murphy? If you left without him, who are you with now?"

I... Ugh! What a mess!

I paused for a moment to come up with a suitable excuse. "I bumped into a friend of mine from K City. Oh right, are you all still in the private room?"

"Girl, look at the time. Why would we still be there? Plus, it's hard to last the night at my age. Oh right, I just wanted to let you know that Mr. Murphy's pretty drunk tonight. Take care of yourself, and make sure you lock your doors and windows."

Stunned, I asked, "Did you ply him with drinks?" She must be trying to make a move on him.

She cackled wickedly. "I wasn't planning to get him drunk at first. But then, how often does a rich, handsome man drop in one's lap, am I right? If I missed this chance, I wouldn't have anything to boast about to my kid when I'm married to some mediocre man in the future. If I could bag myself a relationship with someone like that, that'd make for some great storytelling!"

The gears in my brain appeared to be jammed when faced with her unusual thought process. How does your brain come up with these things?

I couldn't help but comment, "If you need my help, just let me know. Who knows, maybe I can be your wing-woman. You can always drop by and pretend you're visiting me or something."

I heard her booming laughter. She sounded ecstatic like she was already imagining her glorious future.

She asked abruptly, "How about I drop by for a visit tomorrow?"

“No!” I blurted out before continuing awkwardly, “I’m busy tomorrow, so I can’t entertain you.”

She clicked her tongue at me. “What, you need to entertain that friend of yours from K City?”

Erm.

“Yep! I guess you could put it that way.”

“Hmph! Ditching your friends for a man!”

I heard some movement behind me and hurried to end the call. “Nora, let’s talk tomorrow. It’s late, and we should get some sleep.”

“Hey, why are you in a rush to end the call? I still—”

I hung up before she could finish her sentence.

The doors to the bathroom opened, and I turned around. Sitting cross-legged on the bed, I stared at the man who walked out with a towel slung on his waist.

We seemed to stare at each other for a beat before he arched his brows and asked, “Aren’t you leaving?”

Me? He wants me to leave?

He smiled devilishly at my silence. “Do you have something to say to me?” he asked.

I pursed my lips and hopped off the bed. “Nope, it’s getting late. I’m heading off now.”

Chapter 681

I'd barely reached the hallway when Ashton lifted me from behind and dumped me onto the bed.

I landed in a clumsy heap on the bed. Glaring at him, I shouted, "Ashton! Are you sick or something?"

"Yes," he replied seriously as he tossed his towel aside. He rasped seductively, "I'm lovesick."

I...

I tried to be modest and look away from his body. "Ashton, there are dressing gowns in the hotel. You should put one on!"

He seemed to ignore my words as he crawled onto the bed toward me. He asked huskily, "What are you hiding from? Are you scared of something?"

I was tongue-tied as the scent of his shower gel hit me. I started inching backward slowly. "Ashton, what are you trying to do?"

He began closing in on me, and I felt unsettled by his stare. "You should know what I'm planning to do."

He'd said this lightly, though I couldn't miss the emphasis he'd placed on the last word in his answer.

I'd run out of space to back into. I looked at him and swallowed my saliva involuntarily. "Don't come so near to me. It's late, and I should really get going."

This position was far too sensual for my liking. I was finding it hard to breathe.

He seemed to enjoy the atmosphere immensely. He didn't make a move and gave me a piercing stare.
"Going back? Where to?"

He moved his lips closer to me as he spoke.

I was so taut that I almost forgot to breathe. Acting on instinct, I closed my eyes.

I tried to wiggle around and escape as I sensed his movements. He ordered in a deep tone, "Don't refuse me!"

I was taken aback and didn't know what to do. So I froze and let him have his way.

He deliberately took his time, placing featherlight kisses along my cheek.

I can't focus when he's doing stuff like this.

"Scarlett," he rasped, and I luxuriated in his rich baritone.

I mumbled incoherently, beginning to fall under his spell. He suddenly stopped just as I was anticipating his next move.

I opened my eyes and was met by his knowing smirk. He teased, "Do you want it?"

I knew my face was as red as a tomato at that point. I accused weakly, "Ashton, you jerk!"

His laughter rang out through the room.

I'd be lying if I said I didn't expect what happened later that night.

I woke up to the piercing rays of the August sunshine through the window. I was shocked when I saw the man lying next to me.

“Why are you still here?”

Ashton was lying on the bed. When he saw that I was awake, he pulled me into his arms.

He chuckled, “Why wouldn’t I be here?”

I was still getting over my surprise and stuttered at him. “I-I...”

“Are you hungry?”

I chewed my lips and pulled away from him. “I should leave!” I still need to go to work this morning.

He pressed me down on the bed. “Where are you going?”

I kept mum for a bit before saying, “Ashton, let’s just treat last night as a drunken one-night stand. Next time...”

“We go our separate ways?” His warm tone had disappeared as he interrupted my words. “Scarlett, did you really think I was going to let you get away?”

I shook my head. “No!” I paused again, thinking of what to say. “I’m not running away. I just want to make a life of my own. Ashton, you’re really good to me, but I will always be living in your shadow.”

He retorted, “That’s rubbish! What do you mean that? Is my existence somehow disturbing your life?”

I nodded woodenly. "Yes, it is disturbing my life. I want to live alone and not become entangled with you like this. Why can't you understand?"

He stared at me coldly, not gratifying me with a reply.

He's angry all right.

I got up and picked up my clothes. I got dressed quickly and looked at him coolly, "I'm sorry for bothering you last night."

Then I rushed out of the hotel without waiting for his reply.

I hailed a cab to Murphy Corporation. The alcohol from last night was still messing with my system, and I felt light-headed.

I was greeted by the sight of Armond in a sharp black suit as I walked into the office. His stare was burning a hole through my head.

I was surprised when I saw him. I remembered Nora telling me how much he'd drunk last night and wondered if he was okay.

I put on a small smile and greeted him, "Good morning, Mr. Murphy!"

Linda ambled over with a pile of documents which she then dropped on my desk. "Ms. Stovall, there's quite a bit of work for you today. Good luck."

I nodded and greeted her as well. I noticed that Armond was still staring at me after Linda had left.

Flustered by his staring, I said, "Mr. Murphy, you..."

He interrupted, "Where did you go last night? You didn't come home."

Slightly stunned by his question, I tried to hide my embarrassment with a laugh. "I bumped into an old friend. We had a few drinks together and ended up pulling an all-nighter."

I knew my excuse was a bit far-fetched, but this was the only thing I could come up with.

He looked at me wordlessly. His incessant staring unnerved me.

Chapter 682

I tried to clear up the awkward tension in the air by making some small talk. "Mr. Murphy, have you had your breakfast yet?"

I almost forgot that my current job entailed looking after his meals.

He left my question hanging as he turned and headed into his office.

I wondered what I should do. In the end, I went downstairs to get some pastries for him. When I returned to the office, Armond was gone.

I didn't see Linda either. That was when I realized that there was a meeting this morning. I hurried to the conference room.

The person who was presenting his slides stopped talking when I entered the room. My embarrassment grew when I noticed that everyone in the room had turned to look at me.

Erm, awkward much!

I addressed my apology to everyone in the conference room. "Sorry for the interruption! And sorry I'm late for the meeting."

Armond was seated at the front of the conference room. He shot me an intense gaze before motioning for the presenter to continue.

The meeting seemed to last for ages, and my hangover didn't make things any better. When the meeting finally ended, I got up to leave and was stopped by Armond.

"Scarlett!"

I slowed down and turned my head. I smiled awkwardly and addressed him. "Mr. Murphy!"

"Did you forget about the meeting today?" he asked sternly.

I nodded sheepishly before shaking my head in an attempt to clear myself of the funk I'd been in since this morning. "Mr. Murphy, I'm really sorry. That was an oversight on my part, and I promise it won't happen again."

He pursed his lips before continuing, "I don't doubt your capabilities since you've been employed at both Fuller Corporation and White Corporation before. That's why I hired you without going through an interview with HR. But this doesn't mean that you can gloss over the regulations in Murphy Corporation. Scarlett, you have to treat every job you take on seriously since it's now your responsibility."

I nodded several times and answered sincerely, "Yes, I know!"

He frowned, apparently in a bad mood. He walked around me and left the conference room.

I sighed, still feeling uneasy about the whole situation.

Linda was waiting for me at the door. Sensing my dejected mood, she tried to comfort me, "Mr. Murphy is always this serious when it comes to working. You'll get used to it after a few more days."

I tilted my head to look at her, surprised and touched by her kind words. "Thank you!"

She smiled at me. "Everyone went through this phase as well. For us women, if we refuse to become housewives that are crippled without their husbands, we can only fight harder to establish our careers."

I was stunned at her words. She started to walk away but stopped after a few steps. She turned back to me and said, "Oh right, I have a tip for you. Mr. Murphy likes sweets, though he doesn't eat them very often. You can carry some sweets with you. Who knows, it might cut down the number of times he tells you off!"

That was unexpected. Armond has a sweet tooth?

"By the way, Mr. Murphy has gastric problems, so he can't skip his breakfast in the morning. It would be good if you have some gastric medication with you at all times."

Linda left after bestowing me with her advice. It took me a moment to get over my surprise at the new things I'd learned about Armond today. I then headed back to the office and collected a stack of documents meant for Armond.

He looked pale, and I thought he was still angry at me. Cautiously, I said, "Mr. Murphy, I've already reviewed these documents. They're all good to go; they just need your signature."

He mumbled his acknowledgment without looking at me. He continued reading the documents in his hand as I placed my stack on his desk. That was when I noticed that one of his hands was clutching his stomach.

Linda's words came to mind as I realized he might be in pain from his gastric problems instead of being angry.

Seeing his intense concentration on the documents in front of him, I pulled out a few sweets from my pocket and placed them on the desk. I said apologetically, "Mr. Murphy, I'm really sorry about what happened this morning. Please have a few sweets first to stave off the pain, and I'll head out to get you some medicine and food in a bit."

He stopped whatever he was doing and met my gaze. His brows were raised as he asked with some humor, "Did Linda tell you about this?"

I looked at the sweets on the table and nodded. "Linda told me that you like to eat sweets. She also mentioned that you have gastric problems, so you can't skip breakfast. I'll remember these details in the future. I slipped up today, but I won't repeat my mistakes."

I grew nervous as I stared at him, and I took in a small breath to calm myself down. I tried to give him my most serious expression as I waited for his orders.

Suddenly, he smiled at me. He replied, "Just don't repeat it again. I'm fine, and you should get back to work. Let's have lunch together later."

I nodded eagerly.

I was still worried at his pallor and asked, "Are you able to bear the pain?"

He smiled placidly. "I've lived with this for a while now, so I'm used to it. Plus, it's almost noon, so I don't want to trouble you to go out now."

I nodded and said, "Then please have some sweets first and drink some water."

I left his office. Unable to shake off my concern, I went to the pantry and prepared a glass of warm milk.

My phone began ringing with a call from Nora. I picked up the phone. "Morning, have you eaten?"

“Not yet. Babe, I need your help!” Pots and pans clanged in the background, and I guessed that she was in the kitchen.