

When There Is Nothing Left But Love Chapter 728-732

Chapter 728

When did Summer tell Ashton all this?

As I stared at the tree in a daze, Rachel said, "If you can't climb it, then forget it!"

Meanwhile, Ashton kept quiet and simply looked at me.

They seriously have nothing better to do. Grabbing on the trunk, I stepped on its branches and began to climb up the tree.

Back when I was in the mountains in Venria, I had to do a lot of physical exercises to survive. Resultantly, my arms were much stronger than before.

When I was up on the tree, I looked down and said, "Pass the bag up!"

Ashton handed me an empty bag as he warned, "Be careful, don't fall!"

"Thanks!" I took the bag from his hands and shifted my position to pick the fruits.

It was not a difficult task, and indeed, the fruits on such trees were big and juicy and would surely taste delicious.

When I had already picked quite a few, the heavy bag became difficult to move around with. I lowered my body and passed the bag over to Ashton.

Then, I prepared myself to climb down.

“Ah! Snake!” A sudden voice rang out, shocking me. I slipped, falling off the tree.

I could not help but pray for the best for myself. Please, let there be nothing sharp below. Otherwise, this won't be pretty.

I was prepared to take a fall. However, I suddenly noticed a strong force around my waist. Shocked, I turned to search for the source.

Ashton's handsome face was what stared back at me. Although I was a little surprised, I let out a sigh of relief.

Recalling that Rachel had shouted about a snake, I released myself from Ashton's arms and moved away, keeping my distance. I asked, “Where's the snake?”

Ever since I saw a snake in Venria's forest back then, my fear of snakes had only continued to grow day by day.

My question drew Ashton's attention, so he looked at her as well and asked, “Where's the snake?”

Rachel seemed to be stunned. When she regained her senses, she pointed at her feet in a panic.

Since she had pointed at somewhere so close to me, I subconsciously took a few steps back. Yet, when I looked closely, there was nothing.

Full of doubt, I looked at her in puzzlement. “Are you joking with me, Ms. Zimmer?”

She shook her head somewhat innocently and replied, "No, I really saw it. It was really here. Come see for yourself if you don't believe me!"

Feeling frightened, I looked at Ashton. He stepped forward to take a look, but a frown soon appeared on his handsome face. He looked at Rachel with a dark expression. "You don't know what a snake looks like?"

Rachel did not look too well. She replied loudly, "It's my first time. I'd only seen it in books or on television previously. I've never seen one in real life!"

Feeling suspicious, I glanced over, then breathed a sigh of relief. Great, I think she's the only one that would mistake an earthworm for a snake!

When Ashton had instinctively reached out to grab me as I fell, he had dropped the bag of fruits.

Thus, I grabbed a bag and bent down to start picking up the fruits. Ashton also bent down to help me as he said softly, "Are you okay?"

I raised my eyebrows and replied, "In perfect condition!" I could not help but look over at Rachel. It was impossible that she could not even tell apart earthworms from snakes. She was definitely trying to frighten me on purpose.

Fortunately, Ashton had been quick enough to catch me when I fell. Otherwise, I would have had to stay in the hospital for a few days at least.

Rachel looked a little uncomfortable. She walked over to Ashton and lowered her voice as she said, "Mr. Fuller, I really didn't do it on purpose. It's because I hadn't seen it before. That thing was small and soft and looked almost like a snake. That's why I..."

"Pick these up and let's go back," replied Ashton, cutting her off. His voice was light and it did not sound like he was blaming her.

Rachel froze for a moment before helping to pick up the pears as well. Most of them had been stained with mud and had to be washed when we get back.

In total, there were two big bags of fruits. Rachel carried one bag and Ashton carried the other. It did not feel right to have my hands so empty.

I looked at Rachel and said, "Ms. Zimmer, why don't I carry it!"

She had subconsciously wanted to hand over the bag but hesitated for a while as she looked over at Ashton. Then, she said with a smile, "It's fine. You just fell off a tree and should still be quite shocked. Just take a break!"

I shook my head and replied in a carefree manner, "It's fine! I didn't get hurt, so it doesn't matter!"

When I took the bag from her hands, Ashton frowned at me. "Give it to me!"

I was taken aback for a moment before I shook my head. "It's okay. I can carry it!"

He had a displeased look on his face, looking at me with a hint of fierceness.

Although I was a little scared, I did not say anything. After a while, he handed me the bag in his hands and said in anger, "Since you like to carry it so much, carry both then!"

His actions came very abruptly, so I simply froze for a while, dazed. When I eventually composed myself, both Rachel and Ashton had walked far away.

I was taken aback and stood there for a long time, unable to recover my thoughts. Did I anger him again?

Feeling helpless, I could not help but sigh before I followed them in the end.

Chapter 729

The two bags of fruit were heavy but still manageable. I was lagging behind the rest of the group as I was walking slowly with the heavy load.

It had rained, so the road was muddy and wet. My shoes were caked with mud, making the walk a slippery affair, full of near misses. I planned to take a rest after crossing this muddy stretch, as my arms were almost breaking under the weight of these heavy bags of fruit.

Unfortunately, all of a sudden, I slipped and sat right into a pool of mud.

Slosh! The mud splashed onto the fruit I was carrying as well.

Oh my god! Where am I going to find clothes to change into?

I was tired and frustrated, so I just sat in the mud pool, stoned.

“Throwing in the towel?” I heard a voice mocking me.

I looked up to see Ashton. He was standing a distance away, looking amused. I instinctively wanted to get up from the ground.

On second thought, I gave up and just sat there. “It’s none of your business,” I retorted. He had already seen my embarrassing fall, so who cares?

“It is not about you. I am worried about the fruit. It was hard work harvesting them. You are not going to waste them like that, are you?” he mocked as he walked towards me.

I held out the muddied fruit to him and pouted, "There you go. Are you happy now?"

He looked at me with a tickled expression, seemingly trying to suppress a good laugh.

He did not take the muddied fruit from me. "Get up. Mr. Oberick is still waiting for the fruit."

With that, he turned to walk away, not showing any intention to help me up. Apparently, he came by to ridicule me. How maddening!

I was a complete mess when I reach the base. Leedon was resting on the steps when I approached. When he saw me, he gaped. "Ms. Stovall, did you fall into a trench?"

"Sort of." I could not bother to go into details.

He suppressed his laugh and took the muddied fruit from me to wash. "There are shower facilities at the base. You don't have any extra items of clothing with you, do you? If you don't mind, you can use mine." It was kind of him.

"Sorry to trouble you. Thank you very much." I did not have other options and was thankful for his offer.

"No trouble at all. Hurry on," he urged.

Everywhere I went, people turned to gawk at me. I don't blame them. I looked like I rolled in the mud.

Finally, I made my way to the bathroom. Joseph was there waiting for me, with a set of clothing in hand. "Mr. Fuller gave instructions to bring this to you, Ms. Stovall."

I saw him trying to hide his amusement.

“You tell Ashton Fuller that I would not thank him for sending me clothing. It was his fault that I got into this state.” I vented my frustration on him.

“Yes, Ms. Stovall. You go clean up. I will guard the entrance for you,” he said. Joseph was trying his best to hold in his laughter.

I was thankful for Joseph’s offer to stand guard. This base had no bathroom for ladies as all the staff was men. Luckily they had standalone shower rooms that I could use.

Leedon came by with some clean clothes for me. “Thank you Leedon, but I already have a set here with me.”

“That is great! I will get back to my work then.” He left and I went in for a shower.

After washing up, I rinsed my dirty clothes and packed them into the bag. When I came out of the shower, Joseph had composed himself. I thanked him for his help.

“Ms. Stovall, I’ll get going then.” Seeing I was done with cleaning up, he excused himself and left.

It had been a long day. I was on my way home when I met Leedon. “Mr. Campbell came by and invite us for lunch, so please stay a little longer, Ms. Stovall.”

“We just had breakfast together this morning, isn’t it?” I was puzzled.

Leedon laughed, “Mr. Oberick is an old man who lives alone. Only his granddaughter would visit him occasionally. I guess Mr. Fuller wanted to invite more people to keep him company. It is livelier with everyone gathered.”

I could not disagree with that. “Sure! Lunch is at the visitor centre?” I asked.

Leedon nodded, "I will be transporting some goods there, so my vehicle will be full. Mr. Fuller will be driving there. You can join them."

"Okay."

"Oh, Mr. Oberick heard you are the one who harvested the fruits. He asked for you to join them. You'd better move along," Leedon urged.

"I harvested much fruit. Did you keep some for the staff?" I asked.

Chapter 730

Leedon nodded and shared, "We ate them. Mr. Campbell gave us a big bag. Don't worry about us. We work in the orchard and get to eat the fruits regularly."

I headed straight to Channing's office. I was at the door and could hear laughter drifting out from the room.

"Rachel, you have a glib tongue. I have not laughed so much in a long time." It was Channing's voice.

"Mr. Oberick, you have flattered me. It is an honor for me to get to chat with you. I am thankful you enjoyed my company." Her words brought more laughter. Without a doubt, Rachel was much better than me when it came to socializing.

I was about to knock on the door when I heard Channing said, "Ashton, I was too sick to travel to your wedding when you and Rachel got married."

He fished out a pretty box from his pocket and handed it to Rachel. "Rachel, this is a small gift from me. Before I went to fight in the war in Venria, my wife gave this to me and I had kept them since. It is a bracelet. I gift it to you now. Please take it."

Rachel was surprised and delighted. She looked to Ashton, seeking his consent to accept the gift.

Ashton was also caught off-guard by this gesture of Channing. He came around and held the box. "Mr. Oberick, we appreciate your generosity. This bracelet was from your late wife. It is too precious. I cannot accept this gift."

Mr. Oberick was a little displeased he rejected the gift. "Who said it is for you? I am giving this to George's granddaughter-in-law. Take your hands off. Let Rachel take it."

He took the bracelet from the box and put it on Rachel's wrist. "Rachel, from now on, have a blessed life with this rascal."

Rachel was not expecting this gift. She looked to Ashton, confused.

Ashton was frowning slightly. However, when he saw Channing was happy, he kept quiet, so as not to dampen the joyful moment.

I did not want to interrupt the conversation, so I turned around to leave.

"Mrs. Fuller, you are here." Joseph was standing behind me, a tray of fruit in hand.

I was taken by surprise. I took a moment to recover from the shock before mumbling, "Oh, you went to cut the fruit?" He nodded.

We attracted the attention of those in the room, and they turned to look at us.

“Hello, Scarlett! I heard you went to harvest the fruit and had a fall. Are you alright?” Since Channing already saw me, I could not turn around to leave anymore.

I put on a smile and entered the room. “Don’t worry, Mr. Oberick. I just slipped. It was no big deal,” I assured him.

He laughed and recalled, “When George and I were fighting the war in Venria, there were days when the combat zone would become slippery and muddy because of a storm the night before. Sometimes, we would slip and roll down the mountain. Those were the difficult days. You kids have an easy life now.”

We were nodding to Channing’s story when I turned in Rachel’s direction and caught sight of the bracelet. It was unintentional. The bracelet was very exquisite, so I took a second look at it.

Rachel must have thought I was after the bracelet, so she put her other hand over it to hide it from my sight.

I was amused and looked away.

We had a good time chatting and enjoying the fruit Joseph served.

After a while, we could see Mr. Oberick was getting tired and nodding off.

We ended our conversation and Ashton helped Mr. Oberick into the car to head for lunch at the visitor centre. The plan was to send him home after lunch so he could rest. Mr. Oberick must be tired after a long morning, given his age.

Joseph got into the driver’s seat while Ashton helped Mr. Oberick settle into the backseat. Rachel joined them in the backseat.

Joseph was stunned. He looked at me, then turned toward Ashton with a questioning look in his eye, but Ashton kept quiet.

Joseph observed I did not get into the car, so he asked, "Are you not joining us?"

I shook my head. "I will head there with Leedon and his team."

"Leedon is transporting a load of stuff in his vehicle. It will be packed." Joseph was concerned.

"Not a problem," I assured him.

"Joseph, get going," Ashton commanded coldly. He was obviously not happy.

Joseph was bewildered but drove off compliantly. I let out a small sigh and consoled myself. It's okay.

Back at the base, Leedon was surprised to see me. "Ms. Stovall, did you not meet Mr. Fuller?"

"There were a few people with him. It would not be convenient for me to join them in their car. The visitor centre is not far from here. I can cycle there," I replied.

Chapter 731

Leedon nodded and reminded me, "The path is muddy. Ride carefully. You wouldn't want to get all dirty again."

"Noted."

The path leading from the base was indeed muddy, as Leedon had forewarned. Luckily, the weather was good in the morning and dried out the road a little, so I did not fall. I only got some mud stains on me.

The lunch was at the hotel at the visitor centre. I returned the bicycle and cleaned off the mud stain on my shoes and pants before heading to the hotel.

Just then, Nora called. "My dear, what are your plans for tonight?"

"I had a long day. I want to get a good night's sleep later," I replied.

"Tsk. What a waste of time!"

"What do you have in mind then?" I questioned her instead.

"Aren't you working on a project at Lavelian Village? We decided to pop over and spend Valentine's Day with you. There is a big field just behind Lavelian Village. We can camp there tonight, watch the sunrise in the morning, then spend the whole of tomorrow there. We already bought stuff for a barbeque tomorrow." She sounded pleased with her plan.

"We?" I was curious.

"Armond, Linda, Tabitha, Laurel, Tessa, and you. We know you are busy at work, that's why we chose Lavelian Village for our outing. We can have a get-together without affecting your work schedule. Oh, by the way, Tabitha's fiancé is joining us too. This going to be fun!" she chirped.

After a pause, she whispered, "Do you want to invite Ashton to join us?"

"It is not necessary," I declined. "What time will you be here?"

"Soon. In about an hour. Shall we have lunch together?"

I would actually prefer to meet them for lunch. However, since Ashton had arranged for a lunch meeting with Mr. Oberick, I could not commit. "We shall see. You go ahead with your plans. I will join you once I am done on my side."

“Okay!”

“Oh, I dirtied my clothes, so please bring an extra set of clothing for me,” I requested.

“No problem.”

After ending the call with Nora, I went into the hotel and was ushered to the private dining room Ashton reserved.

Almost everyone has arrived, and Channing was delighted to have such a lively group join him for lunch. He was chatting with Ashton and Rachel.

Their conversation soon turned to children. “Come to think of it, you were married for many years. Do you have kids?” Channing asked.

Rachel blushed, but Ashton was tongue-tied, and he turned to look at me.

I casually turned away to avoid his gaze. I could hear him diverting the subject. “Mr. Oberick, you should take some tomato basil soup later. It is appetizing.”

Channing may be old, but he is not senile and can see through Ashton’s little trick.

However, that was a subject close to the old man’s heart, so he refused to let go of it. “My boy, you are not young anymore. You have to start planning for your future. Both of you are over thirty and you had been married for so many years. It’s about time you consider having kids.”

Rachel tried to save Ashton from the grilling, so she smiled and chipped in, “Mr. Oberick, don’t be upset with Ashton. I was the one to blame. We definitely plan to have kids, just not now. We are in no hurry and can wait for a couple more years.”

“No hurry? How old are you now?” He then turned to others seated at the table and asked, “What do you think? Don’t you think it is about time?”

He locked in on Leedon and questioned him. “Leedon, tell me, when you were their age, how old was your child?”

“Mr. Oberick, you can’t compare me to them. I am not educated and left school early, so I got married early too. My focus was on our kids. Mr. and Mrs. Fuller are young and educated. I am sure they have their reasons for delaying having kids. Every generation has their different priorities, don’t you agree?” Leedon was a little awkward being dragged into this conversation.

Channing could not find fault with his reasoning. “Young people like you lack the wisdom we have. There is always an appropriate time for everything. At each stage of our life, we should do the things that are important at that stage. You will understand what I mean when you are older and wiser,” he sighed.

He seemed to be getting melancholic as he spoke, so Ashton told him, “Mr. Oberick, I have a daughter. She is five this year.”

The old man was confused. “You have a child? But your confessions are inconsistent with one another.”

Rachel was embarrassed and tried to explain, “Mr. Oberick, that child is not...”

“Let’s eat! It has been a tiring morning. Let’s get started so everyone can go back and get some rest after lunch.” Joseph was quick to propose. He obviously was trying to stop Rachel from yakking.

Rachel was slightly taken aback and displeased with Joseph’s interruption. Ashton jumped in to change the topic to prevent Channing from probing on.

Chapter 732

Joseph’s quick thinking saved the day. The lunch session went by smoothly without more awkward episodes. Everyone ate their fill and dispersed to continue with their respective chores.

Nora arrived as we were about to send Channing home.

“Grandpa!” We could hear her shouting as she ran in from a distance away.

Channing looked up and was elated to see his granddaughter. “What is my little girl doing here?”

“I am here to meet my friends.” Nora held on to Channing’s arms and teased, “Are you here to meet your old friends?”

Channing looked at Ashton and smiled, “My old friend is no longer around. This is the grandson of the old Mr. Fuller. Let me introduce them to you. This is Ashton, and next to him is his wife, Rachel.”

Nora was baffled. She looked at me and mouthed, “Wife?”

I just smiled and did not elaborate.

She scowled at Ashton and spoke sarcastically. “Hi Ashton, when did you get a new wife?”

“You little imp! Mind your manners and stop spouting nonsense.” Channing knocked her on her head and chided.

Nora flinched but did not pursue the matter as she wasn’t sure what transpired. She chatted with Mr. Oberick for a while then arranged for a driver to send him home.

After Mr. Oberick left, she turned back to Ashton and Rachel. "I did not know it is okay for a married boss to have an affair with his subordinate, let alone doing it openly right in the face of the wife! Well done, you two!"

She then turned to chastise me. "Knowing my grandpa is not aware of the situation, why did you not explain to him?"

"It doesn't matter. Let it go." I gave her a reassuring smile as I reminded her of the group of friends waiting in the car. "Have all of you eaten?"

She shook her head. "We just arrived and are about to have our late lunch here."

I nodded and urged them to go for their meal. In the meantime, I headed back to finish off my work. We were all happily looking forward to camping.

It was almost eight at night when we finally set off to the field where we planned to camp. We were a little worried as it was getting late and it would be difficult to set up the tents in darkness. Luckily, the field was not far away.

When we reached the field, someone had already set up a tentage. Nora glanced at me and queried, "Did you invite any guests?"

"Nope. Why did you ask?" I was puzzled.

She pointed at the grey tent. There was a light inside the tent and, in the flickering light, we could see a lanky figure standing outside.

Nora observed I did not figure out who that was, so she forewarned, "That's Ashton!"

I finally had a better look when we drove nearby. Indeed, it was Ashton. It looked like there was someone else in the tent. Nora let out a curse, "Disgusting! Why can't they be more discreet?"

She frowned at me and accused, "Don't you have anything to say? Why are you so emotionless?"

"What should I be saying?" I shook my head and declined to engage her further in her quibble.

I was the one who pushed Ashton away. If he found a better half, I should give him my blessings. I have no right to be jealous nor angry.

Nora was probably exasperated and gave up on me. She jumped off the car and went up to Ashton. "What a coincidence, Mr. Fuller."

Ashton was poised and composed as usual. "I had heard about this beautiful place. Took the opportunity to visit since we are around the area," he nonchalantly replied.

"Ohhhh..., looks like we are meant to meet again," Nora sneered.

Rachel came out from the tent. We could see she was startled and had not expected to see us. She hid her surprise and greeted us with a smile.

The rest got off the car. Tabitha and her fiancé were attracted by the beauty of the place. They immediately went for a nice, romantic tour around the field.

The stars were shining brightly and the field glowed warmly under the moonlight. Laurel and Tessa were also captivated by the beautiful sight. The gentle cool breeze welcomed us to a perfect star-gazing night.

Tessa's heart skipped a beat when she saw Ashton there, but when she noticed Rachel was next to him, her face fell.

After the earlier incident, Tessa and I kept our distance. We would merely greet each other politely when we meet.

Armond was a quiet and reserved guy, quite the opposite of mischievous Nora. He unloaded the tents from the car and started working on them.

Laurel and Tessa also started putting up their tent. No one knew if they deliberately chose the site next to Ashton's tent.

Nora was loafing about. She ran to me to gossip. "Do you think Tessa still has an eye for Ashton? And that Ashton, is he really going to share a tent with Rachel tonight?"

I shrugged, ignored her, and continued fixing my tent. I could hear her mumbling, "What the hell is going on!"

I turned around and teased her, "So, are you going to slip into Armond's tent tonight?"