

When There Is Nothing Left But Love Chapter 758-762

Chapter 758

He touched his aquiline nose and smiled. "It looks good!"

Looks good?

"I'll get some to put on you, and you can tell me if you like it."

"Not right now, I'm in a rush. I'll gladly be at your service tonight!"

I...

Got taken advantage of again.

Without paying attention to him, I found a seat and ordered some food.

Rachel suddenly appeared just as we ordered. I had a vague suspicion that this was not at all coincidental. She looked ravishing in her black skirt with knee-high Dr. Martens.

"Mr. Fuller, Ms. Stovall, fancy running into you here!"

Ashton nodded at her curtly and grunted in acknowledgment. Turning to me, he said, "It was exhausting last night. Have some more and recover your energy."

I blushed hard enough at that, but when he heaped food onto my plate, I positively burned crimson.

Rachel was no fool. Her face grew sour when she caught sight of my hickeys, which I have tried to hide to no avail.

I was impressed by how well she'd managed to hide her displeasure. "Mr. Fuller, Ms. Stovall, would you mind if I joined you? I'm here alone," she asked good-naturedly.

"No."

"Yes."

Ashton and I spoke at the same time but with differing answers.

"Then I won't bother you." Rachel left to find herself another seat.

"Why are you being so mean to her? It's awkward for her to eat alone," I said with a frown.

"I don't like it when someone sits next to me. I'm not used to it."

"What nonsense!" I rolled my eyes.

I pushed the plate of okra in front of him. "Have some more. These are good for your kidneys."

Ashton smiled, his beady eyes crinkling as he did so. "Did I not please my wife last night?"

I did not manage to swallow my fruit juice in time and sprayed it all over the table. It was a good thing that the tables surrounding us were empty.

Ashton handed me a serviette which I grabbed immediately for fear of him wiping my mouth for me.

“Ashton, could you please not have dirty thoughts while we’re eating?” I chastised after cleaning myself up.

“Hey, you were the one who pointed out that I had weak kidneys. I was just going along with what you said.” He shrugged.

I covered my face with my palms in exasperation. “I did not say that. I just meant that okras help with kidney health. It was not a hint that you’re weak in anything. Do you get me?”

“So were you praising my abilities then?” he asked shamelessly.

For the love of... Ugh!

It was times like these when I found myself constantly amazed at the capacity and creativity of the male brain.

I wouldn’t be able to finish my lunch if we kept this up.

Thus, I did not speak for the rest of the meal. Surprisingly, Ashton finished all the okra with grace. I think he felt awkward about it.

Nora called right then. “Are you all in Lavelian Village?” she demanded with her usual vigor. “I’m bored over here. Can I come over to you?”

I was speechless. “Some items at the base have been stolen. Do you think we would have the time to entertain you if you came?”

“That’s fine. I was just thinking of coming over and bothering you for a bit. We’re all friends, after all. I could visit my grandfather in the meantime; he asked me to invite you for dinner too. Are you free tonight?”

Channing inviting me for dinner? I was nonplussed. “Why would Mr. Oberick invite me for dinner?”

“Because I told him about you, of course. I’ve never had any friends growing up, so he would be delighted if I brought a friend home for dinner.”

I nodded as I recalled the last meal I had with Mr. Oberick at the hotel. He mentioned the thing about Grandma. Maybe this would be a good opportunity to ask him further about Grandma’s past.

I realized after several moments that Nora was not able to see my nod of agreement. “Alright, I’ll see you in a bit!” I said.

After I hung up, I found Ashton looking at me with a frown on his face. “Was that Nora?”

I nodded. “She invited me to dinner tonight.”

“You’re not planning on bringing me along?”

I snorted.

“I think it would be pretty awkward if you tagged along. Besides, it’ll be boring for you to listen to us girls gossiping.” Actually, I did not want him at Mr. Oberick’s house with me.

I had many questions about Grandma that I intend to discover on my own.

Ashton leaned back in his chair but did not pursue the matter. “Did you ever have a crush on Armond?” he asked suddenly.

I almost bit my tongue off. “What are you thinking about?” I asked with a glare.

Although, I think it’s fair that he would think that. Given the circumstances of what had happened before.

Ashton looked around idly. “Nora and you are pretty good friends, and she’s a good match with Armond, wouldn’t you say so? I suggest that you should stop thinking about Armond.”

I was breathless with indignant anger. “Ashton, you need to sort out the rubbish that’s going through your head!” I said as I stood up violently.

Without another word to him, I turned around and marched out of the hotel.

Right at the hotel entrance, Linda saw that I was all worked up, so she asked, “What’s wrong? Have you guys been fighting again?”

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I tried my best to suppress my temper. “Ashton is a jerk. A d*mn jerk!”

Linda was about to ask me something but changed her mind. Instead, she stifled her giggle.

I knew that she was laughing at the way I vented my frustration about Ashton. My resentment, however, did not dissipate this easily. “How could I have a crush on Armond? His eyes are attractive, but that’s about it. They’re not good for much else.”

“Scarlett, you could tell this to Mr. Fuller straight to his face, you know,” Linda said as her lips twitched. “Why would you get yourself so worked up?”

“Tell him what?” I retorted. “He’s a typical man without a freakin’ brain! Ugh... Rachel has been so nice to him, and he fails to see it. Not just that, he fails to see how Armond and Nora are meant for each other. I do not like Armond at all, but this was the conclusion that he jumped to despite contrary evidence!”

“There, there. It’s just a small matter, so don’t be mad at it anymore,” Linda said, still trying to conceal her amusement. “Anyway, I have something to attend to, so see you!”

“Why are you in a rush?” I frowned. “Aren’t we supposed to go to the base together?”

“Um... Mr. Fuller is still staring at you, so I think he’s expecting you to go with him. See you around!” Linda disappeared without waiting for my response.

Her hasty departure startled me. As I turned back towards the hotel, I was greeted by the sight of Ashton at the door with his arms folded. He gazed at me with his bright dark eyes, with a smile on his lips.

I just spoke ill of him. I definitely can’t make amends with him this easily.

Besides, I wasn’t planning on acknowledging him. I will go on my own.

Before I’d made a few steps, Ashton caught my arm. “Are you still angry?”

“No.” I pursed my lips haughtily.

“I know that there’s nothing between you and Armond. I’m sorry, I shouldn’t have said those things. It was my fault.” His tone was equal amounts of amusement and exasperation.

“How could you be wrong? You’re the president of a corporation! It was my mistake, not yours,” I answered sarcastically as I was taken aback by his confession.

I threw off his grip and prepared to walk away from him.

However, he yanked me towards him until I was pressed against his chest. “Alright, let’s call a truce,” Ashton said. “I still have to get back to work. Let’s head to the base!”

It felt like he was comforting a surly child rather than a sincere apology. I knew I was wrong to have blown it out of proportion too; it wouldn’t do to stay mad at him.

“Let’s never speak of this again,” I said, looking up at him.

“Let’s not,” he agreed, smiling down at me as he did so.

I’ve always harbored the suspicion that Joseph was either listening or watching us as he always appeared exactly when he was wanted. In this case, he brought the car over when we were ready to leave.

Ashton squeezed me close to him and covered my eyes. “Get some sleep,” he said quietly.

“I’m not sleepy,” I said as I flung away his hand. “What’re you trying to do, Ashton?” I asked with a look of confusion.

He stretched out to put up the partition before he said, “Was it not enough for you to be looking at me?”

I was stupefied for a moment but burst out laughing when I realized that he was jealous when I was distracted watching Joseph.

“Ashton, what on earth is going on inside that head of yours?” I gasped for breath. “I was just curious about Joseph.”

“Curious about what?” he frowned.

“At how he seemed to turn up exactly when he was needed all the time? Does he monitor or eavesdrop on us?”

“Mrs. Fuller. I am doing neither,” said Joseph frankly from the front. “I am alerted by Mr. Fuller whenever I’m needed. That is how I arrive quickly.”

Ashton lifted my face with a finger under my chin. “If you ever had any doubts, you could just ask me. Don’t stare at people.”

“Ashton, are you actually jealous?” I was baffled.

Ashton had my cheek in his hand. With a faint smile, he leaned in and kissed me.

My eyes widened. We were in full view of Joseph, who was driving in front! How does this man not have any sense of boundaries?

I raised my arms to push him away, but he pressed his entire weight against me, rendering me immobile.

The journey wasn’t long. Once we reached, Joseph tactfully parked the car outside of the entrance to the base and departed on his own.

I have always suspected that Ashton was something of a kissing addict.

If we had not already arrived at our destination, I was afraid that he would have sucked every bit of moisture out of me.

Ashton let go of me slowly, looking as if he was immensely satisfied. He rubbed my lips gently and said, “The okra worked!”

I was flabbergasted by this extraordinary statement. Why would he suddenly mention okras?

It took a while for me to recollect our conversation from the restaurant earlier when I had urged him to eat some okras. I blushed furiously and pushed him aside.

Meanwhile, Linda was already at the entrance to the base. She opened her mouth to say something but thought the better of it when she saw my odd expression.

I greeted her as normally as I could. "Is that why you left earlier? To wait for me here?" I smiled at her.

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She nodded and blocked my way with a smirk. After a brief deliberation, she said, "I recommend that you make yourself decent before heading in."

I blushed automatically. "Why? What is it?" I stammered.

Linda coughed and spoke in as normal a voice as she could muster. "Ashton has... a way with women, based on how he looks. You don't have to make it so obvious, we're all adults after all."

Confused, I pulled out my compact mirror to take a look. Oh, God! My lips were swollen, hair in a tangled mess, and even the hickey, which was originally quite subtle, now pulsated an angry red.

Without thinking further, I rushed off to a washroom in the base to clean myself up.

Linda followed me close behind, her smile wide with glee. "Don't be embarrassed. It's normal!"

“Then why did you look at me in that manner earlier on?” I was speechless.

PlayvolumeAd

“I’m here to remind you that there is a large group of older men inside the base,” Linda giggled. “If you went in there looking like this, it would be even more awkward!”

I blended the hickeys in with my skin tone as best as I could, but they still showed up like angry boils. I began to panic. “Linda, help me out here. It’s not going away.”

She rummaged through her purse and handed me a bottle of liquid foundation. “Try this. I get eyebags from staying up late at night, and this helps to hide them.”

She was right; it made my hickeys almost invisible. However, my swollen lips still made me anxious. “What about my lips? I can’t hide them!”

“Why don’t you wear a mask?” Linda suggested.

It was an excellent idea. “Where would I find one here in the base, though?”

Linda chuckled and procured one from her purse. “It’s yours for the day.”

“Thank you, Linda! You’re a lifesaver!” She had everything I needed!

As we came out of the bathroom, we ran into Rachel again. She was clad in black from head to toe and looked very cool. Her makeup was heavier than it was in the restaurant.

The cold look of disdain she had when she caught sight of me only intensified her haughtiness and made her look even more beautiful.

As Rachel walked past, she passed a scathing remark. "It's one thing to pretend to not want it but another to deliver yourself. You should be ashamed."

This hurt me deeply.

Linda was well aware that Rachel was referring to me. "There are different ways of throwing yourself into a man's arms," she chimed in. "Some of us can throw ourselves into Mr. Fuller's arms without clothes, and he still wouldn't be interested."

"Who exactly are you referring to?" Rachel demanded. She withdrew all pretences at the sting of Linda's comment.

"Ms. Linda, you'd better clarify what you mean. Feeling brave by the presence of your friend here, are you? Not the usual little b*tch that you are?" Rachel shouted at Linda shrilly.

Linda wasn't a pushover and preferred to settle matters with fists rather than words. She swung an arm at Rachel. "Who're you calling b*tch, b*tch?"

Rachel returned the blow. "You are, you b*tch!" she yelled.

The two women exchanged progressively vicious threats as they yanked at one another's hair.

I was too flabbergasted to react. When their voices became too loud to ignore, I came to my senses and attempted to break up the fight.

Linda was pinned to the floor by Rachel, who grabbed fistfuls of her hair and screamed at the top of her voice. Impulsively, I grabbed Rachel by the hair, pulled her off Linda, and began to claw wildly at her body.

She was a strong woman and did not take my assault lightly. She wriggled with all her might, all four limbs flailing wildly in every direction as curses and insults spewed from her mouth.

Rachel screamed curses at us and our families. Foul words which we did not know existed were used with great ardor in her rage.

On the contrary, I was not as eloquent as her. “Rachel, you gold-digging b*tch!”

I recalled that Nora had once mentioned that Rachel could appear very demure and innocent but actually had a never-ending thirst for ambition and status.

No matter what profanities she employed, I always called her the same thing, because I knew that she was exactly that.

At last, even Linda had had enough. “Scarlett, you dimwit! Don’t you know any other foul words?”

I myself did not know how I held back my laughter. She was right – it was always the same insult.

This battle between us had only ended when Linda came out from the bathroom and emptied a container of water over Rachel.

She sat drenched in the pool of water, weeping and screaming curses at us. Her coolness and dignity disappeared completely.

Linda threw the container aside and stood over Rachel. “Listen to me closely, Rachel. Don’t think that men are interested in you just because you are good-looking. There are many beautiful women like you in the world whose lives are not going well, but they know their place and keep to themselves. They don’t get involved with other people’s spouses because that will only degrade themselves.”

Rachel wept as if her heart was going to break. "I will always get what I want. Scarlett does not want him and pushes him away, so isn't he up for grabs? Who do you think you are to judge me? All because I am beautiful and talented?"

Their argument amused me. Before I could stop myself, I joined in. "Liking somebody is something you couldn't control. It is not wrong of you to like Ashton. You can continue to pursue him, but I will also keep being in the way. Let's call it a fair game between two rivals."

"Scarlett, are you crazy?" Linda gawked at me. "Another woman is after your man, and you're still this generous?"

"I trust Ashton completely." I shrugged. "If he does fall in love with Rachel, it's his choice. If he does not and turns her down without even giving her an opportunity, doesn't that show that it was worth all of the trouble I had gone through to make him my husband?"

"That's true..." Linda nodded.

Rachel continued to glare at me fiercely. "Scarlett, you're too confident with yourself. After the honeymoon phase, we'll see if you still feel the same."

She did have a point. "Like I said, fair game amongst rivals."

PlayvolumeAd

Rachel's screams and sobs had attracted a large group from the base.

When Armond and Ashton arrived, they saw Linda and I standing tall and proud over the wretched figure of Rachel on the floor.

The outcome of the confrontation was obvious at a glance.

Rachel cleverly used this opportunity to weep harder and blubber about how Linda and I were the ones to assault her.

Ashton looked at me sternly. My heart thumped nervously at his impending accusation.

It felt like I had done something grievously wrong just from the way he was looking at me.

“Linda!” Armond called with a frown. “Ms. Zimmer is a director of Fuller Corporation. You two have crossed a line!”

Linda readily admitted her mistake. “Mr. Murphy,” she said as she hung her head. “I am sorry. I acted rashly.”

She sank into a magnificent bow to Rachel, who was still weeping on the floor. “Ms. Zimmer,” she said sincerely. “I would like to beg for your forgiveness for the incidents that had transpired today. I was too irrational. I hope that you could forgive me!”

I was stunned. Linda’s ability to adapt astounded me.

Armond appeared satisfied with her apology. “Ms. Zimmer,” he said to Rachel. “No matter whose fault it was today, Murphy Corporation will bear the responsibility accordingly. We will send you to the hospital to check if you had sustained any injuries. Meanwhile, we will carry out punishment to Linda and Scarlett here. Again, we sincerely apologize for your ordeal.”

I was about to ask why but was promptly silenced by Ashton’s furious glare.

After that, Armond turned to address me. “Ms. Stovall, no matter whose fault it was, this place belongs to Murphy Corporation, and everybody is a guest here. The altercation that you have had with Ms. Zimmer is unacceptable behavior.”

I turned to Linda, and she gave me a wink. Then, I regained my senses and apologized to Rachel as well with the same deep bow.

Now it was Rachel's turn to be embarrassed. She had assumed the role of the victim to gain sympathy, but now it was backfiring on her.

After we had apologized, Linda rolled up her sleeves to reveal the scratches Rachel had caused.

"Ms. Zimmer," she said to Rachel. "You were not the only one hurt from this ordeal. Scarlett and I are hurt too. Your nails are awfully long, you know. Scarlett's neck and face had been ravaged by you. Besides, you are aware of how hard you've pinched and choked us. You're not the victim just by sitting on the floor and crying about it."

"As a partner of Fuller Corporation, you are a guest here at Murphy Corporation, which is why Scarlett and I had apologized to you. As for whose fault it was, we are all clear about it in our hearts."

Linda looked at Armond, all traces of her apologetic demeanor vanishing as she said, "Mr. Murphy, we're leaving!"

She tugged me by the arm, and we left.

But before I could get far, Ashton grabbed hold of my wrist. He was silent the entire time, but now he had a dark and dangerous look in his eyes.

I did not know what he intended to do with me. "Linda, why don't you go ahead and treat your scratches. I'll be right behind you."

Linda was startled but complied with my request.

Armond shifted his gaze from Ashton to Rachel on the floor but said nothing.

“Did you hit her?” Ashton asked in a low voice.

“Yes, I did.” I nodded with no intention of lying.

He deliberated for a moment and said, “As the wife of Fuller Corporation’s chairperson, you were wrong to be intolerant and to raise a hand against an employee of mine. For that, you owe Ms. Zimmer an apology.”

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I felt as nonplussed as Armond looked. We both thought that Ashton was prepared to give me the scolding of a lifetime.

Rachel’s look of shock on her tear-streaked face told me that she did not expect Ashton to be this lenient with me as well.

I hesitated for a fraction of a second but repeated my sincere apology toward Rachel.

Ashton looked down at her. “Ms. Zimmer, I, too, am sorry for whatever transpired today. I will be sure to make the arrangements to see that you are compensated for.”

He was indifferent but cunning about how he had crafted that sentence.

Rachel was deathly pale as she stood up. She gazed at Ashton with disappointment but was unable to say anything more.

All of a sudden, Joseph appeared and took her away to the hospital.

Armond had nothing more to say as well. He exchanged several words of courtesy with Ashton and promptly departed.

After they left, Ashton and I remained where we were. I hung my head and prepared myself for the telling-off I was about to receive.

"I shouldn't have hit her," I blurted out. "I won't do it again."

"If you didn't hit back, she'd walk all over you," he said with an unflinching gaze at me.

I was shocked, to say the least. I looked up at him quizzically.

Ashton gently lifted up my sleeves and frowned at my scratch scars. "Did you return the favor?"

I nodded. "I did, but I trimmed my nails a few days ago, so I think they didn't hurt her. I did pull out some of her hair, though."

Ashton gazed at me with a crestfallen expression written across his handsome features. "You could have used your fists or, at least, kicked her."

I fought down a smile. "I'm not like men who fight with fists and feet. Actually, it was a good thing that Linda had drenched her before the fight got too out of hand."

Ashton eyed me with some playful disdain. "Two of you ganging up on a woman, and you still managed to get yourself hurt. You weren't even the one who threw the water! If Linda weren't here, would Rachel have kicked your ass?"

I was speechless and hung my head like a guilty child. "If Linda weren't here, I wouldn't have dared to start a fight," I said in a small voice. "I wouldn't have been able to beat her anyway. She's too vicious!"

Ashton grunted and turned to leave at that.

I followed closely behind him but squatted down after a couple of steps. My heart filled with joy at every step he took that led him further from me.

Ashton turned to look behind him when he did not hear me anymore. "What is it?" he asked.

"I'm hurt. I can't walk." I remained squatted and pretended to be injured.

He was near tears with exasperation. "Just tell me. What should I do with you?"

I racked my brain for a moment. "Could you carry me out of here?"

Ashton laughed helplessly. "Is your leg injured?"

"No!" I said, with a shake of my head.

"Then why would I carry you?"

"You would if you love me!" I said in a huff and got up to walk.

I knew that he wanted me to say it out loud, but if it had to be forced, it'd lose its meaning.

Ashton looked at me with a twinkle in his eye. As I walked past him, he swept me up roughly in his arms.

I was startled by the sudden movement. "Ashton, you jerk!" I squealed.

He grunted without saying much else.

As we exited the corridor, the employees of the base caught sight of us and stared.

They had an odd expression on their face. I wouldn't blame them. After all, they were under the impression that Ashton and Rachel were something of a couple given their closeness.

Especially since that day when we had dinner with Channing, Ashton did not bother to correct Channing's assumption that he and Rachel were an item, thus accidentally condoning the rumors.

As time passed, that notion became the default in everybody's minds.

Now that Ashton and I were this intimate under the public eye, it might attract some very unwelcome gossip and speculation about us.

Ashton acted as if he hadn't noticed anything. He carried me straight to the office and plopped me down onto an empty chair.

"Where're you going?" I blurted, seeing as he was about to leave.

"I'm getting a first aid kit," he answered, turning around to look at me. "Do you intend for those to turn into scars?"

"Of course not!" I shook my head.

As his tall and thin frame departed, I pored over the documents that Joseph had neatly arranged in a pile.

They were mostly the minutes of recent meetings that they've had, nothing important. I got bored of them quickly.

Ashton returned soon after with a first aid kit in hand.

"Where else are you injured besides your arm?" he asked as he rolled my sleeve up.

I shook my head. It was common for girl-fights to just bear some scratches on non-vital areas. They would heal up soon enough.

It wasn't even anything serious; Ashton was just overzealous.

I couldn't help but feel a surge of emotions as I watched him tend to my wounds with such tenderness.