

When There Is Nothing Left But Love Chapter 993-997

Chapter 993

I felt sorry for the young lady. She must have suffered a lot after knowing that her survival cost the life of another girl.

After a while, I asked, "Do you know anything about Armond?" That day in the cowshed, Ann told me that some of the children never returned to the village after they were taken away.

I was not sure if it was what I think it was.

Upon the mention of Armond, Hailey's clenched the blanket, her face darkened. After a long silence, she finally said, "That man is Satan! He has blood on his hands just for money. I suppose many people have died at his hands."

I furrowed my brows. "You have never met him before. How are you so sure that he has something to do with the organ trade?"

She looked up at me and uttered, "I have never met him, but I knew that guy. My father was imprisoned because of him. Initially, my father only wanted to find me a matching heart. That man brought the girl of my age to my father. He told my father that her illness was incurable and that I could get a heart transplant after she died. As time passed, my health deteriorated, only then did he tell my father the truth. He asked for three million for bringing the girl to my father. After the girl died, he blackmailed my father and demanded a tenfold increase in the price as hush money. Having no choice, my father embezzled the company's money. In the end, he was charged and imprisoned. It's all because of him! That man is evil! You need to be wary of him."

I was stunned by her revelation. "Did that girl really die?"

Hailey clenched her fists, her eyes reddened. "Yes. My dad told me he had buried her, but..."

The young lady burst into tears.

Seeing that, I stopped asking further questions and decided to leave her alone. Those children that never return to the village... Did they die just like that girl?

Hailey's words made me realize that Armond must be hiding something. As soon as I left the ward, I made a call to Brandon.

His gruff voice was heard over the phone, "Hello, what's the matter?"

"The kid's test result is out. If the kid is to donate her organ, I need her identity card and her parents to sign the consent form. How are you going to solve this?" Hailey told me that the hospital wouldn't perform surgery without the necessary documentation. I wondered how Brandon was going to deal with this.

After a while, the man said, "You don't need to worry about that. As long as you agree with the surgery and pay us the money, we will take care of it."

Since we hadn't discussed the price yet, I asked, "How are you going to charge me?"

"Well, you will have to bear the costs of the operating room, the doctors, the medication, and also the money for the kid's parents. Why don't we meet up and discuss this? This is a serious matter, and I bet you wouldn't want to discuss it over the phone."

"Alright. You decide the time and the place." I shuddered at the thought that the organ trade was rather systematic and well-coordinated. It seemed like the kids in that village were not the only victims.

When I was back in the ward, Summer had woken up. She hadn't met a girl of her age for a long time, so she was chatty with Amy.

Meanwhile, Cameron was reading a project proposal. Although she had handed over most of her work in the company to Nick, the latter, being inexperienced, still needed her guidance.

Since Zachary was nowhere to be seen, I asked, "Mom, where is Dad?"

Keeping her eyes on the proposal, she answered, "He's gone to meet his friend. Oh, he asked me to ask you from where did you find the kid? She's healthy and fit. It doesn't seem like she's from the orphanage."

I frowned. "Orphanage?"

Cameron nodded. "Your father has contacted an orphanage before. Now, he wanted to donate to the orphanage where the kid lived as a token of gratitude. But, it seems like that little girl came from a village and not an orphanage. Boris told me it took you guys more than seven hours to travel to that village where you found her. Who gave you the address of the village?"

I suddenly understood the reason Ashton became mad at me yesterday. The man knew from Zachary that the latter had contacted an orphanage. Hence, he knew I was lying to him, for Amy was obviously not from an orphanage.

I started to feel the throbbing in my temples. If Ashton knew I was the one who turned to Armond for help, it would be a disaster.

I gave Cameron a seemingly convincing answer. "I got it from a friend of mine." I was relieved that Cameron was absorbed reading the proposal that she didn't ask further.

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I didn't return to the villa that night after my fight with Ashton. That wasn't the main reason for my absence, though. Summer and Hailey were both in the hospital, and Hailey didn't have any family. I couldn't ask my Mom to stay with her at the hospital, so I went there instead.

The hospital was shrouded in a gloomy aura; I ended up sleeping fitfully that night. Cameron and Zachary dropped by early the next morning with some breakfast.

Hailey was recovering well, as was Summer. After greeting Cameron, I left for my appointment with Brandon.

We met at a heritage eatery that was neither big nor grand. When I arrived, I spied Brandon sitting in the corner of the eatery. Seated, his posture made him seem shorter and fatter.

He looks just like a wobbly man toy.

He waved and hollered when he saw me. Then, he caught the attention of the eatery owner and ordered a few oily dishes. I sat down in front of him, not in a rush to speak.

He didn't appear to be in a rush either. He'd ordered more than ten dishes for the two of us, and he ate most of the food. He didn't question my lack of appetite. I guess he's probably used to it. He devoured his food so quickly I half-suspected that he barely chewed at all. He only spoke to me after we finished the meal.

Now that the food was gone, he wiped his oil-stained mouth and said, "Take a look at the contract. If there aren't any issues, you can sign it now."

He passed a thick stack of papers to me. I was blinded by the rows of complex legalese on the sheets. I frowned, unable to understand much of the contents of the contract.

At least I could understand the sums in the contract. I counted the number of zeroes and knitted my brows. "Why is the cost of the surgery suddenly increased to a million?"

He pursed his lips before cleaning his teeth with a toothpick. "Ms. Stovall, I heard from Mr. Murphy that money isn't a concern to you. Plus, this is a private operation. The operating theatre, doctors, the equipment; everything has a price. I'm sure you know how expensive these things are. And hey, what about compensation for my efforts? I also need money to settle with that kid's parents. Please, that one million I quoted you is a discount already."

I held in my laughter. He'd managed to make a life-or-death operation sound like a business deal. Still, I wasn't in a hurry to sign. I looked at him directly and said, "You're right. It's actually not a big sum. I do have one request, though. Since this isn't a legal procedure, I want to see the operating theatre, the equipment, and meet the doctor beforehand. There are two children's lives at stake here, one of which is my daughter. I'm sure you understand my concern."

He frowned slightly. After some thought, he replied, "I need to think about this."

I nodded. "Sure."

Our discussion ended here. I supposed he had to discuss my request with his boss before he could give me a firm reply. If Hailey was right, then Brandon was probably acting under Armond's orders.

After saying goodbye to Brandon, I walked into an alley. After waiting for a short while, I came out of the alley and followed him. Sometime later, I saw him get into a black Accord. The driver wore a pair of shades, and he looked vaguely familiar. After a brief greeting, the car moved.

I couldn't walk closer to the car, but luckily the driver rolled down his windows as the car drove off. I was stunned when I realized who he was.

Dante! Why is he hanging around Brandon? Did he end up working for Armond after Abe's death?

I only managed to collect myself after the car was out of sight. From what I know about Dante's character, he wouldn't hang around Armond since he had a hand in Abe's death. All these men are

sticklers for loyalty. Abe treated Dante like his own brother when he was still alive. So why would Dante be chummy with one of Armond's lackeys? Unless Dante himself is involved in the black market?

Suddenly, I sensed someone behind me. Nerves taut, I broke out in a cold sweat when I realized that I had nothing to defend myself with.

"Scarlett!" The gruff, familiar voice turned my surprise into joy. I turned and saw Danny behind me.

I smiled happily at him and asked, "Why are you here? Are you ok? How have you been?" I'd tried to track him down when I was in A City, but he'd hidden his tracks well as if he was trying to avoid me. I learned nothing about him and had never expected to bump into him here.

He appeared to have lost some weight, looking much thinner than his usual muscular self. The angles on his face were sharper as well. With a fairer complexion and a buzzcut, he blended right in with the residents of this city.

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Faced with my slew of questions, he replied, "I've been well. But how do you know Brandon?"

"Do you know him too?" I asked, surprised.

He nodded. "Yeah, Dante works with him. I've met him a couple of times. They operate in the black market, so why are you meeting him? Are you sick?"

I shook my head urgently. "No, I'm not sick. But my daughter is."

Shocked, he said, "I see. It's better to steer clear of them if you can, though. If you get involved in the black market, it's hard to get them off your record."

I didn't quite understand his warning but nodded. "Ok, I know."

Since he didn't have more to say, I spoke up again. "Since you're here, shall we grab a bite together?"

He shook his head. "No, I have other things to do. I'll be off then."

Seeing that he was ready to leave, I called out to stop him. "Danny, how should I keep in touch with you next time?"

He turned his head back to look at me. "I'm very grateful for how you've helped me in the past. If you have any questions for me, you should ask them now. I'll tell you everything I know, and then we're even."

This statement confused me. His brows were furrowed in impatience as he watched me. I couldn't help but wonder if I'd underestimated the complexity of our history.

After a pause, I asked, "What are you doing in A City? Do you know about Abe's death?"

He pursed his lips before replying, "I know what happened to Mr. Langston. As for my job in A City, it's exactly what Dante is doing."

I frowned. "But it's illegal!"

He mumbled an agreement but continued matter-of-factly, "I know, but I gotta do what I gotta do to survive. A City isn't a good place to make a living for us foreigners. At the end of the day, we need money to live."

I didn't know how to respond to that. I couldn't deny the truth in his words. We are but slaves to the money that governs our lives in this world.

"Is it true then, that as long as there's money, you can carry out a perfect crime?" I blurted.

He knitted his brows uncomprehendingly at my question. A moment later, he said, "You should go home. It's not safe out here."

I had more questions to ask but he'd already walked away.

If Hailey is telling the truth, then Armond is really engaged in shady dealings. I couldn't imagine the number of innocent lives they had harmed each year.

I was caught in a dilemma. If I pursued this to the end, I was worried I wouldn't be able to accept the consequence. After all, I was a willing participant in an illegal deal, and losses and gains always came hand-in-hand. My decision to seek out Amy in the countryside was entirely due to my wish to save my daughter.

Hailey's father could bring himself to harm a perfectly healthy child to keep his daughter alive. It's hard to pin the blame on anyone, but someone was undeniably killed in the exchange.

I knew I couldn't sort out these dilemmas alone. I called Ashton when I was in the car. The phone rang for a while before he answered. I could hear his clear voice through the receiver. "What's up?"

Ashton was still angry at me over the name card incident. I sighed before asking, "Where are you? I miss you."

My words seemed to surprise him, and there was a pause before he replied, "See you at home."

He hung up on me. Perplexed, I stared at my phone. Why did he just hang up on me like that?

I put down my phone and headed straight for the villa. Ashton was sitting in the living room when I arrived, looking like he'd just reached home not too long ago. His dark eyes showed a hint of surprise as they landed on me.

He pursed his lips and put on a somewhat petty air. "Why did you call me?"

So he's still angry at me then. I walked toward him and said gently, "I did meet Armond when I was in K City; you knew about that already. When I came to A City to find Amy, it was based on information that Armond had given to me. Ashton, I wasn't lying to you. I just didn't want you to overthink things. That's all."

Sensing the cloud of anger around him, I let out a frustrated sigh. "I know this is my fault. I shouldn't have lied to you. Will you please stop being angry at me? Ashton, we shouldn't be upset at each other over such small things. I suspect that Armond has dealings in the black market and probably the deaths of countless people on his hands. I don't know anymore if I can proceed with Summer's surgery. Can we stop arguing and start discussing more important things?"

He frowned slightly as he stared at me. "Black market?"

I nodded. "I found out from my contact that they have their own operating theatre and equipment. On that note, do you remember how we met a girl named Hailey at the public tender in the Oasis Hotel? She has heart disease. Her father colluded with Armond to kill someone so that she could get a heart transplant, though he ended up in jail later on after he misappropriated some funds for his company."

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After some thought, he asked, "I have some recollection of her. How did you get in touch with her?"

"Actually, she looked for me. We already knew each other after meeting on a few occasions. Now, I'm worried about Summer. What if Armond betrays me after Summer gets the kidney from Amy? We're not the only ones who need to bear the consequences. My parents will be dragged into this mess as well. I can't let Summer's affairs disrupt their newfound peace."

Though Summer's situation wouldn't involve something as heinous as murder, as in Hailey's case, it would be hard to predict Armond's actions after the operation. He forced me down this path, claiming we wouldn't be able to proceed with a normal, legal operation. But he could always turn around and threaten us with Amy's existence. If he fabricates a story to the press, it'll be a huge blow to the reputation of the Fullers and the Moores.

I looked at Ashton, who'd pursed his lips as if in deep thought. He looked at me and said, "I think we should postpone Summer's operation and follow the legal procedure. We shouldn't touch Amy if we can. You should also look out for your parents. I'll do my best to find a suitable donor ASAP. I'm sorry, but I think Summer will have to wait a while longer."

I frowned slightly. Though this went against every instinct I had as a parent, I nodded and agreed with Ashton. I couldn't drag two whole families into the mud to satisfy my own wishes.

"We'll stick with our original plan then. Try not to give away too much information to anyone else." He then pulled out his phone and called Joseph.

He seemed to be discussing some matters about Moranta with Joseph. I wasn't in the mood to worry about such things. My mind was fixated on my proposed visit to the hospital with Brandon tomorrow.

The next day, Ashton rushed to Moranta on company business. He had left in a hurry, saying that there were problems at a few ports in Moranta that were recently acquired by the Fuller Corporation.

I stayed in A City to continue working on Summer's affairs.

Brandon sent me a text containing the address of the hospital as well as our meeting time. Before I left, I gave Cameron a call. She sounded like she'd barely slept the night before. She answered in a hoarse tone, "Scarlett, what's going on?"

“Mom, do we have the results of Amy’s health checkup? Did the doctor mention when they can arrange for the operation?”

“Not yet, I think the results will only be out at noon. Yesterday, the doctor told us that they couldn’t find her personal information. They need to log her identification details in the hospital’s system before they can carry out the operation. Could you contact her parents and get them to send her information over? If it’s possible, we can send someone to bring them here so they can sign off on the operation,” Cameron said, sounding exhausted.

I paused for a moment before answering her. “Mom, Amy doesn’t have any form of identification. Her parents had eight children and she was the only one who wasn’t registered. If they need that information, it’s going to take a long time to iron out all the paperwork, and Summer’s operation is going to be delayed. This was something I overlooked at the beginning. I was hoping you could help me find a solution.”

My answer stunned her. “She doesn’t have any form of identification? They have eight kids; how could they just forget about one of them? What about her future? Oh dear, we need to think of something quickly. How about you ask Boris to bring her home? We can give them some money and get her registered.”

I mumbled an agreement and hung up.

Amy’s lack of an official identity wasn’t the only problem at hand. I couldn’t elaborate on my plans to investigate Armond, so I could only delay the operation with this excuse.

Even if Summer needed that operation, we had to follow the legal procedure. If we committed to an illegal operation, we’d be inviting trouble for ourselves in the future.

After I hung up, I took a car ride to the address that Brandon had given me. The car came to a stop at a large factory located just outside the suburbs.

I was surprised when I saw the deserted building. This isn’t a hospital. It’s more like some abandoned factory!

There was an elderly man in the security booth near the gates of the factory. As I walked toward him to ask about my location, my phone rang with a call from Brandon.

As soon as I picked up, he said, "Just come in. You don't need to ask him anything. He has Alzheimer's and can't remember a thing."

Taken aback, I turned and saw the elderly man smiling at me. I returned his smile and walked into the factory grounds. Just like Brandon had mentioned over the phone, there was a two-story house behind the factory. He asked me to wait for him outside.

He came down five minutes later. He opened the metal doors to the house. He wore a leather jacket over his floral print shirt, though his protruding belly made for a rather unflattering display. He looked around behind me and confirmed that I was alone. He arched a brow in mild surprise. "Ms. Stovall, I thought you'd at least have some company. I didn't expect you to really come here alone."

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I chuckled, "We're only here to take a look at the hospital and the medical equipment. We're not here to tear down this place. Why did you bring so many people?"

He chuckled and replied, "Let's go. The doctors and equipment are up there. You should take a look at them so you'd feel more assured. Rich people like you tend to be more cautious."

I followed behind him and let out a soft chuckle. "I have no choice, she's my precious daughter, and I want to give her the best."

His laughter echoed in the lift. Upon arriving at the second floor, I followed him past a metal gate that led to a fifty square meters big office. There were five doctors donned in their white gowns.

After an exchange of greetings, Brandon announced, "Alright. Since everyone knows each other, let's jump straight to the equipment. Please explain to Ms. Stovall their functions and attend to her queries as soon as possible."

They all nodded.

I was not in a rush to look at the equipment, so I asked, "Mr. Dumphy, I'm not an expert in this field, so there's no point in me trying to know more about the equipment. However, I have a request. I hope you wouldn't mind."

He smiled at me and replied, "Of course I wouldn't mind. I have no reason to reject your request as long as it's logical and legal."

Logical and legal?

I let out an awkward chuckle. Would my request be logical and legal?

I looked at him and continued, "I'd like to look through the doctors' credentials. To be qualified as either a clinical or surgical doctor, one needs to attain certain qualifications. I hope you all don't mind letting me take a look at them."

A few of the doctors' faces froze while Brandon was puzzled. "Ms. Stovall, I believe you know that such information is confidential. Rest assured that our doctors are all experienced and capable, and they all graduated from top universities. We'll definitely do our best for your daughter."

I furrowed my brows and was hesitant. "Mr. Dumphy, there are two major factors that can determine the success rate of surgery – a safe operating environment and the doctor's capabilities. Since I'm not an expert in the medical field, it doesn't make sense for me to measure the safety level of the equipment. However, I would be able to verify the doctor's qualifications. Since they're from top universities, can I take a look at their certifications?"

It seemed like my request was ridiculous to them, as none of them intended to show me their qualifications.

I looked at the doctors, then at Brandon, and smiled slightly. “Mr. Dumphy, I don’t think I’m making a difficult request. I believe this would form the basis of the trust I have with you all. If I’m unable to trust your doctors, I would rather engage the surgery somewhere else. I don’t wish to bet on my daughter’s life.”

Brandon frowned and replied, “Ms. Stovall, you know the significance of this surgery very well. We share the same purpose of saving your daughter’s life. It’s not that we don’t want you to look at their qualifications, but if you were to leak such information, it would ruin their career. After all, they do not have a perfect record on their portfolio.”

I nodded slightly and did not refute his words any further. “Indeed. Since you want to protect your doctors while I want to save my daughter, let’s come to a compromise.”

“What are your thoughts?” he asked me impatiently.

“You could rent the operating theatre to me. Since you won’t be able to show me their qualifications, I won’t be able to trust them with my daughter’s surgery. Hence, I would get other doctors to perform the surgery. Despite that, I’d still pay the same amount.”

It was a logical offer, so he had no reasons to reject it. He thought about it for a moment and replied, “Your request is not impossible. However, we need to bring it up to the senior management for approval.”

I nodded with a smile. “Please bring it up to them as soon as possible. As you know, time is running out as my daughter is in critical condition.”

He nodded profusely.

It was not easy to flight a taxi in the suburbs. I was calling someone while pacing around the factory. I wonder if Hailey did her surgery here as well.