

# In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 31

After speaking, I lifted my full glass of wine. Resisting the urge to throw up, I chugged down a few glasses in a row. My alcohol tolerance wasn't that high to begin with. Hence, by the third glass, a dull ache had formed in my lower abdomen.

Jared sensed the change in me and held down my hand. Glancing at Ashton, he said slowly, "Ashton, she's still your wife now. You know she can't drink in her current state. It'll be too late to regret if something happens to her."

"Let me go!" I was already a little dizzy. Driven by rage and indignance, I pushed Jared's hand away and reached out to grab a glass of wine.

I was stopped by a powerful grip, right before being pulled into a familiar embrace. Joe stared at Ashton with a bewildered expression. "Ashton?"

"She's my wife, so I'll drink the rest!" With that, he finished the remaining amount of wine. As Rebecca watched him, her eyes instantly glowed red.

My stomach felt queasy, the urge to retch surging within me several times, but I was trapped in Ashton's arms. Thus, I had no choice but to fight through nausea.

Ashton had been polishing off glass after glass for quite some time when Rebecca abruptly stood up and ordered Joe, "Take me home!"

Anger and hurt could clearly be detected in her voice.

Joe looked at Ashton with a conflicted expression, opening his mouth to speak, but no words came. In the end, he trailed after Rebecca and left.

Immediately after, Jared snatched away the wine glass in Ashton's hand and snapped at him, "If you don't want anything to happen to her, you'd better take her back now!"

He was referring to me.

Ashton frowned and carried me out of the nightclub, bridal-style. My head spun slightly and I didn't know what happened to Jared after that. After Ashton put me in the car, I felt a stabbing pain in my abdomen.

Seeing me curled up into a ball while cradling my belly, Ashton's brows scrunched together and his palm caressed my abdomen. "Does it hurt very badly?"

I nodded in response, a layer of sweat already forming on my forehead.

He started the car and said, "Hang it there. I'll take you to the hospital!"

Breaking out in cold sweat, I quickly grabbed his arm and peered into his dark eyes while shaking my head. "Bring me back to the villa and get Dr. Crest to come. He can treat me!"

He frowned, looking slightly unhappy.

Afraid that he might overthink things, I explained, "After the surgery, he was the one who monitored my recovery, so he knows what to do."

Ashton paused for a moment before putting the car into drive and heading back to the villa.

I breathed a sigh of relief at that.

Ashton skillfully maneuvered the car and floored the accelerator at the same time, so we reached the villa in no time.

Ashton carried me into the bedroom, where Jared gave me some medicine which slowly eased the pain in my abdomen.

After a hectic day, I was exhausted, not to mention light-headed as well, so I gradually drifted off to sleep.

While I was asleep, the muffled sound of Ashton calling me pierced through the haze in my mind, but too drowsy to open my eyes, I vaguely felt him taking off my clothes and carrying me into the bathroom to give me a bath.

My subconsciousness wanted to refuse him, but I just couldn't wake up no matter how hard I tried.

His palm seemed to graze my abdomen. Unsure of what he was trying to do, I squirmed away from him a little.

In my groggy state, I felt him carry me back to bed. Once again overcome by exhaustion, I fell into a deep slumber almost immediately.

The next day.

Perhaps it was because I had too much to drink last night, I woke up with a hangover. I sat in bed for a long time while my phone rang a few times.

After feeling more relaxed, I checked my phone to see that there was a message from Macy.

How was the male escort last night? Did everything go well?

I held my forehead, utterly speechless, and typed out a message: Macy, you do know that after a miscarriage, it's not advisable to have sex for at least a month, right?

Not long after I sent the message, she called me.

I answered it and Macy began fussing on the other end. "What the heck? You should've told me that earlier! Do you know how much I paid that male escort yesterday?"

I stretched lazily and got out of bed to draw the curtains open while speaking into the phone. "Let's go shopping one of these days and I'll get you something you like. By the way, I ran into Rebecca last night."

Macy was stunned to hear that. "Isn't she always flaunting about what a virtuous woman she is? Why did she go there then?"

"Ashton and the rest were there too." After a heavy downpour, the villa's surroundings seemed to sparkle brilliantly, as if cleansed by the rain.

Macy sighed. "Forget it. Let's not talk about her anymore. Have you planned when to leave J City?"

Thinking about this matter gave me a headache. "Ashton hasn't signed the divorce papers, and I haven't settled things at the company yet."

She hummed a response, falling silent for a while before saying, "Tell me after you're done with all of those. I'll head to Q City in a few days to check out some good locations, then settle the bar transfer here."

I felt my throat tighten from emotion. "Hour Bar has been operating for so many years already. Don't you feel sad about giving it up?" The fact that she was doing it for my sake didn't leave a pleasant feeling in my heart.

"Tsk!" She sounded slightly exasperated when she spoke again. "Some things come and go in life. What's there to be sad about? Besides, it's not like I can't open up another bar in Q City."

Having said that, she instantly chirped excitedly, "Have you ever thought about what you wanna do once you leave Fuller Corporation and move to Q City?"

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I was caught off guard by her question, because not once have I ever thought about it. After everything here was settled, my belly would probably get bigger, so it wouldn't be convenient to look for a job in that state.

"I might take a short break or something." After the baby was born, I would probably have my hands full, so it would be best to wait until the baby was older to think about this.

"That's a good idea." She stayed silent for a while, probably contemplating something. "You've suffered so much all these years because of Ashton, so it's time for you to take a good rest. It's a good thing I've saved enough money for the two of us to spend over the years!"

I burst out laughing. "Don't worry. I won't be completely helpless even after Ashton and I divorce. I still have my savings." The villa was left by Grandpa. Even if Ashton gave it to me after we divorced, I probably wouldn't sell it away. As for the company shares, I still hadn't decided what to do with them.

After a few good laughs, we ended the call. I wrapped my arms around myself and leaned against the floor-to-ceiling windows, gazing at the scenery outside.

Indeed, it was time to think about what I wanted to do with my future.

For some inexplicable reason, the air seemed to turn slightly chilly. Rubbing my arms a little, I turned around to look for a coat and was startled to see Ashton standing behind me in a rigid posture.

I was so alarmed my hands instantly turned clammy, "Didn't... Didn't you go to the company?" I had no idea how long he had been standing here and how much of my conversation with Macy he had heard.

His obsidian eyes seemed to bore into my soul as he asked in a brooding tone, "Going somewhere?"

His question stunned me, and I guessed that he must have heard some of our conversation. "What do you mean?" I feigned cluelessness with a guilty conscience.

Seeing him stalk toward me, I started to panic and racked my brain for a way to divert his attention. I abruptly clutched my abdomen and furrowed my brows. "Ow! My tummy! It hurts so much!"

With that, I squatted down to finish the act.

He faltered in his steps, then quickly came to my side and hauled me up with a frown. "Let's go to the hospital!"

Crap.

Does this count as digging my own grave?

"No..."

I rejected him a little too quickly. He narrowed his eyes at me, his gaze on me intensifying. "You seem to be really against going to the hospital, Scarlett."

"No..." A hint of sadness flashed across my face, and I answered him with red-rimmed eyes, "It just reminds me of how helpless and afraid I was while lying on the operating table!"

He visibly stiffened at that. After a long while, he roughly pulled me out of the bedroom.

Thinking that he was going to take me to the hospital, I tugged on his sleeve and protested with teary eyes. "I really don't wanna go to the hospital, Ashton!"

Besides, I didn't actually have any stomach pain.

"Go down and eat something." He glanced at me with cold eyes, but there seemed to be a trace of helplessness in them too.

For a while, an indescribable feeling grew in me. Last night, he rescued me, and today, he compromised. Somehow, he wasn't as impassive toward me anymore.

Humans were greedy creatures. Once we had a taste of something, we would crave for more, and in the end grow possessive.

After seating me at the dining table, he went into the kitchen and came out with a bowl of something in his hand.

I thought it was just canned mushroom soup, so surprise was an understatement when I saw that it was home-cooked ginger carrot soup. For a moment, I stared at him as conflicting emotions raged through me. He only cast me an indifferent glance before informing in a low voice, "Jared will come over to check up on you later. Don't go to the company for now. Even though the project with Dr. Ludwick has been completed, you still need to bear the losses due to the delay you caused. But for today, just rest at home!"

As soon as he finished speaking, he put on his jacket, grabbed his car keys and left.

I was frozen in place for a while. When did he start treating me differently? After knowing that I was pregnant?

For a long time, all I could do was stare at the ginger carrot soup.

When Jared came over, I was still a little bit out of sorts.

He frowned as he looked me over. "You don't have to eat this if you don't like it. You can still eat whatever you like. The fetus isn't that fragile, you know?"

His voice jolted me out of my stupor and I looked up to see him standing by the dining table, staring at me with his medical kit in hand.

I quickly got to my feet. "Oh, you're here!"

He blinked in surprise, but didn't comment. Opening his kit, he took out some medicine and handed them to me. "Take this 3 times a day for 21 days. Abstain from alcohol from now on, as it might cause fetal growth retardation or malformation. Also, you might need to start going for pregnancy checkups at the hospital."

I nodded and took the medicine from him. "Thank you!"

He was initially going to leave after this, but he hesitated and looked toward me. "In your current state, I don't think you'll be able to leave just yet. Why don't you be upfront with Ashton? Since he intends to keep the child, I'm sure he'll handle everything else too!"

I knew what he was getting at. The "everything else" he said was referring to Rebecca.

I didn't know much about things on her end, neither have I ever asked Ashton about it, but I couldn't help from blurting out, "Ashton must really love Ms. Larson!"

Jared walked toward the sofa and took a seat, sending me a fleeting glance before replying, "This has nothing to do with love. If you really want to be with Ashton, tell him the truth. He has his own way of handling things."

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What way?

I didn't voice this question. Everyone had their own way of thinking, so I didn't know what Jared meant. All I knew was that this child belonged to me alone.

Ashton never had any feelings for me to begin with. If Grandpa were still alive, I could probably stay by Ashton's side for a few more years, but he was gone, so I didn't have the confidence to continue holding onto him.

Risking my child to do it wasn't a wise choice.

Silence stretched out between us before I spoke again. "Since I'm pregnant now, I'm afraid I'll have to trouble you for the time being. As for everything else, I have my own plans. Thank you, Dr. Crest."

He probably thought I didn't understand him as a crease formed between his brows, but he didn't say any more.

He sighed. "I have something to do later on. Remember to eat your medicine. I'll take off first."

After seeing him off, I didn't eat the bowl of ginger carrot soup Ashton cooked for me as my stomach felt slightly uncomfortable. Perhaps it was because I was still in the early stage of pregnancy, I didn't have any morning sickness, but I really didn't have an appetite.

I had just gone back to the bedroom and lay down on the bed when my phone rang. It was an unknown number, but I picked it up anyway.

Half a beat passed before the person on the other end spoke. "It's me, Rebecca!"

I blinked in surprise, then frowned. "Do you need something from me, Ms. Larson?"

"Let's talk! I've sent you the address!"

Before I had the chance to refute, the line went dead.

I couldn't fathom why Rebecca was looking for me now.

I bet it had something to do with Ashton though.

But what made her think that I would rush over to meet her just because she told me to? Looking at the address she sent to me, I took a screenshot and sent it to Ashton with a single sentence beneath it. Ms. Larson asked me to meet her, but I was afraid that I might get triggered and end up punching her, so I declined.

Ashton called me not long after the message was delivered.

I answered the call and leaned on the balcony railing while enjoying the scenery, then said in a carefree voice, "Yes, Mr. Fuller?"

After saying this, I could almost picture the frown on his face. "Where are you?" he asked in an unhappy tone.

"Home."

"Mm." There was a brief pause. "Rest well at home!"

I nodded. "Okay."

It seemed that he had read my message. After ending the call, I couldn't sleep and had nothing to do, so I went to his study out of boredom.

As I was constantly occupied by work previously, I rarely had time to look through the books here. Now that I had some time off, I deserved to laze around for a bit.

Ashton's study was very large and there were all kinds of books here. I flipped through some books with illustrations to pass the time, and it didn't take long for my back to feel sore.

I put down the book in my hand and wandered around the study. My gaze fell on a small cabinet tucked in the corner that looked slightly dated.

Out of curiosity, I searched through it and found some photos. They were quite old and worn, but I could tell that they were all photos of Ashton when he was young.

I've never met Ashton's parents, so an old and faded photo of a young couple holding a baby together with smiles on their faces caught my eye.

The man's eyes were quite similar to Ashton and Grandpa's, so I deduced that he must be Ashton's father. Hence, the woman, who looked gentle and elegant, was probably Ashton's mother.

I flipped through the album and noticed that something didn't add up. The next few photos showed Ashton's parents carrying a baby girl. Confused, I turned back the pages and found that there were indeed several photos where there was a little girl, about two to three years old, standing beside Ashton's parents.

In the past, Grandpa told me that Ashton was his parents' only child. I don't recall there ever being a daughter. As for Uncle Charlie and his wife, I heard that they didn't want any kids, so this couldn't be their daughter either.

Just who is this little girl in the photo?

With no other explanation, I assumed that it was the daughter of one of their neighbors from back then. Without giving it much thought, I continued looking through the album.

The photos at the back were of Ashton during his schooling days. This showed how sentimental Grandpa was, recording every special moment of his grandson's life since he was but a baby and keeping them as memories.

At the end of the album was a group photo which seemed to have been taken more recent. Rebecca, Jared, and Joe were all in it.

There was a boy who looked bubbly and enthusiastic. All of them were good-looking in their own way, but this boy had a paler complexion, seeming like he had some kind of health condition. Because I didn't recognize him, I didn't try to figure out who he was.

The girl standing among the four boys was none other than Rebecca. At that time, she still gave off an innocent and shy vibe.

It was obvious at first glance that she was the precious little princess everyone coddled. How lucky.

After looking through all the photos, I felt like my heart was being squeezed by an invisible force. Ashton and Rebecca had a long history, while I had only known him for barely two years.

If it weren't for my grandma's illness and desperation which led her to bring me to meet Grandpa George, I would never have had the chance to marry Ashton.

If anything, I had only relied on Grandma and Grandpa George to marry Ashton. It was justifiable that he harbored no feelings toward me.

Come to think of it, even after such a long time, I never once stopped to think just how Grandma and Grandpa George came to know each other. Logically speaking, the Fullers were wealthy and influential, while Grandma was a rural old lady who lived in the countryside. Just how did they meet each other?

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Unwittingly, I had stayed in Ashton's study until the sky turned dark. I couldn't tell if it was because of my pregnancy, but I didn't feel hungry even after not having anything to eat for the whole day, but my stomach did feel uncomfortable.

I went downstairs and rummaged through the kitchen cabinets for something to eat. Fortunately, Stacey stocked up enough food previously. After some time, I spotted some cucumbers in the refrigerators. Since I was too lazy to cook, I simply washed some cucumbers and planned to eat that as my dinner.

I didn't notice Ashton returning to the villa. It wasn't until I walked out with a slippery cucumber in hand that I saw him sitting in the living room.

When did he come back?

Sensing my presence, Ashton turned his head, his eyes instantly zooming in on the cucumber in my hand. A frown appeared on his face as he asked in a gruff voice, "What do you plan on doing with that?"

I was baffled, and answered in a matter-of-fact manner, "Eat it, of course!" What else can I do with this besides eating it?

Ashton scoffed. "Did I fail to satisfy you? Is that why you've resorted to using that?"

What?

I couldn't quite grasp where he was going with this. What does he mean by "using that"?

He stood up and approached me with a brooding look on his face. I couldn't figure out what was up with him, so I raised the cucumber in my hand and asked, "Do you want one?" I just so happened to wash two cucumbers just now.

Ashton's gaze turned stormy as he growled, "No!" Before I knew it, he had snatched the cucumber in my hand and thrown it aside. His hand wrapped around my waist, while the other hand reached up to my lips, grazing them with his fingertips.

No matter how slow-witted I was, I still realized what he wanted to do right now. I instinctively tried to make a run for it, but his arm was holding me firmly in place. In a deep and husky voice, he said, "It's already been a few days. We should be in the clear now!"

I just couldn't hear the logic in his words.

"Ash..." My words were cut off by his actions. I reached up to try and push him away. Unfortunately, he overpowered me as a man, and I was utterly powerless against him.

When I felt his arousal against my belly, my eyes widened. He...

"Ashton, don't..." I gasped halfway through my sentence.

"No, Ashton, we are so not in the clear! There's still a risk of infection!" Rebecca just recently had a miscarriage, so he couldn't touch her, and the same was true for me. Hence, I could understand why he was acting like a sex-deprived man now.

Seeing him ignore my warnings, I started to panic. "Ashton, the doctor said to abstain for a month. Please!"

I was on the verge of tears.

Perhaps he heard the plea in my voice, because he gradually stopped what he was doing. Without a word, he hugged me tightly in his arms, then gently traced my collarbone with his lips.

After a long time, he finally calmed his raging hormones and released me. "Hungry?" he asked with hooded eyes.

I was slightly embarrassed because of how loud my stomach had growled. With a slight nod, I cracked a smile that looked more like a grimace. "I didn't eat anything since I woke up."

Ashton was stunned, then his eyes fell on the cucumber from just now. He transferred his gaze back to me, a complicated expression on his face. "You were going to eat the cucumber just now?"

I nodded. "I don't feel like cooking because of the smoke and grease, so I washed two cucumbers."

He gazed at me as the corners of his mouth tugged upward slightly, as if he was smiling but exasperated at the same time.

A moment passed before he went into the kitchen. After a while, he came out with a bowl of noodles. He even added two eggs to it.

When he saw the way I was gaping at him, he cocked a brow at me and said, "Come and eat!" Although it was an order, it didn't sound unpleasant.

What Jared said to me earlier today surfaced in my mind. If I come clean with Ashton, will he really handle this matter?

I got up and sat at the dining table. Noticing that Ashton had only cooked one bowl of noodles, I blinked in surprise. "You've already eaten?"

He nodded and motioned for me to quickly eat. Then, he lowered his head and read through the messages on his phone.

The noodles looked and smelled delicious, but after only a few bites of it, my stomach started to churn.

I managed to endure the discomfort for a while, but could no longer suppress the nausea rising in my stomach and began to dry heave. Without a second's delay, I ran to the bathroom and emptied my stomach of its contents.

"Does it taste bad?" A cold voice reached my ears and I froze. Looking over my shoulder, I saw Ashton standing by the door.

I hurriedly shook my head. "No. Maybe after going a whole day without food, my stomach couldn't handle it when I finally ate something."

He helped me up and tugged me upstairs, making me slightly confused.

"What's wrong?"

He took off his suit and changed into casual wear, then glanced at me to announce, "Change your clothes. I'll take you out to eat whatever you feel like eating."

I was taken aback and quickly objected. "I'm not hungry, so I won't be able to eat even if we go out."

However, my words seemed to fall on deaf ears because he pierced me with a gaze and said in a tone that left no room for discussion. "I'll wait for you outside!"

To be honest, I really wasn't hungry, but...

After mulling over it, I still changed my clothes and went out with him.

At this hour, J City was buzzing with activity. While Ashton was driving, he glanced at me and asked, "What do you feel like eating?"

I turned over the question in my mind before answering, "Something light!"

It might be because morning sickness was starting to hit me, so I constantly felt nauseated by certain odors.

He nodded slightly in response. As I studied the gentle look on his handsome face, I suddenly realized that this was the most peaceful day Ashton and I had shared since the day we got married.

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For a transient moment, I deluded myself into thinking that the two of us could stay like this forever, and that our family of three could live happily ever after.

The car stopped in front of a cozy-looking restaurant. I got down and went straight into the restaurant to find us a table.

It looked like not many people came here at night, so as soon as I sat down, the waiter handed me a menu. Since Ashton already had his dinner and I was having an upset stomach, I ordered some light bites and a bowl of pumpkin soup.

To my surprise, after Ashton parked his car, he came in with Rebecca and Joe flanking him.

A coincidence? Or did they plan this beforehand?

Seeing that I was already seated, Ashton and the two of them came over to join me. When Rebecca saw me, there was a subtle shift in her expression, but she didn't make any remarks since this was a table meant for four.

Because I was already seated, Rebecca sat down next to me before Ashton could. She peered at me and asked in a voice as sweet as nectar, "You don't mind me sitting beside you, right, Scarlett?"

Could I say that I minded it?

Of course not!

Hence, I remained silent.

"What did you order?" Ashton asked as he took the menu from the waiter.

"Some small bites and a bowl of soup," I replied.

He nodded and chose a few items from the menu. Just then, Joe pursed his lips and complained, "Don't order anything for me, Ashton. I don't have an appetite."

Ashton nodded and gave the menu back to the waiter.

Thereafter, the three of them started to chat. I couldn't join in their conversation, so I simply stayed silent.

The waiter brought over a bowl of pumpkin soup after a while. The moment he placed it on the table, Ashton naturally pushed it toward Rebecca and said in a deep voice, "I ordered this for you. Drink some. It'll warm you up."

Rebecca beamed. "Pumpkin soup is my absolute favorite! You really do know me best, Ashton!"

The chemistry between them was like a knife stabbing straight into my heart.

He remembered many things about her down to the tiniest details. His bone-deep affection toward her was something I could never earn even if I were given a whole lifetime to pursue it.

“Scarlett, what soup did you order? Why don’t we share? The pumpkin soup here is really good. Ash used to bring me here, so I know.” Without waiting for me to reply, Rebecca pushed the bowl of soup in front of me.

I shook my head and pushed the bowl back with a smile. “I ordered one too. It’ll be here soon.”

She shrugged and continued chatting with the two men, making me feel slightly left out.

Before long, the small bites and soup I ordered were served. Rebecca noticed that I had also ordered pumpkin soup and smiled innocently at me. “It looks like you like pumpkin soup too, Scarlett. Let me tell you a secret. Ashton makes the best soup!”

As she spoke, she leaned so close to me that I could feel her breath on my neck. I didn’t like it when others came too close to me, so I shifted slightly with a frown on my face.

“Ow!” Suddenly, my half-eaten bowl of pumpkin soup was spilled all over me, making a complete mess.

Because it was hot, my knee-jerk reaction was to stand up, but I accidentally bumped into Rebecca who was leaning close to me. Following that was her whimper of pain.

The blistering pain from getting scalded was so unbearable that I couldn’t be bothered to apologize, frantically reaching out to grab a piece of tissue to wipe the soup on my legs. Before coming out, I had only changed into a dress because Ashton was already waiting for me. The dress was thin, so my skin was already red.

After wiping most of the soup from my legs, I looked up to see that Ashton was crouched in front of Rebecca as he carefully wiped her bleeding nose.

I thought back and realized that I must have knocked her nose when I got up too abruptly just now, so...

Joe grabbed a tissue and handed it to Ashton, glaring at me as he spat, “Are you always such a klutz, Ms. Stovall?”

I was momentarily at a loss for words.

Looking at Rebecca's swollen eyes and her bleeding nose, I forced an apology through the ache in my heart. "I'm sorry, Ms. Larson."

I was certain that I didn't touch the bowl of pumpkin soup just now. Other than Rebecca, who was the closest to me, I couldn't think of anyone who would be so lame as to intentionally spill a bowl of soup on me.

"It's fine, Scarlett. Just be more careful next time." After that, Rebecca turned her red-rimmed eyes to Ashton. "Ash, I've lost my appetite. Can you go for a stroll with me?"

Ashton frowned, looking at the untouched food on the table and said, "Eat a little bit first."

It seemed like amid this crisis, no one had noticed that I was scalded or even realized that the soup was spilled on me.

Standing by the side, I suddenly felt that my presence was redundant and laughable.

"I'm leaving," I announced, then turned and left to the restaurant. My heart felt like it had been stabbed with a blade made of pure ice, the agony almost making my legs give out beneath me.

God is so unfair. He gifted some women with happiness, while other women with suffering.

"Scarlett!" A low and furious voice came from behind me. I looked back and saw that Ashton had followed me out.

He looked at me with furrowed brows, seemingly controlling his anger when he asked, "What are you doing?"

What am I doing? Is it accusation I'm detecting in his tone? Is he accusing me of knocking into Rebecca?

"I don't have an appetite, so I'm going home." Feeling miserable, I didn't want to say too much for fear of losing control of my emotions and ending up airing my grievances to him.