

In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 126

The middle-aged woman continued, "According to our investigations, Fuller Corporation has already been audited under the supervision of the public during this month, and you have submitted the audit report to the Economic Network."

I nodded without saying a word.

"I've gone through the reports, and I see your signature on most of them. Are you aware of the company's fiscal deficits, Ms. Stovall?"

"Officer, that's not illegal, is it?" I asked with a frown.

She shook her head and flashed a faint smile at me. "No, but the problems that arise from it are. HiTech, which's owned by Fuller Corporation, has caused the accidental death of four employees six months ago due to inadequate safety measures. However, Fuller Corporation has tried to sweep everything under the rug instead of resolving the issue. That has resulted in three of the workers' family members committing suicide last night."

"Four employees died in an accident?" I stood up from my chair in shock. "How come?"

She sneered at me upon seeing my panicked reaction. "Drop the act, Ms. Stovall. You were the one who handled those incidents, so you should know it better than anyone else."

I stared wide-eyed at her in confusion. "I'm not putting up an act! It's only been a little over a month since I've taken over HiTech, and the accident in South District happened about half a year ago! I wasn't in charge of it back then!"

"I knew you were going to say that. It's true that you've only taken over HiTech's case recently, but HiTech was already under your management when you were made director of Fuller Corporation a year ago. George Fuller handed the company over to you along with 15% of its shares."

I was completely bewildered and shook my head profusely as I said, "I'm not in charge of the South District. I have no idea about what happened!"

"You're doing to need evidence to back up your statement, Ms. Stovall. We have all the documents you've signed in HiTech throughout the entire year, so I suggest you plead guilty. Since you're not the person in charge, your improper handling of the accident will only get you fired at worst."

I began to calm down as I relayed what the woman had said. She's right; this isn't a criminal case at all! It's just an industrial and commercial issue involving the company!

"Sorry, but I'm unable to answer your questions on this. What you're doing right now counts as unlawful imprisonment, and I have the right to sue you for violating my human rights by interrogating me for a criminal case."

There's no way I'll be the one being investigated for issues with Fuller Corporation. As for the case with HiTech, I can only assume someone is trying to set me up! I mustn't admit to any of these accusations, or my reputation will be ruined forever!

The middle-aged woman chuckled when she saw how calm I was. "Very well, then. You may have your attorney bail you out so you can go have a chat with Fuller Corporation and its stockholders in J City!"

"Oh, you bet I will!"

I then quickly contacted my lawyer and was allowed to leave after taking care of the paperwork.

I drove straight to Fuller Corporation and parked somewhere nearby when I saw a huge group of people assembled outside the building.

I don't know what's going on, but I have a feeling that things are about to get a whole lot worse...

Instead of getting out of the car right away, I tried calling Jared again, but there was still no answer.

Fortunately for me, Joe answered his phone when I called him after that.

"Mr. Quinn, I need an explanation for the four lives that were lost in the workplace accident at HiTech!"

"I think you should be more concerned about Ashton making it out of the operating theatre alive, Scarlett."

At that point, I felt myself breaking down as I rubbed my aching forehead. "He got himself into an accident because he decided to go to K City for no apparent reason, so how is that my responsibility? You shouldn't have double standards like this, Mr. Quinn. Now, I know you've heard about what happened in Fuller Corporation."

"I've already had someone assigned to handle the situation in Fuller Corporation. As for HiTech, old Mr. Fuller has transferred 15% of its shares over to you with your knowledge. Ashton decided to have you sign the papers for the factory in South District, so you can ask him about it when he gets out of the ER."

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The man then paused for a moment before continuing, "Here's a piece of advice, Scarlett. Some things aren't worth fighting for."

"What do you mean by that?" I felt like I had fallen into a bottomless pit with no hope of getting out.

"I gotta go." He then hung up on me, leaving me to stare blankly at the huge crowd outside the building.

My phone started ringing all of a sudden, and I saw that it was Macy calling. "Where are you?"

"Outside the office building!"

"Got it, stay where you are! I'll come and get you!"

Macy hung up after saying that, and I saw her appear at the entrance of the building about fifteen minutes later.

I quickly gave her a call and said, "Look behind you!"

She turned around and ran up to me when she saw my car. "Let's discuss this back at my place."

We arrived at Glenwood Apartments shortly after.

"What on earth is going on with HiTech?" she asked with a serious look on her face.

I tried my best to explain, "Grandpa handed HiTech over to me a year ago. Though I'm not in charge of it personally, most of its official documents are signed under my name."

She froze. "So... You're gonna be the one to take the fall for what happened to HiTech?"

I nodded. "On top of that, there's also some issues with the audit handled by AC Credit and Harrison Credit. A discrepancy in the data reported by both companies. The Bureau of Industry and Commerce is investigating the matter as we speak. If this isn't handled well, Fuller Corporation's stock market will plummet, and the company will face bankruptcy."

Macy paced about anxiously as she said, "To hell with Fuller Corporation! You should be more worried about yourself right now! The media is pinning everything on you, and some of the stockholders can be very extreme. As for the case with HiTech, you might be looking at a very heavy fine here. Well... Ashton should be able to help you take care of all of this, but things are surely going to be tough for you after this!"

I held my head between my knees as I tried to calm myself down. "Ashton has gotten into an accident and is currently in the ER..."

Her jaw dropped in shock. "What the... Why is everything happening all at once?"

I could only shake my head helplessly in response.

Thanks to how advanced internet technology was, word got out very easily in J City.

I didn't return to the villa after Mrs. Eriksen gave me a call to tell me that there was a huge group of reporters crowded outside.

Fortunately for me, not many people knew about Glenwood Apartments, so it was safe for me to stay there.

I got a call from Nick shortly after. He told me Ashton was still in the ICU; he didn't have any further information regarding his condition.

As expected, Fuller Corporation's stocks hit rock bottom in just two days, and to say the stockholders weren't taking it very well would be an understatement. Some of them had mental breakdowns so bad that they were even close to attempting suicide.

Despite Joseph holding a press conference to ease the public's concerns, all of Fuller Corporation's operations had to be suspended due to the investigation by the Bureau of Industry and Commerce.

Over half of J City's shops, malls, construction sites, and hospitals were owned by Fuller Corporation, so the sudden halt in its operations had almost the entire city paralyzed as a result.

Macy headed to shop for groceries every day and report the situation outside of the building to me when she returned.

I still had a lot of unanswered questions, but waiting was all I could do.

"Look, all you have to do right now is get enough rest. Don't worry about everything else, okay? I mean, look at how big your tummy has gotten! The baby is due in a few months!" Macy said while serving up dinner. Her cooking has improved a lot recently, much to my relief as I didn't have anything else to eat.

I nodded at her in response, but there was no way I could relax. "The Bureau of Industry and Commerce will announce the results of their investigation tomorrow, and I don't even know what to expect..."

"Whatever the outcome is, at worst, Fuller Corporation will go bankrupt. Sure, you having to take the fall isn't exactly pleasant, but Mr. Fuller is both the President and Chairman of the company! He'll have to pay up to billions in compensation! That's way worse!" What Macy said was true. I knew humans were selfish by nature, but it wasn't something I agreed with.

"How could I possibly leave after all Grandpa has done for me? I'd live the rest of my life in guilt if I do!" I exclaimed with a sigh.

"Say, do you think Joe could be behind all of this? He was in charge of HiTech when that accident happened, yet he chose to ignore it and do nothing! Also, Quinn Corporation was

mostly responsible for the issue with AC Credit and Harrison Credit! Maybe he's trying to get at Ashton by using you..."

It's not like I haven't considered that possibility, but Ashton is no fool either! I brought that up with him once, but he told me Joe wouldn't do that as both Fuller Corporation and Quinn Corporation would be one soon!

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Joe is a smart guy. He wouldn't make such a huge sacrifice to get at Ashton. Still, without Ashton around, I had no idea as to what I should do...

Macy gave me a pat on the shoulder when she saw how stressed I was. "There, don't worry about it. You're only twenty-six, so you couldn't have known much about workplace politics and conspiracies to avoid them. Besides, I can tell there's a lot more to this incident than it may seem."

She's right! This whole thing happened while Ashton, Joe, and Jared weren't around! Now that I think about it, it does seem premeditated! Who could've... Zachary!

The look on my face turned cold the moment the man's name came to mind.

Yes, it all makes sense! Zachary and Cameron are the only ones capable of helping Ashton if Fuller Corporation were to fall! It'd be a piece of cake, considering the connections and the amount of money they have! After all, they just recovered their daughter who was lost for over twenty years! It's only natural for them to do everything in their power to help her get what she wants! We all know Rebecca loves Ashton, but it's very unlikely for him to divorce me when I'm pregnant with his child. With this incident, however, it'll be a whole different story!

"What's on your mind?" Macy snapped me out of my train of thoughts by tugging at my shirt sleeve.

"It's a conspiracy!" Having lost all appetite, I put my cutlery down and looked her in the eye as I continued, "I think they're actually targeting me instead of Ashton!"

"Hold up. I'm confused now. What are you talking about?"

I ignored her question as another conflicting thought popped into my head. But... If it really were Zachary and Cameron that did all this, why would they be involved in the accident along with Ashton and Rebecca? As much as they may love Rebecca, it wouldn't make sense for them to risk their lives like that!

"Never mind, I'm probably overthinking things..." I got up and walked into the bedroom after saying that.

After giving it some thought, I decided to give Nick a call. "Are you alright, Scarlett?" he answered within seconds.

"Yeah, I'm alright!" I said while staring down from the balcony. "How are things on your end?"

"Ashton's still in the ICU, so there isn't much I can do. Waiting here is a waste of time, so I'll be coming back today. Got a lot of things to take care of now that Harrison Credit is under investigation."

There was indeed no point in staying there if he wasn't able to see Ashton anyway.

"Are Joe and Jared there? Have you seen them?" I asked.

There's no way they'd stay there with Ashton after what's happened to the company! It wouldn't make any sense!

"Jared is in the ICU. Joe left this morning after having someone take his place there. Hey, you don't have to worry about Fuller Corporation, okay? I'm sure everything will be alright after a couple of weeks."

He was probably talking to me in the corridor; I could hear his voice echoing from time to time.

"Yeah, sure." I lacked the vision they had to fully comprehend what was going on, so I hung up after a brief exchange.

Joe must be heading towards the office if he's coming back today! With that thought in mind, I hurriedly packed my stuff and got ready to leave the house.

Macy was shocked when she saw me leaving and quickly stopped me at the door. "Are you crazy? Where do you think you're going?"

“Joe’s on his way back. I have to go to the office.”

“Let him handle it! We can’t have you going out there when you’re pregnant like this! What if something happens to you?”

“I’ll be fine!” I figured it was probably not as serious as I had imagined. Besides, Joe was only coming back a few days after the incident had occurred, so it was obvious that he knew something I didn’t.

“I’ll go with you!” Macy knew there was no stopping me, so she grabbed her coat and headed out with me.

The huge group of reporters and stockholders gathered outside the building made it impossible for us to get in through the main entrance, but Macy had a brilliant idea.

By driving my car and parking it outside the building, she had managed to gain the crowd’s attention fairly quickly. “Hey, isn’t that Mrs. Fuller’s car?”

That little distraction allowed me to quickly snuck into the building while the entire crowd rushed over and surrounded my car.

Only a few managerial staff were in the office at the time. The rest of the people there were all investigators from the Bureau of Industry and Commerce.

I made my way to the conference hall and saw Joe talking to the investigators.

The man raised an eyebrow at me when he noticed me. “How did you get in here?”

“I walked!”

One of the investigators then handed him a stack of documents and said, “The results of the investigation will be announced tomorrow. As far as I know, there are no other issues apart from the safety violations at HiTech.”

Joe nodded in acknowledgment. “Thank you, officers!”

He then began reading through the documents after the investigator left. Despite everything that has happened, he didn’t seem even a tad bit anxious. In fact, he was so calm that it felt slightly unnerving.

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“Mr. Quinn, let’s talk!” I said as I took the documents from his hands.

“What do you want to talk about?” Joe asked as he raised his eyebrows.

The casual way he addressed the conversation really irked me. However, I just swallowed my rage and replied, “It has only been two months and there has already been a problem. Do you take me for a fool?”

“What do you expect? Or are you implying that I have something to do with this?” Joe said with a sneer.

“Don’t you?” I stated with a cold glare. “You were in charge of the Fuller Corporation audits all this while, especially the Robinson Group. Now the very same Robinson Group that was supposed to be AC Credit’s responsibility has problems with their auditing and you expect me to believe that you have nothing to do with this?” I remarked.

Joe leaned back into his chair and glared at me. “Hmph! Yes, it is true that the audits have always been my responsibility. But you should also note that during the past few years when I was in charge, there was nothing that went wrong. The Robinson Group audits had issues after you took over. Can you be sure that you never have made a mistake while looking at their documents and reports? Weren’t you the one who verified and signed the documents? Do you think I was able to interfere in that?” he declared.

Joe paused for a moment to readjust his seat before continuing, “The issues regarding HiTech were brought up by you. Ashton was aware of the nonconformity of the factory in the South District and how I found an alternative to the water supply. We tried to keep all that under wraps because the company has gone public listed and any negative news would have tanked the stock prices. However, you just have to be a little ‘Miss Perfect’ and bring up this issue.”

I was stunned by the revelation. “So you knew all this while but didn’t tell me?” I queried.

“Oh Ms. Stovall, do you still not know the unspoken rules of our industries after all these years? Do you have any idea how large the Fuller Corporation is? Any corporation of this

scale would definitely have its flaws. As long as these flaws don't affect the development or cause any significant problems, the corporation would just overlook them. Moreover, the factory in South District already had its issues settled, it just wasn't reported to the higher-ups. Did you think the families affected would let the Fuller Corporation off so easily otherwise?" Joe sneered.

"So why did someone take their life then?" I questioned since I heard the interrogator mention a suicide case when I was taken into the prosecutor's office.

Joe chuckled like he was being amused by an idiot. "It was more than half a year after the incident before someone committed suicide. I guess pregnancy really does make someone lose their sense of logic," he mocked.

So someone tried to implicate the Fuller Corporation by tying the two incidents together and I'm the only one out of the loop?

I was stunned by the revelation and was at a loss for words. Joe wasn't worried about this incident at all because it was like what Nick said, this was all a reshuffling and the one who is being kicked out is me!

I was the person who signed the auditing documents for Fuller Corporation and HiTech was in my name. Therefore, both incidents were directly tied to me.

Fuller Corporation knows that if worse comes to worst, they would announce the termination of employment on me to the public. After that, they would continue operations like normal.

I couldn't help but give a chuckle. "Well, well Mr. Quinn, well played!" I said with my tone dripping with sarcasm.

Joe knew that if everything went according to plan he could oust me from the company without anyone even caring.

He looked at me and my swelling belly for a moment before saying condescendingly, "It's OK Ms. Stovall. Even if you were forced to leave the Fuller Corporation, you will still have your stocks. Your pregnancy will be due soon so you will leave the company one way or another. Therefore, please go easy on this."

Yes, I know I'll be leaving eventually. You don't need to remind me.

“Since I’m leaving eventually, it doesn’t matter if I leave because of this or other reasons right?” I chuckled dryly.

“Does Ashton know about this?” I asked while holding back my emotions.

Joe looked at me for a moment before nodding his head solemnly.

As soon as I saw that, I felt as if my heart was torn asunder and the air felt suffocating. I actually suspected it was Zachary who was behind this.

It really seemed like everything was just a joke in the end.

Nothing up till now was a coincidence but a ploy that was orchestrated by people in the know.

Alas, everything that happened next was all according to what Joe had described.

The following day, the report from the prosecutor’s office was sent out and it showed that the Fuller Corporation’s audits had been affected by HiTech and were thus non-conforming. This also meant that the report appearing in International Weekly was falsified.

It was decided by the prosecutor’s office that everything had to be re-audited, including Fuller Corporation which was managed by Harrison Credit, and Quinn Corporation, and handled by AC Credit. There would also be a fine for commercial fraud under deceptive practices. The silver lining was that because Fuller Corporation practically had a monopoly on the economic sector of J City, they didn’t publicize the findings and opted to settle it privately.

As for HiTech, I had to take responsibility for all the liabilities as I was the person in charge, and that had affected Ashton indirectly.

All in all, the situation was resolved without much issue. With that, the operations in Fuller Corporation that were put on hold to assist in the investigation for most of the week resumed to normal.

As for me, it went exactly as Joe had predicted. The company terminated my employment publicly with immediate effect.

Everything that happened went exactly as scripted so I wasn't too upset since I knew what would happen beforehand. There was only a tinge of dissatisfaction in me.

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I didn't return to the villa after everything settled. I only sat around in Glenwood Apartments to pass the time since I didn't need to go to work at Fuller Corporation any more.

After a few restless days, it was pretty obvious how much my belly had grown.

I didn't even try looking up news regarding Ashton anymore. I just resolved to take care of the budding life within me.

During the weekend, Macy practically begged me to go to Q City with her for a few days since she was so bored. With the free time that I have right now, and me being the laid back person I am, agreed immediately.

It was a short trip from J City to Q City and it only took about an hour to arrive from one to the other. We hopped onto the train and Macy looked like an excited schoolgirl as she looked at the scenery outside. "I just made a down payment on a new house and the renovations just completed. I am inviting you over for a few days to jazz up my new place," she said while holding my hand.

"When did you buy a new house? This is the first time I'm hearing this," I asked. Admittedly, things have been hectic for me so I didn't pay as much attention to her affairs.

"I only got it recently. I wanted to tell you earlier but you were so occupied with everything at work so I decided not to tell you until now," she said nonchalantly as she was looking at her phone.

I guess she has a point.

Our hour-long journey came to an end as quickly as it had begun.

After we alighted, Macy hailed a cab to get us to our destination as soon as possible. I could tell that it was a newly developed residential area on our way there.

The unit wasn't very big, being only a hundred-odd square meter. The renovations were exquisite but not something that high-end. It was perfect for two people to live in.

"Let's get some food in a bit. We'll rest for tonight and then I'll show you around tomorrow," Macy said while leaning against the door to my room.

"So what are we having later?" I nodded in agreement with her plan.

"What do you feel like eating?" she asked while glancing at my belly. "Oh, I know! Let's get some pasta!" she continued.

"OK! Let's have some spicy pasta! I haven't had spicy food in ages! I'm already five months into my pregnancy, there shouldn't be any problems," I expressed. I knew Macy was concerned for me.

"Are you sure you can handle it?" she questioned me with her eyebrows raised.

"Yes, I am," I assured with a nod.

"Well, alright then!" Macy agreed.

I wasn't familiar with Q City so I just tagged along with Macy wherever she went. We went over to Million Plaza where they had the whole of the third floor dedicated to food. Macy went a little wild once we got there as it has been a good while since we last ate out.

We decided to do a little shopping before we ate and Macy was like a kid in a candy store. She was only held back by the fact that I was pregnant and couldn't walk that much. Otherwise, she would have probably shopped till the next day.

After finding a nice little pasta shop, we sat down and ordered our food. "Shucks! I had so much I wanted to eat while we were walking around. But now that I've actually ordered them, I've lost my appetite!" she said with a sigh.

By my estimations, she was about two months pregnant now. "Do you get any morning sickness?" I asked.

"Nope. I just don't have much of an appetite. Everything else is pretty much normal," she said as she shook her head.

Pregnancy was different for everyone and I knew that, so I just nodded my head at her statement. "Remember to be prepared for everything. Stay in Q City and live out the rest of your pregnancy in peace. We're only two to three months apart, so if you have anything you need for yourself or your child, just let me know," I reassured her.

"I already have everything planned out! I've even gotten the confinement center sorted out for my confinement period. The only issue I ran into is that Q City doesn't have as many confinement centers as J City. But I found one near my place so it will be convenient when the time comes," she nodded with a laugh.

Macy had always been better at taking care of herself than me so I wasn't too worried. I took out an ATM card from my purse and placed it in front of her. "This ATM card was something George gave me when I got married to Ashton. I have never used it but there is money in the account. You're gonna be alone in Q City and I'm sure this would be of some use to you," I stated.

Macy frowned a little and pushed the card back to me. "I was able to pay off the house with just my savings. The money I got from selling off the bar is still in my bank untouched. Ashton was also really generous with his offer and paid me more than double the market price. So don't worry about me, I have more than enough funds to support myself if there were any emergencies. So please take the card back and keep it for yourself. I'll be fine," she reassured.

I ignored her pleas and pushed the card back to her again. "I'm not taking no for an answer. I've worked at Fuller Corporation for two years and I've barely touched what I earned. Ashton also gave me a card that I've barely used. Moreover, Grandma left me some money too. On top of that, I'm still married to Ashton so he won't mistreat me or anything technically. Even if we get divorced I would still get a lump sum of alimony. So please just take what I'm offering," I pleaded in a serious tone.

"Alright, I'll accept it. But in return if there's anything bothering you, you have to let me know immediately!" she finally conceded and kept the card away.

It was then the waiter brought our pasta out to us. So I just gave Macy a shrug and shot her a look saying, "I promise you! Now let's eat!"

Time flew by as we were eating and chatting away.

Seeing as it was getting late, Macy gave her belly a rub and suggested, "Let's get some milk tea and do a little shopping before we head back! I haven't shopped in a very long time!" she suggested.

I agreed since it really had been a long time since we last came out together. We got the bill and left for the shopping area.

"Letty, what brand have you..." Macy froze as soon as she heard those words. Her face filled with terror and dread.

I couldn't help but follow her gaze and not far from where we were was John. He was in casual attire and with his statuesque physique and charming features, he was more attractive than any male celebrity around.