

# In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 476

Did she think I murdered Nancy?

I almost laughed out in disbelief. Looking at her, I scoffed, "Ms. Fuller, you've actually overestimated me. If I were that ruthless, that slap would never have made it to my face."

She said disdainfully, "You can drop the act. I know Nancy slandered and humiliated you before, so you've been vengeful all this while! It's not impossible to get rid of her. After all, you have the backing of the Stovall family or the Moore family. It should be easy for you to get rid of an actress without leaving a single trace behind. I never took you to be this cruel, Scarlett!"

Nothing I say will make her change her mind. Plus, she didn't come here to ask if I murdered Nancy. She doesn't even care who really did the deed since she's already fixated on me being the perpetrator.

No one else was at home, and I didn't want to continue talking to her. So I said, "You've already slapped me and scolded me; you can go back now, Ms. Fuller."

But alas, if it was that easy to deter Sally, I wouldn't have been forced into tight corners by her several times.

She ignored me and entered the villa. Plonking herself down on the sofa in the living room, she tossed a folder on the table. Her voice was full of hatred and disgust as she said, "Scarlett, if you have any feelings for Ashton at all, you should leave him. Don't drag him into this mess."

I frowned and opened the folder she'd tossed on the table. As I flipped through the photographs that were inside, a cold sweat broke out on my body.

These photos were taken before Nancy's death. The faces of the men who were in the photographs couldn't be seen clearly, but Nancy's tortured expression was distinctly captured.

I lifted my gaze and looked at Sally. "Why are you showing me these photos?"

She returned my gaze as her expression darkened. "The police have begun investigating the scene. Just how long do you think you can keep this under wraps? Since your return to K City, Nancy's had her contract with the Fuller Corporation dissolved, and she also slandered you when she attracted media attention for her little stunt on top of that building. Now, she's dead. Who else can be responsible for her downfall?"

She paused as she attempted to control her emotions. "I don't know if this is revenge or just pure hatred. Frankly, your actions have nothing to do with me. But you must leave Ashton. He cannot have his reputation sullied by a wife like you. Just one misstep and it could destroy him and the Fuller Corporation. You will only ruin him if you stay by his side."

I almost laughed out loud at her audacity. "What makes you think I did it?" You didn't even get any facts right, and you're placing the blame on me already?

She sneered, "The Moore family has had its fair share of dirty dealings. Do you think Cameron hasn't seen the news? To them, Nancy's worth less than a dog."

I laughed. "And what does that have to do with me? Ms. Fuller, my patience is limited. I've tolerated you many times in the past because you're Ashton's aunt. After all, we're taught to respect our elders. But if our elders cannot behave rationally or reasonably, I think there's no longer a need for tolerance. Please leave my house right now!"

She was frozen in shock, not expecting me to retaliate. She looked furious. "Just who do you think you are, Scarlett? This house belongs to the Fullers. What makes you think you can kick me out?"

"She can because she's my wife!"

I was surprised at Ashton's sudden appearance. He walked into the living room and stood beside me.

He glared at Sally with barely concealed anger. "You may be my aunt, but I expect you to know your place better."

"Ashton! Are you going to cut ties with me over this woman?"

"If you continue acting like this, it wouldn't be impossible." Ashton was usually calm, and his emotions were hard to discern. Now though, his anger was palpable. As he stared at Sally impassively, he asked, "Do you need a lift home?"

As he uttered his words, it was painfully obvious that Sally had overstayed her welcome. With her chest rising and falling rapidly with anger, she glared at me fiercely before leaving in a huff.

Staring after her as she left, the pain in my head intensified. I also felt frustrated.

Ashton pulled me down onto the sofa. Already in a sour mood, I blurted, "What's with Nancy's death?"

He glanced at me. "Her mother owed a lot of money to the loan sharks. They probably knew she'd gone into hiding, and that it would be impossible to get the money back. So, they took drastic measures."

Frowning, I asked, "But murder's a little extreme, isn't it? Someone obviously wanted her dead. Did the Moore family have a hand in it?"

He chuckled, "Why didn't you guess it was me instead?"

"You wouldn't!" I said resolutely.

This stunned him. "You're that sure," he said as he raised his brows.

"Nancy may be a hateful woman, but you wouldn't stoop to murder. You have your morals. Plus, there are more than enough things in the company that deserve your attention compared to some C-list celebrities like Nancy. This whole crime reeks of revenge. That's something you'd never do." I didn't even wish Cameron dead for what she did in the past, and that was worse than anything Nancy has ever done.

I also knew that Ashton and I shared somewhat similar beliefs, and this further convinced me that he would never murder Nancy.

He paused slightly before pulling me into his arms. His chin rested lightly on my head as he spoke in a rumbling tone, "I didn't know your impression of me would be that honorable. I'm about to burst with pride."

I didn't banter with him but continued to ponder the situation, which felt strange to me. "The Moore family wouldn't do this. Let's exclude Cameron first and consider Zachary. He may have dallied with the mafia for years, but he wouldn't just end someone's life so carelessly."

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He nodded and whispered, "Don't worry about that. Focus on your coming examinations."

Indeed. Why bother? That was none of my business anyway.

Independence Day holiday.

Thanks to Emery, I got to sit in on classes at K University. That would really help with my revision for the examinations.

I met Emery's fiancé, Hunter Zane, as I got out of class. He was a tall, soft-spoken, bespectacled man, every inch of him was gentlemanly.

He was the one who wrote the recommendation for me to attend classes at K University. "Prof Zane!" Waving my arms, I called out to him from afar.

He saw me, smiled and stopped in his track.

I went up to him and saw he was holding some law books. He must have just finished his class. "Anymore classes later?" I asked.

He shook his head. "I am done for the day. What about you? How was the English class?"

"I have learned a lot!" I replied as we walked out of campus together. "Are you going to Clermont later in the day?"

"I may not be able to make it. I have guests coming, so I have to pick them up. Please help me get a message to Emery—ask her to join us for dinner tonight." Hunter replied.

"Sure! Your parents are coming?" I probed. He smiled and nodded.

Hunter's from J City. Since it was nearing their wedding date, I supposed the family came for the wedding.

We parted at the car park as he had to rush off for his next appointment.

I walked to and from class most of the time as K University was not far from Clermont. The weather was refreshing, perfect for a nice and relaxing stroll.

I did not notice the black Bentley that stopped by the side of the road until someone blocked my path.

It was Marcus.

"What's up?" I grunted.

"Where are you heading? Let me give you a lift." He stood there leisurely with a hand in his pocket and a cigarette between his long fingers.

A chance meeting? Or maybe he had it all planned out?

Well, it did not matter.

"That's not necessary. I am just a short distance from home," I replied with indifference.

"Home? The home with Ashton Fuller?" he responded sarcastically with a frown.

I had no intention of elaborating. I just stood and stared at him with impatience.

"Scarlett Stovall, how foolish can you get? If he is true to you, he would not have kept your relationship a secret."

"That is between the two of us. Please mind your own business. If that is all you have to say, then I will take my leave." I brushed him off.

"Are we worse than strangers now? We went through so much together in that one month. Does that mean nothing to you at all? Am I so repulsive that you would not wish to even talk to me?" He held me back and lashed out.

I let out a sigh and asked, "Camelia should be due soon, right?"

He was stumped. "Is that what is bothering you?" He paused and then continued, "That was an unplanned pregnancy. If that bothers you, I will send her back to M Country after she gives birth. She will not come between us."

I pushed him away angrily. "What do you mean she will affect us and you want to send her back? Marcus White, do you know what sets Ashton apart from you? Ashton takes responsibility in a relationship. Even if he does not love someone, he would not hurt her. He may be a little clumsy when it comes to love but he shows respect to the other party."

I took a deep breath to calm myself before continuing, "I know I have no right to criticize you. Four years ago, what I did was not to one's satisfaction. I will make it up to you. You can state your demands. Just don't ask me to love you. As for you, please man up! If you are not in love with Camelia, why did you cozy up to her? How could you be so callous now? What has she done wrong? The only mistake she made was to fall for you."

That was the problem with most of us. The grass would always be greener on the other side. We would fail to treasure the relationships we have and long for the ones who left. How tragic.

Marcus contemplated for a moment. "You will fulfill any demands I have?" he asked.

"Anything, other than to love you." Sometimes, one just got to bite the bullet and face the consequence.

"Come work at White Corporation, move out of Ashton Fuller's place, and do not see him ever again." Marcus listed his demands.

"I will be having my examinations next month so I can't take on any work for now. As for my relationship with Ashton, that is none of your business. Marcus, please quit pushing my buttons!" I was annoyed.

"No to everything? So that is what you mean by fulfilling any demands?" he sneered.

"I... I can agree to work at White Corporation. Just not now, since I am having my examinations soon. That is something beyond my control."

Marcus deliberated over it. "Since you have your examinations coming, I wouldn't get in your way. Let's do this instead. Come to Moonlight Bay and cook for me every day. Take that as repaying me for saving you back in those days."

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"For how long?" I sulked.

"One year!"

"Marcus White, I have my life to live too! Don't push it." Just my luck to have met him.

"Half a year!"

"Half a year of cooking in exchange for the one month that saved your life. You got a good deal." He looked towards me confidently.

"Deal!" I was tired and flustered. All I wanted was to end the episode and move on.

He did not stop me as I walked away. He just stood behind me and said, "The best way to handle a bully is to give them an eye for an eye. If you want Sally to disappear, just let me know. I can make her vanish from your sight."

I was baffled by his words, so I turned around for clarification. "What do you mean?"

He shrugged and nonchalantly declared, "Nothing much. I just felt sometimes you are too indecisive. Some people are plain revolting. Their existence is a mistake in the first place."

"You are the one behind Nancy's incident?" I instantly pieced the puzzle together.

He stubbed his cigarette and replied impassively, "She asked for it."

"Marcus White!" I was aghast at the person he has turned into.

"She serves no purpose anymore. She will only get in the way," he spoke without any emotion.

Slap! I hit him so hard my hand hurts.

A man jumped out of the black Bentley and darted in front of me to shield him from any further strikes.

Marcus pulled the man aside and unperturbedly wiped away the blood from the corner of his mouth. "You feel for her? Or are you disappointed in me?" he probed.

I took a deep breath and stepped back in despair. "Marcus, don't go overboard."

"So Ashton Fuller will toe the line? Do you think he is really the generous, forgiving gentleman you think he is? Have you seen how he deals with his business competitors?" Marcus accosted me.

He bent towards me and uttered gravely, "I am no match for his ruthlessness, Scarlett. There is more to him than meets the eye."

"That is enough! I gotta go." Disturbed by his words, I hurried away.

I was relieved he did not come after me. How did one become so incorrigible?

Ashton was not home when I got back. What Marcus said gave me the chills. I bundled up in a blanket and stayed in bed.

Ashton called in the afternoon and said he was going out of town for business. He had a hectic schedule. Sometimes, he even brought work home.

His busy schedule did not bother me as I have my hands full as well.

Alas, there was always a curve ball in life.

The following day, I was supposed to go to my class at K University. When I woke up, there was a crowd gathered outside the gate.

Paparazzi! Ashton's villa was in a secluded location. Not many people knew about this place.

Obviously, someone has maliciously spread the news and attracted the paparazzi's attention.

I grabbed my phone to call Ashton.

From the pop-up screen of my phone, I saw a photo of Marcus and me. It looked like it was taken when we met yesterday.

Whoever leaked the photos did it with ill will as all the photos published hinted at an intimate relationship between Marcus and me. The earlier incident with Nancy had barely blown over and now a scandal with the CEO of White Corporation made headlines.

I was sure the affair between Ashton and I would be uncovered too.

Guess I would have to lie low for a couple of days.

Ashton called to comfort me. "Fret not. I have tightened the security at the villa. Those paparazzi would not dare to trespass. You just stay put at home till I come back."

Surprisingly, I was not worried, even though this was the first time I had to deal with such a crowd. "Ok. You get on with your work. I can do my revision at home." I calmly reassured him.

There was sufficient food at home so it would not be an issue to be trapped in the house for a few days.

I grabbed some food and sat down to surf the headlines. The keyboard warriors were indeed impressive. Details of my background and the incidents that happened four years ago all surfaced.

Luckily, my relationship with the Moore family was not exposed. The affairs at the Stovall's were a little complicated and touchy so the paparazzi did not go big on that. They probably would not want to risk getting into legal trouble with the Stovall family.

So the focus was on my love affairs with Marcus and Ashton.

I was expecting the paparazzi to hound me for a couple of days. Surprisingly, when I peeked on them in the evening, more than half of the crowd has dispersed.

I could not be sure what happened to the paparazzi. I assumed Ashton was helping with the damage control. Summer was not able to come home to me. John had to bring her to the Stovall residence.

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I was just about to call Ashton for updates when the phone rang. It was Emery on the line.

“How did it go? Have you decided how you are going to thank me?” She was never someone who beat around the bush.

I have not the faintest idea what she meant until I glanced at the small crowd of paparazzi still waiting outside. “You are the one who got rid of paparazzi?”

“Oh my! Don’t you read the news? Such major news and you are still oblivious?” she exclaimed.

Indeed. I went back to the sofa and turned on my tablet. Professor Marrying Up! The Moore Heiress Engaged To A College Professor! That was headlines all over the town.

“You are behind that news?” It was an extremely demeaning headline. Hunter may not have come from a rich and influential family, but he worked his way up and became a professor at a renowned college. His personal accomplishments and capabilities were widely recognized.

“Hunter was the one who told me to do so,” Emery revealed. “You know I hated the idea of being under public scrutiny, so we have never planned to go public with our wedding plans. However, your scandal with Marcus was obviously orchestrated. Not only were juicy details leaked, but the spotlight was also shone on the incident that happened four years ago. It would have been easy to deal with if those were blatant lies. Unfortunately, most of the information exposed was somewhat true. Both the Moore family and Ashton wanted to protect you from this unwanted attention. We could not think of a better way to divert the public’s attention other than releasing news of my wedding.”

That made sense. K City had just a few paparazzi and they had been hounding the same few big shots and celebrities. They likely ran out of gossip subjects.

Emery was in her thirties but her family never pressured her to wed.

However, in the public’s eye, she was the “It girl” who had it all—looks, wealth, capability. The city was awash in speculation that she would marry into another influential family. After all, it was common for moneyed families to use marriage as a means to strengthen the clan.

Once news of Emery's wedding was out, it became the talk of the town. No wonder the paparazzi left me alone.

"What do you and Hunter plan to do now?" Once the news went out, it meant they would not be able to have a low-profile wedding anymore.

Emery seemed to take it in her strides. "All we need to do is to make public our wedding details. Poor Prof. Zane will have to get used to his newfound fame."

"I am sorry... Yesterday's meetup with Marcus was unplanned. I did not expect someone to be stalking and prying into our relationship."

"It's no big deal. It will blow over." She went on to remind me, "but don't forget our dinner date. You have to make time for it."

"Of course! I will not miss that," I cheerfully replied.

Night fell.

I was fast asleep and did not notice when Ashton got home. I woke up to the sound of running water from the bathroom.

I lay in bed, staring blankly at the ceiling, still groggy from sleep. Ashton came into the bedroom, wrapped in a towel. He did not switch on the lights for fear of waking me.

I leaned over to switch on the bedside light and turned around to find him looking at me. He was wet, fresh out of the shower.

"Did I wake you?" His handsome face had a smile on it.

I shook my head. I had always been a light sleeper and would have woken up anyway.

By the time he came to me, he had already wiped his body dry. His hair was dripping wet though. I sat up, took the towel from him, and started drying his hair.

"Are there any more paparazzi outside?" I asked. Although most of them had shifted their attention to the Moores, there were still a few hanging around.

He grabbed me and sat me on his lap, his chest still cold from the shower.

"They have all left." He sounded tired and rested his chin on my collarbone.

"No! That is ticklish!"

"Where is your itch?" he murmured.

I pursed my lips bashfully.

"Have you taken your dinner?" His voice was mellow and subdued.

"Yes," I replied with a nod.

He bent and suck hard on my neck. "Little liar! The food in the fridge was untouched."

I did not expect him to be so attentive and observant.

"I was not hungry. I snacked." It was the truth. I seemed to have put on some weight since I came back to K City.

"How can you consider snacks as a meal?" he grumbled.

"Of course, we can!" It's true, especially for ladies.

He would have none of that. After I dried his hair, he carried me and made his way downstairs.

It was dark. I clung to his neck for fear of falling. "Ashton, where are you bringing me to? It is late. Aren't you tired?"

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"To grab some food," he uttered.

For me?

"I am really not hungry. I swear." I was not a little kid anymore. I could have fixed myself a meal if I was hungry. Alas, he ignored me and continued making his way down. I had to plead again, "It is late. I would get poor digestion and suffer badly tomorrow."

With this, he stopped and fixed his gaze at me. "Are you sure you are not hungry?"

"Yes, I am not," I replied affirmatively.

I breathed a sigh of relief when he finally put me back in bed. Late night meals would really be bad for health.

He lay on top of me, with no intention of leaving. His deep-set eyes gazed into me, his eyes betraying nothing.

"Yes?" I was perplexed.

"I'm hungry." His Adam's apple moved sensuously as he murmured.

I fell silent, then said, "Why don't you go downstairs and grab some food?"

"No need. Here is good." He leaned closer to me, breathing heavily.

I was feeling uneasy being pinned down. "Please let go," I pleaded.

Our eyes locked. I blinked awkwardly and he kissed me, catching me off-guard.

I was so shocked I forgot to breathe. He let go of me briefly only when my eyes popped from holding my breath. "You plan to keep me monk-like forever?" He seemed amused by my expression.

"I'm sorry, Ashton."

Abstaining from sex for four years may be unthinkable for some people. To me, it was liberating and empowering instead.

I managed to get over the sorrow and painful memories and got myself back on my feet in these four years. However, I had yet to recover from the trauma my body endured.

Ashton was still asleep next to me when I woke up. He would usually be up and gone.

I propped myself up and studied his face. Memories of the past seven years flashed by.

It seemed the time of tribulation was coming to an end. I hoped what followed would be some peace and serenity.

However, I was afraid of getting my hopes up somewhere deep in me.

I was lost in thoughts and did not notice Ashton was awake. I only snapped out of it when he spoke. "Are you hungry?" I turned to meet his eyes. His smiley face was gorgeous.

"No." I shook my head.

He pulled me into his arms and said, "You've lost weight. You gotta eat more." His voice was manly.

"You know I had put on weight instead!" I smiled. I felt secure in his embrace.

Joseph brought us quiche for breakfast. It was simple but tasty. However, I had no appetite and so only took a few bites.

My stomach was churning. I bore with it until Ashton left. As soon as he left, I went to the bathroom and threw up whatever I ate.

Maybe I never really wanted to eat in the first place.

There was a small handful of paparazzi still waiting outside the gate. More details about my affairs with Ashton and Marcus were uncovered. As I had expected, I was portrayed as a slut.

I had to quit reading too much into what was being written as it would have been too draining. With so much negative publicity around, I had to do self-study at home since I could no longer attend classes at K University anymore.

Unable to catch hold of anyone after a few days of futile wait, the paparazzi finally gave up and left. It had just blown over so I would not be heading out anytime soon. I was a little traumatized after being hounded for the past few days.

We were no divine beings and thus, could not remain unaffected by the gossips.

Summer came back after staying with the Slovals for the past few days. She immediately threw herself in my arms and asked, "Mommy, is it true you do not want me anymore? Why did you leave me at Grandpa's place?"

I was stumped. "Mommy had to attend to some matters, and I could not pick you up. What is wrong, my sweetheart?"

"I was told you do not want me anymore and I am not your real daughter, so you will send me away once I grow up." An innocent kid would not lie.

There were not many people at the Stovall residence. The most likely person to have spoken such nonsense to Summer would be the nanny.

"Grandpa was very busy and he worked late every day. Uncle John too, although he would tell me bedtime stories when he got home. Mrs. Dune cooks for all of us! She was the only one I can play with." Summer's words confirmed my speculation. Only Mrs. Dune would have spoken those nasty words to her.

"Summer, sweetheart, Mommy would never leave you or send you away. You are mommy's dearest daughter. In the future, if anyone says otherwise, you just ignore them, ok?" I gave Summer a big hug and comforted her.

She nodded and went out to the yard to play. She did not take that gossip to heart.

I wanted to call John but decided otherwise after some deliberation.

Ashton called in the evening. "Have you taken your dinner?" He sounded husky. He must have had a long day.