

In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 501 - 505

My hand felt warm in his. Looking over at the bags placed by the side, I said somewhat awkwardly, "It's just a few pieces of clothing."

Emery chuckled jovially. "And a pair of shoes for me," she added.

Emery took a few tentative steps, then turned to me and marveled, "These shoes are fantastic! Much better than high heels."

I smiled at her.

Ashton looked at me and raised an eyebrow. His grip on my hand tightened somewhat as he picked up the bags from the floor and pulled me along with him.

"Hey Ashton, are you blind? There are some more bags here," Emery yelled after us. She was seething.

Ashton said nothing. Paying no heed to Emery's indignant cries, he dragged me headlong towards the mall's exit.

I stopped short in my tracks. "We left some bags behind?"

Ashton furrowed his brow. His gaze settled on something beyond me.

I turned to see Hunter Zane striding towards us. Recognition dawned on me, and I followed Ashton obediently.

Ashton had parked his car just outside the mall. It was a black McLaren sports car and looked tremendously flashy.

"Why did you choose this car today?" The car was impressive, but I had rarely seen him driving it.

We placed our bags in the trunk. I noticed that they were all the items that Emery had picked out for me. How did Ashton know that?

"I just randomly chose this one," Ashton answered shortly. He pulled me into the car. "What would you like to eat?"

I suddenly recalled the incident with Joe in the mall and exclaimed, "Mr. Quinn wants to have dinner with us!"

Ashton bit his lip, his eyes darkening.

"OK," he replied briefly, while fastening my seatbelt.

Emery and Hunter had followed behind. Emery called to us from afar, "Scarlett, I'll be enjoying a candlelight dinner with my husband tonight. I'm afraid I won't be able to join you. Thanks for the shoes though, I absolutely adore them! I'll treat you to a good meal next time."

I smiled at her and waved goodbye. Ashton had secured my seatbelt, then abruptly bit me on the chin.

I cried out in pain and looked at him in bewilderment. "What's wrong?"

"You've never given me anything!" Ashton retorted hotly. At that moment, he sounded rather pitiful.

Seeing his forlorn look, I couldn't help but give in. "I'll buy something for you another day, OK? Is there anything you like in particular?"

Ashton grinned. "I'll be happy with anything as long as it's from you."

What?

The wise person who said that men are just like children must be a woman! Who else would be able to come up with such an accurate observation?

Joe had made dinner reservations under his name at a private room in a restaurant specializing in pasta dishes.

It wasn't the first cuisine that sprang to mind when one considered the winter cold, but the pasta they served here was al dente and surprisingly flavorful.

There were five of us present. Besides their usual trio, Joe had brought Rebecca along while I accompanied Ashton.

As we took our seats, Joe broke the ice, saying genially, "I sourced for this place a few days ago. It's received multiple smashing reviews online, let's if it lives up to its name."

Ashton had always been a man of few words. He merely nodded in reply.

Jared said nothing either, knocking back a glass of water.

Ever since that day, Jared had never returned to the villa to see Summer. Ashton must have said something to him.

We ate our meal in a silence that seemed weightier than usual. Joe had initially intended the meal to be an occasion for them to pick up where they had left off before. The situation, however, was far too awkward to even consider that possibility.

We decided to call for the waiter to serve the drinks.

The waiter swept away the tea and juice on the table. When he approached me, intending to come for the glass of juice in my hand, Ashton stopped him. "She doesn't drink."

The waiter froze for a moment, then moved on to the others.

Joe gave us a questioning look but said nothing else.

Jared was also gazing evenly at me. It carried a vague sense of dissatisfaction.

Who knew where the source of his unhappiness lay? Not me. However, I had a sense of foreboding about it all the same.

"Does everyone remember what occasion it is today?" Joe asked in an attempt to liven things up.

Ashton frowned as if deep in thought. Jared transferred his intent gaze towards Joe, remarking, "Did you go to visit him?"

Joe nodded. "I went last week. J City isn't experiencing much cold at the moment. I delivered some fruits to him."

I had no idea who they were referring to.

Rebecca had been quiet up to this moment. She now looked at Ashton and said, "Ash, I've sold my brother's house in J City. I want to stay in K City."

Ashton seemed unbothered by that disclosure. Matter-of-factly, he replied, "OK, you can decide for yourself. You can look for Joe if you need anything. He'll help you out."

That effectively brought that conversation to an end.

Rebecca lapsed back into silence.

Jared sniggered. The contempt in his voice was evident to everyone present.

Joe quickly jumped in to salvage the situation. "Ashton's been busy lately. I'll look out for Rebecca. Ashton, go ahead and focus on whatever you need to."

Ashton remained unconcerned. The tension was rapidly mounting at the table. Each of the individuals sitting around it remained stubbornly unyielding. Nobody moved to speak.

It was unbearable I stood up and announced, "I'm going to the washroom," before leaving the table.

While I was washing my hands, Rebecca burst in. She leaned against the wall with her arms crossed against her chest. Contemptuously, she said, "Are you happy now that things between Ash and Jared have gotten to this state?"

In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 502

Gritting my teeth, I washed and dried my hands leisurely, intending to ignore Rebecca.

Rebecca barricaded the door by standing before it in her high heels, incensed. "What, are you playing the victim now? Do you know how much the three of them have gone through together just to have gotten to where they were? You ruined everything when you appeared. Scarlett, don't you realize what a jinx you are?"

"What's that got to do with you?" I shot back, trying to suppress my rage. "It's entirely up to the three of them if they disagree. Why are you in the picture? Or are you worried that you won't be able to reap benefits from them as easily as you did before?"

"That's total nonsense!" Rebecca shrieked. "You don't even know the depth of their feelings for each other. You're utterly cold-blooded, Scarlett. You have no idea at all."

"Yes, I have no idea!" I replied. Countless people had come and gone in my life, but I'd never once thought of asking anyone to stay. I was indeed unfamiliar with the feelings that Rebecca referred to.

I made another attempt to leave. Rebecca, however, was determined to stop me. Impatiently, I remarked, "Rebecca, the only reason why you're blaming me right now isn't that you care about their friendship. You're just upset that I appeared on the scene. You think it's because of me that they're colder to you than before, but it's entirely your own doing! You've shamelessly used them over and over again. You could have depended on Ashton's goodwill to tide you through, but you were just too greedy. His money wasn't enough for you; you had to have his love as well. You even dared to use Parker's last words to satisfy your own selfish desires! It's no wonder that they're disgusted and sick of you. You've already revealed your worst side to them."

Rebecca's face was white as a sheet. I took the opportunity to push her aside and walked out of the bathroom.

When she had recovered herself, she hastily lunged towards me. However, she lost her balance, tottering on her high heels.

Rebecca fell straight onto the bathroom tiles, landing on her behind. It was a most unflattering posture for her.

"Scarlett..." She howled after me in fury.

I shrugged helplessly. "That was all you. It had nothing to do with me."

It would have been in keeping with Rebecca's usual style if she acted pitifully or started crying. However, seeing as there was no one around to witness her suffering, it was rather pointless for her to carry on with her usual show.

I was thus surprised when she actually burst into tears. It quickly evolved into full-blown sobbing.

Between tremendous sobs, Rebecca heaved, "Scarlett, how could you say such wicked things? Parker was everything to me. When he asked Ashton to take care of me, Ash was the only emotional support I had. You snatched him away from me, and now..."

I didn't fully comprehend the situation until I caught sight of Jared striding towards us.

Looks like a leopard truly never changes its spots!

Jared never even glanced in Rebecca's direction as he entered the bathroom. I felt that my presence there was no longer necessary and walked back to our table.

The sound of Rebecca's sobs followed me down the corridor.

I hardly noticed Jared when he caught up with me, assuming it was just another patron in the restaurant.

Instead of going on ahead, however, he walked alongside me.

Instinctively, I turned to look at him. His face was expressionless, and he looked almost like his usual self.

After a while, Jared suddenly said, "You took care of Summer ever since she was young. I never once considered taking her away from you, but she's still a Crest, after all. No matter what kind of life she ultimately chooses, she still has to know that her father is still alive."

Dumbfounded, I stopped short in my tracks and looked at Jared speechlessly.

After a pause, I managed, "Before Macy left, she insisted that she'd never let Summer acknowledge you nor allow her to be known as a Crest. Jared, you have to understand that some things, once lost, can never be regained."

Jared looked at me icily. "What do you plan to do, then? Will she follow you for the rest of her life? You might have given her everything, but do you really know what she truly wants?"

"She's been with me since she was born. Why shouldn't she continue to stay with me? You might be her biological father, but have you ever cared for her? Have you ever seen her

stumble over her first words? Trip over her own feet when she was learning to walk? Were you ever there to comfort her in the middle of the night when she was bawling for her mother? Never. What right do you have to call yourself her father? Based on the sole contribution of your sperm?" I snapped back.

I was incredibly touchy about any matters pertaining to Summer.

Suppressing his rage, Jared growled, "I wasn't even aware that Macy was pregnant back then. If I knew, I definitely wouldn't have left her just like that to carry the child to term alone, much less leave her in your hands! All this was out of my control."

I snorted. "How could you not have known? If not for you, then how would Kristina have gotten the news? She provoked Macy when Macy was at her lowest, causing her to give birth prematurely and die from a hemorrhage. Jared, do you think that flimsy claim of yours sufficiently excuses you for all you've done?"

Jared looked rather dejected. Narrowing his eyes, he asked skeptically, "Did you say that Kristina caused Macy's death?"

In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 503

"Are you saying that you've never tried to find out what happened to Macy back then?" I asked. My heart ached for Macy. If Jared really cared about her, why didn't he even try?

The obvious answer was that he didn't care. Otherwise, Jared wouldn't have given up just like that. Not only had he never tried to look for Macy, he never even asked after her.

It made me even more fearful of handing Summer over to Jared.

He remained silent, biting his lip.

I'd calmed down. Looking at Jared's troubled face, I vowed, "No matter what the Crests have planned for Summer, I will never give her up to you."

I then stalked the rest of the way back to the table.

Ashton had been engaged in casual chit-chat with Joe. When he said me, he reached out in concern and asked, "What took you so long?"

"It's nothing. Have you finished eating already?" We'd all gathered here today under the pretext of having dinner, but nobody had taken more than a few bites.

Ashton continued looking at me. "You're not hungry?"

I shook my head vigorously. "Nope."

Upon hearing this, Ashton pushed back his chair and stood up. Politely, he said to Joe, "It's getting late. We'll get going then."

Obvious displeasure was written all over Joe's face. He demanded, "Didn't we agree to this get-together? Are you leaving before we've even gotten to say anything?"

"It's late!" Ashton repeated firmly, hauling me along with him. Jared was smoking near the door. We passed each other without another word.

My heart throbbed as we got into the car. "Ashton, do you think it's right for me to keep Summer with me?"

Ashton started the car. In a mellow voice, he asked, "Did Jared say anything to you?"

I shook my head. "I just feel that whatever I do for her won't be good enough, somehow."

I had often considered if I should tell Summer everything, all those times that Jared had visited her at the villa. But what would I tell an innocent child of four, five years old? What could she do with that information?

Perhaps everyone else was right. Summer would leave someday, eventually. But not now.

Ashton caressed my hand with his. His gentle gaze soothed me. "How about this? Let Summer and the Crests get to acknowledge each other, but she continues to stay with us. They can come over every once in a while to see her. Would you be able to accept that?"

I thought about it. For Summer, that would mean a bigger family and more love showered upon her. She had nothing to lose from this arrangement.

I stalled for a while before replying uncertainly, "Can that be arranged?"

Ashton took my hesitation for agreement. "Of course!" he agreed heartily.

Summer was already at the villa when we got back. When she saw Ashton and me enter, she came running and flew into his arms. At her age, she was already rather adept at turning on the charm.

“Mr. Fuller, I have something for you!” Summer announced, putting on an air of mystery.

Struggling to contain his laughter, Ashton asked, “What is it?”

She furtively fished out a sweet from her pocket, hiding it in the palm of her hand. It was all very obvious to us, but she was evidently trying her best.

Summer instructed, “Give me your hand!”

Ashton nodded and obediently did so. A sweet encased in a shiny wrapper dropped into his outstretched palm.

I laughed in spite of myself. Children often derived joy from the most curious things.

Ashton swept her up in his hands and carried her over to the sofa. Patiently, he asked, “Why did you suddenly want to give me a sweet?”

Summer thought about this for a while, then proclaimed, “This isn’t any old sweet! My friend Dottie from school said that her uncle gave it to her aunt when they got married. It’s a lucky sweet! If you eat it, you can marry Mommy. Then I’ll have a Daddy as well.”

I’d originally been heading towards the kitchen. My ears pricked up at her last sentence and halted immediately, turning to look at the two of them.

Their happiness made a lovely picture.

Ashton held the sweet tightly in his hand. He looked at Summer and me in turn, his gaze unfathomable.

Then he turned to Summer and said firmly, “OK!”

I refused to give it more thought. I walked into the kitchen, my emotions in tumult.

Four years ago, I had indeed signed the divorce agreement. However, I left the papers behind before leaving.

Ashton insisted that he'd never even signed them, but that didn't matter to me.

Wherever I went, wherever I turned, there he was. Nothing else mattered.

...

It was nighttime, and I'd gone to bed early. The shrill sound of my phone ringing, however, pierced through the fog of sleep. I awoke blearily to see that Ashton had already answered the call.

He was clutching some documents in his hand and seemed to have just emerged from the study.

When he saw that I was awake, he thrust the phone towards me, mouthing, "It's Hannah!"

I hesitated, glancing at the clock. It was already midnight. I took over the phone.

Before I could speak, Hannah was panting heavily over the phone. She gasped, "Scarlett, my stomach hurts like crazy! Can you come over? I think I'm going into labor."

Alarm bells went off in my head. I sprang up from the bed, nearly tumbling off it in my frenzy.

Alert, Ashton caught me in his arms before I fell. "Be careful!" he admonished.

In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 504

I nodded and took a deep breath. Having calmed down slightly, I asked Hannah, "Where are you now? Send me your address, and I'll come over right away."

"OK!"

After we'd ended the call, I found Ashton looking at me anxiously. "What's going on?"

"I think Hannah's going into labor. There's no one with her right now, so I'm going over," I said, already making a beeline to my wardrobe to change.

When I had finished, I saw Ashton waiting for me at the door with his car keys in hand.

I was startled but had no time to question him. We immediately got into the car and headed off towards the address Hannah had given.

On the way, I began dialing John. None of my calls were successful.

"Why isn't John picking up?" I fretted.

Ashton continued driving, his eyes fixed serenely on the road. "Don't get all flustered yet."

I knew that I had to compose myself but couldn't keep my hands from shaking. Hannah's baby was only seven or eight months old. How can she suddenly be going into labor? Something must have gone wrong.

It was precisely at this crucial moment that John had chosen to go missing.

I considered briefly and decided to give Louis a call. It was quiet on his end of the line. Louis' rich voice came through clearly. "Scarlett, what's up?"

"Uncle Louis, where's John? I think Hannah's going into labor now. Can you reach him?" I asked hurriedly.

Louis paused, then said, "I'll look into it. How's Hannah doing?"

I shook my head instinctively, then replied, "I'm still on my way over to her. I don't know yet."

"All right. Don't fret, my dear. Let me worry about getting in touch with John. Focus on getting Hannah to the hospital as soon as you can. Don't worry!" Louis said comfortingly.

I nodded. Ashton was speeding rather wildly down the roads. He wrinkled his brow as if he was pondering over something.

"What's wrong?" I prompted.

"It says here that Hannah's location is in the alley. My car won't be able to enter. I'll have to go down to take a look," he said, immediately parking the car. He swung his legs out and headed straight towards the alley.

When we finally found Hannah, she was lying in the yard with a puddle of blood forming beneath her. She looked rather dazed and on the verge of passing out.

When Hannah saw us, she heaved a sigh of relief. Then she fainted dead away without saying a word.

Upon our arrival at the hospital, Hannah was quickly wheeled into the ER. It was only then that I let out the breath I'd been holding ever since the call came.

I turned back to look at Ashton, only to see streaks of blood all over his body. His hands seemed dipped in red.

When he saw my look of horror, he glanced down at his dreadful state. He then commented ruefully, "I'm fine! I'll go back and take a shower soon."

My legs were trembling slightly from the shock, and I crumpled onto a chair along the hallway. I quickly clung to Ashton once I'd partially recovered my wits.

The terror from the last time I experienced a miscarriage washed over me like a flood, leaving me floundering.

Ashton embraced me, consoling, "Don't worry, nothing bad is going to happen."

After the fear had subsided, I remembered my original mission. I took out my phone and called John again. It rang for ages before someone picked up.

It was a woman's voice, however, that answered. "Hello, Mr. Stovall is currently in the shower. Please call him again later."

Yvonne? The voice sounded incredibly familiar.

"Get John on the line," I replied coolly.

There was silence on the other end for a while. "Are you Ms. Stovall?"

I was immensely annoyed, and my voice hardened. "Get John on the line," I repeated.

Yvonne seemed to have discerned my displeasure. She stuttered, "Ms. Stovall, Mr. Stovall's really in the shower right now. I'll be sure to get him to call you back. Is that OK?"

I refused to dignify her with a response. I flung the phone away from me without even hanging up.

The phone was rather hardy and survived that sudden bout of violence, clattering onto the floor with only a cracked screen.

Wordlessly, Ashton got up and retrieved the phone. He deftly extracted the memory card, then casually tossed the phone away.

Using his own phone, Ashton dialed Joseph. Joseph arrived in no time at all, bearing an entirely new phone.

I sat for a while longer, steadying my nerves.

Ashton handed the new phone to me, then gestured towards the door of the ER. "Are you tired?"

It was already one o'clock in the morning.

I shook my head resolutely. "I'm not tired."

After another few moments of silence, Ashton tugged at my sleeve and said, "Promise me that you won't let anyone get to you, OK?"

Don't I already know that? I shouldn't allow anyone to get to me, but...

"I can't help myself! No matter how awful Hannah is, John was still the last one who had her. The child is his! Even now, he's still messing around with another woman! I..."

I was mid-rant when Louis charged in. Seeing Ashton and I seated there with John nowhere in sight, he demanded, "Where's your brother?"

"He must be dead!" I said scornfully.

It was the first time I had ever been rude to Louis. When I realized what I'd just said, I immediately froze.

I looked up at Louis. He was gazing back at me with an unreadable expression on his face.

My immediately assumed that he was about to reprimand me.

However, he suddenly chortled. "My dear, what in the world are you saying?"

I...

I took a deep breath and explained, "I don't think John's going to make it."

Then I continued rather impulsively, saying, "Uncle Louis, Hannah's still a part of the Stovall family after all. John's utterly irresponsible, but if this child is born, what will everyone else think of the Stovall family?"

In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 505

Louis was smart enough to understand what I was trying to say.

He sighed. "I've thought about it, but Hannah comes from a complicated family. Her parents were drug dealers, and she's also an ex-convict. If she marries into our family, we'll have to announce her identity to the public. I'll lose my job and the Stovall family's reputation will be affected too."

Previously, Hannah told me a bit of her past, but she didn't go into the details. Indeed, compared to the Stovall family's future and Louis' career, it was best if Hannah didn't marry into the Stovall family.

John knew everything all along. Why did he sleep with her in the first place?

Louis was getting old, so after staying up the entire night, he felt exhausted.

He arranged for someone to wait outside the ER and went back home.

Ashton had to work, but he insisted on staying here with me. Hence, I had to leave for him to leave too.

Luckily, John showed up half an hour later with Yvonne behind him.

Even a fool could see they were acting oddly.

"How is she?" John came to me and asked. As his forehead gleamed with a thin layer of perspiration, it was evident he had rushed here the minute he received the news.

I tamped down my irritation and the urge to slap him, but I refused to talk to him. Hence, I just glared at him before leaving with Ashton.

Outside the hospital, I was still simmering in fury. Ashton offered, "Why don't you hit me to vent out your anger?"

I met his gaze as my anger faded away gradually. Reaching out, I smoothed his creased sleeve, which I was tugging on earlier.

"I'm alright now."

He chuckled lightly and brought me to his car. When he was buckling me up, he pressed a kiss on my forehead. "You were adorable back there."

Adorable?

I gaped, but nothing came out of my mouth. Is that correct?

As I had stayed up the whole night, I fell asleep on the way home.

The next day, I woke up in my bed.

Ashton was having breakfast in the dining room. Joseph was there with him. When the latter saw me coming down the stairs, he flashed me a smile and inclined his head as a greeting.

As Summer was nowhere to be seen, I froze in my tracks. "Is Summer still in bed?" She has to go to school soon! Don't tell me she's still sleeping?

"The driver sent her to school earlier," replied Joseph.

As I wondered why she left home this early, Ashton gave me a bowl of soup. "Follow me to work today."

I looked up in confusion. "I was planning to visit Hannah."

Even though Louis had arranged for someone to take care of her and John also showed up last night, I had to go visit her.

He placed the papers down and spoke softly, "You might not be able to go."

Puzzled, I met his calm gaze.

Joseph explained, "The hospital is crowded, so you might get hurt. You should stay with Mr. Fuller for the time being."

I frowned. "What happened?"

"It's nothing much."

As I was staring at him persistently, Ashton placed the papers down and returned my stare. "The weather forecast says it's going to snow in K City soon. Put on more clothes before heading out later."

I nodded. As he wasn't about to allay my doubts, I didn't press on.

I only found out what was happening when we arrived at the entrance of Fuller Corporation. The reporters had barricaded the entrance.

Joseph alighted from the vehicle to make way for us while Ashton took my hand. "Don't be afraid. I'll handle their questions, alright?" he spoke gently.

Although I wasn't entirely sure, I could guess what was going on. I nodded obediently.

After getting off the car, the reporters soon surrounded us. Luckily, the bodyguards were around to protect us.

They started hurling questions at Ashton, but the latter kept his mouth shut.

He pulled me into the company and headed to the conference room.

I was clueless at first, but the reporters' questions enlightened me.

The news of Fuller Corporation's president's ex-wife having an extra-marital affair was trending on social media. The blurry photos taken at the hotel were posted everywhere, too.

Even Nancy's name was mentioned.

Making use of a few blurry photos of me, the media compared me to Nancy's photoshopped photos. They also analyzed the conflict between Ashton and Marcus.

The public was interested in gossip. As a result, I became their target. Calling me a loose woman was no longer enough. They pinned Nancy's death on me and pitied both men. To them, I was toying with Ashton and Marcus' feelings.

The netizens expressed their heartfelt condolences to the deceased and showed their sympathy to both the men.

Meanwhile, I became the filthy and unfaithful b*tch who cheated on my husband.

When I saw how they labeled me as a b*tch, I couldn't stand it anymore and immediately closed the webpage. Pursing my lips, a hint of mirth flashed across my gaze.