

In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 1763

Chapter 1763 Set Up

"Is that so? Then let me ask you a question. Do you think Ashton has ever loved me?" I asked calmly.

"Of course." A hint of delight flashed across Nathaniel's eyes. "Unfortunately, it was ruined by me."

"Oh, really? Then he should show you his gratitude. Otherwise, he would need to give up his life and pride because of love and live in agony. Ashton Fuller, you're so lucky." Both Ashton and Emery were confused and could not comprehend what I was doing.

Luckily, Nathaniel took the bait. "What are you trying to say?"

I quickly turned around and fixated my gaze on him. "It's very simple. You don't even dare to love someone. How can you say that you're better than him?"

Listening to that, Nathaniel lowered his head, seemingly mulling over my words.

Afraid that he would see through my trick, I immediately continued and interrupted his thoughts, "Didn't you say that you can't understand my foolish behavior of sacrificing everything for love? Perhaps you'll only understand how difficult it is to control your emotions when you really fall in love with someone. Even so, Ashton managed to break free from it. How can I not love such a man? If you don't have confidence in yourself, then you don't have to try. Not everyone can get out of it without getting hurt. Admitting that you're inferior to others is better than falling for someone, right?"

Never had I imagined that I was so good at bluffing.

Just as I was about to breathe a sigh of relief, Nathaniel stood up abruptly and left the private room without saying a word. It happened in a split second, and Nora could not react immediately. She only snapped back to reality and chased after him after a moment.

As a result, my heart missed a beat, and I started to grow anxious. I was not sure whether the words I had said earlier could persuade him. If he found out that I was setting him up and decided to deal with us in a fit of anger, then we would be doomed.

On the contrary, if he accepted the challenge, then we would be one step away from victory.

Once he fell in love with someone, she would become his weak spot, and when he had a weak spot, he would no longer be indestructible.

As the sound of Nora's heels gradually faded away, I slowly calmed down. Losing strength, I propped myself up with my hands on the table to support my body.

"You're always so reckless."

Hearing Ashton's voice, I remembered that he was still there. I raised my head and looked at him. "I've always been like this. You only realize that now?"

His black eyes glittered under the light. For some reason, I felt that it was because of me. However, in the next second, he ignored my words and walked away.

My gaze was fixated on him until his tall figure disappeared from my sight. Feeling discouraged, I fell back into the chair.

While sighing, I lifted my hand to press my temple.

"What a bluff. Why didn't I realize that you have such an ability before?" Emery was greatly shocked by the scene earlier.

"Nathaniel forced it out of me." I waved my hand and continued weakly, "I'm not sure if I can succeed or not. We'd better not count the chickens before they hatch. Nathaniel is always acting out of the norm."

"I think you've been quite unpredictable as well recently. The two of you are a good match," Emery joked.

"Ew!" I was jolted awake by her words. "What nonsense are you saying? I'm doing all this to survive. Don't curse me."

"What's the matter? If Nathaniel does use you as his test subject, you can take this opportunity to get your revenge."

I shook my head vigorously. "The situation is already complicated enough. Nathaniel is such a scary man. I don't think I can handle him. Besides, there are so many women in this world. Why would he choose a woman who is divorced and has given birth?"

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Chapter 1764 Engrossed In Acting

"Well, that does make sense." Emery quirked her eyebrows and did not continue the topic. She lowered her head and started to eat.

I looked at her and remembered about Hunter, so I queried, "What about you and Xavier's father?"

“What about us?” Emery did not even lift her head and was all focused on eating.

If she was being so open about it, it proved that there was nothing between them. If something was up, just like Alexander, she would have acted awkwardly.

Thinking of that, I did not pursue the matter any further. “Oh, it’s nothing. I happened to meet him earlier today.”

Emery was unbothered. She placed a piece of abalone on my plate and commented, “I’ve hired a new chef, and he’s really good at cooking seafood. Hurry up and try it...”

When I left The Jade, my phone rang. It was a message from John: How is it? Was it successful?

It seemed that it was the same for everyone. No one knew what Nathaniel would do and could only wait for a relatively safe time to ask about the result.

Even though I was not utterly confident, my intuition told me that it was not much of a problem. Thus, I replied jokingly: Have confidence in your acting skills.

Soon, I received a text from him: Then it’s done.

After a while, he sent me another message: You can’t have possibly used the excuse of acting to voice out your true feelings, right? When you said that you would choose Ashton over me, I felt so upset.

And it seemed that being too engrossed in acting was not a good thing either. I smiled while typing on the phone: I cried hard after you left. Do you feel better now?

John: Yeah. Now, we only have to wait and see what will happen tomorrow.

After that, he stopped replying to me.

Hence, I placed my phone aside and entered the car.

The night was still early, and the city was lively and bustling. Everything outside the car window was like a picture scroll, exiting my line of sight at a constant speed. None of those excitements had anything to do with me.

If Ashton or any of our children was sitting next to me at that time, I would probably have had a different feeling.

“Mommy...”

As soon as I entered the house, Audrey ran into my arms while crying.

Later on, I found out that she had refused to eat her dinner unless she saw me. But the food Lindsey cooked was too mouth-watering. The more she waited, the hungrier she became.

"All right. All right. It's all my fault. Don't cry anymore. We'll have dinner together now, okay?"

"Okay..." Audrey puffed her cheeks and pursed her lips. Just one glance at her melted my heart instantly.

Feeling guilty and distressed, I hurriedly carried her up and walked toward the dining room. "Mrs. Kingsley, please heat up the food. Eating cold food isn't good for the children."

"I just heated the food. It's the perfect timing to eat them now," responded Lindsey.

Hearing that, I sat down and accompanied the children as they had their dinner.

"Mommy, why aren't you eating? All these dishes are delicious," mumbled Audrey while chewing the food in her mouth.

On the contrary, Gregory and Shaun were eating elegantly. I did not need to worry about them at all. All of a sudden, warmth filled my heart, and I smiled. "I'm not hungry. You should eat more so that you can grow taller."

"Okay!" Audrey nodded and swallowed all the food in her mouth. Then, she stopped eating and looked at me solemnly. "Mommy, is Ashy not coming back anymore?"

"Huh?" For a moment, I forgot that it was Ashton's nickname. I frowned when I came around. "Audrey, you can't call Daddy that."

I then turned to Gregory and reprimanded, "Gregory, were you the one who taught her that?"

"No!" Audrey did not give Gregory a chance to speak. "I saw it in Greg's book. Daddy is a bad guy! He hasn't come home for such a long time, and because of that, Mommy doesn't like to stay at home. I don't like him anymore!"

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Chapter 1765 Remarry

I wondered if Ashton would continue his pretense if he found out that his beloved daughter was so discontented with him.

However, I could not explain the situation to the kids, so I could only educate them indirectly. Putting down the spoon, I looked at her seriously and said, "Audrey, did Uncle John tell you that there are many children in this world who don't have enough food to eat? In order to support them, their parents have to leave their hometown and work at a place far away from home. For a year or maybe many years, those children won't be able to see their parents."

Holding her spoon, Audrey blinked and nodded. "Yes, Aunt Emma showed me their photos before. She also told me that those children's parents are dead. If Uncle John donates money to them, they will have food to eat, and Mommy will also come back to me. Aunt Emma wasn't lying."

For a brief moment, I was stunned, not knowing that John had done all that to look for me.

Someone fearless like him had actually believed that life would reward him for his good deeds.

Not hearing any news from me must have left him in despair, but fortunately, fate had reunited us.

Taking a deep breath, I tried to get hold of my emotions before continuing, "Yes. Without money and a home, you'll end up like those children. They might not be able to eat all the food that you're eating now in their whole life. Because of Daddy's hard work, you can live in a cozy house and eat delicious meals every day. Do you think it's right for you to say he's a bad guy?"

"No, but..." Audrey pursed her lips, and her voice trailed off.

"I know what you mean. Daddy has indeed neglected us during this time, but we're the closest people to him. Shouldn't we be more considerate of him?" I stretched out my hand and caressed her hair. "Do you know that he always says that you're his beloved daughter?"

I did not know which sentence had moved her. In an instant, she was on the verge of tears again. "I'm sorry, Mommy. I was wrong."

She felt like crying, but knowing that she was at fault, she was too embarrassed to cry out loud, so she pressed her lips together tightly and stared at me.

Looking at her forlorn expression, I quickly comforted her while fondling her hair, "It's okay. Since you've admitted to your mistakes, I'm sure Daddy won't blame you."

Soon, Audrey lifted her hand to wipe away the tears and continued to eat her dinner obediently.

Seeing that, I breathed a sigh of relief and prayed for Ashton in my heart. This is all I can do for you. If you don't come back and apologize to your precious daughter soon, you'd better be prepared to face her wrath.

Since Ashton was not around, Audrey kept clung to me and wanted to sleep with me.

She explained that it was too scary for her not to see Ashton or me the moment she woke up. Thus, she wanted to see me as soon as she opened her eyes. That way, she would not cry when she woke up and found that Ashton was not by her side.

After she fell asleep, I sent Ashton a text after much consideration: Are you abandoning your daughter as well? If you don't come back anytime soon, the kids might disown you!

Worried that his phone had been tampered with, I did not dare to write anything ambiguous in my text, nor did I expect him to reply.

Nevertheless, it was the first time I had contacted him after such a long time, so I could not help but feel nervous.

Unexpectedly, I received his reply in a short time: No matter what, I'm still their biological father.

Even though he sounded domineering, it was reassuring. I stared at the phone screen for a while before replying to him: Don't be so confident. I might divorce you and remarry another man. At that time, your children will take another man's last name!

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Chapter 1766 That Would Be Great

I thought Ashton would reply immediately, but he did not.

It took him five minutes to reply: That would be great.

What's great? Remarry?

I wondered if he really meant it or if there was a hidden meaning behind those words of his.

All of a sudden, my heart missed a beat, and I felt restless. Picking up my phone, I went to the balcony.

After waiting for a while, there was still no reply from him. Soon, I lost my patience and typed on my phone again: What do you mean?

For the whole night, I felt uneasy. Worried that I might miss his reply, I did not dare to sleep soundly.

However, there was no reply from him after that.

The next morning, I heard my phone ringing in a daze and jolted out of bed reflexively. It turned out to be my alarm. I had promised Audrey to make breakfast for her in the morning last night.

Feeling disappointed, I went to the bathroom and washed myself up.

Unexpectedly, after I sent the kids to school, Nathaniel's car stopped in front of me.

However, it was Nora who came down from the car.

Wearing a grimace, she rushed over and slapped me in the face.

"Why are you always going against me?"

Because of the stinging sensation on my face, I finally regained my senses.

Nevertheless, the only thing I cared about now was Nathaniel's movement. Unwilling to waste time on her, I looked at her calmly and questioned impatiently, "Do you know that you look like a shrew now?"

Nora had been a sophisticated and sensible woman. No one would have ever related her to the word shrew, but her act of hitting someone without any reason now was simply barbaric.

"It's all because of you! Even if we have a different stance right now, I've never hurt you. I only wanted to stay by Nathaniel's side and get back my son. You're a mother as well, so you should understand my feelings. But why do you have to destroy all my plans?"

Confused, I asked, "When did I ruin your plans?"

"You exposed my purpose of buttering him up in front of him!"

My mind went blank for a moment. After a while, I realized that she was angry because of what had happened last night. They probably had a conflict after getting home.

My original intention was to stimulate Nathaniel. I did not know that I would hurt her by mistake. "I'm sorry. I didn't have time to think about the situation at that time. If I've caused you harm, I'll try my best to make it up to you."

"Make it up to me? Nathaniel has chased me away, and I can no longer use his resources to find my son. What can you do to make it up to me?"

It seemed that Nathaniel was indeed affected by what I had said.

Since it all started because of me, I could understand why she was so furious. Pondering over the situation, I suggested, "Even if Nathaniel wants to look for someone, he will need help from Holden, and Holden owes me a favor. I can ask him to look for your son. As long as your son is still alive, he'll be able to find him."

"One hundred percent?" Nora queried doubtfully.

In response, I shook my head. "Even saints make mistakes. There's no guarantee that he'll definitely find your son."

"You don't even know if Holden can find my son, but you want me not to blame you for messing with my life? After being with Ashton for such a long time, your ability to set people up has improved, huh?" Nora remarked sarcastically.

Both of us had taken different paths in life. It would be a waste of time to continue arguing with her. "Apart from this, do you have a better choice? Kill me to vent your anger? Do you think Ashton and the Stovall family will let you off easily? Nora, let us both take a step back and let go of each other. In the future, you'll know that it's a good thing that you've left Nathaniel."

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Chapter 1767 Source Of Entertainment

I could still see anger in Nora's eyes. She stayed silent for several seconds, then lowered her head and stared at the phone in my hand. "Call Holden now. I need to see it with my own eyes," she said in a commanding tone.

I forced a smile. Her worry was totally unnecessary. It was just a phone call. I would not go back on my words.

Immediately, I called Holden to put her mind at rest. After explaining the matter, I gave them each other's contact numbers.

Nora looked at Holden's name on her WhatsApp contact list and her expression softened. However, it was only for a split second as she soon returned to her usual cold demeanor. Casting a quick look at me, she put away her phone, turned around, and got into the car. "This isn't the end."

With that, she closed the car door with a bang and sped off.

Perhaps it was because I had the same experience of losing a child. Her neurotic behavior made me feel for her.

Only the people who had experienced it would know how torturing it was to search for a lost child. In the first half of her journey, she had been forced to work together with Nathaniel. I hoped that she would meet a good person for the remaining journey.

After Nora left, I kept waiting for Nathaniel to appear, but one day had passed, and I heard nothing from him.

The only thing that I could do was to comfort myself that it was normal. Nathaniel was always unpredictable and acting out of the norm.

Despite that, when the phone rang that night, I still sprung forward to answer it. When I saw that it was John, I lost my balance and slumped on the couch.

Looking down, I saw that my ankle was swollen. I rubbed it for a while, hoping to alleviate the pain before answering the call. "Hello?"

"What took you so long?" John sounded a little anxious.

Afraid that he would be worried, I took in a deep breath and replied calmly, "The phone is in the room. I just came up."

Fortunately, he did not grow suspicious as he changed the topic naturally. "Nathaniel didn't leave his villa for the whole day."

"Is that so?" I sat up from the couch. "This is out of my expectation."

"This man tends to waste time on an insoluble or insignificant problem once he starts to brood over it. It's not necessarily a good thing."

Thinking of Ashton's strange behavior last night, I hurriedly interjected, "You sent someone to follow Ashton, right? Did anything happen to him today?"

"My dear sister, don't you know that he's the safest person in the world right now? As long as you're still in love with Ashton, Nathaniel will keep him alive. Why do you need to worry about him?" uttered John jealously. He was probably angry at Ashton again.

Left with no choice, I could only tell him what had happened last night. "He didn't reply to me after that. How can I not worry about him?"

"You asked for it. You should know Ashton better than anyone. It's not even the first time he has done something like this. There's no need to feel nervous."

Roasting Ashton was probably one of John's greatest sources of entertainment, but I was not in the mood to play along with him. "John!"

"Fine. There's nothing special. Except for hanging out with Lucas and the gang, he only went to the Notary Office. Then, he stayed at Summer's club and never left."

“Why did he go to the Notary Office?”

“I don’t know. Maybe he went there to deal with business matters. What else can he do there?”

That was true. No matter what, Ashton was still the legal person of the company. It was not weird for him to be there in person when dealing with company matters.

After that, John brought up some other news that he had found out before hanging up.

Audrey had already fallen asleep in the bedroom. After spending the whole day waiting for nothing, I felt frustrated, so I poured a glass of red wine and leaned against the couch.

Eventually, I fell asleep.

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Chapter 1768 Accept Your Challenge

When I opened my eyes again, I saw a blurry figure sitting in front of me. Subconsciously, I thought that it was Ashton and murmured, “You’re back...”

Gradually, my vision became clearer, and I noticed that the person in front of me was not Ashton but Nathaniel.

The moment I met his eyes, I instinctively flinched. Is this a dream or reality?

Nathaniel raised the corners of his lips and smiled. “The fearless Scarlett is actually afraid of seeing me?”

The disgust I felt from listening to his voice instantly pulled me back to reality. Looking at him impassively, I gritted my teeth and said, “You’re wrong. No one wants to get near to filthy things. I’m different from you. I can distinguish right from wrong, and I’ve done nothing illegal. But you, on the other hand, have done all sorts of evil deeds. I bet you can’t even sleep soundly at night because you’ll be worried that the police might appear at your door and arrest you.”

“You’re wrong again.” He removed the scarf around his neck. “I’ve never taken those stupid cops seriously. As long as I want, I can get myself out of this situation at any time and live a normal life.”

“That’s just what you think. You won’t get away with this. Justice always prevails!”

He laughed and turned around to look at me contemptuously. "I've never seen you argued so strongly in court when you were a lawyer. What's the matter now? Do you like to argue with me whenever you see me?"

The look in his eyes showed me that he was not afraid of my threats.

Even after hearing what he said, I showed no hint of fear. "Maybe it's because both lawyers and police are full of sense of justice. Whenever we see anything that's against the law, we can't help but exercise our duty."

Surprisingly, Nathaniel only nodded and did not refute.

I stared at him vigilantly, only to see him getting up and taking a wine glass from the bar. Subsequently, he sat back on the couch, picked up the bottle of red wine I had opened earlier, and poured himself a glass. Lifting his head, he finished the wine in one shot.

I clenched my fists anxiously and sat up, my heart hammering in my chest.

Audrey was inside my bedroom while Gregory and Shaun were in another room. If Nathaniel was going to harm us, I could only protect Audrey. Both Gregory and Shaun were smart. Hopefully, they could read the situation and protect themselves by hiding away from Nathaniel.

"I accept your challenge," Nathaniel piped up.

As expected, even saints could make mistakes. No matter how smart he was, he still fell into my trap.

However, he shattered my wishful thinking in the next second by saying, "Do you think that I don't know what you're thinking? You want me to fall in love with someone and take control of her so that you can use her to negotiate with me. Isn't that right?"

He was right, but what could I possibly say? There was no way that I would compliment him for being smart.

Since he already knew that I was plotting against him, I wondered what he would do next.

Although I was looking at him while keeping my composure, I was actually thinking that as long as he could let the children go, I would not mind kneeling and begging for mercy.

While I was deep in thought, I heard him saying in a low voice, "But even so, you will not succeed. I'll prove to you that even if I fall in love with someone and have a weak spot, you're still no match for me."

At that, he rubbed the wine glass with his fingers. Seeing that I did not respond after a long time, he turned around and asked, "Why are you silent?"

“What do you want me to say?” I secretly gulped and maintained a poker face. “What you said is beyond my understanding. I’m sorry, but I’m not as smart as you. I’m afraid that I can’t communicate with you.”

“I know that you’re provoking me to attract my attention, but I must remind you that I’m not a good-tempered person. You’d better restrain yourself. Otherwise, you may not have the chance to live until the day you successfully scheme against me.” Nathaniel’s expression darkened. He was exuding an intimidating aura.

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Chapter 1769 Make Me Fall In Love With You

I stopped feeling afraid the moment I did not feel any murderous intention from Nathaniel. Nevertheless, I still restrained myself and did not argue further with him.

Then, he turned his face away, took out two stamps from his pocket, and threw them on the table.

One of them rolled on the table and stopped in front of me. At a glance, I saw that it was Fuller Corporation’s corporate seal.

“What do you mean?” I questioned.

“I’ve sent some of the documents to your email. From today onward, Ashton Fuller and Fuller Corporation have nothing to do with you anymore.”

Subsequently, he looked at me and smirked. I saw the hint of mischief in his eyes when he said, “And what you have to do is make me fall in love with you.”

I held my breath, and my mind went blank. Emery was right. I had gotten myself into big trouble.

Setting aside whether I could handle a man like him, I was a divorced woman with three children. Not only was I not young anymore, but I was still in love with my ex-husband. How could someone like me possibly make a man who was not interested in love fall for me?

Fate had to be toying with me. How could this happen to me?

Nathaniel observed my reaction and incited, “You can’t do it? It seems like the love that you worship like a god isn’t that miraculous. I’m here in front of you, not fighting back nor resisting, but you can’t make me fall in love with you.”

With that condescending look, he sounded as if he had secured the victory and was waiting for me to admit defeat.

I remained silent because I was well aware that it was impossible to hold sway over another person's feelings. I could not fight a losing battle.

Mustering up my courage, I tried to bargain with him. "Can't you change your target to someone else?"

"No way."

"Then there's no need to continue this talk. You should leave now."

"Don't try my patience," he warned.

Closing my eyes, I leaned forward and said, "Since I'm going to die anyway, why don't you kill me here and now?"

Silence blanketed the entire house. For a long time, there was no reaction from him at all.

I opened my eyes slowly, only to find that Nathaniel had been looking at me for the whole time. We were very close to each other, but I did not feel any hostility from him.

"Since it's a comparison, then I must fall in love with the same woman as Ashton. Moreover, you're the only woman who has surprised me over and over again. This is your only chance to defeat me. Do you really want to give up?"

He was right. It was my only chance.

At the same time, it also meant that he had already decided to destroy us. If I did not agree to his plan, then all of us would have to suffer destructive damage from him.

"Okay, I agree." It would not hurt to give it a try. Sooner or later, Ashton would be able to find the evidence of his crime. And before that, I would have to deal with him.

Besides, a person's feelings are not inflexible. Maybe I could use this opportunity to change him.

"Good." Nathaniel crossed his legs and smiled with satisfaction. He still had not realized the seriousness of the matter.

"Then what are we waiting for? Let's start now," I said while loosening my muscles.

He spread his arms wide and raised his eyebrows frivolously, telling me to do anything I want.

“Okay. Since you want to compete with Ashton, I’ll teach you how to love me like him. Can you cooperate with me?”

“It depends,” he said.

I gave him a sideways glance. “You were the one who talked about fairness, but if you can’t do it, why bother?”

In response, Nathaniel sighed and gave in. “Fine. I’ll do as you say.”

“Then now I need you to do something for me.”

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Chapter 1770 Deal

“Hmm?”

“Please leave my house right away.” Emery was right. I did not need to be so careful after taking control of the situation. “I don’t want to see you anymore, and I need to rest. If you stay, you’ll only make me hate you more. It’ll affect me from doing my best.”

Nathaniel shrugged. “That’s reasonable.”

With that said, he stood up and went out.

“Wait!” I stopped him before my eyes drifted toward the scarf on the couch. “Your scarf.”

Nathaniel turned around to look at it. The first look that flashed past his eyes was a nonchalant one, but a beat later, he took the scarf and swiftly made himself scarce.

I kept staring at the door until I heard the sounds of a car starting up downstairs. After making sure that he was gone, my heartbeat slowed down a little, and I let out a deep sigh of relief. In the next second, I fell back onto the couch and stared at the ceiling.

Even now, I could not believe that I had just ordered Nathaniel.

Patting my chest to calm myself further, I then recomposed myself to scan my surroundings. Only when I saw the stamp on the table did I recall that Nathaniel had mentioned Ashton earlier.

Almost immediately, I jerked upright and grabbed the stamp. Then, I studied it and realized it was the real thing.

Nathaniel said that the email was already sent to me...

With that thought in mind, I hastily turned on the computer.

Upon logging into my email, I saw the signed digitalized copy of Ashton's divorce agreement, as well as the transfer agreement of all his assets.

Like Nathaniel had said, Ashton was going to leave without taking a single cent.

What is Ashton planning to do? Has he struck a deal with Nathaniel? No, I can't feel at ease at all. I have to find out more.

Just as I keyed in the number, I realized that it was too risky to make a call. Thus, I decided to test the waters with a WhatsApp message.

We've been together for so long. Shouldn't we meet up and have a talk even if you want to split up?

Right as I finished editing the message, I sent it. However, in the next second, a bright red exclamation mark popped up on the screen, along with a line of words.

System: You are unable to send messages to this user.

Did Ashton block me? I wondered.

I was met with the same results when I tried to call him—the number couldn't be reached.

At that, I could no longer keep my cool, and I instantly called Nathaniel.

Unlike Ashton, Nathaniel answered the call in seconds. "Don't tell me that you've fallen for me and can't stay even a second away from me."

That's disgusting. Cheesy much.

However, I was not in the mood to joke with him. "What have you done to Ashton?"

"Don't you think that it's inappropriate to talk about another man to the man you're about to start a relationship with?"

"Cut the crap. You know that I haven't let go of him yet. You're the one who chose me. I'm not the one who should be trying hard to make me forget him. If you want more brownie points from me, hurry and give me my answer."

"Sure, but you'll have to change that temper of yours. I really don't like the way you're talking to me now." The connection of the call was rather poor, so Nathaniel's voice sounded robotic. That was also why I could not decipher what he was truly feeling at that moment.

Nevertheless, nothing was more important than Ashton's safety, so I swiftly recollected myself and softly pleaded, "All right, my bad. I shouldn't have been that rash. My apologies. Perhaps you haven't understood what's going on. What I mean is that, while I teach you how to love a person, I need Ashton to be safe. That way, I'll be able to focus on my job and give you what you want."

Fortunately, Nathaniel was convinced. "Good, you're reasonable. I've forgiven you. Don't worry. I didn't do anything to him. However, I want you both to cut ties properly, so I've made a deal with him and gave him what he wanted. That's all."

"What did you give him?" I asked.

"Something good enough that he would exchange you for it."

With that, the line went dead.