

When There Is Nothing Left But Love Chapter 733-737

Chapter 733

To my surprise, she blushed. "Don't phrase it that way. I was only going to spend the night chatting with him."

She felt a little embarrassed and tried to explain further. "I actually wanted to keep you company tonight. Alas, I am caught between love and friendship! What a difficult decision that is!" she exclaimed.

"I am used to sleeping alone, so you don't have to bother about me," I stated as I crawled into the tent and started laying out my sleeping bag.

"Really? You can't get mad at me if you get spooked in the middle of the night, and I don't come running back to you, okay?" she muttered shyly.

"Don't worry, my dear Nora. I won't"

She grinned sheepishly, every inch a besotted young girl. "Young lady, get a hold on that dirty little mind of yours and stop drooling. Have some dignity." I cupped my forehead and jested at her.

She gave me a sly smile and whispered, "I can't help it. That man is too seductive. I can't control myself anymore!"

I was left speechless.

Rachel came by with some snacks and invited, "We brought some snacks. Would you like to join us?"

Nora folded her arms defensively and rebuffed her. "No thanks. We brought snacks as well. We don't need yours."

Oh, my! How childish can she get?

Ashton walked over and took a glance around. When he saw all the tents were up, he proposed, "Let's have supper together. If we are lucky, we may get to see shooting stars tonight."

"Oh yes! We have a good view of the starry sky here," Laurel concurred. "We can stargaze while we eat. We brought our grills, so let's enjoy a barbeque under the stars! That would be so wonderful!"

"Set! Let's get moving." Nora was all for it.

In the end, the barbeque planned for the next day was brought forward and everyone started chipping in with the preparation. The guys began to set up the grills while the ladies started preparing the food.

Nora brought over a bag of vegetables and potatoes. We started cutting and skewering them.

Suddenly, Nora leaned closed and asked, "Scarlett, what do you think is the difference between a vixen and a siren?" She had a shifty look in her eyes.

I shook my head, clueless. "I am not sure. Seems to be the same to me."

She sniggered and explained, "Not the same. They are all bitches in disguise, but a vixen is seductive, feisty, and out to get you."

"What would a siren be then?"

She deliberated for a moment, then declared, "A siren is alluring. Before you can suspect anything, you have already fallen into her trap."

"So, is there a difference between the two? Sound like they are both flirts, right?" Her attempt to explain confused me further.

She paused to reorganize her thoughts and then pointed in Rachel's direction. "Try analyzing based on my earlier definition. What do you think Rachel is, a vixen or a siren?"

I was lost. All I saw was Rachel squatting next to Ashton, and they were helping to start the fire. Nothing seemed to be out of place.

"If I really have to match her to one, then vixen?" I hesitantly made a wild guess.

"Tsk. Now look over to Tessa and observe. What is she?"

Tessa was sorting out the ingredients, a short distance from Ashton. Her sight was fixed on Ashton and Rachel.

Watching Tessa made me realize she seemed to have been staying away from me the whole evening.

Usually, she would be hovering around me, directing sarcastic remarks at me. This evening, she was hanging around Ashton and Rachel. If Tessa's looks could kill, Rachel would have been dead many times over by now.

I reckoned she has redirected her anger to Rachel.

"Honestly, I can't differentiate. Based on your explanation, a siren and a vixen are the same." I gave up trying to figure out her little puzzle.

Nora wagged her finger and shook her head at the same time to emphasize her point. "You have to be more observant and discerning. Look at Rachel. She has not left Ashton's side since we arrived. No

matter what Ashton does, she will be near him and pretending to help those around them. Next, watch her interaction with Tabitha and Laurel. They barely know one another, but Rachel is already acting pally with them, even feeding them fruit.”

“Now look, she is walking over to Tabitha’s fiancé with a plate of fruit,” Nora proudly pointed out.

“Are you reading too much into it? Everyone’s busy, so she brought them the fruit out of goodwill. Looks normal to me.” I honestly could not figure out what Rachel had done wrong.

“Are you dumb? There is nothing wrong with offering fruit. The problem lies with the timing! Why did she choose to bring the fruit to Tabitha’s fiancé at this exact moment? She could have brought it to them earlier,” she scoffed.

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I was dumbstruck. “Are there such unspoken rules?”

She pouted before going on, “Tabitha and her fiancé were chatting and having a sweet couple time moments earlier. Tell me, what is her fiancé doing now?”

I turned to look. “He is cleaning the fishes.” I could not figure out what she was getting at.

She squinted her eyes and asked, “Would that be dirty and smelly?”

I nodded, and she gave me a despised look before elaborating, “She did not bring the fruit when he and Tabitha were free. She chose to go over at this particular moment when Tabitha had gone away to wash the vegetables and when his hands are dirty and smelly. Don’t you think it is intentional?”

“It could be just a coincidence.” My eyes could not help following Rachel’s move, waiting to see what unfolds next.

Rachel walked over with a plate of cut fruit and smilingly placed it in front of Tabitha’s fiancé. “You have worked hard. Why don’t you take some fruit first?”

PlayvolumeAd

No one can be mean to a pretty lady smiling sweetly at you. He may not be interested in her, but it would have been rude for him to reject her offer outright. Thus, he politely declined by saying, “Thank you, but I am afraid it is not a convenient time for me to eat now.”

“No problem. Here you go.” Rachel casually picked up a piece of fruit with the toothpick and placed it next to his mouth. He had no choice but to open his mouth and ate the fruit. He was blushing when he mumbled a thank you with his mouth full.

Rachel smiled sweetly and cooed, “Loosen up. Tabitha and I are friends, so we are friends as well. This is just a small gesture, so you don’t have to thank me.”

She turned around and fed Tabitha a piece of fruit as well, then head back to Ashton.

Nora nudged me with her elbow and said, “Did you see that? She teased the man right in front of his girlfriend, and she made it look so innocent. That is a siren. Whatever she does, no one will associate it with bad intentions. Now, watch Tabitha’s fiancé.”

I followed her gaze. He was blushing and started stealing glances at Rachel.

I pursed my lips and frowned, “Why did she do that?”

“For fun. She is trying to project an image of being kind and innocent. The people around her would feel she deserves to be pampered and will subconsciously indulge her. Look at how she is always sticking to Ashton. People who don’t know any better would think they are a couple and sing praises about them.”

Nora gave a wry look and continued her analysis. “When you were at the hotel earlier today, I am sure grandpa thought Ashton and she are husband and wife. She is an expert in using small gestures to mislead people. The undiscerning would easily fall for her tricks.”

I had to agree with Nora’s analysis. Indeed, I had thought Ashton was to be blamed for Mr. Oberick mistaking Rachel as his wife. In actual fact, Rachel was the one who projected that image by fussing over the old man as if she was Ashton’s better half. Since Ashton kept mum about it, everyone just assumed she is Mrs. Fulller.

“So she is the siren?” Suddenly, I saw Nora’s point.

Nora snapped her fingers and praised, “Bingo, smart lass. It is very easy to identify a siren. All you need to do is watch more soap operas and you’ll be an expert in no time.”

I was not interested in soap operas so I was clueless. I paused, then questioned, “What about the vixen?”

She raised an eyebrow and commented, “Look at Tessa. Since we got acquainted with her, what left the deepest impression on you about her?”

“The tales she told Ashton!” I blurted out without hesitation. I couldn’t forget how she cooked up a totally alien version of what happened to us in Venria!

If we did not overhear their conversation, Ashton would have likely been misled by her.

Nora signaled in Ashton’s direction and exhorted, “Look, she is throwing herself at your man. Aren’t you going to check it out?”

I shook my head and said, "I had made my stand clear with Ashton. What goes on between the two of them has nothing to do with me. How can I, as the one who pushed him away, stop him from seeing other women. If I do that, I am no better than a siren or a vixen."

Nora rolled her eyes at me and condemned, "Now I realize Rachel is the siren, Tessa is the vixen and you are the moron. Make that a hopeless moron."

I knew she was anxious for me, so I kept my peace. Noticing she was keeping her eyes on Rachel, I reminded her, "Focus on cutting the vegetable, lest you cut your fingers."

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She squinted and then frowned, "Wait! The bracelet on Rachel's wrist looks familiar. I must have seen it somewhere before."

I turned to look. The bracelet on her slim wrist was the gift from Mr. Oberick.

Before I could say anything, Nora dropped her chores on hand and started walking towards Rachel. Unexpectedly, she turned back and picked up the knife. "I can overlook anything else, but how could she shamelessly con him of my grandma's bracelet?" she muttered under her breath.

I was shocked when I saw her with the knife. I quickly went up and pulled her aside. "Calm down! Your grandpa gifted this to Ashton's wife. Since Ashton gave it to her, you should not fault her for it," I explained.

She pushed me aside and fumed, "My grandpa may be senile, but I am not. First of all, Ashton will never be her man. It is okay for that bracelet to go to Ashton's wife but not her. That would be an insult to my grandma. Secondly, my grandpa meant that as a gift for Ashton's wife, meaning you. She is a fake and that means she misled my grandpa. I cannot forgive her for that."

She angrily stormed up to Ashton and Rachel and taunted her. "Ms. Zimmer, that bracelet looks good, right?"

Rachel was alarmed when she saw the knife in Nora's hand. She stumbled backward and nearly dropped the plate of fruit in her hand.

"Ms. Oberick, what are you doing?" Her face regained some color as she stood close to Ashton, feeling more secured.

"Give it back to me!" she demanded, barely hiding her anger.

"What do you want?" Rachel was puzzled. She had no idea what Nora was referring to.

"The bracelet!" Nora hollered. "Do you think any Tom, Dick and Harry can take my grandma's bracelet? How shameless can you be? The old man was confused and you took the opportunity to con him of that bracelet? Ms. Zimmer, show some grace."

The commotion attracted the rest, and Tabitha came running over. "What's wrong?" she probed.

"Why are you holding a knife? That is dangerous. Chill and talk calmly!" Laurel tried to remove the knife from Nora, but she managed to jerk away.

Nora glared around and snapped, "Go back to what you were doing. This is between her and me. Stay out of it."

No one knew what was happening. They could only look on, worried.

Rachel regained her composure. She knew that with so many people around, Nora would not be able to hurt her.

“Ms. Nora Oberick, is there a reason for you to kick up such a big fuss? Indeed, this bracelet is a gift from your grandpa. Mr. Fuller and Ms. Stovall were both present and they witnessed your grandpa gave it to me. How did you get the idea I conned him? Does the Oberick family always give something then turn around, and demand it back? What would happen to the reputation of A City’s famous Oberick family if words got out about what happened today?” Rachel challenged, emboldened by the crowd that gathered.

“How disgusting! My grandpa gave this to Mrs. Fuller. Who are you to take my grandma’s bracelet?” Nora had always been straightforward and will shoot off her mouth when she is mad.

“It’s you, Scarlett Stovall, isn’t it?” Rachel turned her attention on me and jeered, “You are really beyond my comprehension. On one hand, you chased him away. On the other hand, you are still out to milk him. Are you jealous I got the bracelet and wanted it for yourself, so you instigate someone else to get it for you? Scarlett Stovall, if you want it, come get it yourself, and quit hiding cowardly behind others. One word from Ashton, and I will hand it to you. You don’t have to resort to such underhanded means.”

That was ludicrous. When I saw Rachel trying to remove her bracelet, I stopped her. I darted a quick look at Ashton. He stood there like a bystander, so I turned back to Rachel to clarify. “You are mistaken. I did not instigate Nora to get the bracelet from you. First and foremost, it is because Ashton and I are not related anymore, so what he does with the bracelet is none of my business. Secondly, the reason Nora objects to you having the bracelet is that you are a disgrace.”

“You...” She was aghast at what I said. “Mr. Fuller, I’ll give this bracelet back to you. I will never accept this ever again,” She woefully looked at Ashton and quavered, as she removed the bracelet and shove it into Ashton’s hand.

Ashton had not uttered a word. He just stared at me coldly. When Rachel turned to walk away, he grabbed her arm, surprising her.

His action stunned Nora too. She actually did not care who had the bracelet. She was just annoyed with Rachel’s attitude, which was why she frowned when Ashton held Rachel back.

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The crowd which gathered around was perplexed, but I could anticipate Ashton's next move.

He held on to Rachel, but his gaze was on me, cold and with disappointment.

"Ms. Fuller..." Rachel looked at him in bewilderment. The woeful look in her eyes could melt most hearts.

"This is yours, so wear it," Ashton indulgently insisted in his deep, mellow voice. He put the bracelet on Rachel's wrist, held on to her hand, and spoke tenderly, "This is a gift for you, so it's yours. You don't have to remove it if you don't wish to."

Rachel was caught off-guard by Ashton's loving behavior. Her anger dissipated immediately, and she blushed girlishly. She was overjoyed.

"Ashton Fuller, you..." Nora was speechless with anger.

Armond, who had been quietly setting up the grill, walked over and pulled her away. "Don't you want to watch the stars tonight? If you delay any further and it starts to rain, then all you get to watch will be cloud and lightning." He took the knife from her and handed it to me. "Solve your own problem," he solemnly uttered.

Me? What?

I looked around and felt everyone seemed to think I instigated Nora to create this scene. I wanted to defend myself, but on second thought, I kept my peace. I will only come across as being guilty if I try to defend myself.

I looked at Ashton blankly. Rachel arrogantly gave me the eye, showing off her bracelet triumphantly.

I pursed my lips, kept quiet, and went back to cut the remaining vegetables.

Everyone also resumed what they were doing, with the earlier incident weighing on their mind.

Laurel finished washing her vegetables and brought them to me. "Scarlett, did you not told us you are married? How did you get into this entanglement with Mr. Fuller?" she whispered.

She stole a glance at Armond and Nora. "Also, I always thought Armond was interested in you. When did he become so close to Nora? What has happened?" she probed.

Her curiosity amused me. "You bombarded me with so many questions. Which am I supposed to answer first?" I jested.

She thought about it and decided, "First, tell me, what is your relationship with Ashton Fuller?"

"Yes! Yes! I noticed the way he gazed at you was different. Don't tell me you were once lovers!" Tabitha poked her head over for gossips.

Indeed, women can never resist juicy gossips.

"Lover, my foot. She is his legitimate wife. That man has been bewitched!" Nora joined us, still fuming with anger.

"What? You are Ashton Fuller's wife?" the two girls exclaimed, wide-eyed.

“Ex-wife. We are divorced.” I stopped whatever I was doing and corrected them. I was worried more misunderstandings will arise if I don’t.

“B*llsh*t. You initiated the divorce, but Ashton has not agreed to it yet,” Nora countered.

“So, how are you related now? And what is with Ms. Zimmer?” Tabitha grimaced.

“That’s right, the three of you have such complex relationships. How awkward for an ex-wife to meet up with the current girlfriend. At first, I thought they were a couple, so sharing a tent seems normal. Scarlett, you must be so ill at ease with them spending the night together,” Laurel added.

“Not to worry, I am not bothered. It is actually quite nice to see them together,” I replied, unconcerned.

“My gosh! You drove away such a catch! Are you out of your mind, Scarlett?”

“I agree!”

Tabitha and Laurel chipped in animatedly, and they seemed astounded.

“You would be the ones out of your mind if you decide to continue with this gossip. It may start to rain and this beautiful starry night will turn into a cold rainy night instead,” I interrupted them.

“Don’t worry, I checked the weather forecast. No rain expected,” Nora declared confidently.

“Well, you never know. These are ready. Start grilling them.” I thrust the cut potatoes and vegetables into her hands and hurried her on.

Tabitha was called away by her fiancé. Laurel stooped next to me and continued her tattle. “I heard Ashton’s company is based in K City, so you came from K City too, right?. You have always said you lived in A City, so I thought you were from there. I’m curious, did you two break up because of Rachel?”

“Very often, a couple breaks up due to personal differences, not because of a third party.” I shook my head and continued skewering the cut potatoes.

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She nodded in agreement. Her face appeared a little forlorn. “You’re right. The future is unpredictable. Back then, I married him with so much joy and anticipation. Never had I expected that every single day of my married life would be like hell to me. I can’t even run away.”

Turning to look at her, I smiled faintly and asked, “Let’s stop talking about me. Why don’t you tell me about yourself?”

The woman shrugged. A helpless look crossed her round face. “A book I’ve read says that all the happy families are similar, but the unhappy ones are all different from one another. I totally agree with it.”

I nodded my head. Afterward, Nora scampered over to me with a plate in her hand. “Hey, try this. I grilled some meat for you two.”

Staring at the few slices of grilled meat on the plate, Laurel asked, “Didn’t we bring enough meat this time?”

Nora shook her head. “No, we brought quite a lot of them. We segregated the jobs and asked Rachel to marinate the meat, but she didn’t even touch it, so Tabitha only started to marinate them just now. These are all we have for now. Come on, try it.”

Laurel pursed her lips with displeasure. “I knew it. It takes time to find out someone’s true colors. At first, I felt that she’s quite outgoing and generous, but now I’m starting to hate her.”

Nora nodded in agreement. Looking at us, she asked, "What did both of you talk about? It seems you're having a good time."

"We're only talking about our family affairs." Putting some food on another plate, I handed it to her. "These are ready to be grilled now. Pass it to them."

Taking the plate, Nora asked with an inquisitive expression. "What family affairs did you guys talk about? Share with me, please."

With that said, her eager gaze was riveted on Laurel, as if she wasn't going to leave if the latter didn't tell her something.

Having no other choice, Laurel finally told her, "It's about the frustrations that the married women like us have. You've never been in a relationship, so you can't understand our feelings."

Nora clicked her tongue and said exasperatedly, "What do you mean by I can't understand your feelings? I've heard people talking about it before. By the way, I heard that you're going to get a divorce. What happened?"

At Nora's words, I turned to look at Laurel, as I didn't know much about her marriage.

Laurel heaved a sigh. "We've been arguing for months. In our six years of marriage, all our child's expenses are on me. I know I've no right to complain. After all, the child is mine. But I live like a widow now. I almost lost my life in Venria and lost contact with him for a long time. Yet, he didn't even call or text me. What's the point of being with someone like him? When I came back from Venria, he left our child with my mother-in-law and went outstation. In the name of starting a business, he took all our savings with him. I can hardly see him now. I've lost faith in him, so I'm thinking of getting a divorce."

Nora nodded and let out a sigh. "Yeah, it's pointless to stay in this kind of marriage. You're better off single."

She then turned to look at me. "Scarlett, your case is different from hers. Ashton is a rare gem. He's rich and loves you deeply. No matter how severe the conflict is between you and him, you both should talk it

out and solve it calmly. Afterward, you can be happy ever after. Why don't you give him another chance?"

As the conversation was directed back to my relationship with Ashton, I stood up, took the plate of food from her, and suggested, "Let's go and grill some meat."

Trailing behind me, she rattled on, "Scarlett, what's the use of running away from it?"

I ignored her and ambled over to the barbecue stand. The others were grilling their food while chatting away.

Glancing at the woman behind me, Tabitha passed me some grilled sausages. "Why are you babbling?"

Nora pressed her lips together. "I'm teaching her about politics."

All of a sudden, she turned to look at Rachel and said, "You know nothing but how to flirt with men. Instead of joining us, you should just check into a hotel with your man."

For a moment, the atmosphere became awkward. Rachel's face turned pale. She even stopped chewing the meat in her mouth.

"Okay, okay, let's bring the cushions out. The moon and the stars look so beautiful tonight. This is perfect for stargazing. Don't be a party pooper."

Laurel pulled Nora along to take the cushions. Armond and Tabitha's fiancé followed them. With the help of the two men, they could carry the cushions without difficulty.

Leaning closer to me, Tabitha asked suspiciously, "Don't you feel awkward?"

Puzzled, I asked her back, "Why should I feel awkward?"

“Your ex-husband and his new girlfriend are around. Don’t tell me that you don’t care at all. That’s bulls**t.”

With a faint smile, I gazed up at the starry night sky. “I think the moon and the stars are more worthy of our attention now.”

I changed the topic, and she pursed her lips. Right then, they brought the cushions to us. Everyone lay on a cushion while stargazing.

Tabitha was with her fiancé, while Armond was by Nora’s side, and Ashton was next to Rachel. All the couples looked so sweet together.

Thank God that Laurel and Tessa kept me company, so I felt at ease. Only when I lay down did I realize Ashton was lying right next to me, with Rachel by his other side.