

When There Is Nothing Left But Love Chapter 788-792

Chapter 788

The taste of the cheese filled my mouth from the very first bite. "It's delicious. Won't you have a bite?"

She shook her head and rubbed her stomach. "I can't eat anymore. I just had steak with Armond earlier. Besides, cheese is super high in calories. I don't want to get fat!"

"You're not fat for your height," I teased.

Nora pursed her lips. "Of course, you would say that since you're lighter than me."

I laughed but did not antagonize her further.

She cast a glance around and realized that Ashton was not present. "Shouldn't Ashton be back by now?"

I nodded. "He has a dinner appointment. He will be back late."

She grunted. "Looks like the wife of the president has to learn to deal with solitude once in a while."

I felt satiated after consuming a block of cheese. Then, I stood up and poured her some water.

"You had steak today, didn't you?" I asked, recalling her earlier remark.

Nora nodded as she squinted at me. "What's up with your arm?"

I followed her gaze and realized to my horror that my arm was covered in dense red rashes.

She pulled my arm, suddenly frightened. "It's all over your face too!"

I was terrified to discover that they were not just on my face, but also on my legs and everywhere else.

My eyes met Nora's. "Is this an allergic reaction?" we said in unison.

"Are you allergic to cheese or matcha?" Nora studied me intently.

I shook my head. I'd always indulged in those but I never had a reaction like this.

"What else have you had?" Nora persisted.

"Hairy crabs!" I cried in realization.

"You're allergic to seafood?"

I shook my head. "No, it was impossible. I had them just yesterday."

I didn't have the time to overthink. Nora dashed out to the yard and shouted, "Armond, Scarlett looks like she's having an allergic reaction. Hurry over and we'll take her to the hospital."

I studied the rashes with fear and could not figure out what I had eaten to cause such a reaction for the life of me.

Nora returned soon after and pulled me out of the villa where Armond was waiting in his car.

As soon as we entered, Armond headed straight for the hospital. Nora appeared frantic. "Should we give Ashton a call?"

I shook my head as he would be occupied by now. "It's fine. This is just a mild allergy. Let's get to the hospital and see what it actually is before contacting Ashton."

I began to worry about the rashes on my face when I felt the rashes itching fiercely.

Though I wasn't beautiful by modern standards, I was at least proud of my face and did my best to present it well. It would be an awful shame indeed if it were to be scarred and pockmarked for life.

We arrived at the hospital in record time. Armond stopped the car in front of the lobby and Nora dragged me out.

"Doctor! Doctor! This is an emergency!" she yelled.

The staff came rushing over at the sound of her voice. Several nurses enquired about my condition and had Nora register on my behalf.

A nurse led me to an office to wait for a doctor.

The doctor on duty examined me and gave the diagnosis that it was indeed an allergic reaction but not a very serious one at that. A jab or two of a general antihistamine ought to do the trick. It was such a relief for me.

I was still unsure about what it was that I was allergic to. "Doctor, is it possible to find out what triggered it?"

Whether or not it was the hairy crabs or the cheese, I had them often and never had a reaction like this before. Why today then?

The doctor finished writing a prescription. "It could be the fact that the crabs and cheese were consumed together, or that one of the compounds had triggered this reaction. If you'd like, I could run some tests and give you a definite answer."

"Yes, please." I nodded. It wouldn't do to have to be cautious about what I eat all the time. If I'm not careful, I might end up here again in a few weeks.

This was a hospital in the city, and as a result, the wards were all occupied. Even my jabs had to be done out in the corridor. To investigate the source of the allergy, the nurse drew some blood and hooked me up to a drip apparatus.

There were more wards along the corridor. As it grew late, many patients fell asleep.

There was no way I could fall asleep, though I tried to close my eyes to rest them. Meanwhile, Nora took care of my bill while Armond looked for a parking spot.

This may not be a first-tier city, but parking was still a hassle.

I heard footsteps along the corridor. A male doctor in a white gown appeared in front of my eyes.

"Did I wake you?" he asked.

I shook my head. "Don't worry about it, I wasn't asleep." The doctor procured a syringe when he saw that my drip was almost empty.

"Is it time to change the saline?" I enquired nervously.

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He shook his head and pinched the tube. "This is a temporary measure," he said as he emptied the contents of the syringe into my drip.

“Isn’t this administered as a jab?” I inquired suspiciously. Isn’t it normal to inject a patient with antihistamine instead of administering it through the drip?

The doctor adjusted the speed. “It’s saline. The previous batch was too concentrated; this is just to water it down slightly. Don’t worry, it won’t affect anything.”

I wasn’t familiar with medical procedures, but even in my ignorance, this explanation felt too far-fetched to me. But my nagging suspicion was unable to identify what was wrong.

Without a concrete reason to raise any objections, I settled down and accepted it without complaint.

The doctor eventually moved to other patients to carry out the same procedure. My suspicions evaporated when I observed his deftness in carrying out his duty. Soon after, I closed my eyes again.

A while later, I could no longer deny feeling that something was wrong. My eyelids felt too heavy to open.

Suspicion and fear clouded my mind. I groped for my hand and pinched it hard. After ascertaining that I was not dreaming, I mustered all my strength to wrench my eyes open.

The sight of the doctor standing menacingly before I had confirmed my fears.

I reached out to push him away, but he suddenly lifted me up and out of the corridor.

As the sedative began to take effect, I reminded myself over and over again to stay awake.

I bit down hard again on my tongue and the pain of it was immense. By this time, I found myself being carried over to the lift.

I recognized the possibility of him taking me away. My first instinct was to struggle to free myself, but I felt completely limp. I wanted to scream for help, but I was too weak to even form any words.

The lift doors opened and he walked in with me. He pressed for a certain floor but I couldn't see what it was.

The only thing that I felt sure of was that he had selected the lowest of the blurry red dots on the lift panel. It was most likely the underground garage.

I dug my nails deep into my palms to maintain my consciousness.

Before long, the lift doors opened once again and we exited. I had thought that he was going to throw me into a car and drive off to a secret location somewhere to be interrogated.

However, the cold that I was thrust into had succeeded in bringing me to full awareness of my surroundings.

The chill of the September air was cold but not to this extent. This was something else; it was sub-zero temperatures that could freeze hell over.

The realization of where I was flashed dully but clearly in my mind. The morgue!

It wasn't just the underground garage that was at the bottom of the hospital. I forgot about the morgue.

Besides, there was no reason for a garage to be at a sub-zero temperature.

I had recovered some of my wits under the extreme cold. The sight that greeted me upon opening my eyes was one of pure terror. It was white everywhere I looked. The corpses that were not yet stored were covered in white sheets.

The man dropped me from his shoulders and went out of my field of vision. I heard the sound of ice blocks being shifted.

Several seconds later, I felt myself being placed into a container that was even colder than my surroundings.

A series of creaks later, I was pushed into an enclosed space.

The remainder of my wits allowed me to conclude that I was placed into one of the drawers.

My innate survival instincts kicked in. As I fought to get myself out of my predicament, the only act I was capable of was to reach out and touch the sides of my prison. The possibility of exerting force or crying out was beyond reach.

The fear of facing death seeped through my entire being. I knew that I would be doomed if nobody were to come to my rescue. And I would have been dead for a long time before anyone could find me.

But who was it that hated me to resort to such a vengeance in this measure?

I considered everybody around me but could draw no reasonable conclusion.

My body was beginning to shiver violently in a valiant attempt at survival, but due to the sedative nature of the drug that was administered to me, it did not produce much of an effect.

The only thing that I felt was everything was slowing down.

This is such a joke.

Out of all the ways I've considered of me meeting my end, this was definitely not one of them.

I had survived the threats that Rebecca had made, Cameron's vicious schemes, and the near-death experiences in Venria.

But at the very end, I would succumb to such a simple and subtle, even elegant way of murder.

I would not have been able to think of this even in my wildest dreams.

I wanted to see Summer. I did not manage to explain to her why I had to leave without saying goodbye. I had not managed to give her one last hug and tell her that she had to grow up and live her life even if I was no longer around.

I had not managed to meet Emery's children and greet Zachary and Cameron as Dad and Mom. I did not get the chance to cook a meal for them, or the opportunity to tell them that I bear them no resentment.

I did not get the chance to tell Ashton that I actually loved him deeply and that I wanted to bear him a child. I did not get to tell him that I was looking forward to a massive wedding celebration with him.

Chapter 790

There were too many things that I had not yet achieved. I did not want to die or to freeze to death.

Under the deep biting cold, I became aware of my own labored breathing and the low electrical hum of the freezer.

I tried once more to call for help, but I was not able to utter a sound. The cold near the top of my head started to seep in slowly but surely. First, it penetrated my scalp, then through my skull, then it started to affect my nerves. They seared with pain and went numb.

It felt like an eternity, or maybe it was only a few minutes, but the act of waiting for death to claim me in the suffocating silence was awful.

I became aware of feeling sleepy and groggy. I suddenly recalled something being said a long time ago by someone. They said that true death came in three forms.

The first was the cessation of breathing. Your soul and body would separate and somehow feel your limbs stiffen up. This was the death of the body.

The second type was being declared dead. When you stopped breathing and lay in bed, someone would be there to declare you dead and state your time of death.

The last type was death in the memories of your loved ones. When your body and mind disintegrate, along with your existence in the world, and all the traces of you being on earth would go with it. Slowly, you would even fade away from the memories of your loved ones, until one day, you cease to even exist in the first place.

At the moment, I felt like I was experiencing the first type of death. The sound of my breath, no, the sound of my heartbeat was steadily weakening. It grew so faint that I could not feel my breath anymore.

Perhaps my time really had come. It was destined to be this very moment.

Just as I felt my eyes closing, perhaps for the final time, I heard and felt a massive collision. It must have hit the container that I was in.

The noise grew more frantic and urgent; the blows became harder and more vicious. When the brilliant white light flooded my eyes, I saw what seemed to be the shape of a tall and slim figure drawing me out of the icy grip of death and holding me in the warm embrace of life.

It was too much to describe; everything flooded my senses and overwhelmed me.

The door flung open and though it was still sub-zero out there, it felt warm to me.

I could now feel my body, close to the point of being frozen solid, being lifted up in a pair of strong arms. The figure that had carried me was radiating heat like an oven.

Warmth had never felt more welcome in my entire life. I huddled closer. A familiar scent flooded my nostrils, allowing me to identify my savior. I tried calling out but to no avail.

What I wanted to say was "Thank you, Ashton." But I did not manage to.

Because of him, all the terror and tension that had gripped me for the last few hours had dissipated. I shut my eyes tight and drifted off to unconsciousness.

I had a very strange dream. A beautiful woman had an infant in her arms. She walked in the snow for a long time until she was unable to continue. Then, she placed the child down and knelt down in the snow to kiss the baby. She wept as if her heart was breaking.

After a long time, she left the child where it lay and departed on her own. The child, sensing the absence of its mother, cried out pitifully into the night.

I watched the entire scene from afar. Fearful for the child's safety, I had wanted to take a closer look. However, everything vanished as I approached.

Then, the dream shifted. I was back in my childhood with the old locust tree and the swing that hung from one of its branches. Grandma pushed me as she sang my favorite songs.

Suddenly, Grandma vanished as well. I was plunged in a midst of a crowd and caught sight of a slender figure approaching me whilst he waved.

I walked towards it. Before I could get a closer look, the crowd lurched and I was shoved to the side.

The same dream repeated itself several times. I knew that the figure in the dream was Ashton, but whenever I reached out to try to grab hold of him, he would disappear.

It happened a few times, and I grew more and more desperate with each failure trying to hold on to him. Finally, I reached out into the dark and clawed wildly at the air until I felt a pair of hands holding mine tightly.

“Scarlett.” A voice beside me called out.

I heard it and wanted to answer, but I was unable to speak.

“Scarlett,” they called again. I desperately tried to detect the source of the voice and panted heavily from the effort.

I opened my eyes groggily. The figure next to me was familiar.

I reached out to grab hold of him. Even his warmth was familiar. Once again, my strength failed me, and I felt my hand flopping back down onto the bed.

A second later, my hand was being clutched tightly. “Scarlett, I am here.”

It was Ashton.

His voice soothed me greatly. Soon, I felt the fear begin to vanish and felt much calmer after that.

I didn’t even have the energy to nod. Then, my eyelids drooped again.

“What’s happening? Why isn’t she awake yet?” Ashton’s voice rang up and I could see in my mind how he frowned at the doctor.

“She’s out of the critical phase,” the doctor answered. “There’s nothing wrong with her, she’s just drained of energy over the whole ordeal. Just let her rest and she will wake up when she’s ready.”

I was actually wide awake and aware of most things going on around me but I had no way of opening my eyes, and I still felt weak all over.

I heard some footsteps and figured that someone was departing. After a while, I felt my hand being intertwined in another’s.

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“Scarlett, you’ve been asleep for two days,” the soft voice said. “Please wake up!”

I wanted to say something and to open my eyes, but I did not succeed.

I felt something moist inside my bone-dry mouth. After some time, my face and limbs were being cleaned gently by a damp towel.

I couldn’t help but fall back asleep again due to my extreme fatigue.

My dreams were incomprehensible and confusing. The next time I opened my eyes, my surroundings were clearer to me than they were though I was still feeling groggy.

Ashton slumped over my bed as he was asleep. His hair looked rather greasy as though he hadn’t showered in days.

“Ashton!” I croaked. My voice was hoarse but I was surprised that I managed to say that.

I smiled at the realization that I was still alive. It feels so good to be alive!

At the sound of his name, Ashton straightened himself up. He looked haggard and unkempt. I reached out to caress his face and felt a cluster of tiny beards poking out of his chin.

I chuckled. "Haven't I just shaved for you? They've grown back."

Ashton clutched my hand tightly and gaze at me with his deep dark eyes. He did not speak for a long time; his eyes welled up with tears of relief.

"You're awake!" he said with a choking voice after a long while.

I nodded with a smile as I had escaped death yet again.

"It's so good to see you!" I tugged his hand and held it tight.

Ashton got up and hugged me tightly. He poured me a glass and made sure I finished it. "You'll get to see me every day from now on," he said, unable to conceal the joy in his voice.

I felt much better after hydrating myself. I could think clearer and move my body freely now. Not to mention my throat felt a lot more comfortable and moister. "If I could fit you in my pocket, I'll get to see you every day," I said, wasting no time in teasing him as soon as I got my voice back.

Ashton brushed my nose gently in response to my mischief. "You're in a playful mood. It's good to see you back to your old self."

He hugged me again and it was tighter than before. I felt squished into his chest.

I let him hold me and savored it. The entire spectrum of emotions surged through me and I felt lucky to be alive just to experience them again.

No matter what happens in this life, I will never leave him again. He was all I could think about during the few minutes in the freezer. As I approached death, even the rhythm of my pulse had chided me for taking his love for me for granted, and that I should not push him away and pick fights with him.

It was my good fortune to have met him in my life.

“Ashton!” I whispered as I held his neck and looked at him.

He grunted and hugged me again. There was an unspeakable joy behind his wearied eyes.

“I love you so very much,” I said. Since the day we met, over our marriage spanning a decade, I have never told him this. If I didn’t say it now, I didn’t know when I would be able to do that.

I was not going to have any regrets on my deathbed again.

Ashton gazed deep into my eyes. He nodded and planted a kiss on my forehead. “I won’t disappoint you.”

I smiled again, just feeling grateful for being alive.

As I placed my head on his chest to savor the peace that came with it, the incidents of that night suddenly returned to haunt me. “What happened that day I went to the hospital?” I asked.

Who the hell wants me dead? The temperature in the freezer would have sealed my fate within two hours.

If Ashton had not appeared in time, I would not have made it out alive.

“I was having dinner with Joe and the rest when Nora called me,” he explained. “They’d found out that you were missing when they arrived at the hospital. We looked through the surveillance and found out that you were taken to the morgue. As there were no cameras down there, locating you took quite a bit of time.”

Ashton’s voice was low and hoarse as if he dreaded reliving the memory of that night. I was unable to imagine how he must have felt when he found me, frozen half to death like fresh seafood.

Or possibly something worse!

“Did you find out who was behind it?” I asked, looking up at him.

Ashton frowned as his gaze grew cold. “The hairy crabs and matcha that you had consumed were laced with sesame. We’re not sure if this was planned by someone intentionally.”

I frowned. I was aware that I was allergic to sesame, but I had never told anyone that, including Ashton. In fact, the only person who knew that I was allergic to sesame was Grandma.

When I grew older, I basically did not touch sesame at all. Occasionally I would have had mild reactions if the food was seasoned with a trace amount of sesame. It wouldn’t be too serious if I have had a tiny bit.

Be that as it may, it was impossible that anyone could have predicted my allergic reactions. The thing that bothered me more was what happened in the hospital.

It was obvious that that man had meant to kill me. Was the whole rigmarole of drugging me and shutting me in a morgue improvised? Or was it planned in advance?

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At that thought, I could not suppress a bitter laugh. “They’ve thought things through, haven’t they? They even had the courtesy to keep my body in one piece.”

Ashton grimaced in anger. "Something like this will never happen again."

I snuggled against him, confident that he would be investigating this thoroughly. "If you managed to find out who it was, I'd like to meet the person!"

Ashton grunted. His cold gaze resumed. "Take care of yourself and just leave the rest to me."

I did not feel like going back to sleep now that I was up, maybe it was due to the fact that I had been sleeping so much I felt sick of it. "Not many people would hate me to the point of plotting my murder. The people who would actually dare to carry it out are even scarce."

I couldn't figure out who would be that bold to do such a thing.

Nora entered the ward. Her eyes looked swollen like she had been crying for a long time.

At the sight of me sitting up in bed, she paid no heed to Ashton and ran over to my other side and threw herself onto me. "You're finally awake," she sobbed. "You've been asleep for three whole days! I'd thought that you have left me behind and don't want to take me to K City anymore."

It hurt my still frail body to be embraced by two people at the same time.

It was a good thing that Armond arrived in time to pull Nora off of me. "She just woke up. Are you planning on knocking her out again?" he chided Nora.

"Don't be preposterous!" Nora shoved Armond indignantly. "Scarlett is fine. She'll always be."

She wiped her tears at that. "I'm sorry, I did not know that you are allergic to sesame," she said guiltily. "If I knew that the matcha cheese had that amount of sesame in it, I would rather die than to have caused you to have that reaction!"

I chuckled and patted her hand. "It's not your fault, Nora. It was mine for not noticing in the first place. Anyway, it was an accident!"

Nora still felt to blame. "If you did not have that allergic reaction, we wouldn't have come to the hospital, and you wouldn't be abducted. It's all my fault. If we ever caught the man who did this to you, I'll kill him myself!"

"Have you caught him?" Armond turned to Ashton and asked.

Ashton pursed his lips and cast a meaningful look at Armond.

Nora did not understand. "Couldn't you see what he looked like from the surveillance? Even if he had a mask on, you would have found him by now! It's been three days!"

"There was a switch," Ashton explained. "The man who took Scarlett into the morgue wasn't the same man who had administered the sedative." He frowned, deep in thought. "The man who made it into the morgue made every effort to avoid the cameras."

Armond was silent for a while. "Does the trail of evidence end here, then?"

Ashton said nothing but patted my back gently.

"Forget it," Nora said, in an attempt to keep the conversation positive. "Let's eat before we do anything else. There's still plenty to do in Lavelian Village. We would have to go back there after eating."

I perked up. "Has the project in Lavelian Village commenced?"

“Yes, it has.” Armond nodded.

I was still doubtful but did not pursue the matter.

Nora brought some food for me, then she and Armond departed in a rush.

I did not have much of an appetite as I had just woken up. Nora’s cooking was delicious, but I could not force myself to eat much.

“Finish up!” Ashton chastised as he saw me giving up after several mouthfuls.

“I’m really not hungry, I don’t feel like eating,” I pleaded.

“I’ll feed you.”

I glared at him. “Did the doctor say when I could be discharged?” I asked, in an attempt to divert the subject.

“A few more days, as you’ve just regained consciousness.”

I could tell from his expression that he was determined to let me stay and rest for a couple more days. At the thought of Lavelian Village, I grew serious. “Ashton, any leads on the case on Lavelian Village?”

I recalled him mentioning that he considered withdrawing his involvement.

“Another obstacle. Don’t you think that I am fulfilling somebody else’s wish by giving up and walking away?”

His meaning slowly dawned on me. “Do you think it was done by the same person?” I asked, my eyes wide as saucers.

The robbery at the base, Nora's fall, and the numerous attempts on my life. These events appeared unrelated at first glance, but upon closer inspection, they seemed to be interconnected to serve a larger purpose.

The robbery at the base would delay the press conference. Nora's accident would halt the project at Lavelian Village.

If I did not make it out of the morgue alive, Ashton would bring my body back to K City and never step foot in A City ever again. Acceptance of the Lavelian Village project would definitely be out of the question.

Upon arrival at this conclusion, there was still something that I did not understand. "Was everything intended to harm the Murphys or the Fullers?"

Ashton was in no hurry to answer. His gaze fell onto the bowl of soup before me. "Shall I feed you?" he asked quietly.

I ate a few more spoonful. "Alright, I've eaten. Tell me more."