

When There Is Nothing Left But Love Chapter 963-967

Chapter 963

I smiled and shook my head. "I'm not sure but let's stop gossiping about them. At her age, if Aunt Sally manages to find someone suitable for her and have a partner for her remaining years, that's a good thing."

"That's right!" Hannah nodded and continued seriously, "I suddenly believe that destiny really exists. We all have our own predetermined paths to walk. Some people get to enjoy a smooth life with fame and riches but die young. There are others who have it rougher but remain in good health until they die of old age. There are also some who have a difficult start in life but work hard and ultimately get to enjoy the fruits of their labor. It's the same when it comes to relationships. True love might only come to some at a later stage after experiencing trials and tribulations."

I nodded, agreeing with her views. Chandler ordered a few of Hannah's favorite dishes and said, "What about us? It was also not easy for us to be together, right?"

Hannah looked at the man and replied, "We just met each other at the right time."

Seeing that they are showing off their love again, I looked down at my phone. Hailey texted again. It's difficult to explain over the phone. Let's find some time to meet up!

She was right. That issue was too complicated to be properly communicated over the phone.

Just then, I saw an incoming call from Ashton and answered it at once. "Has your meeting ended?"

He replied in a hoarse voice, "Yup, just ended. Where are you now?"

"I'm in town having dinner with Hannah and Chandler right now. Do you want to join us?"

"Sure!"

After I hung up, Hannah looked at me and asked, "Is that Ashton?"

I nodded and she asked worriedly, "Have you been resting well these days? I already noticed that you looked quite pale when I saw you this morning. Are you losing sleep feeling troubled over Summer?"

I froze for a moment and let out a bitter smile before replying, "She's Macy's only child. I... "

I sighed and did not finish my sentence. Not wanting to discuss that topic, I looked at Hannah and said, "Ashton will be coming later. I should go say hi to Aunt Sally first."

Talking about Summer's situation was pointless. I could only hope that a suitable kidney for her would be available soon.

Hannah understood that I did not want to continue talking about it and nodded. "Sure, go ahead. There should be still a while before our food is served," she said.

Sally and Jim were sitting by the window. The middle-aged couple was behaving just like teenagers in love. One of them was talking animatedly while the other listened quietly and responded with smiles intermittently. One could tell from the look in their eyes how much they adored each other.

I must have arrived at an inopportune moment. When Sally saw me, she was obviously startled and had an awkward expression on her face. "Scarlett, why... why are you here?"

"I just happened to be having dinner with my friends at this restaurant and I saw you. I thought I should come over and say hi. Aunt Sally, who's this gentleman?" I asked, beaming.

A blush of embarrassment spread across Sally's cheeks. Jim, who had seen much in life, remained composed and answered instead. "Hi, I'm Jim. Sally and I are dating. I guess you must be her niece? Please have a seat."

His candidness surprised me. I joined them at their table and introduced myself to Jim. I could not help but smile when I saw the blush on Sally's face. "Aunt Sally, Ashton and I are quite busy lately. Are you angry that we haven't had time to visit you?"

Still feeling a little awkward, Sally smiled at me and replied, "I've heard about Fuller Corporation's situation and understand that Ashton is occupied with work. Anyway, you youngsters have your own matters to attend to. I'm already feeling bad that I can't be of any help to you. The only thing I can do is not to be a burden and worry you guys."

I nodded and thought about Summer. I realized Aunt Sally was still unaware of that. With a smile, I replied, "Aunt Sally, we should have a gathering after this busy period. You have to bring Uncle Jim along, yeah?"

Sally nodded. I could see that her cheeks were still in a shade of pink. Since I had already greeted her, I should get going in order not to disrupt their date.

Just when I stood up and was about to leave, I saw Ashton walking towards us. I was rather stunned at how speedily he arrived.

"Oh, Ashton is here too," Sally said as she noticed Ashton as well.

I walked towards him and asked, "How did you reach so quickly?"

He pulled me closer towards him and frowned. "Why is your hand so cold?" He asked, while at the same time holding my hand in his, warming it. "The office is quite nearby and the traffic was smooth. That's how I'm here so fast!"

“Oh,” I simply replied before whispering into his ear, “I forgot to tell you just now. Aunt Sally is here too.”

While we were talking, Jim had already stood up and approached Ashton. After the two men exchanged greetings, Ashton asked me, “Aren’t you with Hannah?”

I nodded and we said goodbye to Sally before joining Hannah and Chandler again. The dishes were served the same time we arrived back at the table.

When Hannah saw Ashton and I, she smiled and said, “I was just about to go over and get you.” Then, she introduced Chandler to Ashton and all of us sat down.

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I looked at Ashton and Chandler; one is reserved and arrogant, the latter kind and down-to-earth. It was not surprising that the two of them had very little in common to talk about. Hannah and I, on the other hand, were busy chattering away.

Hannah looked at the shrimps Ashton peeled for me and said, “You know what, I’m actually quite jealous of the way you two interact with each other. It’s not sickeningly sweet, but one that seems very natural.”

I smiled in return and watched quietly as Chandler carefully fed a shrimp to Hannah. “I’m the one who’s envious of you. Look at how thoughtful and gentle Mr. Coleman is to you. You must cherish him.”

She nodded in assent. “That’s for sure. I wish the best for you and Ashton too.”

It was already quite late by the time we finished dinner and returned to the villa.

Back to our bedroom, Ashton seemed already tuckered out, so I decided to keep the questions I had to myself. After taking a shower and finally lying in bed together, Ashton's voice was a little croaky when he asked, "Is John going to do anything now that Hannah is getting married?"

I was mildly surprised by his sudden interest in this matter and shook my head. "I'm not sure. All I know is that he also plans to marry Yvonne. God knows what's going on in his head."

Now that he brought up this matter, I asked curiously, "Ashton, what would you do if I married another person?"

The man opened his eyes and fixed steadily at mine. His voice was low and solemn when he replied, "Will you?"

I rolled my eyes at him and said, "Why not? Life is so unpredictable, anything is possible. Case in point, years ago, John wouldn't have thought that Hannah was going to bear his child. And now, when John finally falls in love with Hannah, she has decided to become someone else's bride. We can't bet on things to remain the same forever."

Instead of answering my hypothetical question, his dark eyes continued to glare at me intently. I grew impatient and started to pester him, "Why are you looking at me like this? Just answer my question!"

"I will never let you go, or allow you to fall in love with another person, much less letting you marrying someone else other than me. So, your question is invalid." His demeanor was so overbearing I had to forego all other follow-up questions at the back of my mind.

I sighed. "It's just an innocent question. I don't understand why you are taking it so seriously." Feeling a little stirred up, I turned my back against him.

Ashton then moved closer to me, his chest was so close against my back I could feel his strong heartbeats. His big hand rested on my belly as he assumed a dulcet tone, "Scarlett, I believe that many things in life are achievable when you put your minds to it. I can't predict my future, but one thing I know for sure is that, as long as I live, I will not let you go. I never buy the saying that if you love someone you should set her free. I'm just an ordinary guy who wants to be with my wife and can't bear to see you live with anyone else. So, don't you ever think of such a thing again, okay?"

I wasn't sure if it was his bold profession of love or his steady heartbeat against my body, the fog in my mind suddenly lifted and I could see things clearly as they were. I finally conceded, "Alright, I won't ask such a stupid question again." My head rested on his shoulder and my fingers intertwined with his. "Ashton, when Summer gets better, we will start afresh as a family." The man then held me tightly in his arms.

All my life, I was never able to fully grasp the concept of happiness. But at that moment, I finally understood that happiness could just be as simple as spending the night holding onto someone you love who also loved you back.

"Ashton, you..." Realizing what he was about to do, my eyes widened in the next instant. "What are you doing? I'm pregnant, we can't do that!"

He turned me around so that I was now facing him. Our eyes locked and he said in a coarse voice, "Scarlett, it's been a while since we..."

I hesitated for a brief moment before I replied in a soft voice, "But, but it's inconvenient now that I'm pregnant."

Ashton leaned his head against mine and I could feel his humid and heavy breaths inches away. I held my breath and dared not utter another word.

After a few seconds, the man took a deep breath and finally said, "Alright, let's go to sleep."

Ashton still held onto me, but his hands finally stopped moving around. I stole a sigh of relief and recalled what happened during the day. "By the way, are you not allowed to bring a phone during meetings lately?"

"No, why is that?"

“Oh, it’s nothing. Just that I’ve tried calling you a few times and they all went to voicemail. So, I was wondering if there was a no-phone rule instated in your office.”

“My office is very close to the conference room. So, sometimes I’ll leave my phone in my office during meetings. It won’t happen again.”

I let out a faint smile. “Okay.”

Maybe it was just a coincident that Stella picked up his phone today.

The next day, I rushed to the hospital after being informed that Summer and Jared’s bone marrows were not compatible. I arrived at the hospital and met with Cameron and Zachary, who looked like they hadn’t slept all night.

There was discernible sorrow in Cameron’s voice as she spoke, “My dear, the doctor has confirmed that their bone marrows do not match. We’re going to have to search for one that’s compatible with Summer’s.”

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I was puzzled. “Why not? Summer is his biological daughter. How is that possible?”

“It turns out they have different blood types, so it doesn’t matter that Jared is Summer’s biological father. If we perform the surgery anyway, it’ll be like a bad organ transplant, which will make Summer’s condition worse,” Cameron tried to explain the situation to me in her limited medical terms.

My mind went momentarily blank. I had hoped that in the scenario where their bone marrows didn’t match, he could at least donate his kidney to Summer. But now, it seemed that my last hope was also squashed.

As though being sucked out of all energy, I slumped into a chair and was lost in thoughts.

It wasn't until the doctor came out from Summer's ward that I snapped out from my daze when he said, "Can we all please proceed to my office?"

As Cameron helped me up, I noticed that Zachary's expression was rather grim and appeared deep in thought.

As we all took a seat in the doctor's office, Cameron asked anxiously, "Doctor, what are we going to do now that we can't find suitable bone marrow for Summer?"

He looked at us and slowly explained, "Bone marrow transplant is a major operation, therefore it's imperative that we find a compatible donor, or we will risk dangerous level of organ rejection post-operation. There are increasing numbers of acute leukemia patients for the past two years, but suitable bone marrow donors are still very rare. I can understand your concerns, however, the only thing we can do for Summer right now is to continue her chemotherapy. In the meantime, we will keep searching for matching bone marrow."

Zachary asked, "Let's say we have no luck in finding her a suitable donor, how long does she have?"

The doctor was a little rattled by the stone-faced Zachary and had chosen his words carefully when he replied, "If we stick to our current treatment plan, her prognosis is actually quite positive. She will have at least three more years."

"Alright. I understand." Zachary nodded before he stood up abruptly and left the room without uttering another word.

Cameron was panic-stricken and she quickly turned to me. "Letty, quick! You have to stop your father. We haven't gotten to that stage yet!"

Despite being puzzled by what she said, considering the urgency in her tone, I stood up and hurried after him. Zachary was dialling on his phone as he waited in front of an elevator.

I called after him, "Dad, what's going on? Where are you going?"

He turned to me with a self-reproach look on his face. "Scarlett, I know you can't forgive us for what we did to your baby years ago. But don't you worry now. I won't let anything happen to another child of yours. I'll do whatever it takes to save Summer."

I was still as a loss of what he was planning to do as he was about to take off in a grave manner.

I grabbed onto his arm before he could leave. "Dad, hold on for a second. Ashton is already working on ways to save Summer too. Don't you worry, she'll be okay."

Nonetheless, my words seemed to have fallen on deaf ears. Just then, the elevator door opened. Zachary stepped into the elevator and stopped me from following suit. "Stay here and look after your mother. I'm just going to look for a better doctor and I'll be back soon."

Right after the elevator door was shut before me, Cameron hurried over and her expression grew more desperate when she didn't see Zachary. "Scarlett, where's your father? You should have stopped him. He's onto something dangerous!"

"He said he was going to look for another doctor and asked me to stay back."

Cameron was frantically pressing at the elevator button and her voice was choking up as she said, "If he really was looking for another doctor, couldn't he just do it through the phone? I can't let him do this, not after he's finally decided to settle down and live a normal life with us. If we let him do this, there'll be no turning back for all of us."

Sensing that something was off, I looked at her and my jaw was tightening. "Mom, there's no way I can catch up to him now. But I'll get Ashton to stop him. While I'm on the phone, you're gonna have to get yourself together, and then tell me what really is going on, okay?"

With tears rolling down her cheeks, she finally nodded. After I contacted Ashton and told him to get in touch with Zachary, I helped Cameron sit down on a bench in the corridor.

After the woman finally collected herself, she slowly spoke, "My dear, have you heard of organ trading?"

I was stunned by her revelation as cold sweats started to form on my forehead. Shaking my head, I continued to ask, "Mom, what's going on?"

Wiping the tears away from her eyes, the woman slowly explained, "Scarlett, there's nothing in this world you can't buy with enough money and power, including human organs. Your father started thinking about it when Summer started falling sick. He used to work with mafia, so he knows his way around this black market. I tried to talk him out of this, but he wouldn't listen to me. Now that our lives are finally back to normal, and you are expecting another child, it's just too much risk to involve both our families in this business."

I took a few moments to calm my racing heart. "Mom, has Dad found one?"

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Cameron looked at me with her eyes widened in intense fear. "My dear, you can't be seriously considering it! These organs, they are all harvested with illegal means!"

"Mom, that's not what I meant. I'm just trying to figure out where Dad could be heading that's all. Whatever leads he has right now, we have to discuss this matter together before deciding what to do."

She nodded, but her body did not stop trembling.

When Cameron was calmer and more collected, she started to analyze the situation, “Your father had washed his hands off this business many years ago. But starting a few days ago, he’s been secretly contacting a few of his old buddies regarding this matter. I overheard from his conversations that the black market, as well as the operations, are only carried out in A City. So, your dad must be on his way to the airport to fly over there and meet with the dealer.”

Upon hearing which, I made another phone call to Ashton for him to intercept Zachary at the airport. I turned to Cameron and asked, “Who else knows about this?”

She shook her head. “Just the two of us. I didn’t want him to take the risk. If found out, our whole family will be done for.”

Sensing that my silence might mean otherwise, Cameron tried to probe, “Scarlett, tell me, if your father found both compatible bone marrow and kidney for Summer, would you have agreed to it?”

Her question was loaded with massive moral conundrums; my head was filled with many questions to which I didn’t have immediate answers. I lowered my head to look at my phone, at a loss for words.

Cameron grew more anxious as she grabbed onto my arm and said grievously, “My dear, listen to me, you can’t do this. Summer is such an adorable kid and we all love her dearly. But you can’t gamble your future with this matter. It would have been okay if this only involves me and your father, since we’ve had our share of lives at this age. But things are different for you and Ashton. You’re finally expecting another child and you still have a long way to go. As for Summer, we may just have to accept that this is her destiny. Please promise me you won’t make a rash decision on this.”

Cameron’s concerns were valid, and anyone with a sound logic should arrive at the same conclusion. However, I had long regarded Summer as my own daughter, so the only logical sense as a mother was to save my daughter by whatever means necessary.

I looked at her and sighed. “Mom, Summer is my daughter. There’s no way I’ll give up on her. If the dealer manages to find a donor from a clean source, why can’t we give Summer a chance to live?”

Cameron’s eyes widened in disbelief. “Are you out of your mind? There’s no way that kind of things will be clean!”

I knew there was no way that I could sway her mind right now, but I couldn't help but imagine a scenario where someone passed on from an accident and we could offer a sum of money to her family. It would not have brought her life back, but in a way, parts of her spirit got to live on. The concept of organ donation at death might sound cruel to some people, but if the alternative for the body was to be cremated, leaving nothing but ashes behind, why not let them save another life?

"Mom, let's not talk about this right now. Can you please keep Summer company while I try to locate Dad and talk to him?" It's too early to dismiss any remote chance Summer may have.

Cameron did not sound fully convinced. "My dear, whatever you do, please be mindful of the potential consequences they may have on both our families. Do you understand what I mean?"

"I do."

I left the hospital and tried to reach Ashton by phone, but it was engaged. I then attempted to call Zachary's number, also to no avail. I was feeling rather helpless when my phone rang.

Seeing Armond's name on my caller ID only made me feel more frustrated. My tone was more than agitated when I answered his call, "What do you want?"

Instead of being offended, an audible laugh rang from the other end of the line as the man spoke, "Sensing from your impatient tone, I suppose you ran into some trouble. Why don't you come and have a chat with me? I may be able to cheer you up."

"If you have nothing more to say, I'll hang up now." My patience was running thin for this pervert.

He sighed and said, "Hold on a second, I was told that Zachary is on his way to A City. I'm wondering whether that's because Jared's bone marrow is not compatible with Summer's. If that's the case, then I suppose he's heading toward A City to search for..."

The man had now successfully riled me up. "Armond Murphy, what kind of a sicko are you? And what do you want from me?"

“I just told you, I may have some information that’s useful to you so that your daughter will stop suffering from chemotherapy.” His tone suddenly took on a serious note, “There’s no need to dismiss me just yet. I know exactly what you’re looking for and I may even have means to secure some for you. So, what do you say about meeting up?”

I paused for a brief moment to ponder on his words. Maybe what he said wasn’t all bullsh*t.

“Fine. I can meet you up.”

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He seemed to be smiling approvingly when he replied, “I thought you were going to reject me again. Great, I’ll send you the address after this. Don’t be late, or I’ll be sad.”

After hanging up the call, I tried Ashton’s number again. Finally, he answered the phone and there were some traffic noises from his end.

“Ashton, is everything okay over there?”

“I’m stuck in traffic.” Ashton sounded a little flustered. “But don’t you worry; I’ve managed to make contact with Mr. Moore. He promised that he won’t be making the trip to A City for now.”

I heaved a sigh of relief. “That’s great. Can you please take him to the hospital later? I’ll call Mom right now to let her know.”

I gave Cameron a quick update on the phone before receiving a text message with the address where I was supposed to meet Armond.

The address was not far from where I was so I decided to take a cab there.

I arrived at the address to find a cafe bistro that actually resembled more of a private residence. I almost missed the entrance until a waiter greeted me and led me inside.

Armond was already waiting for me in a private room. Dressed in a casual blue sweater, his jacket was draped over a chair next to him as the heater was turned on in the room. Upon my arrival, his lips curled up in a faint smile as he spoke, "Have a seat. Try some of the Earl Grey tea here."

Biting my lips, I took a seat across from him as he slowly poured hot water into his tea pot. After which, he slid a tea cup in front of me and said gracefully, "Smell the aroma from the tea leaves."

I took the cup and placed it under my nose to take a whiff. It did smell fresh and earthy. I put down the cup and said, "It's aromatic."

He kept smiling. "Very tasteful."

His relaxed manner in tea making was in direct contrast to the anxiousness I was feeling all day. Sensing he was in no hurry at all to disclose his real intention, I finally broke the silence, "Armond, I don't have all the time in the world to enjoy tea with you."

His brows frowned slightly, as though I was the biggest buzzkill to his mood. He scorned me and said, "I live life in pursuit of enjoying the quality of the finer things. If you think that I'm wasting your time, the exit is that way," the man said while pointing his slender finger at the door.

He knew clearly that I would not leave just yet, not before I got what I came for.

Pursing my lips, I once again picked up the tea cup and downed the drink in one big gulp. His condescending voice rang in front of me as I did so, "You ought to savour good tea in small sips, not downing it like some cheap wine!"

I put down the cup and stared at him. "It still ends up in the same place. I don't understand what's all the fuss about."

Furrowing his brows, the man poured another cup of tea from his pot and grunted, "Drink and taste it slowly!"

I was increasingly irritated. I wasn't even a tea person to begin with; not to mention differentiating the taste of the tea between big gulps and small sips. However, to get him off my back, I had no choice but to taste the tea his way.

Armond was finally satisfied with the show I put on. "Not bad."

I heaved a sigh of relief and fixed my gaze at him.

Unfazed by my glare, the man drank the last of his tea elegantly before he commented, "This is indeed exceptional tea."

Finally, his vision fell on me while his lips curled up in a smirk. "Am I to understand that you're willing to be with me?"

My brows furrowed into a knot as I tried to contain the mounting rage in my chest. "You already know that I'm a married woman. I can offer you money if that's what you're after. In addition, if you manage to save Summer, I'll make sure you get to keep my grandma's sandalwood box."

The man let out an unsettling chortle as he replied, "This bargaining chip is quite attractive indeed. However, that box is not the most urgent matter to my family. Right now, you're what I want the most."

I stood up, thinking that I had come all the way here for nothing.

"Don't be in such a hurry. I'm not done explaining myself. How are we going to be together when you're so impatient?" The content of his words could pass for something a boyfriend would say to his girlfriend. But the fact that they came from Armond just made me feel chilly all over.

I pursed my lips and remained silent.

This time he finally got straight to the point. "Okay, fine. There's no point going down that road again. Now, why don't you do me a favor, and I'll let you know how to replace your daughter's faulty organ with one that's functioning?"

"What's your condition?"

If one decides to broker a deal with the devil, one has to be prepared to go to hell.

For a few moments, he just stared at me until I was losing patience before he suddenly blurted, "Stay here to have dinner with us and be on your best behavior."

"You have company?" I asked while lifting my eyebrow.

At that moment, I heard a quick knock on our door and turned around to find a middle-aged woman walking toward us. Her otherwise elegant and beautiful features were shrouded by an overall shadow of long-term sickness, not unlike the pasty look on Hailey's face.

"Armond, I was told by the counter staff that you brought a friend here. Is this she?" the woman asked merrily.

The usual gloom and sinister looks on the man's face instantly replaced with that of warmth and tenderness. He stood up and spoke in the most respectful manner I had ever heard, "News travels fast, Mom. She just got here minutes ago."