

In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 26

The three men who walked out of the meeting room shifted their gazes over to me. With a slight raise of his brows and purse of his thin lips, Jared muttered a few words to Joseph, causing the latter to glance at me before taking his leave.

Ashton's gaze darkened as he stared at me. I had a feeling that he was about to unleash his wrath on me.

I hurriedly stood up upon thinking about Caleb. "I'm more than willing to compensate for all the losses incurred for the past two days, Mr. Fuller."

Ashton frowned while remaining silent. Instead, it was Joe who began to cause a stir. "You're incredible, Ms. Stovall. This is a project worth a few billion, and you've managed to incur your own husband a loss of over ten million in just two days! You're being far too generous!"

His words were dripping with sarcasm.

Seeing Ashton remain silent with a grim look on his face, I rolled my eyes at Joe. "You sure are a nosy one, Mr. Quinn."

Pfft! Jared stifled his laughter. With his hands in his pockets, he looked on with innocent eyes as though completely uninvolved.

Joe cast him a glare before turning to me, looking dour. "What makes you think you can talk to me like that, Scarlett Stovall?"

I really had no intention of wasting my breath talking to Joe. The guy never had anything nice to say to me because he thought I was always getting in between Ashton and Rebecca.

Still, we had known each other for a long time, so I chose not to mince my words. "Are you a king who has time-traveled to the future, Mr. Quinn? If so, I'm afraid only the likes of Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar would have the privilege of talking to you. You're from that era too, after all."

Joe's face flushed red in anger and he no longer held back his words. "Even a dead man has more right to talk to me than you do! To think you'd be wicked enough to kill off your own child—"

"Joe," Jared cut the man off sternly. "Ashton and Ms. Stovall have some matters to discuss. I've made a lunch reservation, so let's head over and wait for them there."

Then, he turned to me. "I believe you haven't had lunch either, Ms. Stovall. Why don't you and Ashton join us later?"

Before I could turn down his offer, the man left, dragging Joe along with him.

Only Ashton and I remained inside the large office. Unsure of how he intended to deal with the matter related to Caleb, I decided to break the ice. "I'm responsible for what happened. I stayed home to recuperate after the surgery and couldn't stop thinking about the child, so I completely forgot about Dr. Ludwick."

Ashton remained gloomy and silent, so I continued, "I know I've caused unimaginable losses to the company. I'd be more than willing to resign—"

"Is that how you intend to solve this issue?" Ashton suddenly asked. His voice and eyes were so chilly that I felt goosebumps.

"Yeah." I had it all planned out—now that I had a reason to quit, I could finally leave J City.

The tall man stood in front of me, letting out a cold chuckle and engulfing me with his frosty presence. "You got rid of the child, signed the divorce papers, and now, you're about to quit your job. What are you up to, Scarlett?"

My palms began to turn sweaty. I instinctively stepped backward, only to feel Ashton grab me by the waist. "Are you planning to leave J City?" he demanded, glaring at me with his sharp eyes.

"No!" I immediately denied it. "Haven't you been wanting to sign the papers? Now that I've signed them, you're finally free to be with Rebecca. What is there not to like about that?"

"Fine!" The man's smirk turned even more frigid as his grip on my waist tightened. "You know how much I hate it when others do as they please, Scarlett. Do you think I'd let you off so easily after you killed my child?"

“But you didn’t want the child.” I frowned, feeling increasingly bewildered. “Rebecca kept using it as leverage, so I figured I’d take things into my own hands instead of being coerced into getting an abortion!”

The air in the office grew even more chilly. As Ashton narrowed his eyes, I had a feeling that this man standing in front of me was like a vicious lion—one wrong move and he’d shred me into pieces.

“You’re a smart one, aren’t you?”

I didn’t know what he meant, but I certainly understood it wasn’t a compliment.

“Well, since you’ve already gotten rid of the child, that’s fine. We’ll just have another one.”

With that, he walked away. I remained frozen in place, staring at him in a daze. Perhaps these would have been words of encouragement if they came from a loving husband, but coming from him, they were nothing but crude.

“What are you waiting for? Let’s go,” he remarked coldly, turning back to glance at me.

In a moment of confusion, I merely grunted a response and trotted over to him.

Ashton took me to a huge courtyard with a restaurant within it. Upon entering the yard, a woman in a fancy gown walked toward us. “This way, please, Mr. Fuller.”

Then, she brought us past the yard into a room. There, I spotted Jared and Joe having a chat over some tea.

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As the lady left, Ashton walked over to the chair next to them and sat down, his eyes looking blank. “Why hasn’t the food arrived?”

Devon needs some time to prepare,” answered Jared before turning to me. “Are you hungry?”

After a quick pause, I shook my head.

Joe wasn't impressed by how Jared treated me. "Why are you acting so fragile? It's just an abortion, for God's sake. Why did we have to go out of our way to get a world-renowned chef like Devon to cook for you? What a waste of his time."

Before Jared could stop him, I merely smiled. "The view here isn't bad. I'll go take a walk."

My words were meant for Ashton and Jared.

Ashton gave me a cool glance and said nothing. "The courtyard looks stunning. Go take a look," Jared suggested. "There's also a bonsai garden with a lake full of fish in the middle."

With a smile and word of thanks, I headed outside.

"Are you insane, Jared? Why are you caring so much about that woman? Have you lost your mind? If she hadn't married Ashton through underhanded means, Rebecca and Ashton would've long been happily married by now."

Those words clearly came from Joe. I couldn't help but hear them even if I didn't want to. From how loudly he spoke, pretty much everyone in the building could hear him.

Not wanting to hear them anymore, I picked up my pace. It was indeed a different sight as I arrived in the courtyard.

Considering how this huge courtyard was located in the heart of a glamorous place like J City and even had an enormous plot of land for planting an array of greenery, there was no doubt that the owner of this restaurant was filthy rich.

As I strolled along the pebble path, I spotted a man in his mid-thirties plucking some branches with a child next to him.

Upon walking closer, the man noticed me too. "Hello," he greeted, dropping whatever he was doing.

I returned a smile. "Hi."

The child, who seemed to have just learned how to walk, began trotting over to me. He seems to be quite friendly.

Unable to speak, the little boy stared at me wide-eyed and gave me the yellow flower he was holding.

I was instantly overjoyed and couldn't help but want to pick him up, only to be stopped by the man. "Be careful! He's a playful one. I don't want you getting hurt while you're pregnant."

I stared at the man in disbelief. "How..." How did you know I was pregnant?

The question never left my mouth.

Still, the man responded, "Don't be surprised. I know a little about medicine and could guess that you're pregnant from the way you subconsciously held your belly while walking."

I nodded, feeling amazed by this man.

"This courtyard is really unique," I remarked. "It's like a vegetable garden."

The man couldn't help but chuckle. "Well, to be exact, this is a medicinal herb garden. There are over two thousand different species of medicinal plants here. They're on the brink of extinction, so they're being cultivated here."

Feeling stunned, I glanced at my surroundings carefully. Indeed, there weren't many vegetables here, but there were lots of unrecognizable plants as well as an unusually tall cactus.

"This place is called Herb Garden. J City is the most suitable area in the whole country to cultivate these plants, and that's how Herb Garden became the center of our country's medicinal herbs. There aren't many, but every species is being preserved." After sorting out the branches he had plucked, the man began to leave with his child.

I nodded, gaining a newfound liking for this place as I watched him and the little boy walk away.

Suddenly, the man stopped and called out to me, "Don't hang around too long, Mrs. Fuller! Some herbs here aren't good for the child."

Feeling taken aback, I returned to my senses only after they had walked far away. He knew who I was?

Soon, Ashton came out and saw me kneeling by a stream looking at ants. "Let's go," he called out, standing next to me.

I was so focused on whatever I was doing that I nearly slipped upon hearing his voice. Thankfully, he helped me up with his quick reflexes.

"Did you leave your brain at home?" Ashton asked, frowning.

I smiled sheepishly. "I spaced out."

The man turned and walked away without a word.

I couldn't help but notice that Ashton had been treating me less coldly for the past two days.

Following him from behind, I mustered up the courage to ask, "So Herb Garden isn't actually a restaurant?"

"Yeah," he answered briefly, clearly not interested in holding a conversation.

The man walked so quickly that it didn't take us long to return indoors, and the table was already filled with an array of dishes. Furthermore, apart from the four of us, there was now a family of three at the table too.

It was the man and little boy I had just met, along with a woman, who was the man's wife.

The man smiled as he saw me and turned to his wife. "Bring Mrs. Fuller some cuttlefish stew from the kitchen. It's good for the baby."

I paused briefly before thanking them. "The baby's already gone. What's the point in serving her that?" Joe muttered resentfully.

The way Ashton glanced at me made me feel anxious. Worried that he would infer something from the man's words, I hurriedly turned to him. "You haven't introduced me to this man!"

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From how gently I spoke, I probably sounded like a thoughtful wife.

Ashton's gaze on me darkened for a moment before he began to introduce the man briefly.

This man so happened to be Henry Lowell, the owner of this courtyard and heir of a prominent family of doctors. He was so passionate about medicinal herbs and ingredients that he decided to cultivate them here.

The beautiful woman with him was his wife, and the one-year-old child was his son.

After a brief exchange of greetings, I felt unsettled. I had been trying too hard to keep my pregnancy a secret from Ashton all this while; what if Henry were to reveal it?

Feeling worried, I couldn't help but glance at Jared, hoping he would think of a way to help me.

At this moment, Mrs. Lowell returned with the freshly cooked cuttlefish stew and beamed at me. "Try some of this, Mrs. Fuller. I loved this when I was pregnant. It may taste a little strange, but my husband added some nourishing herbs into it, so they're especially good for you. How many weeks old is your child?"

Suddenly feeling panicky, I returned a smile. "It was six weeks old, but Ashton and I hadn't planned for the child. That's why we decided to get an abortion."

The woman was dumbfounded and stared at me, looking rather doubtful. "You don't look like—"

"These are just some symptoms of false pregnancy, Mrs. Lowell. She'll be fine as time passes. I can't help but admire you and your husband, though. You're both so experienced that you could tell she was pregnant just by observing her." Jared, who was sipping some tea, finally spoke up.

Henry squinted for a moment before smiling and saying nothing more. Mrs. Lowell, on the other hand, still couldn't seem to believe I was merely exhibiting false pregnancy symptoms.

After our meal, Henry whispered something into his wife's ear, causing her to glance at me in surprise before nodding and leaving the room.

Then, Henry turned to Ashton. "Since you've come all the way here, I've prepared some herbs for Mrs. Fuller. If she takes them diligently, it won't be difficult for you both to have another child."

Ashton nodded and gazed at me emotionlessly. I couldn't tell what he was up to.

But somehow, it felt as though he had specifically brought me over to have Henry take a look at me. As for his reasons, I truly had no idea.

Feeling perplexed, I remained silent the whole time until we left.

It was already evening by the time we got into the car. Joe couldn't stand the sight of me, so he pestered Ashton to send me home.

Knowing they probably still had other matters to take care of, I got down and said I would take a cab.

Ashton didn't say much. He merely told me to be careful before leaving with the other two men.

My mind was filled with all sorts of worrying thoughts that I was unable to sleep at all. I considered approaching Jared, but couldn't as he was surely with Ashton now. With nowhere else in mind, I headed to Hour Bar.

The sky had gotten dark and the bar was fairly packed.

Macy was utterly shocked to see me. "What are you doing here instead of resting at home?" she demanded, looking like she wanted to beat me up.

"Relieving my boredom," I spat out before finding myself a seat.

Macy clutched her forehead, seemingly about to explode. "You've just had an abortion a few days ago, Ms. Stovall. Can you please take better care of yourself and stay home?"

Knowing she was worried about me, I turned to her. "Give me a glass of orange juice. Let's have a chat."

"I'm not here to relieve my boredom," she replied before heading to the counter.

Despite keeping my eyes on the bar's patrons, I couldn't help but wonder why Ashton had brought me to Herb Garden. Did he possibly suspect that I had kept the child?

"What are you spacing out about? Didn't you say you were bored to death? Let's go. I'll take you somewhere nice." Macy tapped me on the shoulder and began to drag me outside.

I followed her out of the bar in confusion. "Where are we going?"

"You'll find out when we get there!"

The entire street was filled with bars, and I thought she was just taking me out for a stroll. "Don't you feel bored taking me out like this instead of watching over your own place?"

"What are you talking about?" She pointed at a glamorous-looking nightclub nearby. "There are other people looking after my bar. Didn't you say you were bored? Well, I'm about to show you a whole new world!"

I hardly frequented anywhere else apart from Macy's bar, so my ears instantly felt like they were about to burst from the blaring music playing in the dazzling nightclub.

Macy seemed to know this place like the back of her hand. She found a nice spot on the second floor and called the manager over. "I want two of your men."

The manager immediately nodded. "Sure. I'll have a selection sent over to you."

I turned to Macy in despair. "What are you getting male hosts for?"

"To keep us company, of course!" she answered matter-of-factly before placing a glass of juice in front of me. "Have a look at them and pick anyone you like. They're much more skillful and gentle than Ashton. Don't waste your time thinking about him all day. You should put on an attitude too!"

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Before I could respond, the manager from earlier returned with over a dozen male models, stunning me into silence.

“Pick anyone you like. They have every kind of guy imaginable. Don’t you like those domineering Mr. CEO types? Take a look at that man in the suit. He looks just as good as Ashton, doesn’t he?” Macy remarked while choosing a youthful, puppy-like male model.

The model seemed awfully experienced. He walked over to Macy and carefully poured her a glass of wine before placing her hand in his. Macy showed no signs of refuting; she merely leaned into his arms.

My jaw dropped. Did this woman come here often?

No wonder she could never get a boyfriend...

“What are you staring at us for? Hurry up and choose your guy!” Macy urged.

Not knowing what to do at all, I smiled. “I... I’m good.”

Rolling her eyes at me, Macy pointed to the man in the suit. “You stay here and keep her company, then.”

After the other male models left, the man in the suit sat down next to me. I felt especially uncomfortable. Meanwhile, Macy and her guy prepared to leave and have more fun among themselves.

With just the two of us left here, I turned to the man in the suit and said awkwardly, “Uhh... I’m not—”

“You don’t have to explain, Miss. I understand,” the man responded with a grin. “Everyone’s like this the first time. You’ll get used to it.”

I...

I had no words.

On the other hand, the man readily tried to strike up a conversation. "What do you usually enjoy doing, Miss?"

I smiled. "I like reading."

"Well, it's no wonder you give off such a classy vibe."

Not knowing what to say, I got up. "I have to use the bathroom."

I never found the bathroom despite wandering around the club for a long time. Instead, I bumped into a few familiar faces.

Rebecca and Joe.

The two walked side by side, and we met while walking on the same path from opposite sides. I couldn't avoid them even if I wanted to.

Rebecca's smile instantly vanished as she saw me, and she turned to Joe. "What is she doing here?"

Joe was surprised too. He shook his head lightly. "Ashton told her to go home while we were at Herb Garden. He didn't let her come with us."

From their conversation, I could guess that the few of them had intended to meet up here. They probably didn't want me tagging along, which was why they had sent me away back at Herb Garden.

"Why do you follow Ashton wherever he goes, Scarlett? How shameless could you be?" Joe never had anything nice to say to me, so he didn't hold back the moment he opened his mouth.

Not bothering to explain in detail, I answered briefly, "You think too much. I'm here with a friend."

I didn't have the time to stalk Ashton everywhere.

Rebecca eyed me from head to toe and narrowed her eyes. "Didn't you just get an abortion? What are you doing in a place like this?"

."She's probably sad and lonely. Ashton never touches her, so she has no choice but to find someone else." Joe never knew when to shut up

I frowned, feeling a wave of anger rise within me. "You should rinse your mouth when you get home, Mr. Quinn. You're polluting the air."

I never liked either of them, so I hastily turned to leave.

Yet, Rebecca stood in my way and sneered at me. "It's only been a few days since we last met, and you're getting all smart-mouthed again, huh? Have you not signed the divorce papers? You don't think Ash would actually stay with a woman who just lost a child, do you?"

Feeling increasingly livid, I glared at her coldly and scoffed, "Have you already forgotten that you've just lost your child too, Rebecca?"

"You..." The woman turned red with fury and swung her arm at me, but I grabbed it in time.

"If playing innocent is what you're into, you'd better a better job. Ashton's going to hate you if he saw what you just tried to do."

With that, I shoved her arm away and prepared to leave.

Unexpectedly, Rebecca had decided to set me up. The moment I let go of her, she deliberately stumbled and collapsed against the wall next to her.

From far, it looked as though I had pushed her.

To make matters worse, Ashton and Jared had just walked over. They saw what just happened.

"Are you out of your mind, Scarlett?" Joe yelled while helping Rebecca up. "All she did was say a few words to you! Did you have to do that?"

A few words? Should I have let her insult me, then?

"If you have no intention of using your eyes and brain, please give them to someone who needs them, Mr. Quinn. Don't waste what you've been given." I just couldn't understand why Ashton would hang around someone as despicable as this man.

With Ashton and Jared watching from the sidelines with their hands in their pockets, I shot a glance at them and got ready to leave without even sparing them a greeting.

Yet, Joe decided to grab onto my hand. "You're leaving after running your mouth and hitting someone? Were you raised by dogs, Scarlett?"

"Are you mental, Joe? When did I ever push her? You're whining about me running my mouth, but you started it!" I was in an awful mood to begin with, so I really didn't want to be involved with this bunch. I began to walk away after breaking free from Joe's grasp.

But just when my shoulder touched Ashton's, the latter held me by the wrist, forcing me to stop in my tracks and gaze at him.

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The man's face instantly darkened, and his eyes turned frosty. Evidently, he was mad.

"Can I help you, Mr. Fuller?" I didn't feel like I was Ashton's wife at all here, but rather, an outsider.

The more I felt this way, the more upset I became.

Even the way I gazed at Ashton was full of defiance.

"Apologize." His tone was completely commanding.

My brows creased as rage consumed me. "Have you lost it, Ashton? Why the hell should I apologize?"

"You pushed her," he replied grimly in his deep voice.

I pushed her? I laughed in anger. "You should get your eyes checked, Ashton!"

“Scarlett Stovall!” The man immediately addressed me by my full name. “Apologize to her now.”

“And if I don’t?” Suppressing my anger, I glared at him, unafraid of his glacier eyes.

With a frown and purse of his lips, a chilly air engulfed our surroundings. “Macy’s bar seems to be doing a little too well these days, huh?”

I was instantly terrified. How could this man resort to such lowly methods just to get me to apologize to Rebecca?

I looked up at the man

’s face. His lips remained pursed, and he had a bit of stubble, making him look unruly yet alluring at the same time.

But at this very moment, I couldn’t admire that face of his at all. My heart growing cold, I stilled for a moment before speaking. “Fine. I’ll apologize.”

Breaking free of his grasp, I walked over to Rebecca. Suppressing all the wrath I felt, I gazed at her. “I’m sorry.”

Rebecca looked incredibly helpless as though I had actually bullied her.

Meanwhile, Joe obviously had nothing better to do than to stir things up. “So you think you just have to apologize after hitting someone? In that case, I’ll kill a guy and say sorry, and everything will be fine. Who needs the law, right?” he remarked with a look of disdain.

Holy sh*t.

Once again, I resisted the urge to cuss him out. “What else do you want from me?” I turned to him and asked frostily.

He crossed his arms in a matter-of-fact way. “We buddies have a rule—whatever messes up has to apologize sincerely and hold a drinking session for everyone. When we’re happy, you’ll be forgiven.”

You dipsh*t!

How is THAT a way to apologize?

“Knock it off, Joe.” Jared, who had been watching the whole time, furrowed his brows.

Joe didn’t bother looking at him and glanced at Ashton instead. “What do you think, Ashton?”

Ashton’s gaze on me darkened, and the crease between his brows deepened. After a long while, he turned to Rebecca. “What do propose we do?”

Rebecca lowered her head slightly. She spoke softly, but everyone could hear her. “Scarlett’s your wife, so you decide.”

You pretentious little b*tch.

I held it in and turned to Joe. “So, where shall we drink?”

Jared walked up to me and frowned. “Have you got no fear?”

I knew what he meant. I had to be careful since there was another life inside of me. Who knew what would happen if I decided to drown myself in alcohol?

Joe obviously didn’t want Jared to rain on their parade. “Stop meddling, Jared! Let’s go, Ms. Stovall.”

I followed them to their room.

As though afraid I wouldn’t get knocked out, Joe ordered ten bottles of whiskey and two crates of beer.

“Think you can handle this, Ms. Stovall?”

“Ha!” I wanted to laugh. Does he think this is fun?

After filling ten glasses with beer, Joe said to me, “The rule here is that you can get anyone here to drink for you—anyone at all. But that depends on your own abilities. If you can’t convince anyone to help you, you’ll have to drink everything on your own.”

Seeing the table full of glasses, I frowned as I subconsciously placed a hand over my belly. Hang in there, my baby, I prayed silently.

I picked up a glass and began to drink. Yet, my stomach began to churn from just a few sips.

“Ugh!” Unable to contain my nausea, I dashed toward the bathroom and retched over the toilet.

Jared followed me from behind and stroked my back. “Show Ashton your vulnerable side and ask him to help you. You’re his wife, after all. He won’t let Joe do as he pleases.”

I smirked coldly. Unlike Rebecca, I wasn’t someone who could captivate the hearts of men just by shedding a few tears.

Not responding to that, I asked him, “Is there anything that can reduce the side effects on the baby?”

He nodded. “But drugs are drugs. They can’t undo all the harm.”

“That’s fine. Please get me some later.”

I left the bathroom. Joe had put on a song and was casually singing when I made my way back. “What’s wrong? Can’t even handle one glass?”

Not bothering with him, I glanced at the table. Apart from the glass I had drunk from, all the others remained untouched.

Ashton and Rebecca sat close to each other. I watched as the woman muttered something to him, and he responded with a slight nod.

The man’s gaze darkened upon seeing me, but he soon looked away.

Feeling my heart ache, I walked to the table and glanced at Joe. “I hope you won’t go back on your word, Mr. Quinn.”