In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 921

"Hannah!" I shrieked. I fastened my gaze on the man she was clinging to. He was tall and attired in a black down jacket. That man wasn't exactly handsome, but his height and confidence imbued him with a magnetic aura.

The five of us engaged in this stand-off without anyone speaking for a while. I sneaked a peek at John and noticed that his face had grown thunderous and his eyes wild. After a long while, John spluttered, "How long has it been?"

Hannah looked unaffected as she casually replied, "A few months." Those words, and all the enormity of their meaning, hung in the air between us.

John suddenly gave a loud snort. Flashing her a scornful look, he asked, "Why?"

"There's no reason why, John. All relationships must come to an end somehow," Hannah said breezily. Her manner seemed entirely frivolous.

Hearing her response, John hung his head. He seemed to be laughing at the sheer absurdity of the situation as his shoulders shook uncontrollably. Undoubtedly, he was unable to restrain himself any further as his emotions swelled within him and burst out in a torrent.

Without hesitation, John lunged forward and punched the other man hard in the face. Due to the pure impulse of his move, however, John's blow did not land as well as he had probably hoped it would.

I expected Hannah to cry out in indignation or beg for mercy, but she remained unflappable. She merely crossed her arms and retreated. It was as if she was a mere spectator of the fight rather than its motive.

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Meanwhile, Ashton drew me behind him protectively. We, too, watched on without intervening.

It was only when it seemed that John was on the verge of beating the other man to death that Hannah finally spoke.

"Let him go, John. If you're still mad, take it out on me. He doesn't know what's going on at all," she said with an aggravating coolness.

John paused and looked at her savagely. His eyes were bloodshot. However, he simmered down and slowly walked over to Hannah. "What do you want?" he asked with difficulty.

I had always known that John was in love with Hannah. He had his demons, and to him, Hannah had always been a place of refuge from the rest of the world. I suppose John had always firmly believed that Hannah would never leave nor betray him. In his mind, Hannah was the lighthouse that would always be waiting patiently back at the shore for him to sail home.

Yet John had forgotten that people were terribly fickle beings. He had made Hannah wait for him for too long a time. She was a woman, after all, and needed a man to love and care for her. After some time, Hannah had finally grown weary of being left out in the cold.

Hannah looked at John. She either did not notice the melancholy in his eyes or merely refused to see it. Exhaling deeply, Hannah said, "Kiki belongs to the Stovall family, so I won't take him with me. The villa and the car are both under your name, so I'll return them to you. As for everything else, let me keep them. I'll take them as a reward for staying by your side all these years."

Hannah let out a deep breath, then laughed mournfully. "There isn't much else. Other than Kiki, we don't have any other common possessions. At least the legal side of things won't be too complicated. If you don't have time or energy to care for Kiki, I will. However, you'll need to pay child support. I won't ask for anything else from you."

It was heartrending to see a relationship reduced thus to the stark, bare-bones of assets and payments. There was nothing left to say between John and Hannah. Even goodbye felt redundant.

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John's emotions had gradually subsided. He then merely replied, "We'll talk about it when we get back."

Without waiting for Hannah's response, John walked heavily towards his car. He started it and drove off without a second glance at anyone else.

Ashton and I remained where we were. As for Hannah, she watched as John's car gradually vanished in the distance, then turned towards the man sitting on the ground. "Are you all right?" she asked nonchalantly.

The man softened and patted Hannah's arm reassuringly. "I'm fine."

I stared at them, lost for words. After a while, we simply turned and walked away.

Feeling heavyhearted, I remained silent even after we'd gotten back to the car and driven off.

"Don't worry. I've sent someone to follow John. He'll be fine!" Ashton said reassuringly beside me.

I looked at him, then replied shortly, "I'm not worried about John. It's Hannah I'm concerned about. She was clearly in love with John. Why did she suddenly decide to give up their relationship?"

Ashton rested one hand on the steering wheel, his elbow on the door of the car, a picture of placid serenity. With an air of wisdom, he philosophized, "Autumn doesn't arrive in the middle of spring. And when it does, the leaves on the trees don't fall all at once. Perhaps Hannah was made to wait for too long and lost hope in the relationship."

I bit my lip and turned away. Unbeknownst to Ashton, I was no stranger to that feeling.

I'd drifted off to sleep on the drive back, and Ashton had picked me up and carried me straight into the bedroom. I opened my eyes blearily to look at Ashton, who was getting undressed and ready to shower at the side of the room. "I don't know what's happening to me lately," I moaned. "I get drowsy very quickly and feel rather weak."

Ashton froze at my offhand remark, his hands arrested in the middle of taking his shirt off. He lowered them slowly and turned to me with a peculiar beam on his face. Delighted, he proclaimed, "We'll make a trip to the hospital tomorrow!"

In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 922

I found Ashton's reaction rather bizarre and asked, "Why go to the hospital? It's not that big of a deal."

Ashton sauntered over to my side and looked fondly down at me. "Everyone should go for an annual medical checkup. I think it's been about a year since you last went for one."

I nodded absently, then lay back down on the bed. Since Ashton had left the bed to me, I sprawled happily across its entire width while sighing in satisfaction and comfort.

It was the beginning of winter, and the temperature in K City had plummeted sharply. Ashton was insistent on sending me to the hospital and was up and about early in the morning. I'd been disturbed from my sleep by his bustling about and sat in the living room still yawning, half-awake.

That morning, Ashton had poured out some cereal for both of us. "Would you like some chopped nuts?" he asked, popping his head out of the kitchen.

I nodded, my eyes teary from the multiple yawns I'd just unleashed. "Sure."

It was a cold, misty morning. I couldn't help but shudder at the thought of stepping out into the frigid air and made a mental note to myself to don a few more layers before leaving.

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Ashton emerged from the kitchen with the two bowls of cereal in hand. He placed them on the table, then added, "Would you like some pancakes as well?"

I sneezed, then sniffed at Ashton, "No need. I'll just have the cereal. Since we're going to the hospital, why don't we drop by my Mom's place and bring Summer along? We can get her checked out at the same time."

Ashton agreed. "Let's eat, then!"

Without another word, I slurped the cereal noisily. Ashton gave me a look, then chided, "Can't you eat a little more gracefully?"

I felt thoroughly humbled, like a child who had just received a smack on the wrist.

Just then, I recalled that Nora was back in K City, so I reminded Ashton. "Nora's back in K City. We should bring her out for a meal to catch up and play the host. Besides, I don't feel too safe leaving her to Armond."

Ashton nodded, then replied, "All right. Ask her over to stay, then, or arrange for her to stay in a hotel. It isn't safe anyway for a woman to be wandering around K City alone."

"Armond won't hurt her, will he?" I asked anxiously. Ever since the incident at the warehouse, my opinion of Armond had been totally turned on its head. I was thus a little wary of whether Nora could be entrusted to him.

Noting that I had finished my cereal, Ashton nudged his bowl of cereal over to me. "You're hungry, aren't you? Eat up!" he encouraged.

I felt a sense of warmth within me. Actually, I wasn't that hungry, but I ate the rest of the cereal with pleasure anyway.

I'd actually wanted to probe more into the matter, but Ashton forbade me. "We can talk later. Finish your breakfast first."

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Ashton had always been rather traditional this way. He firmly believed we should be focused on gaining nutrients rather than information during meals between the two of us.

With that, I nodded docilely, then finished the rest of the cereal before me.

After breakfast, I dawdled a little all the way to the door, putting on my shoes slowly in the hallway. Ashton had gone ahead to start the car. Just then, my phone rang shrilly in my bag. I fished it out only to see Mrs. Brooks' name flashing across the screen. I answered, "Mrs. Brooks!"

Before she could even speak, I felt a rush of woe over the phone. Mrs. Brooks gave a long sigh, then said, "Mrs. Fuller, Renee passed away last night. She said she wanted to be buried with her mother. I brought her back to K City with me today. I don't have any close friends or family, and you were probably the one who showed her the most affection in this life. If you have time to spare, Renee's grandfather and I would like to invite you to her funeral."

My mind went blank. Ashton had already driven the car out to the front. However, I remained in my seat, staring ahead blankly as my head throbbed.

Ashton leaped out of the car and ran up to me, puzzled. "What's wrong?"

I hadn't hung up the phone, so Mrs. Brooks' voice drifted over the line, fearfully asking, "Mrs. Fuller, are you there?"

"I'm here," I snapped. I was choking up and struggled to get the words out of my throat. With a frown, Ashton eyed me as he placed an arm around my shoulders.

"Renee will be buried at Woodhills. She said she wanted to lie next to her mother," Mrs. Brooks declared through her tears, her voice hoarse. She'd evidently spent the past few days mourning.

I made a small sound of acknowledgment. Heartbroken, I drew in a deep breath and said, "All right. We'll come over in a while, Mrs. Brooks."

"Thank you, Mrs. Fuller," Mrs. Brooks sniffled in a low voice. We then ended the call somberly.

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When I placed my phone back in my bag, Ashton squinted at me with obvious disquiet in his eyes. "What happened?"

I paused, then said brokenly, "It's Sasha's daughter, Renee. Her grandparents did not continue her treatment and brought her to Turlen instead. Renee passed away mid-journey, and her body will arrive in K City today to be buried."

Ashton frowned. After a moment of silence, he suggested, "Can we go over after we've visited the hospital?"

I shook my head. "Let's go to the airport. We'll accompany them all the way to the cemetery."

Ashton agreed after some deliberation. "OK, I'll come with you."

The news of Renee's sudden departure had stupefied me. I'd always held out the hope that as long as she endured this present suffering, she'd eventually recover.