

# In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 1476

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Obstinately, Ashton remained standing where he was. He cast a backward glance to see Joseph hurrying in with a stack of gifts.

“Scarlett prepared these small tokens for Mom and Dad,” Ashton explained evenly.

Baffled, I looked at Ashton. When had all these been prepared? Had Ashton already predicted that I’d leave John behind to attend the dinner with him?

My mind was swimming with thoughts.

Tiffany tossed her head uncaringly. Joseph, laden down by the weight of the gifts in his arms, tottered awkwardly into the room.

Just then, a deep voice commanded regally, “There’s no need to make such a fuss. We’re family, after all. Housekeeper, take those things from him.”

As if on cue, the housekeeper nervously stepped forward, stiffly receiving the items from Joseph. The atmosphere within the room instantly eased.

It was Nathaniel who had spoken. I’d only heard his voice before and had only taken the briefest of glances at his photo. I was surprised to see that he was casually attired and looked rather youthful. Nathaniel appeared distinctly approachable, unlike the elderly patriarch I’d envisioned in my mind.

Experience told me, however, that there was more below the surface than met the eye.

As he watched the housekeeper set the items down conscientiously, Ashton suddenly turned and leisurely placed his arm around my shoulder. He then led Gregory and me to the sofa next to where Nicolas was sitting.

We’d barely sat down when Tiffany began her whining once more.

“Ashton, you take pains to ignore me whenever we’re in the office. Let’s take this opportunity today to thrash things out. You’ve removed me from my position as the Finance Director and terminated my subordinates. What are you planning to achieve? Don’t forget that the company doesn’t belong to you alone! I’m your own flesh and blood. I should be the one you trust the most!”

As Tiffany spewed her discontent, the maid arrived with cups of hot tea for us. Ashton calmly poured out a cup, then handed it to me. “Have some tea,” he said placidly.

Tiffany bit her tongue in anger. She seethed as she watched Ashton deliberately stir his tea, then drink it slowly. “Are you even listening to me?” Tiffany asked querulously.

Ashton glanced coolly at Tiffany. Menacingly, he growled, “Shut up.”

It felt as if the air in the room had congealed, and the temperature dropped by a few degrees. A shiver danced down my spine.

The smug look on Tiffany’s face remained. She seemed snooty, even emboldened by the fact that she was on her turf and under the Hall family’s protection.

Tiffany thus paid no heed to Ashton’s solemn warning. Instead, she drew herself up and pounced onto me, clawing at my arm. “It’s all because of you! How dare you pretend to be Scarlett and seduce my brother? Get out!”

Ashton stood up. Towering over Tiffany, he glared at her with such hatred that even I, despite not being the object of his attention, quaked inwardly.

It was Tiffany’s first time witnessing this side of Ashton. She gaped at him, cowering in terror.

Ashton’s muscular arm suddenly shot out and grabbed Tiffany’s neck in a stranglehold.

His movements were so swift that it frightened even Joseph, who was used by now to Ashton’s capricious ways. “Mr. Fuller!” he gasped.

Ashton, as if possessed, maintained his merciless grip on Tiffany's neck. Within less than a minute, Tiffany's pale face had turned a deep shade of violet.

Locked in Ashton's hands that clamped upon her neck like iron shackles, Tiffany struggled. She frantically hit his arms, pleading for release.

She barely managed to gasp, almost inaudibly, "Ash... Ashton... let go..."

"You're right. You're my own flesh and blood. You should know how brutal I can be, yet you continued testing my limits. You deserve what you've got coming to you." Ashton said with a deadly calm.

Indeed, Ashton looked entirely prepared to let Tiffany die by his own hand.

I was absolutely sure that if no one stopped him, Ashton would have finished Tiffany off there and then.

That moment felt utterly surreal. It was as if a gruesome scene from a movie was playing out right before my very eyes. I instinctively reached out to shield Gregory from the sight, my heart palpitating wildly.

If Ashton murdered Tiffany in cold blood, the rest of Gregory's life would be hell.

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I gulped. Summoning all the courage I had left within me, I reached out and tugged Ashton's sleeve gingerly. "Ash... Ashton?" I stammered.

A brief shudder ran through Ashton. With a start, he released Tiffany.

Tiffany crumpled to the floor like a rag doll.

The maid ran forward anxiously and helped Tiffany over to the sofa. All other eyes in the room, including that of Nicolas', were fixed on Ashton simultaneously. Nicolas slammed his newspaper onto the table, jolting the already-frayed nerves of everyone present. "Are you trying to rebel against me?" he roared.

Ashton glanced at me, then down at Gregory, apparently unaffected by Nicolas' outburst. He then looked over to Tiffany's inert body with undisguised contempt.

He strolled over to where she lay feebly, then sneered, "Will you say it, or shall I make you?"

"I'll admit it, I'll confess to everything! Just have mercy on me. I was wrong, Ashton," Tiffany babbled. She was almost incoherent with fear. Clenching the pillow she'd picked up from the sofa, Tiffany hid her face behind it as if she could thus avoid Ashton's wrath.

"I lied! You were never engaged to Thora. She promised me benefits in return for matchmaking the two of you... Joseph is your most loyal subordinate. Emery has both a good professional and personal relationship with you. I was the one who manufactured Scarlett's obituary. She didn't betray you. Audrey's also your daughter... Dad was the one who arranged for the hypnosis. We sealed your memories for your own good! I was wrong, but surely it doesn't merit a death sentence! Give me another chance, please, Ashton. I'm begging you, please have mercy on me..."

Tiffany was almost groveling at this point. She had crawled onto the floor and knelt at Ashton's feet, clutching at him wildly. Tears poured down her face in torrents.

My hands still covered Gregory's eyes, but Tiffany's sheer despair permeated any refuge I could offer him from this nightmarish sequence of events. He began to whimper.

I stroked Gregory's back, partly to comfort and partly to quieten him down.

Tiffany's every desire had been accommodated to since she was young. Everything she ate or wore had to be of luxurious quality. Tiffany could get anything she set her heart upon. This fine upbringing had thus culminated in her attitude of absolute complacency.

However, Ashton had viciously brought Tiffany's whole world crashing down about her. She could not even begin to comprehend the bitter environment that Ashton had grown up in, in which he'd carefully cultivated his thirst for vengeance.

As Ashton had declared, Tiffany got what she deserved.

Tiffany's near-incoherent ramble had ignited, rather than extinguished, the fury within Ashton. Narrowing his eyes, Ashton looked at Nicolas.

"Do you want to explain?" Ashton snarled. The grimace he wore looked almost demonic in its rage.

Nicolas remained unfazed. He had watched his daughter's disgrace without flinching. I thought I'd even seen a glimmer of loathing flash across his eyes as if despising Tiffany for the shame she'd incurred.

After a moment, Nicolas replied smoothly, "I'd initially thought that you showed the most promise and was the one most set to inherit my position among the three of you. From the looks of it now, however, I think I overestimated you."

Nicolas then gave a slight nod to the bodyguard who had been standing unobtrusively in the side of the room. He immediately fished out a stack of documents and spread them out on the table.

The photo stood out immediately amongst the rest of the documents. It clearly featured, in high definition, a snapshot of the time I'd spent with Marcus.

"You almost lost your life six years ago because of Scarlett. I saved you! After so many years, you're still adamant about committing the same mistake. Now, you're betraying your family for another Scarlett once more. Take a good look. Is this person the woman you love? She's just a substitute! When are you going to wake up and realize that?" Nicolas shouted.

Ashton's eyes swept over the array of documents, then pursed his lips critically. "It's true that you saved me. Don't pretend to be so noble, though. You knew that I had to be alive for the Hall family to continue living in peace."

Ashton paused. He picked up the photo and examined it closely, then snorted, flicking it away as if it was useless garbage. "There's no need for you to interfere with my business. Perhaps you should worry about your own route of escape first."

"Have you remembered everything?" The neutral expression on Nicolas' face suddenly shifted.

Ashton, however, remained silent.

Maddened by Ashton's absolute disregard for him, Nicolas violently stood up, bellowing, "Ashton, I'm talking to you!"

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The corners of Ashton's mouth twitched. Snidely, he remarked, "Does it matter whether I've remembered anything or not? I didn't even know that you were alive for half my lifetime. Don't you have your own ways of dealing with things regardless?"

Nicolas' face had turned crimson with anger, and the veins on his neck were nearly popping out of his taut skin. "That was a matter of expedience!" he retorted.

"The fake accident was a matter of expedience. My kidnapping was a matter of expedience. So was hurting the woman I loved and separating my two children..." Ashton repeated mockingly. "You've spent your whole live plotting. What's the point of even living, then?"

Nicolas' chest was heaving with rage. Shaking his finger threateningly at Ashton, Nicolas fumed, "Ashton, do you think you can be the CEO of Fuller Corporation without my support?"

The look of tranquility that Ashton maintained throughout Nicolas' rebuke was almost ridiculous in contrast to Nicolas' extreme ire.

Ashton's eyes met Nicolas' levelly. He then said breezily, "Do you want mutual destruction? Perhaps you could have achieved that six years ago. Let's see how you try it now. You might manage to do it if I don't succeed in ruining the entire Hall family first!"

I recalled John telling me that ever since he'd obtained custody of Gregory, Nicolas had recklessly placed all of his eggs in the one basket that was the Fuller Corporation. On the one hand, it would be useful for thoroughly manipulating Ashton. On the other, Ashton was admittedly the most gifted at doing business than anyone else in the Hall family.

After the incident at the island, the Hall family had suffered severe repercussions. It had been impossible for Nicolas to personally intervene, resulting in many complications. The Fuller Corporation had proven to be most useful at the crucial point in time.

Nicolas had allowed himself to be ensnared by his faith in his own hypnosis techniques, never dreaming that Ashton would one day emerge from his stupor.

Nicolas looked at Ashton, utterly aghast. He frantically dismissed Ashton's claim with a leer, saying, "So what if you succeed in ruining the Hall family? You won't be able to bring Scarlett back to life. You may despise the Hall family but the blood flowing through your veins is the same as ours. Your fate is irreparably bound with ours. If the Hall family is destroyed, do you think you'll be able to escape unscathed?"

Ashton met Nicolas' eyes steadily. Smiling faintly, Ashton answered, "Is that so? I don't think there's any benefit to being a member of the Hall family, though."

Not to be outdone, Nicolas sniffed, and said, "Stop lying to yourself. Is there anything you possess that hasn't been purchased by me? The food you eat, the clothes you wear, your prestigious position, weren't all of those given readily to you?"

"I'm willing to give up everything. Even if I leave the Hall family and shed everything, I'll still be Ashton Fuller. I'll still be Scarlett's husband and the father of my children. What about all of you? What will be left of the Hall family when I'm gone?" Ashton taunted. Both Ashton and Nicolas had entered into this fight tooth and nail. Neither evidently had any qualms about ripping the other's dignity to shreds.

"Very well," Nicolas said ominously. A perverse gleam shone in his eyes as he continued, "Let's see just what you're capable of, then."

The tension in the room was unendurable. No one dared to meet anyone else's eyes.

Suppressing his rage, Ashton had pressed his lips tightly into a thin white line. Through gritted teeth, he asked, "Where are those researchers?"

The mention of them roused Nicolas with a start. He gave a dry laugh, then sneered, "The researchers? Are you talking about the project the company invested in? You're the one who's supposed to be coordinating that. How would I know?"

Ashton's hands had been hanging by his side. He now cracked his knuckles, exuding an intimidating aura.

Assuming that Ashton would not dare to lay hands on him, Nicolas pressed, "It must be a pretty big project if you're taking it so seriously. You can't miss out on having these experts on your team. Once you've found them, bring me along to meet them. We may not get along but that shouldn't affect our business efforts."

Looking meaningfully at Ashton, Nicolas emphasized, "After all, we're a family. We should help each other. Nothing is considered too much to ask. If someone wants to abandon ship, though, don't blame us for doing what we must to survive."

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He stood up and walked past Ashton. As he sauntered towards the stairs, he casually said, "I don't think we need to carry on with this meal. Dismiss, everyone."

The next second, a loud sound of glass shattering onto the ground rang in the living room.

As I turned around, Ashton was standing there with his fists clenched tightly, seething with anger.

Roses and broken pieces of porcelain lay in a pool of water, dirtying the clean floor. The vase that was originally placed on the coffee table was now gone.

A maid rushed over and said tentatively, "Sir, we'll clean this up. You..."

Ashton did not reply, he just stood still. When the maid was about to start cleaning up the mess, he turned abruptly and left, scaring the poor maid.

This wealthy family had too much drama. Since he had left, I had no reason to stay here as an outsider. Taking Gregory with me, I rushed out to catch up with Ashton.

He was still very agitated. As soon as he reached the door, he snatched the car key from the chauffeur and got behind the wheel.

Upon seeing that, Joseph clenched his fists anxiously. "Sh\*t! He might get into danger."

I cast him a glance and pondered for a second before handing Gregory to him. "Send Gregory home first."

With that, I jogged towards the car and slid inside right before Ashton started the car.

He whipped around and glared at me with his fury eyes. Locking eyes with him, I could not help but gulp nervously.

"Get out," he enunciated his sentence word by word.

"You wish!" Feigning calmness, I looked away, fastened my seat belt, and stared ahead. "Go on. I have some things to talk to you about."

He narrowed his eyes at me and stared me down for a couple more seconds before releasing the brake pedal and raced out of the house.

Luckily, there were not many cars on the road and he continued to speed down the highway and drove around the riverside for about twenty minutes before finally stopping the car.

I was glad that I had experienced Millie's driving skills before. If not, I would not have stay composed throughout this deadly journey.

Ashton lit a cigarette, took a long drag on it, and slumped into his seat. As he rested his arm by the window, he closed his eyes and continued to puff on his cigarette.

The light from the streetlamp shone into the car and silhouetted his perfect side profile, adding a hint of mysteriousness onto him.

I went straight to the point. "I see you've regained your memories."

However, he did not reply. The air was so still that I could hear him breathing.

Turning to him, I raised my voice and said solemnly, "You've always known about the things Tiffany had done, but instead of seeking justice for your deceased lover, you've opted to act as if you don't know anything to shield your family's mistakes. Am I right?"

He opened his eyes and stared at me with his bloodshot eyes. "What are you trying to say?"

I gave him a faint smile and said half-jokingly, "Well, I need to know the person who I'm working with, don't I? Ashton, do you still remember the first time you meet me? You looked disdainfully at me. It was as if you had believed that your lover, 'Scarlett Stovell', was long dead. That was why you regarded me

as an insignificant outsider. In fact, you're just the same as your family—no longer hoping for her to come back.”

Too many things had happened in the past six years, and I needed to find the answers one by one.

For example, why the first person I saw after waking up was Marcus, who had been missing for a long time? And why did I become his fiancée?

Besides, why did the Stovall family and the Moore family leave while the Fuller family became the one who dominated the business in the city?

And how did the obituary that could only be published by close family members be made without Ashton's knowledge?

Clutching at the hem of my dress, I willed myself to stay calm and looked at the man beside me with a steady gaze.

After six years of being surrounded by the “familial warmth” of the Hall family, I was no longer sure if Ashton, the man who was once the light of my life, was still the man who loved me with all his heart and soul.

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Seeing that I had seen through his act, Ashton looked away in embarrassment and snapped, “That's none of your business.”

He then placed his other hand on the steering wheel and took another drag of his cigarette. “Bear in mind that you're just Scarlett's substitute.”

Under a veil of the cigarette smoke, he drew a rather lonesome figure as if he had worn himself to a frazzle, trying to bear all the lies and deceptions in his life.

As he refused to say anything else, I had no choice but to stop pressing him for more information.

As the saying goes, you can't wake a person who is pretending to be asleep. Moreover, with his personality, no one on earth could make him say something he refused to say.

An hour later, after he finished half a pack of his cigarettes, he finally started the car again and returned home.

Halfway through the journey, Gregory called and said he wanted a cake from the bakery we went to previously, so I asked Ashton to stop the car when we were passing by the mall.

When I was unfastening my seat belt, he said with a hint of contempt in his voice, "Why bother to get the cake by yourself? You can always get someone else to deliver it straight to the house."

I paused in my movement and rolled my eyes at him. "It's more thoughtful to get it myself. Nah, I can't blame you for not knowing this. How could Ashton, the genius in the business realm, understand the importance of sincerity? Don't worry, you don't need to come with me. I'll go by myself while you wait for me here."

With that, I got out of the car and headed to the mall. Two minutes later, a well-built figure appeared and walked alongside me to the mall.

Curious, I glanced up and saw Ashton's chin. "Didn't you think that this is a waste of time?"

He did not even glance at me. "My son is worth the time."

I chuckled inwardly. This guy is so full of himself.

Ignoring him, I whipped around and deliberately walked faster, leaving him behind.

As we entered the bakery at the basement level, the cake that Gregory liked happened to have just one left. Overjoyed, I pointed at the cake and said, "I'd like to take away this cake."

The store manager seemed to be in a hurry to close his business. He gave me a perfunctory smile, put the cake into a take-out box, and handed me the box without giving me a carryout bag.

Worried that Ashton might get impatient, I did not care much and took out my wallet. "How much is it?"

"It's on the house. Please leave as soon as possible." The manager hurriedly put away all the leftover desserts and pressed on his Bluetooth earpiece. "We're going to close soon. Sorry for that. You can come again next time."

It's for free?

They close at seven? Isn't it too early?

Holy crap, is he a filthy rich guy who opens a small bakery to experience a commoner's life? I had no other choice but to leave him a fifty on the counter before taking away the cake.

As we walked towards the exit, I kept thinking about the strange behavior of the store manager.

He looked young, and when he tapped on his earpiece, he had his other hand in his pocket.

Besides, I noticed that there were no other customers in the mall since Ashton and I entered here.

In an instant, I started to feel a trace of panic rising in me. However, when I saw that Ashton was still as calm as ever, I took a deep breath and calmed myself down, consoling myself that I was probably overthinking matters.

As soon as we stepped out of the bakery, an elevator nearby dinged and opened, revealing a man in a cap and a camo inside. He came out and strode in our direction.

Without much thought, I immediately tugged on Ashton's sleeve and pulled him to the escalator at the other side. This floor was absolutely empty, so the man in a camo spotted us instantly and rushed towards the escalator next to us.

Seeing him getting closer to us, my heart started to race, and my breathing turned rapid.

The shops in the mall were all open, but it was all quiet, and no one was loitering around. I suddenly thought of the bakery shop manager who seemed to be warning me to leave immediately.

And the cautious, serious look was more like a plainclothes police officer!

As I glanced sideways surreptitiously, I immediately locked eyes with the eyes of the suspicious man. He had taken off his cap and was leaning against the handrail. When he saw me looking at him, he grinned.