## In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 1081

He sat back down and threw a casual glance my way. "Judging from the way you look... let me guess, we're being held captive by Armond?

My brows knitted into a frown after seeing him so unbothered. What the heck is he doing?"How are you taking this so calmly? We're literally trapped here, yet you seem relaxed. Aren't you afraid of being killed by Armond?"

He chuckled as he looked back up at me. "So Armond is now a bloodthirsty murderer who kills anyone in his way? Well, you're probably refusing to give him something he wants then."

At this, my shoulders tensed. How does he know so much?

No point lying then. I pursed my lips and replied, "It's just a sandalwood box that my grandma gave me. He wanted it, but I said no, so he locked me here. The rest is history."

Deep laughter rumbled from him while his gaze met mine again. "Is it important?"

I nodded and explained, "A little. The sandalwood box holds a contract between my grandma and a major gasoline-producing country. That contract allows the Murphys to take advantage of the low oil prices and bulk purchase petroleum, which they'll make a profit out of later on."

"I see." His eyes narrowed at me before he advised, "I think you should give it to him since there's no sentimental value behind it. Plus, it's not like the Murphys are the only ones benefitting from this. The whole country will benefit from the petroleum deal. So why the hesitance?"

"I don't mind giving the box to the Murphys, just not to Armond!" I stifled a growl at him. "Ashton visited A City to dig up all of Armond's past dirty businesses, so Armond will get what's coming to him. I know the Murphys are involved in the competitive gasoline market,

but Armond isn't the only Murphy capable of running the business. I'll eventually hand them the box once Armond is locked up behind bars."

He frowned, trying to comprehend the reason behind my actions. "So, you're not giving it to Armond because all of his bad deeds will be forgiven if he secures a gasoline deal with Meudari; Because then, Ashton's evidence will mean nothing as people will adore Armond for boosting the nation's fuel economy."

I nodded, "That kind of sums it up."

An understanding look flashed briefly on his face before he stared off into the space. "You hate Armond that much?" I heard from Nora that he and you used to be close, so how'd you two end up as enemies?"

"Life had different plans for us," I shrugged.

"So you're gonna ruthlessly force him into a dead end?" a voice startled me from behind. My head whipped around to see who it was; it was Nora, whom I haven't seen in a while. She looked more elegant now in her fox-fur shawl as she glared at me with disappointment. "He already surrendered A City to you Fullers. Since then, he returned to his turf here in K City and hasn't done anything bad. Why won't you let him live?"

When did she get here?

I brushed my shock off and spoke casually, "What are you doing in K City? You didn't even call to let me know you were coming."

That prompted a sharp retort from her. "There's nothing to say between us. I just happened to bump into you. Speaking of, why are you here? Don't want to return what rightfully belongs to the Murphys?

My lips twitched with disdain at her. Rightfully theirs? "This doesn't belong to the Murphys," I snarled. "I don't know why you're here, Nora, but I'm sure you know that Armond doesn't love you and that he's only using you to get what he wants. Must you continue to lie to yourself?"

"That's none of your concern. I don't need you to explain whether he truly cares for me," her gaze flickered in another direction. "You should give him that contract because he really needs it. I know that he wronged you guys in the past, but getting that contract is a matter of life and death for him. Can't you give it to him?"

She wasn't making sense at all. I couldn't help but sigh at how blinded she was in helping Armond. "You should get your facts checked before telling me what to do. And Nora, don't forget who you are and your values as an individual. It's not wise to lose yourself whilst chasing after some unrequited love."

I didn't know what else to say after seeing the harsh determination in her eyes.

Sure enough, she refused to give in. She looked at me and softened her voice, "You Fullers have already gotten all the glory in the world. You don't need what's in that box, so there's no point holding onto it. Why won't you hand it over to Armond and help him out?

"Scarlett, we'll always be friends, so can't you do this favor for me? I know Armond hurt you guys in the past, but those times are over now. And you guys turned out fine anyway, so why not let bygones be bygones? Help him out just this once. I'm sure that Armond will get along with Ashton once he gets past this hurdle. We'll do anything you ask after this, hmm? Please, Scarlett?"

## In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 1082

Nora drooped her shoulders and stared glassy-eyed at me.

My lips pressed into a thin line. I averted her stare by looking over to Holden, who was staring back at me with an uninterested expression. His eyes bore into mine, hinting that he wanted no part in any of this.

Then Nora's hand clamped around my wrist, and her nails tore my flesh apart like a bear trap while she wailed, "I'm begging you, Scarlett. I'll do anything you ask me to; I'll even convince

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my grandpa to hand over the Oberick family business to you and Ashton. Please, Scarlett, I'll do whatever it takes as long as you promise to help Armond. Just this time."

An oncoming headache pounded at my temples, drawing my brows into a deep frown. "What are you thinking! Do you even know what you're saying? How could you sacrifice your pride and get on your knees for some heartless, uncaring man?"

Nora's eyes swelled and darkened into a deep red. "Scarlett, you've misunderstood Armond. He's not the villain that you say he is. You've got it all wrong. I'll call him over, and he'll explain how things actually went down."

At her bold correction, that annoying headache grew into an electric pain behind my eyes. I couldn't help but bark out, "How dare you expect me to forgive him? You think you know everything, huh? Well, your loverboy orchestrated the car accident and abducted Ashton, then almost froze him to death in the refrigerating chamber. He did all that to obtain trading rights to the Taylor family's port. Do you know that? How would you feel if you were in my shoes? If you knew that Armond did all that to Ashton, what would you truly do? Here you are, preaching to me about how he's misunderstood and asking me to forgive him... but have you ever considered my feelings?

"You say that we're best friends, yet you put me through the pain of losing my child. All because you called me, saying that you were drunk at Imperial Hotel. You knew that I would go to you. Then you used my kindness against me and caused my miscarriage... Do you even know how much the baby that you murdered meant to me? The doctors say that I'll never be able to conceive again, and it's all because of your phone call, that one dreaded call that stole my child from me. Tell me, Nora, do you not care about the lives of others? Because as long as you're not the one suffering, then none of it matters? Because only your problems trump over anyone else's?"

I never blamed her for my child's death as I was equally responsible. However, she shouldn't have pointed fingers at me and said that I misunderstood the whole situation and acted so condescendingly by telling me what to do. Her shamelessness ticked me off so much that it reddened my ears.

Hence, I couldn't bite back my burning resentment any longer. The woman before me was no one worth saving, even if she was once my dearest friend.

Nora's eyes swelled as if they were going to fall out at any moment. She gripped white-knuckled onto my clothes and begged, "I know what I did was wrong, but it's too late to change anything now. Scarlett, please, I don't know what to do anymore... Tell me, what do I do for you to give Armond the contract? All I want is to help the man I love to get through this hardship in his life. That's all I ask..."

At that moment, I could no longer recognize my cheerful and carefree friend. Her tear-strewn face felt so foreign to me. It felt like I had never really known the real her, and now her facade was peeling away to reveal her green and hideous nature.

This wasn't the Nora that I knew. Something lodged at the back of my throat as I saw her begging pathetically. Can a so-called love really change a person that drastically?

Oddly enough, I found myself asking a question that even I couldn't comprehend. "Nora, do you love Armond that much?"

She paused before admitting with a solemn weight, "Yes. He's all I want, and I'd rather die than live in a world without him."

"You're certain that he loves you? Because love isn't one-sided, nor is it unrequited. Are you absolutely sure that he loves you back?" I shot a sharp gaze at her.

My question had taken her by surprise. Her vision blurred, possibly confused as to why I asked her this.

It took her a moment before she eventually regained her focus. Despite this, there was a hint of insanity laced in her voice, "He loves me. He told me that himself, and I trust him. Why do you ask this, Scarlett? He really does love me. He does."

I raised my chin and let out a dry, humorless laugh. "Even friendships have their limits, and you've crossed all of them, Nora. So you can quit your miserable begging because we're not friends anymore. However... let's make a bet since you're so certain about his feelings for you. Come over tonight, and I'll show you his true colors."

Bitter laughter throbbed from my chest as I held her gaze. "Armond still hasn't touched you anywhere intimately, has he?"

"Y-you," Nora stammered. She took a moment to calm her bright pink cheeks before she muttered, "You know that his health doesn't allow for it. Plus, you have no right to use that against me. He treats me well enough, and not all couples need that kind of intimacy to be in love."

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"How are you so certain that it's because of health reasons?" I paused intentionally, hoping to stir anger in her. "Have you thought about why he refuses to seek medical attention, despite not being able to get it up every single time? Hmm? Have you considered that some people only react to those they have feelings for, so maybe he doesn't love you at all? Maybe that's why he doesn't react sexually to you."

At this, her eyes reddened hideously beyond recognition. She stared wide-eyed at me whilst speaking through jagged breaths, "You have no right, Scarlett! I don't care for your lies because I know he loves me."

Seeing her deceive herself, I couldn't help but snicker. My shoulders raised uncontrollably as I held back a burst of roaring laughter. At this rate, she might crack.

Inhaling deeply, I composed myself before continuing, "Then there's nothing left to say between us since you're so sure. I'll see you later tonight; If it turns out that he doesn't love you, then I hope you reflect on him as a person, as well as on yourself. Don't be swayed into living a life that someone else dictates for you."

There was nothing more I could say, so I dropped the subject and turned the other way.

Silence engulfed us for the longest second. Eventually, she got the hint that it was pointless to beg me and gave up altogether. Before she left, she looked me in the eyes and swore that Armond loved her, as if she were reminding not only me but herself.

I said nothing up until the moment she left.

Once she did, it was Holden's turn to glance at me with an unreadable expression. He questioned, "Call me curious, but how does an outsider like you know whether Armond is intimate with Nora? And how would you know that he can't get it up for her? Unless... you've experienced it yourself?"

My lips curled into my teeth as I rolled my eyes at him. "Nonsense! Honestly, I'm starting to wonder if your mind is filled with junk. These were things that Nora and I talked about back then between us girls. What else was I supposed to say to convince her?"

Then he threw his head back understandingly before mumbling to himself, "Does that mean my ex-girlfriends talked about me behind my back? That's crazy! I wonder what they said about me... Nah, I'm pretty sure they talked about how good I am in bed."

This guy...

Ugh... How brazen of him!

I didn't want to waste my breath on responding to that shameless man. Instead, I pulled out my phone to call Ashton but quickly realized that there was no signal. Frowning, my gaze snapped over to Holden.

"Why are you staring at me?" he raised a brow and challenged.

I raised my phone. "There's no signal here?"

He scoffed, "Yeah. Isn't that a given since he locked us up here? Did you really think he'd still allow you to contact Ashton or others from the outside to rescue you?"

"If you knew, then why aren't you trying to escape?" My jaw dropped at how unbothered he seemed. He's not an idiot, is he?

To my dismay, he shrugged in response. "Escape? Mr. Murphy will have someone in send top-notch food soon. Literally, we're trapped in a luxurious villa with good food, something I

can't get from a regular holiday hotel. So why would I escape when I can bask in the comfort of all this?"

How optimistic.

Ugh, alright then. Any help is better than none.

I put away my phone and sat down next to him. "Holden, can you not be so gullible? We're literally trapped here, trapped! Come on, put your greed aside and help me think of a way out."

He tutted in response, "What for? It's real nice in here."

It felt like my last brain cell had snapped after hearing that. Appalled, I shook my head at him. "Forget I ever asked and just do as you please."

Surely enough, Armond had ordered Spencer to deliver our dinner not long after. As Spencer set up the dinner table, Holden casually conversed with him. What's even more shocking was that Spencer, our captor's butler, responded politely before leaving us to our meal.

My lips thinned at the sight of Holden contently chowing down on his captor's food like a fool. There really was no point convincing him to escape, and that made me lose my appetite. Instead, I looked out the window, scanning the perimeters of Armond's ginormous villa. There was a stone wall around the villa that was way too high to climb, and the place was crawling with security. It seemed nearly impossible to sneak out of here undetected.

Unable to think of an alternative way out, I felt another headache pulsating at my temples. I whipped around to face Holden, who was chewing loudly with an oily sheen on his lips.

I couldn't help but snap, "Holden Taylor, for the love of God, please stop eating and help me think of an escape plan! Do you want to be locked up here forever?"

"Forever?" His gaze shifted from my eyes and down to the plentiful food before him. Then he chuckled heartily, "If being that means living here and eating all this food every single day, then count me in!"

This man is hopeless.

Arghhh! Forget him then! My head ached from thinking of escape plans all day, yet I still hadn't come up with a way out. At this point, I gave up and sank into the living room's cushioned chairs.

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I suddenly remembered that Sasha's parents were also locked up here. At the thought of this, I instinctively shot off the chair and paced out the door. Seeing me leave, Holden called out, "Where are you going?"

"To find out where everyone else is!" Worry seeped into my mind. Sasha's parents couldn't handle being stressed, given their old age.

He frowned. "Don't, it's pointless, and not to mention, extremely dangerous because Armond keeps his poisonous pets downstairs. He'll strangle me with his bare hands if you somehow get yourself killed. So, it's best to stay here. I'm sure someone will get us out."

I pursed my lips at that last bit. "Is that someone the person that you're working with?" Isn't that person in Moranta? So who is he referring to?

But Holden disregarded my question. Instead, he resumed eating and even complimented Armond's private chef, singing about how tasty the food was.

Hesitantly standing by the door, I thought about the conversation earlier with Nora before announcing, "Stay here while I head out for a bit. Don't worry, Armond won't hurt me since he still needs me to get that sandalwood box. And I'm sure he's installed cameras all over this villa, so he'll be watching our every move."

Then I exited the living room and trailed down the hallway that Spencer took when he brought me up earlier. After walking for some time, I realized that I hadn't even left the fourth floor at all.

My face scrunched worryingly at the realization that Armond's villa must be built like a maze. Otherwise, he wouldn't have made it so big.

At this thought, I halted and scanned the never-ending walls around me. There were no stairways, and each door looked identical, down its gold knobs and intricate carvings. On top of that, there were many adjoined corridors. Shoot, which path did I take earlier?

My heart thundered in my chest. It swung like a mallet against my ribcage.

All the doors were shut, so I approached random ones and tried to open them. Yet, no matter how much I rattled or turned their knobs, none opened.

The booming in my chest grew incessant as if my heart might burst at any moment.

Then I heard them; despite my initial hesitance, I eventually gave in and trailed after the faint chatters of some men and women. I inhaled sharply as the voices had miraculously led me to a door whose knob could be turned.

With extreme caution, I opened the door and entered before freezing at what was inside the room.

The dimly lit room was spacious. Many stares snapped towards me, alarmed by my sudden entrance. The one person who didn't seem shocked was Armond, who lounged leisurely on a sofa as his gaze trailed from the performance at the very front of the room over to me.

He swirled a glass of blood-red wine and raised his eyebrows mockingly. "I see you've made it. Come in! Join the fun."

I was still too stunned by everything to respond. Eventually, my lips parted as I managed a simple squeak, "I..."

"Escort Ms. Stovall in." Armond's eyes fixated on me like a predator's. He placed his glass down whilst a crooked smile smeared itself across his face.

His stare sent a chill down my back, straightening every fine strand of hair on my body. I trembled helplessly as two men grabbed onto my arms and brought me closer to Armond. They then left after completing their task.

Before me, Armond crossed his legs whilst grinning with a tainted delight. "Have a seat, come watch the show since I doubt you've ever witnessed such finesse."

My feet remained firmly rooted into the ground. I refused to go over, knowing that there were about four to five mastiffs and dingos eyeing me cautiously from every corner of the room.

Thoughts raced in my mind as I tried to figure out Armond's next plan of action. Seeing how unresponsive I was, Armond's eyes narrowed furiously.

"So you prefer to stand and watch?" He spat.

But neither of us, especially myself, was prepared for what happened next.

I winced, feeling a dry and clenching ache in my stomach. Then my knees gave in, and I plopped onto all fours before a sour stream of vomit retched up my throat.

Armond's face loosened into a dull expression, save for the slight twitching of his lips that showed how entertained he was by my suffering.

A sharp stench filled the air around us. I emptied almost everything in me, yet I could still taste the sourness of rotten plums in my mouth. It took a moment before I regained my focus on him. I yelled in disbelief, "Armond, you psychopath! You're insane!"

That's right. Armond thought to himself.

Armond's eyes bore indifferently into mine. "Hmm? Have you finally decided to surrender the contract to me?"

"Do you even know what you're doing?" I felt my emotions churning as I stared down at the repulsive man before me, who sought after the contract by any means necessary.

Armond relaxed deeper into the sofa, sprawling his arms into a comfortable position. He shot a contemptuous stare at me and hissed, "Do you think Ashton would hand over the contract if I made you join them?"

"You're insane!" My face paled to a greyish disdain. Feeling my blood run cold, I stepped backward, wanting to put some distance between myself this monster of a man.

He howled obnoxiously at the sight of me trembling. His laughter wriggled into my ears like worms as he mocked, "You're too meek to beat me in this game of chase, Scarlett. I assure you won't lose anything by giving me the contract, so why don't you hand it over, hmm?"

Damn it. Regret seeped into me as if I had been drenched with a bucket of cold water. I shouldn't have entered the room and walked so willingly into the lion's den.

Gathering whatever courage I had left, I forced myself to meet his gaze. "I'd hand over the contract to anyone without question, just not you, Armond. What you're after is the Murphy family's recognition, aren't you? Well, I won't give you that satisfaction. Look at how you destroyed the Murphy family business. That was why you sought after the trading rights to Moranta's ports; you wanted to undo the damages you've done to the Murphys.

"You're probably nervous because Mr. Murphy's already planning to remove you from your current powerful position, am I right? Well, a vile man like you will never succeed in life, no matter how capable you are or how many despicable tactics you resort to. I won't give the contract to you. I'll put you behind bars myself and allow the Murphys' next heir to restore their family's initial glory. As for you, you're better off rotting in a jail cell where you belong."

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Armond gazed coldly at me, his dark eyes gradually shrouded by devilish redness. Then, his lips curved into a vicious smile as he hissed at me, "Rotting in a jail cell? Haha! Scarlett, no doubt Ashton has fallen head over heels in love with you! I'm really impressed with your courage. So far, nobody dares to talk to me like that!"

I moved backward as he approached me inch by inch, never shifting his blazing eyes away from me. Bang! The sound was followed by a slight pain on my back, indicating that I had retreated to a corner of the cage. As a wave of fear surged within me, my legs started to tremble. I gulped and was about to force myself to utter some words. However, in just a split second, he ripped my clothes into pieces and bellowed, "The rest of you, get out now!"

Everyone in the room stumbled out in an instant. As he trapped me in between his arms, I stammered in panic, "A-Armond, what do you intend to do to me? You can't touch me! A-Ashton won't let you off easily!"

He snickered, "Do you think that I'm afraid of him? He's just a nobody to me! Scarlett, you must have forgotten that this is my turf. Do you think he has the right to stop me from doing anything? After all, he's still busy investigating me in A City at the moment. Do you think he can reach here at once to come to your rescue?"

As he leaned closer to me, I was repulsed by his disgusting countenance. My entire body was shivering in utter anxiety, and I was seconds away from an emotional breakdown. I intended to raise my arms and push him away, yet he was far too strong.

The insidious man looked at me from head to toe with his ferocious eyes. After a while, he slowly took off his black suit and unbuttoned his shirt. My eyes widened as my voice quivered. "What are you doing?"

He twitched his lips and asked mockingly, "You know what I want to do now, don't you?"

Shaking my head frantically, I tried to talk him into changing his mind by yelling, "Armond, you can't do this! Nora is still in this villa as well. You can't do that! You can't!"

His lips lifted into a sly smile. "Didn't you have a bet with her earlier? Well, this is a golden opportunity for you to test it out now. You can experience it for yourself, and you'll find out the truth. Besides, maybe you'll get to know whether Ashton or I have better skills too!"

"Back off!" I grimaced and growled at him. How I wish I could rip him into pieces at once, but there was nothing I could do!

He stared at me and said sarcastically, "Why're you looking at me like that? How do you know that I'm not as well-built as Ashton? You can place your hand on my body and feel it for yourself. Come on now, don't be shy..."

Crouching beside me, he grabbed my hands to press on his body forcefully. I tried hard to pull my hands away, yet to no avail.

I was aghast at his forcefulness, but there was nothing I could do to stop him.

My pupils constricted in profound anxiety right then. Following that, I shook my head apprehensively and yelled at him, "Armond, stop it!"

However, he smiled wryly and continued to mock me, "Are you sure you're not keen on comparing me with Ashton? Don't you, women, like to compare?"

Taking a deep breath, I rose abruptly and pushed him away, thinking of dashing out. However, he grabbed hold of my body effortlessly. No matter how hard I kicked and slapped him, he never loosened his tight grip on me.

Embracing my body from the back, he clung to me tightly. I shrieked hysterically, "Armond Murphy, you pervert! Let go of me! Or I swear to God, you will meet your end soon!"

"Do you know since when I've fallen for you? It's love at first sight! It's amazing, isn't it? The very moment I met you, I told myself that I must win your heart by all means. Initially, I thought of sending you all the way to Venria, and would only appear to be your knight in shining armor when you're in trouble. I'm sure you would've been touched by my gesture and fall for me easily then. Nonetheless, I've underestimated your love for Ashton. I've never expected that even after being apart for such a long time, you are still deeply in love with him!"

Unable to move at all, I panted and responded in difficulty, "Let me go! Don't you know how humiliating it is when you said that you've fallen for me?"

He sneered as he became more violent due to exasperation. "Humiliating? In that case, I'll make sure that you'll be humiliated for the rest of your life!"

The next moment, he tore my skirt apart with brutal force. I was stupefied and yelled helplessly, "Armond, you'd better think twice. I would never forgive you if you dare to touch me! I'd rather die, and by then, Ashton would surely avenge me by ruining the Murphys!"

Armond burst into laughter that instant. "The Murphys? They are nothing to me, so don't waste your time threatening me with the Murphys. Besides, Ashton will never be able to trace your whereabouts. Did you see this cage here? I've prepared it just for you, my sweet little canary! Give up now, Scarlett! There's no use struggling because you're mine!"

"Never!" I roared at him and bit hard on the back of his hand. He shouted in pain and loosened his tight grip. Gazing at me with a glint of ferocity in his eyes, he scoffed, "I'm sure Ashton is on the way to rescue you now, but he's too impetuous. Impulsiveness and anxiety would always lead to something disastrous. Who knows if he would be a victim of a car accident or a plane crash? Scarlett, if any misfortune occurs to him on his way, won't you feel guilty? After all, he came here because of you..."

"Armond Murphy, you're a freakin' lunatic!" Instantaneously, I was panic-stricken at the sight of his nonchalance. On the brink of tears, I could feel the throbbing pain of my heart. No! I can't let anything happen to Ashton! I won't!