

## Chapter 806

If Ashton and I went out to eat by ourselves, Rebecca would find a way for him to bring her along somehow. Inevitably, it would become a three-person dinner, and I would be left awkward and embarrassed at the end of it all.

I might as well go along with Nora and join in the fun.

Because there were so many of us, Linda decided to book a private room. She placed the bag she had been holding onto the table and started handing out the items inside with Nora.

“I had this when I was shopping the other day. It tasted pretty good, so I brought a few cups for you guys too!” As she spoke, Nora handed each of us a cup of milk tea.

When she got to the last cup, she realized that she was just short of one. Linda looked a little awkward. “Sorry, I didn’t know Mr. Fuller’s friend was coming along with us, so I didn’t get one for her.”

“It’s alright, it’s alright! I don’t particularly like drinking milk tea either. Don’t bother your head about me,” Rebecca said, her face flushed with embarrassment.

Before anyone could say anything, Ashton pushed his cup of milk tea towards her. “Here, have a try.”

His actions had been too abrupt, and evidently a little too intimate. Nora and Linda looked rather stunned, and they stole quick glances at me as if to enquire silently what was the relationship between Ashton and Rebecca was.

I smiled blandly and didn’t say anything. Instead, I bent my head and took a sip of the milk tea—for some reason, it tasted sickeningly sweet.

Rebecca took a sip as well and turned to look at Ashton in surprise. “My gosh, it’s so sweet! Ash, do you want a sip too? It’s really good!” She even pushed her cup of milk tea towards him.

Nora shot a look at Linda before replying, “Oh, my bad. I should’ve bought green tea instead. Milk tea is always too sweet. Green tea is just right!” Her expression didn’t look very friendly.

Linda pursed her lips and snickered slightly. “Yes, it’s so sweet that my teeth are practically aching!” The two of them spoke in very soft voices, so Rebecca could only smile placidly in response.

I bowed my head and tried to make sense of my jumbled emotions. I knew about Ashton and Rebecca’s past relationship, and I knew that Ashton cared for Rebecca like a brother did. There was nothing suspicious about their relationship.

However, there was nothing I could do about the fact that I felt annoyed by their closeness anyway.

Suddenly, I heard a deep voice in my ear. "What are you thinking about?" It was Ashton. As he spoke, he took the cup of milk tea from me and took a sip from the same straw I just drank from.

Truthfully, this was normal behavior between a couple, and it was nothing worth making a fuss about. However, we were in public right now, and Rebecca was sitting right next to Ashton. To everyone else, his actions probably seemed rather calculated.

"Gosh, the two of you need to stop it with the public displays of affection. It's making me sick! Can you be more considerate of everyone else's feelings?" Nora joked, her eyes disappearing from laughter.

Linda glanced at her wryly and asked, "Is this the first time you've seen them behaving like this?"

The two of them exchanged another glance and burst into laughter.

However, the smile on Rebecca's face faded away quickly. As her fingers tightened around the cup of milk tea, I held back my laughter and tore my gaze away from her.

The one who got away would always be a source of regret for one. For Rebecca, perhaps, Ashton was destined to be the biggest regret in her life.

Ashton put down in the cup of milk tea in his hand. Turning to me, he commented, “This tastes pretty good, but it’s too sweet for my liking. It’s bad for your teeth. Don’t drink it too often!”

I pouted. “I don’t drink it that often! I just happened to have it once today, and you managed to steal half of it from me anyway!”

Ashton burst into laughter. “Are you mad at me over one sip of milk tea? Is our relationship so weak that it can’t withstand that?”

His voice was very low, for he had said it with his lips practically pressed to my ear. To everyone else, it looked as though we were having a private quarrel.

For the sake of having a good dinner, I changed seats with Armond and sat down next to Nora.

Nora shot a puzzled glance at me and frowned. “Why did you change your seat? That’s your man, you know. Are you trying to avoid him?”

“I wasn’t trying to avoid him. Armond asked us out for dinner because he had something to talk about with Ashton. I might as well take the initiative and move out of their way. Do you want your boyfriend’s efforts in initiating this dinner to go to waste?”

Nora froze for a second before chuckling. She looked at me and said, "Babe, you really think of everything, don't you? Thanks for the heads up!"

I was pretty hungry, to begin with. For the rest of dinner, I kept my head down and stuffed myself to the brim.

After a while, I finally felt somewhat full. Armond and Ashton were chatting with each other, and I was left to my own devices. Feeling rather bored, I swiveled around in my seat to observe both of them. More accurately, however, I had my eyes fixed on Ashton. It had been a few days since we last saw each other, but he hadn't changed at all. Perhaps it was because he was too busy with work, but he looked a little tired. Still, anyone could tell that he was a very handsome man.

He must've felt my stare burning through the back of his head. Ashton looked up and glanced in my direction, his black eyes flashing dangerously.

I could sense that he wasn't very happy, and I felt a little confused. Have I done something wrong? I looked down at myself and realized the problem immediately. Because it was rather hot in the restaurant, I had removed my coat when I stepped into the room. I was wearing a dress inside, and its neckline hung dangerously low on my chest. I hugged myself and lay my head on

## Chapter 807

Ashton drummed his fingers on the table, and he gave a slight cough, warning me to sit up properly.

I blinked rather foolishly and sat up, rearranging my clothes hastily so they looked appropriate for the occasion.

Nora placed a slice of meat onto my plate. Leaning closer to me, she grinned and whispered, "The two of you sure understand each other very well!"

I snorted a little and took a bite of the meat. If we understood each other as perfectly as she thought, Ashton would never have brought Rebecca along in the first place.

My silence made Nora feel rather perturbed. Feeling rather chatty, she turned to Rebecca and said, "Ms. Larson, you're really quiet! You're so pretty, so I'm sure lots of men are queuing up to marry you. Do you have a boyfriend yet?"

Rebecca looked rather stunned by the sudden compliment. She replied haltingly, "Ms. Oberick, you're too kind. I'm no beauty at all. You're kind and generous, and an excellent match for Mr. Murphy. In fact, the both of you look like a match made in heaven."

“Haha!” Linda snorted suddenly.

Nora touched her nose and smiled blandly. Since Rebecca had offered her a compliment, she couldn't exactly scowl back at her. Instead, she plastered a grin on her face and continued to press, “So, Ms. Larson, do you have a boyfriend?”

Rebecca looked a little embarrassed. Shaking her head, she replied very honestly, “No, not yet!”

Nora looked very startled. “You're so beautiful, and you don't have a boyfriend? What's wrong with men these days—are they all blind or something?”

I bit into another slice of meat and muttered quietly, “She has a huge crush on Ashton. He's the one who's blind, I suppose!”

Nora started coughing immediately. She looked up and smiled awkwardly, her cheeks bright red in color.

Gesturing at the plates of meat on the table, she spluttered, “Come on, eat up!”

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After dinner, everyone mulled silently over their own private thoughts.

It was rather late at night by the time the meal ended. Nora and Armond were probably going to spend some quality time by themselves—they bid us farewell and left.

Linda hadn't had enough rest for the past few days. She decided to retire early to her room, too.

That left the three of us. Ashton turned to me and asked, "What else do you want to do now?" We had slept through the afternoon, and if we returned to the hotel room now, we wouldn't be able to fall asleep anyway.

I shook my head and shrugged. Truth be told, I was a rather boring person who didn't have many hobbies—an extraordinarily boring person.

On the contrary, Rebecca's eyes lit up. "Ash, didn't you tell me that Lavelian Village has a beautiful night view? Can I come along with both of you?"

Ashton didn't think much of it. He nodded and asked me, "What about you? Do you want to come along?"

Frankly speaking, I had seen all the night views in this city along with Nora, and I wasn't in the mood to go sight-seeing either. Besides, with Rebecca around, some unnecessary tensions were bound to arise.

But I couldn't let her go by herself, could I? The idea of her walking around the streets with Ashton made me even more displeased.



I nodded nonchalantly and said, “Alright, then. Let’s go.”

It took slightly more than ten minutes to get to the night market from the restaurant—it wasn’t very far away. I was never particularly chatty at night, and with Rebecca around, I felt even less inclined to strike up conversation.

Rebecca seemed much more talkative than she had been at dinner. She seemed to have an endless supply of conversation topics with Ashton around.

We started out walking side-by-side, but the road was bound by a green belt on one side and the traffic on the other. It became more difficult to continue walking like this.

Eventually, I decided to trail behind them, my head bowed in annoyance as I listened to Rebecca’s conversation with Ashton. They were chatting about interesting things that had happened in K City recently. Since I hadn’t been around in K City, I had no idea what they were talking about.

Without anything to add to the conversation, I kept silent throughout the entire journey.

When we finally arrived at the night market, it was noisy with the sound of cheerful crowds. It seemed that most girls enjoyed this sort of environment, too—Rebecca looked excitedly at the various items on sale, looking as though she wanted to buy everything in sight.

Every time she saw something she liked; she would look pitifully towards Ashton. He would freeze for a moment before silently and naturally footing the bill for her.

At that moment, she saw something she wanted again. Shoving the bags of items into Ashton's hands, she exclaimed excitedly, "Ashton, wait for me! I'll be back in a minute!"

She then took off blithely like a girl in a romantic novel. I rarely saw such a bright, cheerful side of her, but I knew enough about Ashton's generosity. It didn't seem very surprising to me at all.

Here, I couldn't help but feel a little upset.

Ashton turned to look at me. Frowning, he asked, "What's wrong?"

I shook my head crossly. Gazing at the bags of items in his arms, I asked sharply, "Aren't those very heavy?"

He merely grinned at me and shot a glance at someone behind me. In a flash, a man in a black suit had appeared out of nowhere and taken the bags from him.

I froze for a second before realizing that the man was his bodyguard. After the previous incident, he had gotten bodyguards to follow me around everywhere. I was always conscious of their existence but had never taken

the time to confirm it. This was the first time I had seen one of them in flesh.

After taking the bags from Ashton, the bodyguard disappeared into the crowd again.

Rebecca wasn't back yet. I turned to him and said blandly, "Why don't you go and look for Ms. Larson?"

## **Chapter 808**

He smiled again, gazing at me with his dark eyes. "I got someone to follow her—don't worry about it. Originally, I planned to go out for a walk with you alone, but Joe isn't around, and Rebecca might be bored if I left her alone in the hotel. Next time, let's go out by ourselves, alright?"

I pursed my lips and grunted in response, sounding rather deflated. When had he become so close to Rebecca, anyway?

Over the past few weeks, he had started treating her like a younger sister who had been entrusted to his care!

He suddenly leaned closer and pinched my cheeks. It hurt a little. I looked up and met his gaze defiantly. In a low voice, he said, “Scarlett, as long as she doesn’t do anything inappropriate, can’t you just treat her as your younger sister? Do you need to make things so difficult for the both of us? Just let go of your grudge, won’t you?”

I frowned even more fiercely. His words had touched a raw nerve in me. Staring at him in the eye, I asked, “Is that all I am to you? A wretched woman who has been wasting away in hatred and regret?”

Was he castigating me for acting like a woman who had been deserted by her husband?

Hearing my sudden question, the smile disappeared from his face. “Scarlett, you know that isn’t what I meant!”

The streets were swimming with people and having an argument here would only reflect badly on us. I pursed my lips and kept quiet.

Ashton seemed to have realized the mistake in his words, too. He tried to take my hand, but I swatted his arm away irritably.

Here, Rebecca appeared with a couple of yo-yos in her hand and a fabulous smile on her face. “Ash, take a look at these! My brother and I

used to play with them all the time, and I didn't know they sold them here! In fact, I thought I would never see them again!"

Ashton assented and handed me one of the yo-yos. "Do you want to give it a go?"

I shook my head. "No thanks!" I was in no mood to play.

He didn't force the matter. Instead, he looked at Rebecca and nagged, "Don't injure yourself!" With that, he continued walking further down the street.

Lavelian Village had lovely architecture. Usually, it would be a dream to sniff the air of Jadeborough and have a stroll along the streets after dinner. The hawker stalls along the road were a feast for the eyes.

However, sight-seeing was best done in the right mood. I had been very happy when I came to visit with Nora the other day, but all I felt in my heart now were bitter traces of annoyance and disappointment.

After walking for a while more, Rebecca seemed to get a little tired. She ran over to a bench by the side of the street and sat down. Smiling sweetly at Ashton, she exclaimed, "Ash, why don't we rest our feet for now?"

Throughout the whole thing, neither Ashton nor I said a word. After sitting on the bench for a few minutes, Rebecca seemed to think of something. Pulling Ashton up, she turned to me and said, "Ms. Stovall, wait for us for a bit, won't you? We'll be back in a jiffy!"

With that, she disappeared into the crowd along with Ashton.

I leaned back in the bench and watched the swarm of people pass me by. The scenery would have made me very happy on normal days, but I couldn't find it in me to smile today.

At that moment, the phone in my pocket started to ring. It was a K City number. Who was calling me from K City? I thought for a few moments, but not a single name came to mind. I picked up the phone anyway.

Immediately, I heard the sweet voice of a little girl on the other end of the line. "Mommy, are you still at work? Why is it so noisy in the background?"

I froze for a second. I had nearly forgotten that Summer promised to call me every night. Snapping out of my daze, I said, "Oh, I just had dinner, and I'm out for a walk now. Work is over for today."

Summer's voice was soft and almost ticklish in my ear. "Mommy, you have to rest well! Don't be too tired! Mr. Fuller went to look for you today—have you met him yet?"

I nodded and smiled. "Yes, I have. Summer, who are you with right now?" With Ashton gone from the villa, she had probably been left in the care of Mrs. Dune.

“I’m in Granny’s house! Since Mr. Fuller isn’t at home, I went to stay with Granny and Grandpa for a while. Mommy, do you want to talk to Granny? She misses you as much as I do.”

I froze again. I wanted to turn down her offer, but Cameron was already on the phone. “Scarlett, how are you? It’s getting cold lately, so make sure to put on warmer clothes. Come back when you’re done with your work, alright? It’s nearly the Harvest Festival—are you and Ashton going to be back in time for it?”

Perhaps it was because we were speaking over the phone, but she sounded even older over the line. In fact, she sounded almost elderly.

I nodded and said, “We’re not sure yet, actually. I’ll get back to you closer to the Harvest Festival.” After a short pause, I said, “Thanks for taking care of Summer for me.”

I heard Cameron’s helpless laughter on the other end of the line. “Oh, you silly child. What’s there to thank me for when I’m taking care of my own granddaughter? Scarlett, I’m getting on in age, and I’ll be gone in a couple of years. I know you still hate me deep inside, but we must look forward in life.”

I pursed my lips and didn’t say anything else.

Summer started fussing to speak to me again. She took the phone from Cameron and started telling me about the interesting things that had

happened in school. I listened half-heartedly to her, laughing slightly when appropriate.

## **Chapter 809**

After chatting for a bit, the child started getting sleepy since she would always go to bed on time. When I heard her yawning, I urged, "Summer, it's getting late. Let's talk tomorrow, alright?"

She nodded in agreement and spoke softly, "Mommy, I'll sleep now and call you tomorrow. You should go home earlier, and don't stay up too late. It's not good for your health."

"Alright. Goodnight!" Hearing that, I felt warm in my heart as I nodded and smiled.

After hanging up, I stared blankly at my phone. When one reached a certain age, they would have to make some decisions. Most people would find a place for themselves, be it having a home, relatives, or friends.

Ashton and Rebecca came back just then, and they seemed to be in a good mood. The two of them had some stuff in their hands. Noticing I was



lost in a daze, the man handed me the candy floss he was holding and said, "Try them."

I wasn't interested in sweet food, so I took a small bite and said indifferently, "It's too sweet. It's getting late, so we should head back now."

With that, I headed directly toward the hotel while they followed me. On the way back, none of us said a thing.

By the time we reached the hotel, it was almost past midnight. Getting our key cards from the counter, I handed Ashton his key card before announcing, "Nora is staying in the same room with me, so here's yours." I didn't want to talk much, as I was overwhelmed by fatigue.

After shoving the room card into his hand, I entered the lift and went to my room.

Right when I had just opened the door, a figure entered my room before me. It was Ashton. He switched on the lights and scanned the surroundings. Raising a brow, he looked at me and asked, "Are you tired? Is that why you don't want to stay in the same room with me?"

I knitted my brows, fighting the urge to fall asleep that second. "You think too much. I've literally been staying with Nora for this whole time. It's just that she didn't come back tonight."

Reluctant to drag on the conversation, I quickly changed into comfortable sleepwear and got ready to wash up. The man closed the door and hugged me from behind while placing his chin on my shoulder. "Are you mad?"

I shook my head and denied, "No. I'm just too tired." I was so exhausted that I didn't even feel like getting mad.

Slowly, he pulled me close and sat on the bed. Wrapping his hands around my waist, he placed me on his thighs. "Do you feel better this way?"

I leaned on his shoulder and finally let out my frustration. "Ashton, you failed as a husband today."

I didn't wish to fight with him. However, bottling up my frustrations and feelings made me feel suffocated, so I decided to just let it out.

The man hugged me tightly and lowered his voice. "Why?"

Leaning on his shoulder, I was getting sleepy. "You shouldn't leave me alone at the square and went with her for so long."

I could understand he cared for Rebecca. After all, they had known each other for a long time. However, seeing how they were so close to each other, I felt uncomfortable.

The man furrowed his brows slightly and wore a gentle smile. “Weren’t you tired? I asked you to rest at the square and even sent some bodyguards to protect you.”

I didn’t feel like continuing the conversation, so I got up from his lap. “It’s late. Quickly wash up and go rest.”

I knew I had to stop the conversation. Or else it would only seem like I was overreacting.

However, before I could walk away, he gripped my wrist and turned me around. Our eyes met, and he asked me, “Are you jealous?”

Upon hearing his words, I shrugged and made it seem like I was unbothered by it. “What am I to be mad about? You only see her as your sister.”

He smiled faintly and pulled me into his arms. “I’ll be more careful next time. I’ll always put you before anything else in the future and do my best to become a good husband. Is that okay?”

“That’s your problem, and it has nothing to do with me. I’m just giving you a reminder.” I pursed my lips while Ashton smiled and leaned in, his warm lips getting closer and closer to mine.

Looking at his dark eyes, my intuition told me to run, and so I hurriedly stopped him. “Ashton, it’s late. Time to hit the sack.”

He raised a brow at me and smirked. "It's okay. Just leave it to me."

Realization soon dawned on me, and I finally knew what he was getting at.

The Lavelian Village project went on smoothly during the later stages, and the cooperation between Fuller Corporation and Murphy Corporation was almost complete.

The next step only required each company to work on its own projects. Most of it was just supervising the progress, so it wasn't as tiring as it was during the early stages, and I alone could handle the workload.

Now that Linda had free time in her hands, it was time for her to leave. After sorting out the work progress, she handed the files to me. "You'll have to handle the rest yourself. I'll return to the city and attend to my work."

I nodded and took over the documents. The woman was the director of the parent company, so she had many tasks to work on. The project this time, she was sent to assist me, as Armond knew I wasn't able to complete it myself.

Now that most of the project was done, she would go back and attend to her work.

After seeing her off, I sorted out the files. Just as it was time for lunch, Nora called, but to my surprise, it wasn't to invite me out for a meal.

## Chapter 810

After answering the call, I heard Nora's voice from the other end. "Babe, I'll have to return to the city. See you there."

I froze for a while when I heard her sudden declaration. "What's wrong? Why are you going back suddenly?" From how I know her, she will follow Armond around. Armond's still here, so why is she leaving?

She explained, "I'm here for quite long. There's nothing left for me to enjoy. I'll go back to the city and hang out with Tabitha and Laurel for a few days. I'll wait for you, and once you're back, let's go out and have fun."

I nodded. She must be bored with Lavelian Village. After all, we were all busy with work and didn't have the time to hang out with her. Days went by, and I could see that her interest was running thin.

"Okay, have a safe trip then. I'll call you when I get back." I still had some work on my hands, so I couldn't see her off.

She hummed a reply and said, "Oh, by the way, what's with Ashton and Rebecca yesterday? Don't tell me she's one of his admirers. She seems gentle, but I can tell that she's way difficult than that Rachel. Can you handle it?"

I smiled gently at her concern. "It's fine. Ashton only sees her as his sister. It's no biggie, so don't worry."

After gossiping for a while, we said our goodbyes and hung up.

Leedon looked at me and asked, "Ms. Stovall, have you had lunch yet? Let's eat together."

I nodded and got up from my seat. As we were leaving the office, he said, "I've heard that the representatives of the third party for this project reached Lavelian Village today. We'll have to meet up with them for the next few days."

I gave a brief reply since I was rather unbothered by it. These types of extensive projects would naturally involve third parties as the construction and funds were enormous.

This was one of the unwritten rules in construction projects. Truth be told, those people were only here to supervise the two companies.

The construction progressed rather smoothly, so it was inevitable for a third party to show up. I nodded after digesting his words, as we would have to meet up with them.

Before we reached the restaurant at the base, we met Ashton and Rebecca. It seemed like they came here on purpose.

When the woman saw me, she greeted me naturally, “Ms. Stovall, where are you going? Ash and I are here to fetch you for lunch.”

Upon hearing her words, Leedon immediately left after bidding goodbye to us.

I looked at the two of them and frowned. “Where is Mr. Quinn?”

It seems this woman had gotten used to following Ashton around.

Ashton walked toward me and held my hand. “Joe has some matters to attend to. It’s getting late, so let’s go.”

Since they were here, I had to go with them. Lavelian Village was a small area, so the restaurants were rather limited, and there weren’t many types of food to choose from.

Hence, we just went to one of the restaurants. I didn’t know if Rebecca was just pretending to be adorable or if that really was how she would normally behave. For the entire time, she had on an innocent expression and would even act coquettishly now and then.

I stayed silent as I couldn’t bear with her behavior.

After ordering the food, she tugged at Ashton's sleeve, asking him to go get some ice cream with her. However, the man didn't feel like going, so she went alone.

After she left, I rested my chin on my hand and asked, "Aren't you worried about her now that you're not with her?"

He looked at me and smiled. "Are you jealous, Mrs. Fuller?"

I shrugged. "Not really. There's nothing to be jealous about."

He held my arm and shoved something into my hand. I was stunned for a while before lowering my head to look at it. It turned out to be an exquisite box.

I raised my head to look at him and knitted my brows. "What is it?"

The man only smiled and urged, "Open it."

I did as told and found a necklace with intricate designs lying inside the box. I turned to look at him while he smiled. "Put it on?"

"When did you buy this?" I studied the necklace and knew that it wasn't your usual necklace that one could just buy from the stores.



“Once, when I was attending an opening ceremony at K City, the organizer gave it to me. I heard that there are only three of these necklaces in the world. It looks beautiful, and I figure you’ll like it, so I brought it here for you.” He reached out and helped me put on the necklace while explaining.

“It looks good on you!” He sized me up and gave an apt answer.

Feeling his gaze on me, I felt uncomfortable, so I quickly changed the topic.

“Oh, by the way! How’s the investigation going?” We didn’t talk about the matters at the base yet. Now that I thought of it, I blurted out.

“It’s not that urgent. Just finish your work on hand.” He didn’t intend to tell me about it.

The dishes were served, but Rebecca had not returned to us. I couldn’t help but look at Ashton and said, “Rebecca has been out for so long. Will she be fine?”

He froze for a while before dialing a number. “Where is she?”

He must be asking the bodyguard who had been following Rebecca.

Suddenly, Ashton furrowed his brows, and his expression turned grim. “Go search for her.”