

Chapter 951

Knowing that I couldn't argue against it, I let him have his way. As we made our way down the stairs, I said, "Oh, right. I forgot to tell you that Hannah found her Mr. Right and is going to get married soon."

He hummed in response. After walking into the garage, he opened the car door for me. "Does John know about it?"

I shook my head. "I'm not sure, but I support Hannah's decision. A woman's youth doesn't last for many years. She gave it all to John, but in the end, her sacrifice was in vain. It's time for her to move on."

He cast me a sideways glance, fastening my seatbelt for me. I didn't quite like the scent in the car, but it was too chilly to roll down the window, so I bowed my head and looked for perfume in his car.

"I thought you would defend your brother," he commented indifferently.

I let out a snort. "I told him to cherish her, or else he might lose her. He brought this upon himself, so he can't blame anyone else but himself. It's pointless to advise someone like him."

Unable to find any perfume in the car, I let out an exasperated sigh, planning to buy a bottle of perfume and put it in the car.

As he started the car, he saw my forehead crease and asked, "What's wrong?"

“There’s an odd smell in your car and I don’t like it.” While speaking, I noticed the bouquet of roses on the backseat. My brows drew together. Was it the smell of the roses? But it wasn’t purely floral scent. There was a whiff of female fragrance.

He seemed to have caught it too. With his brows furrowed, he asked, “I guess I’ll have to get flowers myself next time.”

I tilted my head and glanced at him. “Who did you buy this bunch of flowers for?”

The man raised a brow at me. “I bought it for you.”

Pressing my lips together, I said nothing. The car headed toward the hospital. Summer had received a few treatments. Due to the pain, she started resisting it.

Therefore, when the doctor asked her to go into the operation theatre, she couldn’t stop sobbing.

Later, Jared came with two men trailing behind him. It had been nearly a year since I last saw him. The man was dressed in a pale blue shirt. His usual neatly styled hair was replaced by a buzz cut. His skin became tanned, but his dark eyes appeared more resolute now. The moment he met us, his gaze fell on Summer. His eye turned red-rimmed at the sight of the girl who was now as thin as a rake.

Summer was crying her eyes out, protesting against the pain she knew she was about to go through. In the meantime, Jared seemed to have something to say as he stared at her. In the end, he said nothing, but turned to look at the doctor instead. “Whatever the checkup, hurry up and finish it.”

A few doctors followed him and carried out various medical check-ups for Summer. Afterward, Joe came over together with Rebecca. However, judging from their awkward interactions, they probably had a fight.

Jared was still doing the checkup, while Ashton and Joe went away for a discussion.

The feelings Cameron and Zachary felt toward Rebecca were rather strange. Their resentment was complicated, yet excusable. In the beginning, the couple gave her all their love and care just to make amends to her. Nonetheless, they caused me some irreversible hurt and agony.

Though they did that willingly, Rebecca was the one who sowed discord between me and my parents first. Thus, there was no way to judge the situation accurately.

As a result, Cameron and Zachary hadn't disowned her publicly. That's why they felt awkward whenever they met her.

Perhaps Rebecca felt the same way as well. The mixed feelings that welled up in her heart were indescribable.

Unable to stand the awkwardness, she walked out of the ward and sat in the lounge in the corridor. I stood up, followed the woman, and sat by her side.

Giving me a side-eye, she said impassively, "Ash gets into trouble whenever he's with you. You're such a jinx."

I couldn't care less about her ridicule. "I thought you've figured out that you'll never be able to drive a wedge between me and Ashton. You're still living in your own bubble," I replied in a flat tone.

“You!” She shot daggers at me with much displeasure. “Why are you so proud of yourself? Do you think that you’re that great? Ash is definitely going to dump you one day.”

“I’m pregnant.” Looking at her ferocious face, I announced calmly with a half-smile. “Ashton and I are getting closer to each other. We’re fated to stay together for the rest of our lives.”

Her expression fell at my words. Suddenly, I felt a twinge of sympathy for her. The woman had been living like a photocopy of someone else, not knowing what she herself actually wanted.

“So what if you’re pregnant? Once I show up, your relationship with him will crumble. Ash won’t abandon or stop loving me. Scarlett, don’t you ever think that you’ll be able to live a peaceful life.”

Staring at her, I was neither furious nor scornful, saying calmly, “Rebecca, have you ever pondered what you really want in life?”

The woman was stunned for a second. Then, she glowered at me and shouted, “That’s none of your business!”

Chapter 952

I shrugged my shoulders and said coldly, “Since the day you’re born, you’ve been living under the protection of your parents and your brother, Parker. When they’re gone, Ashton and Joe were there to take care of you. I never understood how a woman can

be as ignorant as you. The passing of your parents and brother didn't knock some sense into you and make you realize that you can't depend on others forever. What are you going to do if Ashton and Joe are no longer with you one day? Have you ever thought about how you're going to live? All these years of enjoying what you've not worked for causes you to forget how you should live!"

"So what? Even if I know nothing, someone will support and take care of me. This is something that you'll never have." She was all puffed up.

I couldn't help but laugh out loud. "Yeah, you're right. You indeed have the ability to have someone to support and take care of you. In this world, there're many incompetent people who can still live very well, just like you. Now I understand why Ashton chose to love and marry me, even though he met you first. Joe used to be so smitten by you, but now he admires the ambitious Kristina even more. Rebecca, you never understood that a man will take care of you solely because of a belief. As time passes, he'll eventually give up on a worthless woman like you. You're like a plastic bag which someone threw away. Not only are you useless, but you pollute the environment and are an eyesore as well. People are eventually going to resent you and send you for destruction. I don't know how you can be so proud of your inability, but let me warn you. Trash is bound to be destroyed one day."

"You..." Provoked by my harsh words, she jumped to her feet, trembling with rage. Even her finger which was pointing at me quivered. "How dare you humiliate me this way? Who the hell do you think you are? Scarlett, what's the difference between you and me? You think you're amazing just because you're pregnant. Don't be such a fool. You can still have a miscarriage anytime!"

Watching her lunge at me with a malicious look, I immediately perceived that she was about to do something to me. I became cautious and was ready to defend myself. However, before Rebecca touched me, someone shielded me in his arms and shoved Rebecca onto the floor.

Ashton's frigid voice sounded beside my ear. "This is the last time I'm going to warn you. If you ever hurt her again, I'll not let you off the hook."

Sitting on the floor, Rebecca was dumbstruck. Her reddened eyes were fixed on us. Wait, no. She was looking at Joe, who just came over and stood next to me, staring at her coldly. Usually, in circumstances like this, he would hold her up with much care and concern.

But this time, he kept his hands in the pockets. The way he eyed her was as though he was only looking at a stranger.

Her eyes misted over, and tears escaped the corners of her eyes. "Why does everybody bully me? I'm the one who got hurt. Why do you still bully me? Is it only because I don't have a family?"

"That's enough!" Joe suddenly yelled with an icy stare. "Are you done? You're so disgusting. It's been over ten years, but you're still putting on the same show. Haven't you gotten enough of it?"

Joe's sudden outburst of anger was out of my expectation, probably Rebecca's too. The woman gawked blankly at him in utter disbelief. "What are you talking about?"

"Hah!" Joe scoffed. "You heard me, Rebecca. Haven't you ever feel grossed out by yourself? How long are you going to act pitiful? Do you think that all of us are brainless fools after all these years? I didn't expose you only for the sake of your brother. Yet, you

do it again and again, refusing to change yourself. If that's the case, go back to J City and never show up in front of me again. Both Ashton and I have done everything we should for you over the years. Just leave and don't come back to us again."

Baffled, Rebecca was at a loss for words as she gaped at him. The woman couldn't believe her ears, so she asked again, "What do you mean?"

Joe frowned, replying in a stern voice, "I'm asking you to stop sticking around in K City so shamelessly. Pack your things and go back to J City."

In an instant, Rebecca turned ashen-faced, as if she was traumatized. She turned to look at Ashton, trying to choke back her tears. "Ash, are you going to ignore me too?"

The man was still holding me. His gaze was dark and gloomy. "Fifteen years ago, I promised your brother to take care of you, because you were still a minor then. Now that you're an adult, you've nothing to do with me anymore."

I was mildly surprised that Ashton was willing to let go of her. Nonplussed, I stared at him. He noticed it and placed his hand on my tummy. A warm, fuzzy feeling shot through me.

Suddenly, a rueful smile spread across Rebecca's face. "Now I know that everything is fake. Your promises, affection, love are all fake. You liars and hypocrites!"

Chapter 953

My brows snapped together at her words. I just couldn't fathom her mentality. No matter how Parker entrusted her to Ashton and the others, more than ten years had passed, and they all had their own families now. Besides, they had provided and taken good care of her as much as they could. In my opinion, Ashton and Joe had done more than enough.

How could Rebecca take it as a matter of course? The woman was so self-centered to the extent that she thought their lives revolved around her. Even biological siblings had no obligation to take care of one another for life, not to mention that Ashton and Joe were not related to her by blood.

That was how selfish Rebecca was.

Holding Ashton's hand, I went into the ward. There was no sign of Jared, so I became worried. "How's the checkup? Where's Jared?"

Helping me to take a seat, he brushed my question aside. "You're pregnant now, so regardless of what's happening around you, you've to take the baby and me into consideration. Can you do that?"

I froze at his words. Only then I noticed that his face was a little pale. Perhaps Rebecca's attack scared the daylights out of him. I couldn't help but smile. "Actually, I had seen it coming and was ready to defend myself, so Rebecca wouldn't have been able to hurt me or the baby. I didn't put myself and the baby in a dangerous situation."

Exasperated, he sighed softly. "Even so, we can't afford to let such things happen again. Most of the time, a lot of things are not within our controls."

Nodding my head, I asked him about Jared again. "How are things going at Jared's end?"

He heaved another sigh. "Be patient. He just finished the checkup. The results will be released only after one or two days."

I was a little anxious. "But Summer's illness can't wait any longer. By the way, has the hospital found a suitable kidney for her?"

For a split second, the man appeared slightly dejected at the mention of this issue, but he quickly regained his composure and said, "Don't worry. Trust me, I'll definitely find a suitable one."

I knew he had been asking around, but I was overcome with anxiety about Summer's condition. Though she had gone through a few rounds of chemotherapy, the result was not ideal. Each therapy was a torment for her. Feeling that I was undeniably responsible for her illness, I didn't even have the courage to see her now.

Even if I threw a fit in front of Ashton, it wouldn't help a thing. Pulling myself together, I looked at him. "What happened just now? Hasn't Joe been very caring towards Rebecca? What's with the sudden change of attitude? What's going on?"

He pulled me into a hug. "I guess he ran out of patience. Rebecca is unwilling to marry him, yet she depends on and clings to him. Both men and women naturally become worried when they reach a certain age. Joe's parents have been urging him to get married, and he himself becomes anxious as well since he has waited for years.

“In fact, Joe’s a conservative man on the inside, so he’s of the same mind as his parents. He feels everyone should do what they’re supposed to at the right time. He isn’t young anymore, but Rebecca keeps wasting his time and refuses to tie the knot with him. That makes him feel even more restless than he already is. Besides, I just told him that you’re pregnant, which means everyone around him is settling down and starting a family.”

As I listened to his words, a sudden realization hit me. Ashton seemed to have become a different man. Previously, he was driven by dreams and ambitions, aspired to scale new heights. He was like an emperor who was eager to expand his territory. But now he put all his heart and love into this little family of ours.

Seeing me staring blankly at him, he rubbed the tip of his nose bashfully. “Why are you looking at me like that?”

I chuckled. “I’m just thinking that I have to be a good mom, and I can’t be as wayward and reckless as I used to be.”

He chuckled. “Hmm? Are you going to be a good mom only?”

“Of course, an amazing wife too!” I snuggled up to him. “Just wait till Summer recovers, and the baby is born. I am sure everything will be fine”

We had been waiting for things to fall into place. Other than waiting, there was nothing else we could do.

Thinking of Joe again, I asked, “After chasing Rebecca away, is Joe going to look for a socialite in K City and get married?”

Ashton kept quiet for a moment. Suddenly, his expression grew solemn as he gazed at me and said, "Sometimes, love and marriage are entirely two different things to men."

Stupefied for a few seconds, I grasped the meaning of his words. He was right. No matter how much Joe loved Rebecca, there was no way she could be one of the Quinns because of her background. We could never deny that in marriage, both parties had to be a good match.

Other than love, there was nothing useful that Rebecca could offer. His family wouldn't be able to accept her, let alone the ambitious man himself. She was like a toy which a child had. Once he grew up, the toy would be put away, regardless of how good it was.

Chapter 954

Without a word, I lifted my head and gazed intently at Ashton.

As my eyes were glued to him for quite some time, the man became uneasy and asked, "What's wrong?"

Pressing my lips together, I asked in a serious tone, "How about your love for me? What is it based on?" I believe in utilitarianism. There was no way for two people to get together solely out of love. There must be other determining factors as well.

With his dark gaze riveted on me, the man didn't utter a word, deep in contemplation. After what felt like an eternity, he finally spoke. "I feel lucky to have you. When I was in my twenties, I thought that love could last forever. Whether you're an orphan or a daughter of the Moore family, I'm fine with it as long as it's you. But now I think

differently. I love you, because you're the one I fell for since I was young, and you're my wife. I'm grateful for your birth and your identity. If it weren't for these, we would've to face countless hurdles and troubles. Because of whom you are, we're able to spend the rest of our lives loving and taking care of each other in peace. Other than that, others will look up to and find us an enviable couple. You're exceptional, and I'm pretty good too. That's enough for us to live this life together."

If love was getting together against all odds when we were young, then marriage was deciding to go through every trivial and mundane matter in life together. However, some had a chaotic married life, while the others treat one another with respect.

Ashton and I were the latter. Treating one another with respect was the best way to show that we cherished our marriage.

Leaning against his chest, I smiled faintly. "Ashton, moving forward, I need your guidance."

He gave me a warm, gentle smile. "Please bear with me too, Mrs. Fuller."

After leaving the hospital, Ashton and I went to the office. Every day, the man ran around between the office and the hospital. He barely had time to rest because of work and Summer's condition.

Arriving in front of the office, I got out of the car and waited for him in the lobby while he parked the car.

It was lunchtime, so the lobby was crowded. At the entrance, a striking red sports car pulled over, drawing the attention of countless women nearby.

I couldn't resist glancing at it too. The woman who got out of the sports car was none other than Rachel, whom I had not seen in a while. Thinking that she was still in A City, I didn't expect that she was back.

The gorgeous woman and the sports car were an extremely eye-catching combination. The man in the car was dressed casually, looking like someone from a wealthy family in K City.

Rachel's outfit was unusually seductive today. A black midi dress with a pair of boots made her legs appear long and slender. She also wore a luxurious and stylish white coat, looking alluring yet elegant.

She seemed to have gone out for lunch with that man. Getting out of the car, she brazenly strode over to the driver's seat and kissed the man on the lips. After that, she gracefully sauntered into the office.

I was surprised that Rachel found a new boyfriend.

Though we were not enemies, I didn't really want to see her. Holding a leather bag in her hand, she raised her brows and said, "Are you here to see Mr. Fuller? I think he's not in the office."

I nodded. "We just came back."

"I heard about your daughter. I guess you got a lot on your plate recently," she said with a shrug.

Instead of denying it, I hummed in response, not wanting to tell her more about it.

With her brows raised, the woman seemed carefree as she explained, "You don't need to be so defensive in front of me. Like I said, if we're no longer love rivals, I'll admire you a lot. The man in the car is my boyfriend. Let me introduce him to you one day. Don't be so antagonistic toward me. Although your husband is outstanding, he has no feelings for me, so I better keep my options open."

Her words surprised me, but I remained silent. Nonetheless, she seemed unfazed by my aloofness. "I guess you need more time, but please don't stay at odds with me. We woman shouldn't be against each other, am I right?"

I pouted my lips, thinking about it briefly before replying, "You know I couldn't care less whether you love Ashton. I'm absolutely confident that he will love me forever. It's just that I'm surprised to see you getting a new boyfriend so soon."

She shrugged nonchalantly. "What's so surprising about that? Every woman has a dream of marrying into a wealthy family, and the same goes for me. Other than the Fullers, there're many wealthy families in K City, so I changed my target. He's the third son of the Quinn family. Though the Quinn Corporation is no match for Ashton, it isn't too bad. He's the one who gave me all my branded clothes, house, and car. After experiencing a lavish lifestyle, I've come to the conclusion that one must make as much money as possible, especially a beautiful woman, who can make a fast buck with her beauty."

My brows knitted together. I couldn't bring myself to agree with her principles, so I kept quiet.

With her eyes fixed on me, she asked nonchalantly, "Do you look down on women like me?"

I shook my head. "Everyone has their own ambitions and pursuits, so I have no right to comment on yours."

Pursing her lips, she shrugged. "Alright, you're not as annoying as I thought. I'm not going to snatch your man away from you, so you don't have to put your guard up against me."

Chapter 955

I just shrugged in reply, not wanting to say more.

As I watched her walk gracefully into the elevator, I couldn't help but muse over the life she had made for herself. For someone as ambitious as Rachel, even if she weren't born with a silver spoon, she'd have done everything in her power to get ahead in life.

Even though one might find some of her methods morally ambiguous, the fact remained that she had both beauty and brains to help in the pursuit of her ambitions.

She was very similar to Cameron in that respect. Everyone had their reasons for chasing money. Some did it purely for the thrill, while others did it so their descendants could live better lives. As long as you were capable and weren't using illegal or ruthless means to obtain your wealth, there was no reason not to be a little more ambitious than your peers.

"Mrs. Fuller, you're here!" A chirpy voice behind me pulled my wandering mind back. I smiled when I saw Stella walking toward me. "Yes, I came with Ashton. Have you just had lunch?"

Stella nodded eagerly. "Have you and Mr. Fuller eaten too?"

“Not yet. We came straight from the hospital.”

Just then, Ashton came back from parking his car and ushered me to follow him.

Stella quickly stepped in and said, “Mr. Fuller, since you haven’t had lunch, shall I buy some back? Mrs. Fuller, what would you like to eat? Let me know, and I’ll get it for you!”

I shook my head meekly as her enthusiasm and offer took me back by surprise.

“Don’t be a stranger, Mrs. Fuller! As Mr. Fuller’s secretary, this is all part of my job scope. Isn’t that right, Mr. Fuller?” she said as she smiled at Ashton.

As someone who never talked much to acquaintances, Ashton just hummed in response and looked at me. “Let Stella get it. What would you like to eat?”

Even though my mind was a complete blank, I didn’t want to disappoint Stella. “Anything’s fine. Thank you, Stella!”

“Okay, Mrs. Fuller. I’ll be right back!” she replied cheerily and bounded off.

I couldn’t help but smile at Stella being so joyful and lively. It was nice to be around people who gave off such positive energy.

“Do you feel like having sushi?” Ashton asked once we got into the elevator.

I hadn't even thought about sushi until he mentioned it, and now I felt myself craving it. But I didn't want to bother Stella by telling her I had changed my mind, so I quickly brushed the thought aside.

When Ashton took his phone out, I panicked a little, thinking he was about to order Stella to buy me sushi. "No, don't trouble her. We can get it tonight after work," I pleaded.

Ashton raised his eyebrow and smirked. "I just want to ask Joseph about the situation in Moranta."

Oh my goodness, it was all just my wishful thinking.

As I turned red and lowered my head in embarrassment, I caught Ashton chuckling at me from the corner of my eye. Well, at least one of us finds this funny.

Once we got to his office, Ashton started on his never-ending pile of work while I sat on the sofa playing with my phone.

I was casually scrolling through videos and enjoying myself when Armond suddenly texted: I miss you. Reading that made me almost fling my phone out from a mix of shock and disgust.

I calmed myself down and replied with a single question mark. Armond immediately texted back: What do you think Ashton would do if he knew I like you?

His words irked me, but I forced myself to reply: He'll go after you. No questions, no hesitation.

Again, he replied within seconds: Hahaha! This game is getting more and more exciting. I wasn't lying when I said I could help your daughter. One word from you, and she'll be able to have the kidney transplant immediately.

I was so appalled and infuriated by his arrogance that I had to steady my hands to fire back the next text: Don't be disgusting!

Whether he had a suitable kidney for Summer or not, I was still determined to keep my distance from hypocrites like Armond.

I was still mulling over Armond when the office door opened. Stella walked in with boxes of food, still smiling as radiantly as ever. "Mr. Fuller, Mrs. Fuller, lunch is here! You must be starving!"

Grateful for the distraction, I kept my phone and thanked her. My gaze unintentionally fell on the watch she was wearing when she handed me the food, and I was a little startled by what I saw.

"You're too kind, Mrs. Fuller! I'm only doing my job," she replied politely before making her way out.

I hesitated for a bit but eventually gave in to my curiosity. "Your watch is gorgeous. It suits you really well."

She was taken aback by the sudden compliment but quickly recovered. "Thank you. It's not too expensive, so it's suitable for us office workers."

"It looks very good on you," I said with a nod.

She smiled without saying much more and left the room.

My mind was starting to wander again when Ashton reeled me back in. “What are you thinking about?” he asked.

He pulled me toward the sofa and sat us both down. When he started taking the food out, I was filled with a pleasant surprise when I realized there was sushi. “You told Stella?”

He beamed at me as he replied, “You had a craving for it, so I wanted to satisfy you.”

Chapter 956

I pursed my lips and looked at him. “Ashton, I remember you’ve told me before that Stella hasn’t met the requirements for a promotion. So why did you suddenly promote her to be your secretary?”

He chuckled as he fed me a piece of sushi. “It’s because of Justin. He pleaded with me to promote Stella to a secretarial role, but her pay remains unchanged. After being hospitalized, she suffered from some side effects and insisted that she was a secretary, not a receptionist. They argued about it so much that Justin eventually came to me for help.

I furrowed my brows as I thought about it. So that's how it is. Stella did play a part in rescuing Ashton, so such a request isn't unreasonable. Besides, how can Ashton turn her down when she's even brought up the side effects she suffered?

"Is the sushi not tasty?" Ashton asked when he saw me frowning.

"No. It's pretty good! I just feel like I've put on weight recently."

Ashton burst out laughing at that. "You shouldn't be thinking about losing weight when you're pregnant. And besides, you aren't fat!"

Jared's test results had yet to be out, so we had no choice but to continue waiting. However, as time went on, my curiosity about Hailey grew even more. She was like a mystery that I wanted to solve.

After lunch, Ashton continued with his work while I texted Hailey for a little catch-up. To my surprise, Hannah called at that exact moment.

"Scarlett, are you busy?" she said even before I could get a word in.

"No. I'm at Ashton's office, and we just had lunch. Have you eaten?"

She hummed in response before adding, "Remember I said I wanted you to accompany me to go wedding dress shopping? Will you be free this afternoon?"

Ashton wouldn't have time for me since he was busy with work, so it wasn't a difficult decision to make. "Yes, I don't have anything going on anyway. Text me the address, and I'll meet you there."

"No need! We can pick you up along the way since we're nearby. Just wait for us at Fuller Corporation."

After the call ended, I walked over to Ashton, only to see him on the phone with Joseph. From the sound of it, he seemed to be asking Joseph to help look for a healthy kidney donor. "Ashton, I'll be going out with Hannah in a bit."

"Going shopping?" he asked as he looked up at me.

"She's getting married, remember? She doesn't have many friends in K City, so she asked if I could go with her to shop for dresses."

He nodded and placed his palms on my belly. "Stay safe. Make sure to call me if anything happens."

"Oh, I think I'll be safe with your bodyguards following me around," I replied with a smile and kiss.

"You know about that?"

Seeing him so startled tickled me, and I laughed. "It's hard not to know when they show up every time I'm in trouble!"

"I feel more at ease when I know they're looking out for you."

I knew he just had my interests at heart, and I appreciated that very much. After reassuring him that I'd take extra caution and bidding him farewell, I headed to the lobby to wait for Hannah.

When they saw me, the receptionists quietened down and greeted me politely. It was then when I noticed the bag of green mangoes by the reception desk. "Where did you buy those mangoes? I haven't seen them in a while," I asked, genuinely surprised.

We were way past mango season, so the fact that they could still get any mangoes was quite the feat.

One of the receptionists smiled shyly at me. "We didn't buy them. Ms. Collins gave them to us. There were still mangoes available in her hometown, so she got her family to mail some over. Would you like one, Mrs. Fuller?"

There weren't many mangoes left in the bag, so I smiled and shook my head. "No need, thank you. I was just surprised how you could still get them when the season's already over. Keep them for yourselves."

Having satisfied my curiosity, I headed out the lobby and saw Hannah and Chandler waving at me from their car. Perfect timing!

Hannah handed me a hot water bottle as soon as I got in, only to laugh when I gave her a look of utter confusion. "The weather's too cold, so Chandler brought these for us to keep warm!"

I was a little surprised at that and thanked Chandler for being so considerate. He simply replied with a smile, like he always did, before driving off to our destination.

Hannah and I started chatting when I noticed a big bag beside her. “What have you brought?” I asked out of curiosity.

“Something tasty! Chandler said I’d get hungry from trying on the dresses, so it’d be better to bring some food along.”

I was blown away by how much Chandler doted on Hannah. She seemed so carefree and happy, and it warmed my heart to know she was with such a good man.

When I merely lowered my head and smiled, Hannah tugged at me to get my attention. “Are you and Ashton planning on having another wedding?”

“No, we aren’t. We don’t want to go through all the complicated wedding formalities again. Besides, we don’t have the time to plan for one when Summer’s situation has yet to improve.”

Chapter 957

“Scarlett, can I ask you for a favor?” Hannah suddenly asked.

“Of course!”

“Really?” She beamed as she continued, “You know how I don’t have many friends, so I was hoping you could be my bridesmaid.”

Her request caught me by surprise, though I was also rather flattered. “Are you sure that’d be appropriate? I thought only unmarried women could be bridesmaids?”

“Why wouldn’t it be appropriate? There’s no rule for that. It’d be so much more fun to have you as my bridesmaid.”

I couldn’t say no to my friend, especially when she was so excited about it. “All right then, I’ll do it. But when’s your wedding?”

“Dear, is our wedding on the fifteenth of next month?” Hannah asked as she tugged at Chandler’s sleeve.

Chandler sighed as he hit his forehead. “It’s on the fifth!”

“Oh, right! Sorry, it’s on the fifth of next month!” Hannah looked back at me with a toothy grin.

I was about to note the date down when I remembered something. “Sorry Hannah, I don’t think I can be your bridesmaid after all. I haven’t told many people about it but, I’m pregnant!”

Hannah stared at me as her eyes widened almost comically. “You’re pregnant? Are you serious?”

What made her reaction even funnier was that she was a mother herself, yet she was over the moon at my pregnancy news. I couldn’t help but laugh out. “Yes, it’s true. I’m two months along now, so you can’t really tell.”

Hannah was bursting with excitement as she grabbed my hands. “This is great news! Kiki’s going to have a sister to play with! Does Uncle Louis know?”

“Not yet. It’s still too early. My mother said to wait till the pregnancy’s stable before telling everyone. It’d be a good excuse to ask everyone out for a meal too.”

Hannah nodded eagerly, her goofy grin even wider now. All of a sudden, her face changed. “You’re pregnant, and you’re still out helping me with the dress shopping? Let’s send you home first! I don’t want to tire you out.”

“Oh no, please don’t make a fuss out of it! Besides, I’m only accompanying you. It’s no problem at all.”

Hannah looked a lot more relieved with my reassurance and broke into a grin again.

Hannah was such a stark contrast from her past self that I wondered if it was because of Chandler. The old Hannah didn’t like to smile. She was beautiful like a doll, but also very cold and distant. Hannah now seemed more like a bright-eyed child who had a lot of enthusiasm and hope for life. More importantly, she always wore a smile now.

It’s true what people said about love. There’s hope and joy when one falls in love with the right person. But love the wrong one, and life would be hellish and fraught with pain.

I don’t know if John was ever the right one for Hannah. But from what I can see now, Chandler is everything that Hannah needs and deserves to have.

When we finally arrived at the bridal shop, the staff immediately welcomed Hannah and me in.

The manager stayed close to Hannah as she recommended her the various styles and designs. However, Hannah already knew what she wanted as she dragged me along to pick out a few dresses.

Every woman dreamed about finding their perfect wedding dress, and Hannah was no exception. They were all looking for the moment where they don the dress and go, "Yes! That's the one!"

When Hannah went off to try the dresses, I wandered around the shop admiring the vast selection.

The best item in any shop would always be in the most conspicuous place, and everything else would pale in comparison. That was exactly what happened when a solitary wedding dress in a window display caught my attention.

The eagle-eyed manager saw how I couldn't peel my eyes off of it and approached me. "That's the latest design for this year's fall and winter collection," she said enthusiastically. "It's inspired by champagne and snowflakes to symbolize romance and happiness."

"This dress is gorgeous," I exclaimed. "Did someone get it custom-made?" A dress like that would have been made and reserved a while ago. Displaying it in the shop was just a means to attract more customers.

Sure enough, the manager nodded. "It has been made to order for quite some time now. We have it on display because the customer hasn't come to collect it."

"Why?" I couldn't help but probe further. I'd be first in line to collect the dress if I were the customer. So why the delay? What happened to the wedding?

“We’ve asked the customer before. But we were only told the dress wouldn’t come in handy for the time being. We just assumed the wedding got postponed,” the manager explained with a shrug.

Hannah came out of the dressing room at that moment, dragging her dress along. “This hem’s too long and too heavy!” she whined.

Even though she was complaining about it, seeing Hannah in her wedding dress took our breath away. She was a classic beauty, blessed with an almond-shaped face, slender neck, and fair complexion. The wedding dress accentuated her figure, and there was no denying how attractive she looked.

“Ms. Anne, this dress looks perfect on you! It makes your fair complexion stand out even more,” the manager remarked.

“December is the next month, and it’s going to be cold in K City. Don’t you think this dress is too revealing? I’m going to freeze in this. Scarlett, what do you think?” Hannah asked while checking herself out in the full-length mirror.

Chapter 958

“It’s beautiful, but I agree with you about feeling cold in it.” My gaze once again wandered over to the dress in the display window, and an idea struck me. “Excuse me, could you let her try on that dress?” I asked the manager.

Hannah followed my gaze and gasped when she saw the dress. “Oh, that looks amazing. But I’m sure someone has reserved it. It wouldn’t be right to try it on.”

“It’s fine! The owner of the dress has given their permission to let anyone interested try it on,” the manager said reassuringly.

Hannah’s face lit up immediately, and she agreed to give the dress a try.

After hearing what the manager said about the customer, I became even more perplexed. The dress was one-of-a-kind, and if I were the customer, I wouldn’t want to let anyone else go near it. Why would the customer not collect the dress and still allow others to try it on?

Chandler had just entered the shop after having parked his car. When he didn’t see Hannah anywhere, he turned to me. “Is she trying on the dresses?”

I nodded at him and tried to hold in my laughter when I saw how red his nose had gotten from the cold. “Do you want to try on the formal wear for yourself? See what suits you?”

“Not now. I’m going to wait till Hannah has picked her dress before I find something to match hers.”

I was impressed at how Chandler had considered every detail and merely smiled back at him.

The manager had run off to entertain other customers, so Chandler and I continued chatting with each other. I finally understood why Hannah had chosen him in the end.

Even though Chandler looked young and naive, he was nothing like that. He was sensitive and thoughtful. And he catered to all of Hannah’s likes and dislikes.

I never understood why so many women would go for men younger than them, but now that I had seen Chandler, I was starting to see the appeal.

Their youth brought about a kind of vibrance and energy that could change lives for the better. After being with John for so long, Hannah's vibrance had been dulled and chipped away. Chandler could give her what John had failed to do so.

"Scarlett, what are you doing here?" I was lost in my thoughts when a voice suddenly brought me back. Upon turning around, I came face to face with John and Yvonne.

"I'm here with... a friend to try on wedding dresses. What about you?" I asked, my brows furrowed.

"We're here to try on dresses too! Ms. Stovall, which one of your friends is getting married? I hope our dates don't clash. Otherwise, it'd be hard on you," Yvonne said as she held onto John's wrist.

Even though she had a full face of make-up on, it still couldn't hide the fatigue on it. From the looks of it, John had not been treating her well.

I pursed my lips and looked at John. "Have you decided to marry her?"

John's gaze landed on Chandler, and there was a flash of recognition in his eyes.

He looked back at me and nodded. "Yes. I'm not young anymore, and Uncle Louis has been nagging at me to settle down."

“Okay. Remember to let me know the date in advance,” I replied plainly.

The manager hurriedly made her way toward John and apologized profusely. “Mr. Stovall, I’m sorry! I didn’t know you’d be coming, so I’ve let Ms. Anne try on the dress you ordered. Please wait while I get everything sorted!”

That dress was custom ordered by John? Is it for Yvonne?

Before I could ask John, Hannah came out in the wedding dress. The dress was beautiful on its own, but when donned on someone like Hannah, it became even more breathtaking.

Hannah was tugging at the dress and mumbling away, “Scarlett, is Chandler here? Can you help me see why this dress...” Her voice trailed off when she finally looked up.

Seeing John and Hannah instantly wiped the smile off of her face. But once she noticed Chandler in the room, a faint smile reappeared as she asked, “How does it look?”

Chandler couldn’t hide his excitement and admiration for his fiancée as he nodded in earnest approval. “You look so, so beautiful. Just like a goddess.”

He looked so silly that Hannah grinned back at him. “Why haven’t you tried on your clothes?”

“I was waiting for you to find your dress so I could get something to match with you,” Chandler muttered, still smitten by Hannah’s beauty.

John had been scowling at Hannah the whole time when he finally asked, “Are you really going to marry him?”

Hannah nodded without any hesitation and looked at him in all seriousness. "I had planned on finding the right time to tell you, but since you're here, we'll give you your invitation first."

"Dear, can you see if the wedding invitation card for Mr. Stovall is in my bag? We might as well give it to him now," Hannah said to Chandler.

Chapter 959

Chandler got the invitation card out and handed it to John politely. "Mr. Stovall, I hope you can attend our wedding and give us your blessings."

John merely glared at Chandler, and Yvonne accepted the card on his behalf. "Who knew Ms. Anne's wedding would be so soon. John and I are also getting married next month. I wonder if the dates will clash!"

She opened the wedding invitation and smiled when she saw the date. "Thankfully, our wedding is on the tenth, so we'll be able to make it to your wedding. Don't worry, Ms. Anne. John and I will be there."

Hannah didn't entertain her any further as she continued to check herself out in the mirror. John's eyes lingered on her, and I could see the hurt in them. It was then I knew that John had really fallen for her.

Then, why is he still marrying Yvonne? He knew very well the kind of woman Yvonne was. Why would he still make such an irrational decision?

Yvonne was mad after getting snubbed by Hannah, so she decided to throw a fit at the manager. "Why did you let someone else try on my custom-made wedding dress? What kind of customer service does your shop provide? I want to make a complaint!"

The poor manager got all flustered as she started apologizing. "Ms. Wilde, I'm very sorry! But when Mr. Stovall had the dress made, he did say it would be fine to let others try it on... "

Yvonne drew a sharp breath when she heard that. "John, how could you? You had the dress custom-made for me. How can you let others try it on?"

After realizing what she had done, Hannah immediately spoke up, "Sorry, I didn't know this was for you! I'll go take it off right now." As she hurriedly dragged herself back to the dressing room, Chandler followed closely behind to make sure she didn't trip.

John stared longingly at her as his face drained of color. "No need. This dress looks good on you. Take it as a gift from me."

"No, thank you!" Hannah shouted as she got into the changing room with Chandler.

Yvonne could see that John was in a foul mood and decided not to upset him any further. "Forget it. That wedding dress doesn't fit me anyway. Why don't you show me around and find me a suitable one?"

The manager looked relieved as she eagerly nodded and showed Yvonne around.

I saw the disappointment on John's face and tried to find the words to comfort him. "You made that dress for her, didn't you?" It was clear to see how every detail of the dress seemed to complement Hannah so well. I wouldn't believe him even if he tried to deny it.

"I had this dress made for her right after she gave birth to Kiki. I wanted to wait till she had recuperated before planning for our wedding. But it's too late for that now," he said with a tone of resignation.

I didn't want to ask how he and Hannah got to be in their current state, so I changed the subject. "Why Yvonne then?"

John looked a little annoyed when my question came out so bluntly. "I'm getting on with age, and it's time to get married. Since it doesn't matter who I marry, I might as well choose someone whom I can easily control."

"John, have you gone mad? Don't you know what kind of woman Yvonne is? Do you want to bring chaos to the Stovall family by marrying her? I don't know why you had to let the perfect wife go and settle for someone like her. I can tell you now that Uncle Louis and I won't agree to this marriage. Even if you must marry, there are many other socialites you can pick from in K City. Any one of them would be better than Yvonne."

His expression darkened as he looked at me. "When have you become this snobbish? Why do you care about one's social status now?"

"You're my brother, and I only want the best for you. You know very well the kind of woman Yvonne is. Other people can't wait to get away from her, yet you're marrying her? I don't care about social status, but I do care about character and morals. If you were marrying a kind-hearted woman who knew when to give and take, I wouldn't oppose. But Yvonne is nothing like that."

“So what? You said I’m a terrible person, and even if I found a good woman, I’d only be holding her back. If that’s the case, why not just find myself another terrible person to be with?” he retorted, his voice full of self-hatred and despair.

Seeing him so disheartened made me wonder if I should comfort or scold him. After much hesitation, I let out a big sigh. “What are you doing? Where were you at the start? Hannah waited for you for so many years, yet you constantly let her down. Why did you have to wait till she found someone she deserves before you start to cherish her? Why do you have to degrade yourself like this?”

He laughed bitterly and gave a nonchalant shrug. “That’s right. I’m degrading myself. So what? I deserve it!”

I had given up on him at this point. I knew nothing I said would knock any sense back into him, so I remained silent. Just then, Hannah came out of the changing room in a Chinese-style wedding dress, complete with a phoenix coronet. I was stunned at how drastic the change was that I couldn’t help but ask, “Didn’t you want to stick to a Western-style wedding? Why the sudden change?”

Chapter 960

Hannah smiled. "That was my plan. But Chandler's mother suggested jazzing it up a bit by adding some Chinese elements. I thought it sounded like a good idea."

If that was her decision, who was I to say no to my friend? And besides, Hannah looked good in anything. "This looks amazing on you, especially with the phoenix coronet," I commented. After a brief pause, I leaned into her and whispered, "Actually, I think I prefer this look to the previous one."

Hannah laughed out loud before turning to Chandler. "Let's mix the theme of our wedding then! We've still got time to make changes, so let's make it fun!"

"If we're going to mix it up, can you go home with me tomorrow?" Chandler asked a little awkwardly.

"Are we going back to let your parents know of the changes?"

Chandler nodded shyly before continuing, "Actually, my mother had already made a Chinese-style wedding dress for you, but she doesn't have your measurements. If we go back tomorrow, she can note down your measurements and make the necessary adjustments!"

Seeing Chandler so shy and innocent instantly melted Hannah's heart. She couldn't help but hug him tight. "Silly you! If I had known about this, I wouldn't have come here to shop for wedding dresses. We can't let your mother's efforts go to waste!"

“My mother said to go with what you like. The dress can be her wedding gift to us.”

Hannah’s eyes were welling up with tears as she lightly hit Chandler’s chest. “If I had found out about this later, I’d have been so upset! I can’t let your mother down, especially when she’s put in so much effort to make a beautiful dress just for me.”

Looking at the happy couple, I knew they no longer needed my help. When I turned around and saw John staring in our direction, I let out a sigh again. I could only imagine how he felt at that moment, knowing that he was to blame for throwing away the best thing he ever had.

“Okay, you two lovebirds, carry on with what you’re doing. I’m going to wait outside,” I said to Hannah and Chandler, who merely exchanged glances with a smile.

Yvonne had just come out in a wedding dress and was firing questions at John. John looked bored with his hands in his pockets, replying with hardly any enthusiasm.

“Ms. Stovall, can you see if this dress suits me?” Yvonne asked when she saw me walking toward them. “I’ve tried two dresses, and John didn’t like them both. I don’t even know what I should wear now.”

“That looks pretty good!” I said, after having looked her up and down.

She thanked me even though she was a little stunned at how patronizing I sounded.

John seemed to have lost his patience when he frowned at her. "You can continue trying the dresses, but I'm leaving first. I've still got work to do." After that, he turned to me and asked, "Want me to send you back?"

I shook my head, feeling appalled at how dumb he acted. He had only just told Yvonne he was busy, yet he still asked if I wanted a lift home. Could he have made it any more obvious about how impatient he was with her?

John swiftly fished his car keys out and made a beeline for the exit. Yvonne tried to stop him, but the dress was so long and heavy that she couldn't keep up.

I decided there and then that it would be better to make things clear with Yvonne. "You don't have to subject yourself to such embarrassment. I know you like money, so why don't you name your price? As long as it's reasonable, my family will give it to you. Please just stay away from John."

I was in the same situation with Cameron many years back. She had wanted to pay me to leave Ashton so Rachel could be with him. It was ironic how I had become the person I hated the most.

Yvonne's lips curled into a smirk, tears welling up in her eyes. "Is that what people like you think of me? That I'm only with John because of money?"

If she was trying to look for sympathy, I had none for her. After having seen Hannah at her lowest point and knowing that John had no love for Yvonne, I couldn't bring myself to sympathize with her at all. "It doesn't matter whether you're with John for money or not. What matters is that you leave him. You know very well that he doesn't love you and that he's only using you. Marrying you was never his intention. As his sister, I shouldn't be interfering in his affairs. But, I'm a Stovall after all, and I know that my family would never accept someone like you. We're offering you money so you can leave with your dignity intact. You wouldn't want this to turn ugly when the media gets wind of it."

