

Chapter 621

Seeing that I had changed the topic, she pouted her lips. “Tsk. It’s a tradition here in K City that relatives and friends will come over with gifts and supplements to visit the baby. It’s a reunion with the relatives as well.”

Nodding my head in acknowledgment, I heaved a sigh of relief inwardly for changing the subject successfully.

After chatting away for a moment, she couldn’t stand the drowsiness and fell asleep, but her new-born woke up.

Opening his eyes, the baby glanced around inquisitively and kicked his legs.

“That’s his favorite move. He’s much smarter than many new-borns,” the caregiver said with a smile while walking in.

I returned her smile. With my eyes fixed on the baby, a sense of tenderness grew within my heart. I stretched out my hand to touch his, and the baby gripped my finger.

His palm felt velvety soft. The alone time I had with the baby was quiet, relaxing, and heart-warming.

I was still deep in contemplation when Cameron came in. Her voice snapped me out of my reverie.

“Letty, we’ve prepared your favorite food, like sweet and sour pork ribs, grilled eggplant, and blueberry cheesecake. Let’s eat lunch now. You can come back to Emery and the baby afterward.”

Dumbfounded, I glanced at my watch. It was already noon.

Recalling that I was supposed to have lunch with Ashton, I declined her offer, “I’m afraid I can’t stay for lunch, because I need to head to the Fuller Corporation soon.”

Cameron flashed me a sly smile. “Are you going to have lunch with Ashton?”

Her question stunned me, and I said nothing.

She giggled at my reaction. “Mr. Fuller is already here. He’s in the living room now. Let’s go.”

I was a little surprised. When did he come?

Stepping into the living room, I saw Ashton sitting at a huge dining table, which could seat up to sixteen people. Most of them at the table were strangers to me.

I sat at the vacant spot beside Ashton, asking him in a soft voice, "When did you come over?"

"I came a while ago," he replied in a deep voice.

"Why didn't you call me?" I questioned. Then, I saw someone I knew at the table. It was Robert.

Ashton held my hand. "I did, but you didn't pick up."

I was puzzled. Fishing out my phone, I saw a few missed calls. Only then I realized that my phone was in silent mode.

"I'm sorry. I switched my phone to silent mode."

Holding my hand, he didn't say a word.

The people at the table made small talk with one another. Emery stayed in her bedroom, as she was on bed rest.

After lunch, the visitors took their leave one by one, while Zachary walked them to the door. In the meantime, Cameron grabbed my hand and said, "Why don't you both stay the night and leave tomorrow? There're many rooms here."

I shook my head and replied impassively, "It's getting late." I was rather taciturn.

Ashton seemed to have noticed that I'm in a grim mood. He made an excuse and took me out of the villa.

Outside the living room, Robert said goodbye to Zachary before he got into his car with the help of a young man.

As Ashton and I were walking out, I found the young man familiar, but I couldn't recall where I had seen him.

After Zachary sat in the car, the young man turned around and bid farewell to Zachary.

Glancing at his aloof and stern face, I finally recollected that he was the man who saved me in J City.

Why was he here?

Was he one of the Murphys or just working for them?

"Let's go." Ashton's voice sounded beside my ear and broke me out of my trance. As I sauntered toward the car, I locked eyes with the young man.

Nevertheless, he only cast me an indifferent glance before he got into the car and drove away.

It was late at night when we arrived home. Exhausted, I headed to the bedroom after saying a few words.

Leaning languidly against the couch, I was worn out. A few moments later, Ashton sat by my side. The man seemed to have something to say, but he couldn't find his words.

Still, I chose to remain silent. Over the past few days, we appeared perfectly normal. He was still gentle and caring toward me, while I beamed with joy whenever I saw him.

Yet, something just felt different now. It was even more unbearable than fighting like cats and dogs or shouting at each other at the top of our lungs.

"Scarlett, we..." His voice trailed off the moment his phone rang.

His forehead puckered, but he picked up the phone anyway. "What's the matter?" the man asked in an icy tone.

I couldn't hear what the person on the other side of the phone said. Unexpectedly, Ashton jumped to his feet with his brows snapped together. "Don't panic. I'm coming over."

After ending the call, he gazed at me apologetically. "Scarlett..."

Before he finished speaking, I interrupted him with a gentle smile, "Go ahead. Watch out on the road. Don't be anxious and settle everything calmly."

He was nonplussed by my response. In the next second, a smile spread across his face, and he planted a kiss on my cheek. "Sure."

Immediately, the man left.

After sitting on the couch for some time, I remembered that I had not spoken to Summer for a long while.

Standing up, I headed to her room. The five-year-old girl was now more disciplined than before.

Her room was very tidy, and she was studying at a table. The moment she saw me, a sweet smile appeared on her face, and she ran toward me. "Mommy, did you go to see the baby this afternoon?"

Chapter 622

I grinned. "Yes. Who told you that?"

"Uncle John called and told me this morning."

Surprised, I smiled at her. John was quick at getting updates.

I carried her up and sat on the bed. With a solemn face, I gazed at the little girl. "Summer, I'll be away for several days. Do you want to stay with Mr. Fuller or Uncle John and Grandpa?"

She tilted her head while staring at me in bewilderment. “Mommy, aren’t you going to bring me along?”

“Summer, you need to go to school, so you can’t go around with me all the time. Just stay in K City. Uncle John, Grandpa, and Mr. Fuller will take good care of you.”

“But I want to go out and have fun with you, Mommy,” she protested with a frown.

“Summer!” I raised my voice. “You can come with me during the school holidays. Do you remember that you’ve taken a day off previously? Everyone has their own responsibilities, children and adults alike. Just like how Mr. Fuller goes to work every day, you need to go to school every day too.”

As usual, knowing that I was angry, the little girl no longer argued with me. She kept quiet for a moment before saying, “Okay, Mommy. I’ll listen to you.”

Opening my mouth, I wanted to say something to comfort her, but in the end, the only words I could say were to ask her to take care of herself.

At night.

It was already 12 a.m. when Ashton came home. In my sleep, I vaguely felt that he got into bed, but I was too sleepy to ask him how things went.

The next morning, he had left when I woke up.

Flora knocked on the door. "Good morning, Mrs. Fuller. Your breakfast is ready. Before Mr. Fuller left this morning, he asked me to send his clothes for cleaning."

I nodded and allowed her to come in and go into the bathroom.

She was the one taking care of and in charge of the laundry, so I let her do whatever she needed to. Tying my hair up, I went into the bathroom to freshen up.

As the woman was taking out the clothes Ashton had worn yesterday, her body suddenly went stiff.

Instinctively, I turned to look at her and saw her holding a white shirt. There was a glaring, red lipstick stain on the collar.

"Mrs. Fuller, maybe Mr. Fuller..." Flora was at a loss for words. The atmosphere was awkward at that moment.

I flashed her an assuring smile. "It's okay. Perhaps it was rubbed on the shirt accidentally. Go ahead and send it for cleaning."

Lowering my head, I continued brushing my teeth and washing my face. To be honest, I was unfazed. After years of being together, I knew full well what kind of a man Ashton was.

When it came to loyalty and relationship, I had faith in him, and I wouldn't doubt him only because of a small matter like this.

Breathing a sigh of relief, Flora left the room with the laundry.

After walking away for a short while, she retraced her steps and stood at the doorway. "Mrs. Fuller, Mr. Fuller isn't that kind of man. Please don't think too much."

"We've known one another for eight years, so I know his character very well. I trust him," I replied with a confident smile.

Then, she seemed relieved and walked out of the bedroom.

After having breakfast, I asked Flora to take care of Summer and headed to Hannah's place.

It's been almost half a year since I last saw her. On my way, I went to a shopping mall and bought some baby clothes as a gift for her child.

When I arrived, the baby, who was less than one year old, was crying unceasingly while Hannah held him in her arms to comfort him.

The woman saw me, and she couldn't help but freeze for a second. Handing the baby to the caregiver, she strode over to me. "Why didn't you tell me you're coming? I could've picked you up. Have you eaten?"

“I ate before leaving my house,” I answered with a smile. My gaze landed on the baby. “Is he hungry?”

Hannah signed and complained, “He just can’t stop crying, whining about every little thing. This boy is even more attention-seeking than a girl.”

Staring at her blissful face, I was overcome with envy. “He’s still a baby. I believe he’ll be fine once he grows older.”

I held back my urge to carry him and gave Hannah the gifts instead.

Holding my hand, the woman babbled on while taking me into the living room and updated me about her current life.

After leaving Hannah’s place, I didn’t know where to go, wandering on the street. Then, I saw an old man selling sausages in an alley. The scene made me hark back to my past.

Walking over, I asked for a few sausages, and the old man said, “Miss, we have tacos and potato wedges. Do you want to buy them too?”

Looking at his tanned and kind face, I couldn’t resist nodding my head. “Okay.”

As I was about to pay, I found that my bag had no purse, but only a phone and a few bank cards. It’s been years since I stopped bringing cash with me when I go out. My face turned red with embarrassment.

The old man seemed to have noticed my situation and said with a grin. “It’s alright. I’m here every day. You can pay me whenever you pass by again.”

I looked down at the food in my hands, which cost about ten bucks. Afterward, I handed the food back to him. "I'm sorry, I have no cash with me now."

However, he refused to take it back. "Miss, just take it, it's on me. If you like it, you can come often."

I'm never the one who could bring myself to reject others' kindness, so I nodded my head and took the bag of food. My cheeks heated up again.

After thanking him, I took a seat in the alley and started eating the sausages and taco leisurely.

Chapter 623

Staring at the golden potato wedges, I was too full to eat anymore, but it brought back my childhood memories.

The land in R Province was cultivable. Every year during spring, Grandma planted two acres of maize. From soil preparation to sowing to manuring to irrigation, I had to be there to give her a hand. On our way back, we dug up some potatoes to make potato wedges.

Sometimes, we roasted them over the fire. When they were cooked, the dark, burnt skin was peeled and the golden potatoes smelled appetizing. With Grandma's homemade sauce, they were the most delicious food I had ever eaten.

At that time, she often wiped the ashes on the tip of my nose and laughed. "When Letty gets married, I'll help you take care of your baby and feed the little one roasted potato as well."

My eyes misted over in reminiscence. A passer-by saw tears trickle down my cheeks. He handed me a packet of tissue and consoled me out of sympathy.

"Hey, I don't know what you're going through. But you're still young and have plenty of time ahead of you. No matter what problem you're facing, hang on and don't give up. Eventually, it'll pass. Cry it out, then start again."

Taking the tissue from him, I nodded gratefully. With a faint smile, I gave him the potatoes wedges in return. "Thank you."

After pulling myself together, I ambled along the street instead of hailing a cab.

Suddenly, my phone rang with a call from Ashton. "Shall we eat lunch together?"

Glancing up at the sky, I actually felt that the weather in K City was getting warmer. Lifting my hand to shield my eyes from the dazzling sunlight, I stared at the leaves on a tree blankly.

“I’m going to visit Aunt Sally.”

Pausing briefly, he said, “Flora told me that you didn’t drive when you left the house. Be careful as you move about.”

“Okay,” I replied while nodding my head before hanging up.

It was past noon. I hailed a cab and headed South.

Sally’s house wasn’t too far away. When I walked into the yard, she was about to have her lunch.

The woman was surprised when she saw me. “Lucky you! You’re here just in time for lunch.”

With that said, she stood up and took another set of utensils for me.

“Let’s eat together,” she looked at me and said.

I grinned at her and sat at the table. “Mmm... It looks yummy.”

After lunch, Sally wanted to take a walk, so she took me and strolled around the house.

There were many people in her neighborhood. A young lady was holding her baby under the sun. She was grinning from ear to ear while playing with the baby.

A moment later, the young lady went away. Holding my hand, Sally said expectantly, "Ashton and you need to buck up and have another baby. I'm not working now, so I can't wait to look after your baby."

She paused for a second and glanced at me in contemplation. "Both Ashton and you are good-looking. I'm sure your baby will be beautiful and even more adorable than Ashton when he was young."

She chuckled while letting her imagination run wild.

I plastered on a smile, but my heart felt heavy.

After we went back to her house, Sally took some clothes to the backyard, and I trailed behind her.

When I saw her washing her clothes with her hands, I squatted and helped her out.

The woman tried to stop me a few times, but she gave up as I went on washing the clothes. Letting out a sigh, she explained, "These are branded clothes, so I've to hand-wash or send them for dry cleaning. But the laundry shop is too far from here, so I wash them myself since I'm free now."

I smiled and nodded in acknowledgment. "If it's inconvenient for you to stay alone, why don't you move in with us? Our place has more than enough rooms. It'll be livelier if you're there."

She chuckled. "Have another baby, and I'll come over to take care of the baby."

I didn't utter a word, so Sally thought I was shy and stopped talking about it. Standing up, she went into the house, brought a stool, and put it behind me.

"Ashton said that you often have backaches after the miscarriage. I've never given birth before, so I'm robust enough to handle this. Take a seat. Stop washing them if you're feeling unwell."

Initially, I wanted to decline, but I gave in to her insistence.

When we had finished washing the clothes, we sat in the yard with some fruits on the table. Pouring me a glass of water, she said solemnly, "Don't be shy. You're a mother now. As for Ashton's and your baby, I've even thought of a few boy's and girl's names. When the time comes, I'll list them out for your reference."

The water in the glass tasted bitter all of a sudden. I swallowed it, and the bitterness lingered in my throat.

After chatting for a while, I wanted to make a move. Before I leave, she reminded me with concern, "Have a safe journey. Text me when you're home."

I turned my head around and nodded at her. Perhaps I should make time to see Cameron. No matter how much resentment I felt toward her, she was still my biological mother.

Sally stood at the doorway and sent me off with a smile. For some inexplicable reason, a wave of sorrow welled up in my heart. Walking over, I wrapped my arms around her.

“Ashton and I are not by your side every day, so please take good care of yourself.”

She let out a hearty laugh. “Honey, why are you so sentimental all of a sudden? You can come over whenever you want.”

I put on a smile and said in a gentle voice, “I know that in your eyes, Ashton shouldn’t be with an ordinary woman like me. Though you’re not happy with me, you still care about us a lot. You’re not his biological mom, but you have him on your mind all the time. In fact, you’re really amazing.”

Stunned, Sally paused for a moment before replying to me, “Honey, what are you saying? This is all so sudden.”

“Thank you!” I cut her off and wrapped my arms around her. There was a bittersweet feeling in my chest.

This world is never a place dictated by absolute rights or wrongs. Aren’t we all merely treading grey areas day by day?

There was an anxious expression on her face as she asked, “Is something wrong?”

I gave her a cheeky smile in return. “Yes, I’m hoping you can help me with something.”

Surprised, she asked, “What is it?” Her expression turned serious.

“Can I borrow some money?”

She laughed out loud at my request. “Honey, you gave me a shock!” She pulled out some notes from her pocket and stuffed them in my hands.

Then, she chided me, “Honey, why did you make it so dramatic? I really thought something serious had happened.”

I chuckled as I counted out the money I needed and returned the rest to her. “A tenner is enough.”

I left Sally’s house and headed to the taco stand. After I paid the seller, I went back to the villa.

Ashton wasn’t home yet. I drifted off into a daydream as I stared at the magnolias in full bloom in the yard.

I snapped out of my daydream and decided to do something useful around the house. I started tidying up the second floor, and I had just finished cleaning the bedroom when Ashton came back.

He frowned when he saw me. “Your back is hurt. Just let Flora deal with the cleaning.” As he gently told me off, he pulled me down to sit on the bed.

He continued, “I heard you paid a visit to Aunt Sally today.”

I nodded and looked at him. Suddenly I didn't know what else to say, and I just stayed silent.

I leaned on his chest and listened to the calming sound of his heartbeat.

He spoke up first. "You didn't have any cash on you?"

Slightly surprised, I nodded. "I bought some food from a taco stand in an alley. I didn't have any cash on me, so I borrowed some money from Aunt Sally."

This got a sigh out of him. "You can draw money using the debit card I gave you. Just use it whenever you need to buy something."

I nodded before asking, "Do we have any cash at home?"

"There are several thousand in the drawer in the study. You can take it whenever you need it."

I mumbled my understanding and continued hugging him, just taking in his scent in silence.

It had been drizzling in K City. I stood before the Moore residence, hesitating. If I go in, they'll ask me to stay for dinner, and if I say no, I'll upset both Cameron and Zachary.

In the end, I decided not to go in. I lingered for a moment longer before leaving.

Rain showers during spring weren't chilly. Instead, they brought with them warmer weather.

Enjoying the weather, I walked around aimlessly after leaving the Moore residence. Somehow I ended up outside the Fuller Corporation office.

So much time has passed, but I can still remember when I first set foot in K City five years ago. My life has changed so much since then.

I approached the reception counter, certain that I would be required to make an appointment. To my surprise, the receptionist seemed to recognize me. She greeted me, “Mrs. Fuller, welcome to the office.”

Pleasantly surprised, I asked, “How do you know me?”

“Mr. Fuller informed us that you might drop by. You can just head on up,” she said amicably.

I’d almost forgotten that my return to K City—as well as my relationship with the Fullers—had been splashed across the tabloids. There wasn’t much that the public didn’t know about me, let alone for someone who worked at the Fuller Corporation.

I walked into Ashton’s office on the top floor of the building. He was already waiting for me at the door. There was a black fountain pen in his hand as if he’d gotten up in the middle of working.

He pulled me into his arms and smiled gently. I could feel him releasing a sigh of relief. “Why’d you suddenly drop by?”

Realizing that my clothes and hair were wet, he pulled me into his private restroom. He rummaged around for one of his spare shirts as he said sheepishly, “You should take a shower and change into dry clothes.”

I looked at the shirt in his hands and chewed my lips hesitantly. “We’re at your office.” What I really wanted to say was that the office was a public area, unlike our house. It would probably be quite inappropriate for me to walk around in his shirt.

He smirked and gave me a peck on my lips. “It’s fine. Just wear this first. I’ll ask Joseph to bring you a set of clothes in a bit.”

I heard his office line ringing as I walked into the restroom. I could make out the baritone of his voice as he replied, “Come in!”

Someone’s probably here to pass him some documents. I turned on the showerhead and started bathing.

I felt much warmer after the shower. I put on the black shirt he’d given me, which was longer than I’d expected. The shirt brushed my knees.

I patted my hair dry instead of using a hairdryer. I walked out of the restroom and saw Rachel standing beside Ashton at his desk.

They were so engrossed in their discussion on the marketing strategies for the AI project that I thought Ashton must’ve missed my entrance.

Not wanting to disturb them, I waited quietly at the door of the restroom.

Their discussion ended abruptly. His gaze then landed on me as he chided, “You should blow-dry your hair, or you’ll fall sick.”

His brief remarks caused both of them to lose track of their discussion, and Rachel's gaze swivelled in my direction.

She was obviously surprised at my appearance. Her eyes travelled my entire length, stopping on the black shirt I was wearing.

Chapter 624

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Chapter 625

I chewed my lips subconsciously, feeling awkward under her stare.

I recollected myself and replied to Ashton, "I'll blow-dry it in a bit." I usually avoided the hairdryer except during winter, as it was bad for my hair quality.

Ashton knitted his brows as he stared at me somewhat sternly. Then, he turned to Rachel and said, "Put the Marketing Department in charge of promoting the AI. You can settle the rest with Joseph."

Rachel frowned as she took a covert glance at me. "Mr. Fuller, we need you to review all these materials personally before we can—"

"You may leave now," Ashton cut her off before looking at me out of the corner of his eye. He waved me over. "Come here!"

I walked towards him. Rachel glared at me darkly, probably angered by my distraction.

She left in a fit of irritation.

Ashton embraced me as he coaxed, "If you don't blow-dry your hair, you'll catch a cold."

As he was talking, he took the towel in my hand and began patting my hair dry.

I nodded in response and pretended to look at my nails. Hmm, they're getting a bit long. I should cut them soon.

His gentle stare was starting to burn a hole in the side of my head. I turned to face him and his magnetic gaze.

"Is there something on my face?" Instinctively, I lifted my hand towards my face. Rubbing at the possibly non-existent stains, my uncertainty grew.

He burst into laughter as a hint of humor flashed across his eyes.

"No!" He seemed to be holding back his laughter as he answered me.

Nodding, I asked, "Are we having lunch together later?"

"Is there anything you'd like to eat?"

"Anything's fine!"

He nodded in agreement, though he didn't specify what we were going to eat.

Despite Joseph's several reminders on the meeting with the people from Granatano, Ashton made sure to dry my hair thoroughly first.

Ashton didn't share even a hint of Joseph's anxiety. Instead, he had Joseph bring over a set of clothes for me and only left for the meeting after I'd changed.

His actions induced both a sense of helplessness and poignancy in me.

Rachel suddenly entered the office to my shock. I addressed her, "He has gone for his meeting."

She nodded and appeared a bit put out before placing some documents on his desk.

However, she didn't seem like she was in a rush to leave. Instead, she stopped in front of me as if she had something to say.

I stared at her directly. "Ms. Zimmer, do you have something to say?"

She didn't say anything but merely sat down in front of me. She only spoke once we were eye-to-eye. "Mr. Fuller's been getting home late recently, hasn't he?"

I raised my brows at her but didn't respond.

She smirked and tossed out her next question nonchalantly. "Aren't you curious?"

"You can just speak directly, you know." I wasn't well-versed in the art of dallying with awkward acquaintances.

Her lips curved as she spoke in a smug tone. "Since the AI technology is going public, we've been working together till late every day. Sometimes we're so busy we even

forget to take dinner. Luckily Mr. Campbell is always so attentive and comes by to remind us not to skip our meals.”

Then, she bared her claws. “Scarlett, you’re in a far too different world from him. He needs someone who can keep up with him and support his career.”

I looked at her, the lipstick mark on the collar of Ashton’s shirt suddenly coming to mind.

I wasn’t angry and merely replied indifferently, “I’ve always believed that courtesy and elegance are values that every mother passes down to her daughter, but I guess not every woman is lucky enough to have a mother.”

“Y-You...” She glared at me, infuriated by the blow I’d taken at her.

I scoffed, “Ms. Zimmer, no one is doubting your professional skills and talents. But I’m sure Ashton and I share the same thoughts when it comes to the other aspects of your character. Honestly, though, I am rooting for you.”

She scrunched her brows in confusion.

At that point, I was the one smiling cryptically at her.

The stare-off ended shortly after as she left the room, looking somewhat discomfited.

Soon, it was time for lunch.

Ashton chose a restaurant serving Chanaean cuisine. The dishes were lightly seasoned and generally on the sweeter side, which rather suited the female palate.

“Do you have any plans this afternoon?” Ashton asked as he busied himself refilling my plate.

I paused for a moment and shook my head. “I don’t have anything planned for now.”

He didn’t ask any more questions after that. After I finished eating, he placed his hand on mine and said apologetically, “I’ve been quite busy these days. I’m sorry I haven’t been able to spend much time with you.”

I chuckled and shook my head. “It’s okay. You don’t have to apologize for that.”

I was stuffed from lunch thanks to the feast he’d ordered. He pulled me up from my seat while saying, “Let’s go for a walk. We need to burn off some of that food.”

Since there was still time to spare, I ended up ambling aimlessly around the city with him.

The sidewalks were crowded. As we were crossing the road, he pulled me tightly against him. He turned his head and said, “Stay close to me and don’t wander off.”

He’s acting like some dad reminding his daughter to be careful. I couldn’t help but smile at his words. As I tilted my head upwards to look at the bright sky, I caught sight of the envious stares from the pedestrians around us.

Ah, I almost forgot about his ability to always stand out in the crowd.

There were many youths out and about that day. Just across the road, I saw a couple caught in a tight embrace, looking as if they couldn't bear to be apart.

We neared the couple after crossing the road. I tugged on Ashton's shirtsleeve, catching his attention. "Huh? What's up?"