

Chapter 756

I knew he got mad.

Lying beside him, I was at a loss looking at his back. "Ashton, then what do you want?" I asked.

He uttered coldly, "Scarlett, you know clearly what I wanted, but you've always acted like a fool with me. You don't need to please me to make me agree to your request. Just tell me what you want, and I'll do whatever you say. You know I can't say no to you."

At that instant, my heart was overwhelmed with mixed emotions.

I moved closer to him and rested my head on his back, wrapping my arms around him.

Upon that, the man's cold aura subsided. Yet, he still had his back at me.

After a while, I spoke up, "I'm not doing it because of what happened today."

The man remained silent. I let out a sigh and coaxed, "Ashton, don't turn your back to me. You know I can't sleep like this."

The man's body stiffened. "Then what do you want me to do?" he asked.

It seemed like his anger had dissipated, so I pushed my luck. "I want you to cuddle me."

Slowly, Ashton turned around to face me. He was indeed good-looking. Whenever I saw his handsome face, I felt lucky to be his wife.

As our eyes met, I found no trace of anger in his. Feeling encouraged, I buried my face in his chest.

“Hug me tight, or I can’t sleep,” I cooed in a muffled voice.

In fact, after all these years, it was the first time I acted so lovey-dovey with him.

Yet, it seemed like Ashton was pleased. He hugged me tight and let my head rest on his arm. His eyes lit up while looking at me affectionately.

With my cheeks flushed, I shifted in his arms and protested, “I can’t sleep when you keep looking at me.”

He lifted my chin and suddenly asked, “Have you ever imagined our wedding?”

I was slightly bewildered. Why is he suddenly talking about a wedding? His question threw me off balance.

Nevertheless, I answered, “Um... Maybe like Emery’s Chinese-style wedding? At a place where the flowers blossom. I prefer holding a wedding on a sunny day instead of a winter day. If possible, I wish to wear a red wedding dress with silver and gold embroidery. Ah, and also, a red veil and a phoenix coronet. It will be wonderful!”

Since it wouldn’t cost to imagine a wedding, I let my imagination run wild. Besides, it seemed like Ashton was interested to know.

He looked happy after listening to my answer. With mirth in his eyes, he whispered in my ears, "I will give you everything you want. The wedding will be held following strictly to the traditions."

After a short pause, he said in a hoarse voice, "But now, let's have our wedding night first!"

Before I had even realized it, the man mashed his lips against mine.

"Ash... Mmph..."

My mind was jumbled up, but I know I should say something to stop him. "Ashton, I... I don't want to do it."

The man muttered a response. Fixing his eyes on me, he asked, "Are you afraid that you might lose your heart to me?"

Ashton indeed knew me well.

For a brief moment, I was at a loss when that man spoke my mind. Thinking I had nothing to lose, I narrowed my eyes and flashed him a smile. "Ashton, you know what you're going to lose if we continue, and we're talking about billions here."

He curled his lips into an alluring smile. "Is that important?"

Well, perhaps not. To you, a few billion are just the tip of the iceberg. With that in mind, I wrapped my arms around his neck and pressed my lips against his.

Whatever! Why should I stress myself over this? Instead, I should enjoy this moment.

The next moment, Ashton hugged me tighter in his arms.

Once we were in bed, be it men or women, we would abandon all our pretense of being calm and gentlemanlike while revealing our deepest desire.

Ashton and I were now stark naked. Before he entered me, I requested, "Ashton, can we turn off the lights?"

The man narrowed his eyes, and his mind was all muddy. "What, are you feeling shy?"

Nevertheless, he did as I said. In the darkness, the two of us were drowned by passion and ecstasy. In fact, we had never felt so sexually compatible before.

In the end, the two of us were being drained of all energy.

The morning in Lavelian Village was full of life. The air was fresh, and the sun was shining bright. It was already September, yet the trees and flowers still looked lively as they were in summer.

In the morning, I woke up with Ashton nibbling on my lips.

I grumbled, "Ashton, can you be gentler?" Then, I pushed him away from me. If we continued, I was afraid I might have to spend the rest of the day lying in bed, exhausted.

I tilted my head, whining in a pitiful voice, "Ashton, I'm tired."

The man let out a chuckle; the hoarseness in his voice sounded singularly sexy in the morning.

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"Mm, I know." Then, he praised, "Scarlett, you are beautiful."

I believed no woman could resist a man giving her such compliments, especially after spending a lovely night together.

I took a deep breath to compose myself. In my coarse voice, I complained, "Ashton, you're a b*stard! I said I don't want it anymore, but you still..."

I thought it was the end, yet it was only the beginning. My soul rose and fell as the intense pressure pushed me beyond all previously known limits. Throughout our lovemaking, I was at the man's mercy, like a cloud having lost all its direction.

When the wave of ecstasy subsided, I was lying on top of him with my eyes closed, panting.

The man's seductive voice was heard, "Want to take a bath together?"

Feeling exhausted, I shook my head, unwilling to move my body. The man chuckled.

Disregarding my reluctance, he carried me in bridal style all the way to the washroom.

Coincidentally, the bathtub in the hotel room was huge enough to fit a lovely pair.

“I don’t want to take a bath,” I said in my hoarse voice.

The man smiled faintly. “I’ll keep you company.”

“Ashton Fuller, get out!”

Instead of leaving, Ashton lit up his cigarette and started smoking.

I frowned at the smell of the cigarette. “Are you still smoking?”

I remembered that he had quitted smoking a while ago. Why is he smoking again?

Seeing my furrowed brows, he stubbed out his cigarette before explaining, “Well, I don’t usually smoke.”

I leaned myself against the bathtub and relaxed. After I regained some energy, my phone in the room rang.

That was when I remembered I still needed to hurry to work. Yet, I couldn't bring myself to clean myself up when the man was around. "Ashton, could you please leave?"

Hearing my request, he raised his brow. "We're married!"

"I know we're married, but even a husband and wife need some privacy."

"But I've seen your naked body a hundred times over!"

Ugh! It's hard to communicate with him! I stood up and wrapped my body with a towel. "Then I'll leave the washroom to you. I'll use it later."

Seeing my resoluteness, the man eventually gave in. "Fine, I'll leave."

I heaved a sigh of relief. In no time, I managed to take my shower and apply makeup.

After coming out of the washroom, I got myself changed into the clothes in the wardrobe that Ashton prepared for me.

As if something had hit me, I suddenly turned around to ask the man, who was looking at me with his arms crossed, "You've even prepared my clothes! How are you so sure that I will come to your room?"

Without any hesitation, he answered confidently, "Because I know you."

Well, that seemed to be the only explanation.

Soon after, I grabbed my phone to find that there were a few missed calls from Linda.

I returned the call, and it went through in no time. Linda asked over the phone, "Scarlett, where were you last night? You didn't even come back to sleep."

"I'm with Ashton now." I sighed internally. It seems like it's impossible to stay away from that man.

Linda was shocked as she cried out, "Have you guys gotten back together? Or did you compromise because of what happened at the base?"

I shrugged my shoulders and gave an ambiguous answer, "Both, I guess. Anyway, you don't need to worry too much about the compensation. We'll find a way out."

"Hmm... okay." After a short pause, she said earnestly, "Scarlett, thank you."

I smiled faintly. "Well, you don't need to thank me for that. I can't pay the few millions of compensations either. I guess there are times when we need to compromise in life."

Just then, Ashton loomed over me. I ended the call and looked up to see him staring at me. "Compromise in life, huh? Are you planning to sell yourself to me?"

I admitted frankly, "After bribing you last night, I can no longer act righteous if we argue in the future. Isn't it a huge sacrifice?"

Hearing that, Ashton chuckled. He wanted to hug me, yet I shunned away. "Mr. Fuller, you should take your shower. It's already noon, and I suppose as the president, you wouldn't want to be late."

Eventually, the man gave me a big smooch before he walked toward the washroom.

I was amused by his childish act. It was indeed true that inside every man, there was a child.

It was late when we finally left the room, so we decided to have a meal at the hotel's restaurant.

Since there were only a few places to eat in the hotel, it was normal to bump into someone we knew.

Linda saw us the moment we entered the restaurant. She scrutinized me with her teasing gaze before coming up to me. "You must be hungry. I see you have had a passionate night."

For a brief moment, I was slightly bewildered. When finally I understood what she meant, feeling embarrassed, I changed the topic, "Did you go to the base just now?"

Linda nodded. "I'll leave you guys then. See you later."

With that, she left and soon found herself a seat at another table.

Annoyed, I shot daggers at Ashton. "Look what you've done!" I couldn't possibly cover up the hickeys on my neck as there were just too many of them.

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He touched his aquiline nose and smiled. "It looks good!"

Looks good?

"I'll get some to put on you, and you can tell me if you like it."

"Not right now, I'm in a rush. I'll gladly be at your service tonight!"

I...

Got taken advantage of again.

Without paying attention to him, I found a seat and ordered some food.

Rachel suddenly appeared just as we ordered. I had a vague suspicion that this was not at all coincidental. She looked ravishing in her black skirt with knee-high Dr. Martens.

"Mr. Fuller, Ms. Stovall, fancy running into you here!"

Ashton nodded at her curtly and grunted in acknowledgment. Turning to me, he said, "It was exhausting last night. Have some more and recover your energy."

I blushed hard enough at that, but when he heaped food onto my plate, I positively burned crimson.

Rachel was no fool. Her face grew sour when she caught sight of my hickeys, which I have tried to hide to no avail.

I was impressed by how well she'd managed to hide her displeasure. "Mr. Fuller, Ms. Stovall, would you mind if I joined you? I'm here alone," she asked good-naturedly.

"No."

"Yes."

Ashton and I spoke at the same time but with differing answers.

"Then I won't bother you." Rachel left to find herself another seat.

"Why are you being so mean to her? It's awkward for her to eat alone," I said with a frown.

"I don't like it when someone sits next to me. I'm not used to it."

"What nonsense!" I rolled my eyes.

I pushed the plate of okra in front of him. "Have some more. These are good for your kidneys."

Ashton smiled, his beady eyes crinkling as he did so. "Did I not please my wife last night?"

I did not manage to swallow my fruit juice in time and sprayed it all over the table. It was a good thing that the tables surrounding us were empty.

Ashton handed me a serviette which I grabbed immediately for fear of him wiping my mouth for me.

"Ashton, could you please not have dirty thoughts while we're eating?" I chastised after cleaning myself up.

"Hey, you were the one who pointed out that I had weak kidneys. I was just going along with what you said." He shrugged.

I covered my face with my palms in exasperation. "I did not say that. I just meant that okras help with kidney health. It was not a hint that you're weak in anything. Do you get me?"

"So were you praising my abilities then?" he asked shamelessly.

For the love of... Ugh!

It was times like these when I found myself constantly amazed at the capacity and creativity of the male brain.

I wouldn't be able to finish my lunch if we kept this up.

Thus, I did not speak for the rest of the meal. Surprisingly, Ashton finished all the okra with grace. I think he felt awkward about it.

Nora called right then. "Are you all in Lavelian Village?" she demanded with her usual vigor. "I'm bored over here. Can I come over to you?"

I was speechless. "Some items at the base have been stolen. Do you think we would have the time to entertain you if you came?"

"That's fine. I was just thinking of coming over and bothering you for a bit. We're all friends, after all. I could visit my grandfather in the meantime; he asked me to invite you for dinner too. Are you free tonight?"

Channing inviting me for dinner? I was nonplussed. "Why would Mr. Oberick invite me for dinner?"

"Because I told him about you, of course. I've never had any friends growing up, so he would be delighted if I brought a friend home for dinner."

I nodded as I recalled the last meal I had with Mr. Oberick at the hotel. He mentioned the thing about Grandma. Maybe this would be a good opportunity to ask him further about Grandma's past.

I realized after several moments that Nora was not able to see my nod of agreement. "Alright, I'll see you in a bit!" I said.

After I hung up, I found Ashton looking at me with a frown on his face. "Was that Nora?"

I nodded. "She invited me to dinner tonight."

“You’re not planning on bringing me along?”

I snorted.

“I think it would be pretty awkward if you tagged along. Besides, it’ll be boring for you to listen to us girls gossiping.” Actually, I did not want him at Mr. Oberick’s house with me.

I had many questions about Grandma that I intend to discover on my own.

Ashton leaned back in his chair but did not pursue the matter. “Did you ever have a crush on Armond?” he asked suddenly.

I almost bit my tongue off. “What are you thinking about?” I asked with a glare.

Although, I think it’s fair that he would think that. Given the circumstances of what had happened before.

Ashton looked around idly. “Nora and you are pretty good friends, and she’s a good match with Armond, wouldn’t you say so? I suggest that you should stop thinking about Armond.”

I was breathless with indignant anger. “Ashton, you need to sort out the rubbish that’s going through your head!” I said as I stood up violently.

Without another word to him, I turned around and marched out of the hotel.

Right at the hotel entrance, Linda saw that I was all worked up, so she asked, "What's wrong? Have you guys been fighting again?"

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I tried my best to suppress my temper. "Ashton is a jerk. A d*mn jerk!"

Linda was about to ask me something but changed her mind. Instead, she stifled her giggle.

I knew that she was laughing at the way I vented my frustration about Ashton. My resentment, however, did not dissipate this easily. "How could I have a crush on Armond? His eyes are attractive, but that's about it. They're not good for much else."

"Scarlett, you could tell this to Mr. Fuller straight to his face, you know," Linda said as her lips twitched. "Why would you get yourself so worked up?"

"Tell him what?" I retorted. "He's a typical man without a freakin' brain! Ugh... Rachel has been so nice to him, and he fails to see it. Not just that, he fails to see how Armond and Nora are meant for each other. I do not like Armond at all, but this was the conclusion that he jumped to despite contrary evidence!"

“There, there. It’s just a small matter, so don’t be mad at it anymore,” Linda said, still trying to conceal her amusement. “Anyway, I have something to attend to, so see you!”

“Why are you in a rush?” I frowned. “Aren’t we supposed to go to the base together?”

“Um... Mr. Fuller is still staring at you, so I think he’s expecting you to go with him. See you around!” Linda disappeared without waiting for my response.

Her hasty departure startled me. As I turned back towards the hotel, I was greeted by the sight of Ashton at the door with his arms folded. He gazed at me with his bright dark eyes, with a smile on his lips.

I just spoke ill of him. I definitely can’t make amends with him this easily.

Besides, I wasn’t planning on acknowledging him. I will go on my own.

Before I’d made a few steps, Ashton caught my arm. “Are you still angry?”

“No.” I pursed my lips haughtily.

“I know that there’s nothing between you and Armond. I’m sorry, I shouldn’t have said those things. It was my fault.” His tone was equal amounts of amusement and exasperation.

“How could you be wrong? You’re the president of a corporation! It was my mistake, not yours,” I answered sarcastically as I was taken aback by his confession.

I threw off his grip and prepared to walk away from him.

However, he yanked me towards him until I was pressed against his chest. "Alright, let's call a truce," Ashton said. "I still have to get back to work. Let's head to the base!"

It felt like he was comforting a surly child rather than a sincere apology. I knew I was wrong to have blown it out of proportion too; it wouldn't do to stay mad at him.

"Let's never speak of this again," I said, looking up at him.

"Let's not," he agreed, smiling down at me as he did so.

I've always harbored the suspicion that Joseph was either listening or watching us as he always appeared exactly when he was wanted. In this case, he brought the car over when we were ready to leave.

Ashton squeezed me close to him and covered my eyes. "Get some sleep," he said quietly.

"I'm not sleepy," I said as I flung away his hand. "What're you trying to do, Ashton?" I asked with a look of confusion.

He stretched out to put up the partition before he said, "Was it not enough for you to be looking at me?"

I was stupefied for a moment but burst out laughing when I realized that he was jealous when I was distracted watching Joseph.

“Ashton, what on earth is going on inside that head of yours?” I gasped for breath. “I was just curious about Joseph.”

“Curious about what?” he frowned.

“At how he seemed to turn up exactly when he was needed all the time? Does he monitor or eavesdrop on us?”

“Mrs. Fuller. I am doing neither,” said Joseph frankly from the front. “I am alerted by Mr. Fuller whenever I’m needed. That is how I arrive quickly.”

Ashton lifted my face with a finger under my chin. “If you ever had any doubts, you could just ask me. Don’t stare at people.”

“Ashton, are you actually jealous?” I was baffled.

Ashton had my cheek in his hand. With a faint smile, he leaned in and kissed me.

My eyes widened. We were in full view of Joseph, who was driving in front! How does this man not have any sense of boundaries?

I raised my arms to push him away, but he pressed his entire weight against me, rendering me immobile.

The journey wasn’t long. Once we reached, Joseph tactfully parked the car outside of the entrance to the base and departed on his own.

I have always suspected that Ashton was something of a kissing addict.

If we had not already arrived at our destination, I was afraid that he would have sucked every bit of moisture out of me.

Ashton let go of me slowly, looking as if he was immensely satisfied. He rubbed my lips gently and said, "The okra worked!"

I was flabbergasted by this extraordinary statement. Why would he suddenly mention okras?

It took a while for me to recollect our conversation from the restaurant earlier when I had urged him to eat some okras. I blushed furiously and pushed him aside.

Meanwhile, Linda was already at the entrance to the base. She opened her mouth to say something but thought the better of it when she saw my odd expression.

I greeted her as normally as I could. "Is that why you left earlier? To wait for me here?" I smiled at her.

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She nodded and blocked my way with a smirk. After a brief deliberation, she said, "I recommend that you make yourself decent before heading in."

I blushed automatically. “Why? What is it?” I stammered.

Linda coughed and spoke in as normal a voice as she could muster. “Ashton has... a way with women, based on how he looks. You don't have to make it so obvious, we're all adults after all.”

Confused, I pulled out my compact mirror to take a look. Oh, God! My lips were swollen, hair in a tangled mess, and even the hickey, which was originally quite subtle, now pulsed an angry red.

Without thinking further, I rushed off to a washroom in the base to clean myself up.

Linda followed me close behind, her smile wide with glee. “Don't be embarrassed. It's normal!

“Then why did you look at me in that manner earlier on?” I was speechless.

“I'm here to remind you that there is a large group of older men inside the base,” Linda giggled. “If you went in there looking like this, it would be even more awkward!”

I blended the hickeys in with my skin tone as best as I could, but they still showed up like angry boils. I began to panic. “Linda, help me out here. It's not going away.”

She rummaged through her purse and handed me a bottle of liquid foundation. “Try this. I get eyebags from staying up late at night, and this helps to hide them.”

She was right; it made my hickeys almost invisible. However, my swollen lips still made me anxious. “What about my lips? I can't hide them!”

“Why don’t you wear a mask?” Linda suggested.

It was an excellent idea. “Where would I find one here in the base, though?”

Linda chuckled and procured one from her purse. “It’s yours for the day.”

“Thank you, Linda! You’re a lifesaver!” She had everything I needed!

As we came out of the bathroom, we ran into Rachel again. She was clad in black from head to toe and looked very cool. Her makeup was heavier than it was in the restaurant.

The cold look of disdain she had when she caught sight of me only intensified her haughtiness and made her look even more beautiful.

As Rachel walked past, she passed a scathing remark. “It’s one thing to pretend to not want it but another to deliver yourself. You should be ashamed.”

This hurt me deeply.

Linda was well aware that Rachel was referring to me. “There are different ways of throwing yourself into a man’s arms,” she chimed in. “Some of us can throw ourselves into Mr. Fuller’s arms without clothes, and he still wouldn’t be interested.”

“Who exactly are you referring to?” Rachel demanded. She withdrew all pretences at the sting of Linda’s comment.

“Ms. Linda, you’d better clarify what you mean. Feeling brave by the presence of your friend here, are you? Not the usual little b*tch that you are?” Rachel shouted at Linda shrilly.

Linda wasn’t a pushover and preferred to settle matters with fists rather than words. She swung an arm at Rachel. “Who’re you calling b*tch, b*tch?”

Rachel returned the blow. “You are, you b*tch!” she yelled.

The two women exchanged progressively vicious threats as they yanked at one another’s hair.

I was too flabbergasted to react. When their voices became too loud to ignore, I came to my senses and attempted to break up the fight.

Linda was pinned to the floor by Rachel, who grabbed fistfuls of her hair and screamed at the top of her voice. Impulsively, I grabbed Rachel by the hair, pulled her off Linda, and began to claw wildly at her body.

She was a strong woman and did not take my assault lightly. She wriggled with all her might, all four limbs flailing wildly in every direction as curses and insults spewed from her mouth.

Rachel screamed curses at us and our families. Foul words which we did not know existed were used with great ardor in her rage.

On the contrary, I was not as eloquent as her. “Rachel, you gold-digging b*tch!”

I recalled that Nora had once mentioned that Rachel could appear very demure and innocent but actually had a never-ending thirst for ambition and status.

No matter what profanities she employed, I always called her the same thing, because I knew that she was exactly that.

At last, even Linda had had enough. “Scarlett, you dimwit! Don’t you know any other foul words?”

I myself did not know how I held back my laughter. She was right – it was always the same insult.

This battle between us had only ended when Linda came out from the bathroom and emptied a container of water over Rachel.

She sat drenched in the pool of water, weeping and screaming curses at us. Her coolness and dignity disappeared completely.

Linda threw the container aside and stood over Rachel. “Listen to me closely, Rachel. Don’t think that men are interested in you just because you are good-looking. There are many beautiful women like you in the world whose lives are not going well, but they know their place and keep to themselves. They don’t get involved with other people’s spouses because that will only degrade themselves.”