

Chapter 796

If I said that I did not want to eat, he would just continue to nag. Thus, I could only reply, "I've already eaten. Have you?"

"Yep, I'm eating now!" The sound of glasses clinking together could be heard from his end.

"Are you eating outside?"

"Yep!" he replied.

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My hair was still wet, and when I leaned back against it, my back was drenched. I turned and asked, "Who are you with?"

He chuckled lightly and said, "A... girl!"

I pursed my lips. "Is she younger or older?"

"Younger!"

My eyes narrowed as I asked, "Is she pretty?"

"Yep!" he quipped.

My lips twitched. "Is she prettier than me?"

He grinned and said, "Both of you are pretty!"

I inhaled deeply and snapped, "Ashton, be serious. Otherwise, I'm going to hang up on you."

He laughed loudly and clearly had no qualms about hiding his exuberant mood.

The laughter was pleasing to the ears. I had initially assumed that he was eating with some woman. But from the way he laughed, I could tell that I knew the person he was with!

A childish voice sounded out from the phone, "Mr. Fuller, are you talking to Mommy?"

My heart skipped a beat. It had been so long since I last heard Summer's voice and held her in my arms.

Tears welled up in my eyes that instant.

Ashton handed the phone to Summer. "Mommy? Is that you? I'm Summer."

My heart ached, and the lump in my throat prevented me from speaking for some time. A weight pressed down on my chest as I struggled to draw breath.

Due to my silence, Summer became anxious and said, "Can you hear me, Mommy?"

Tears started to flow down my face. Each beaded droplet of water seemed to sting me on its way down. I took in a shaky breath and replied, "I'm here, Summer. I... can hear you!"

Speaking to her brought on another tide of tears.

Summer was elated to hear my voice. She could not contain her excitement as she proceeded to fire off words, "Have you eaten, Mommy? When are you coming home? Mr. Fuller and I have been waiting for forever. Let me tell you a secret – I've planted many sweet potatoes in the yard. Grandma says that when they sprout, you'll be back. They've already started growing. Are you going to be home soon, Mommy?"

I choked, and for a moment, I could not breathe. Tears cascaded down my cheeks endlessly as I nodded and said, "I'm going to be home soon. Once I'm done working, I'll go home to you. Eat well, do your best in school, and listen to what Mr. Fuller says, okay?"

"Okay!" I could almost see Summer nodding earnestly. "I'm a very good girl, Mommy. I can recite many poems now, and I even know how to write and count. Mr. Fuller let me take piano lessons, and I've learned how to play 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star.' I'll play it for you when you're back. I know how to draw too. I drew a beautiful picture for you, so please come home soon, Mommy. My birthday is almost here. Mr. Jackson says he'll invite Michael and Mr. Johnson to my birthday. It's going to be fun. So, you have to come home quickly!"

I nodded and tried to fight back the tears. "Okay. I'll definitely be back before your birthday. I promise to spend your birthday with you."

Ashton seemed to be talking to Summer at that moment. "Alright, that's enough for now, Summer. Let me talk to Mommy, okay?"

Summer was reluctant, so she said, "Can I ask you for a favor, Mommy?"

I nodded as my whole body trembled with the force of my suppressed sobs. "What birthday present do you want?"

"No. I want to ask if I can talk to you every day until you come home. I want to hear your voice. Grandma and Grandpa do too. Grandma cried a while ago because she misses you as much as I do!"

Her voice was full of innocence – pure and naive. I made a sound of agreement to hide the guilt that was gnawing away at me.

I left because I knew that I would not be able to provide Summer with the best quality of life. She would have a much better life with Ashton. However, I forgot that she was just a child. To her, I was the only family she had, and she was frightened that I would leave her.

After a while, Ashton took over the call. He must have known that I was crying. Thus, he lowered his voice and said, “She’s doing well here and is very obedient. Jackson and the rest will come to see her.”

I nodded and choked out, “Thank you, Ashton.”

“You’re my wife, and Summer is my daughter. There’s no need to thank me!”

I could not help but laugh and let out a breath of relief. “When the Lavelian Village project is done, I’ll return and spend Summer’s birthday with the two of you!”

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He hummed a response, and his magnetic voice drawled, “I’ll be waiting!”

I grinned. The memory of what happened at the base today surfaced, and I paused before saying, “Ashton, have you heard anything from your investigation into the stolen machines?”

He was stunned by my sudden change in topic and replied, “There hasn’t been much news for now. What’s wrong? Did you find anything?”

I nodded. "It's one of the walls at the base. A normal cement wall won't produce an echo when knocked – only fake walls will. However, the back wall of the base has an echo. I studied it today and noticed that the outer part was about three feet wide. Normal walls aren't that wide."

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He was silent for a moment before replying, "You stay out of this matter from now on. Let Joseph handle it. You should just focus on the project in Lavelian Village since the Fuller Corporation will finish it soon and arrange for a conference as soon as possible."

I knew he was worried about my safety, so I did not say anything else. At this moment, someone knocked on my door; it was probably Nora.

I hung up the call and went to open the door. Nora was carrying several bags in her hand. When she saw me, she said, "I knew you would be at the hotel. I just came from exploring the food street and bought a bunch of tasty snacks. You'll be sure to love them!"

I lowered my head and glanced at the bags. I reached out to receive them and said with a smile, "You went all on your own?"

She nodded and placed the items down. She noticed that something was off about me and asked with a frown, "Have you been crying?"

I was stunned. I flashed her a smile and said, "I called home and realized how much I miss my daughter."

She hesitated for a moment before exclaiming dramatically, "You and Ashton have a daughter?"

I grinned and replied, "She's five years old!"

Hearing that, she spluttered and cursed, “Holy s**t, you even have a daughter. Why did you argue with Ashton? Is something wrong with you?”

I smiled in response. It was a long story, and it was better for me to change the topic. “I didn’t think Lavelian Village would have this type of seafood mix. I’ve been craving it for some time.”

She had bought about ten different variations of it. Looking at me, she said, “My grandfather always forbade me from eating it, so I became obsessed. Now that I’m out alone, I want to try everything. I’ll call Armond over to join us. The two of us probably can’t finish all of it, and I don’t like wasting food.”

I raised an eyebrow. “Does Armond eat these?”

“Even if he doesn’t want to, he’ll have to. I carried these a long way. It’ll be a waste of my effort if he doesn’t eat them.”

I pursed my lips and kept silent. Sometimes, the dynamic between a couple could not be explained through logic and science.

After that, she turned and walked out of the room. I took the food out of the bags. There were about ten items, and they all came from the same food street.

Everything smelled so good, and steam could be seen rising from them. Soon, she came back with a sullen look on her face.

I noticed that Armond was not with her and asked, “What’s wrong? Where’s Armond?”

“I don’t know. He’s not in the room. I called for him multiple times, but he was engaged on another line. He’s probably busy working!” She plopped down on the seat and was visibly dispirited.

I smiled and looked at the warm food on the table. “Then, should we wait for him?”

She shook her head. It did not make sense for us to let the food go cold anyway.

Following that, she gestured for me to start eating. She ate a few mouthfuls of grilled scallops from one of the takeaway boxes and said contentedly, “I finally know what this tastes like. It’s so delicious. I bet that Grandpa has never tried something this yummy. What a shame!”

I smiled and ate a few pieces of roasted meat. It was extremely fresh and flavorful. Immediately, I could not help but exclaim, “This roasted meat is great. Here, have a taste!”

She nodded and placed a pan-seared chili scallop in front of me. “Try this. I’m sure it tastes better than those you had in the restaurant.”

I nodded and tried one. The spiciness and salty freshness were delectable.

After feasting on all ten dishes, our stomachs were bulging.

Nora collapsed on the bed and massaged her round tummy. “I’m so happy. It was so delicious, and I’ve never had so much food in my life. All my efforts to lose weight have gone down the drain.”

After resting for a bit, I cleaned up the remnants of our meal. My stomach was uncomfortably full too. I saw it was only 9 p.m. and realized there was still time for a light evening stroll.

“Let’s take a walk around the area. I haven’t had the chance to admire the night scenery. A walk will definitely help with the digestion,” I suggested to Nora.

She quickly nodded and said, “Sounds good. We can take pictures of the night scenery too. I have a neon skirt that I haven’t worn out yet. This would be a great opportunity to take some insta-worthy pictures!”

Chapter 798

Usually, girls would like to chat with their girlfriends, give in to their cravings, dress up, visit beautiful places, and take nice pictures together

However, I seemed to have wasted my decade of youth consumed by work and hate. I did not even spare one moment to relax and enjoy myself.

“Sure. But I don’t think I bought anything nice,” I said to Nora.

She gave me a thumbs up and said, “Don’t worry about it. I’ve got plenty of pretty skirts and dresses. You can wear one of mine!”

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She then dragged me to her wardrobe and showed me around. I was absolutely stunned. She had filled the hotel wardrobe with a variety of outfits. They were all various shades of pink and looked extremely fanciful.

I could not help but blurt out, “We’ve only been here for two days. When did you have the time to amass all these outfits?”

She shrugged. “I got all of them on the first day. There are many boutiques in Lavelian Village, and they aren’t expensive. Since they’re all so pretty, I bought them. Besides, they only cost about a hundred each, and everything was less than five thousand in total. What a steal!”

My lips twitched upon that. “Young lady, these clothes cost as much as my one month’s salary!”

She rolled her eyes at me and sneered, “Boo-hoo. Don’t try to play the pity card. You’ll definitely earn a commission of one million after the Lavelian Village project. Besides, may I remind you that your husband is the chairman of Fuller Corporation!”

Placing a palm on my forehead and sighing, I did not rebuke her any further. Then, I turned towards the clothes in the wardrobe and said, “I don’t think I’ve ever worn anything of this style.”

She giggled and replied, “Me too. Let’s try it out together these two days.”

Soon after that, she picked a beautiful white dress and handed it to me. “Your complexion is paler, so you’ll look classier in this.”

I nodded and put on the dress before sitting at the vanity mirror to apply some makeup.

After putting on a long neon pink skirt, she looked completely different. She was like Cinderella, who had just been transformed by her fairy godmother. Now, she looked absolutely radiant and gorgeous.

When she saw me putting on my makeup, she scoffed, “It’s so dark at night. With that kind of makeup, you won’t be able to see it at all. Here, let me do it for you!”

She snatched away the powder compact in my hand and started to dab away.

After a flurry of movement, I looked in the mirror and was floored by the person I saw. “Isn’t this... too much?”

She shook her head and insisted, “No, it looks just right. Don’t you think you look beautiful now?”

It was beautiful but out of my comfort zone. I had never applied eyeshadow or drew in my eyebrows. My usual makeup routine consisted of a light powder base and lipstick.

The makeup she applied on me was too bold, and I was not used to it.

Despite that, she ignored me and started to work on herself. When she was done, she picked up her phone and started to walk out of the hotel with me in tow.

Behind the hotel was a bustling night flea market. There were plenty of white-walled and black-roofed structures in the surroundings. However, it was not a common sight as there were not many such structures in Xenhall.

Because of this, the place was flooded with people. Moreover, the design of the place was elegant. Thus, there were many tourists who liked taking pictures in front of the place.

Nora liked taking such pictures too, so she dragged me around the place, and we took turns taking pictures of each other. We then went around exploring the different shops.

“My grandfather told me that this place was once used as a meeting place for ministers. However, its unique design attracted tourists. Otherwise, it would still be used as a meeting place!” explained Nora as she struck different poses.

I held the phone and crouched down to find the perfect angle for her photo. Unfortunately, I was not artistically inclined and could only take snapshots. As she spoke, I snapped away.

Right then, I glanced at Prism building behind her and caught sight of a familiar figure walking out of the building.

I was momentarily shocked at the familiar figure. Isn't that Armond? The person holding his hand was extremely familiar as well, but I could not put a name to the face.

“Hello? Earth to Scarlett... What are you looking at?” Nora’s voice shook me out of my trance. She had held her pose for a long time and was getting tired. Thus, she crouched down and looked at me curiously.

I pointed behind her and asked, “Isn’t that Armond?”

The street was extremely crowded at that moment. She quickly looked in the direction that I was pointing at.

I saw that Armond was about to leave and paused, preparing to chase after him. However, the sea of people soon swept him away.

She looked at me with bafflement. “Did we make a mistake?”

I shook my head. It was definitely Armond. But what is he doing here? Is he discussing business?

Chapter 799

I looked at Prism building and asked, “What kind of people usually come here?”

Nora thought about it and replied, “They’re all ministers. Sometimes, it can be used to receive guests. However, this is far from the city and not many people come here. Usually, it’s just a few ministers from Lavelian Village.”

Armond's appearance was only for a second, so we quickly shook it off. We came to have fun, and so I continued to take pictures of Nora.

We ended up taking photos and exploring all the places that we could. After that, we returned to the hotel late at night and fell asleep after quickly washing up.

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The next day, Nora lay on the bed and told me, "I'm not planning on going out today. I want to sleep all I want to pay back my sleep debt."

I nodded. She came from a rich family and was uninterested in working a normal job. Her father had invested in multiple companies, and she would be able to live comfortably for the rest of her life, even if she never had to work for a single day.

The moment I left the hotel, I received a call from Ashton. His voice was gentle and sweet as he asked, "Are you awake?"

I smiled and answered, "Yes. I'm going to the base now!"

"Have you had breakfast?" he asked.

"I'm going to grab something to eat on the way!" I replied. The hotel did provide breakfast, but I had woken up too early.

He murmured a response and said, "Remember to eat a proper meal!"

I could not help but laugh at his remark. "You're being too much of a nag, Ashton."

He was quiet for a few seconds before answering in a deep voice, "I miss you so much, Scarlett."

Upon that, I was startled for a while and could not help but smile brightly. "I miss you a lot too, Ashton."

His deep laughter made the rising sun appear even more beautiful.

At that moment, Joseph was already waiting for me at the entrance. I bid goodbye to Ashton on the phone and went in the car.

Joseph gave me a beautiful box and said, "Have some breakfast, Mrs. Fuller!"

I was astonished and asked, "How did you know I haven't had breakfast?"

He started up the engine and chuckled. "Mr. Fuller gave me a head's up. I'm here to take care of your meals, after all."

Okay!

As time went on, I realized that true happiness came from the thoughtfulness of others. Being remembered was the highest form of honor and joy.

When we arrived at the base, Armond was also getting out of his car. I casually greeted him and was reminded of when I saw him at Prism building the night before.

Hence, I casually asked, "Mr. Murphy, were you at the night flea market yesterday?"

His obsidian eyes flashed at me, cold and baleful.

His gaze frightened me, but I spoke confidently, "Nora bought a lot of delicious food yesterday. She couldn't find you in your room, and we thought you went to the night flea market. When she called you, the tone indicated that you were engaged in another call."

Hearing that, he frowned slightly, and his gaze softened. He then smiled and replied, "I was busy last night, that's why I wasn't at the hotel."

I nodded and joked, "What a shame. You missed out on all the good food!"

He smiled back at me. "I'll definitely have to seize the chance next time."

With that, he entered the base without another word. At that moment, Linda had also alighted from the car, and her dark eyebags were extremely evident. She feebly greeted me, "Good morning!"

I could not help but ask, "Oh God, look at you! What happened to you?"

She sighed and lamented, "It's all because of the project, of course. I didn't sleep the entire night and am exhausted now."

I knitted my brow. "You mean the one for Lavelian Village?"

She yawned and nodded before suddenly catching herself. Then, she shook her head abruptly and said, "No, it's the projects that I was handling previously. They're all in the midst of completion. I have so much on my plate now that I had to work late!"

I nodded my head. Her reaction was somehow strange, and I could not help but suspect that she was hiding something from me.

Later on, we walked into the base, and I said to Joseph, “Did Ashton talk to you?”

Joseph nodded. “He did. Mrs. Fuller, you don’t have to interfere. Let me handle everything.”

I nodded and entered.

The first floor of the base had been completely constructed. Rachel wore a hard hat and was directing the workers at one side.

After Joseph and I entered the base, we did not go to the second floor directly. Instead, we walked around the site of the accident on the first floor. The broken machinery had apparently been fixed.

Since the broken machinery were fixed, Joseph and I went to the second floor.

The second floor was still under construction. Hence, Joseph and I put on hard hats for safety purposes.

When Rachel saw us, she glanced at Joseph before saying, “Mr. Campbell, it looks like you have many responsibilities recently. Mr. Fuller had decided to let me lead this project, so I’d suggest you take a break and mind your own business!”

Chapter 800

At that was direct enough, Joseph simply nodded without saying anything.

Then, Rachel looked at me and said, “If I remember correctly, Ms. Stovall is the one in charge of this project. However, it seems like Mr. Murphy is the one working the hardest. He’s even doing the handover. Is Ms. Stovall only in charge of supervising?”

As she was in high heels and standing on a platform, the woman was towering over me. With her arms crossed in front of her chest, I couldn’t help but feel the pressure.

I squeezed out a faint smile and replied, “Thanks for the reminder, Ms. Zimmer. By right, you and I should be the ones liaising on the Lavelian Village project. I hope to see you at all our future discussions.”

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“Of course!” Rachel replied with a dry smile.

After all, both of us had fallen out with each other previously and it was obvious that there was still a barrier between us. Besides, she was most likely still of the view that she was the most suitable woman for Ashton. As such, I couldn’t really be bothered with her.

As Joseph had other matters to attend to while Armond was responsible for the operation of the entire Murphy Corporation, the two men did not stay long.

After they left, Rachel and I were the only ones left in the discussion. I had to admit that she was extremely capable when it came to work.

She had come out with a very good plan for the second floor while I had my own ideas too. She was very professional and did not reject my suggestions straight away because of what happened with Ashton. It was after careful deliberation and analysis that we decided on the elements to include, with feasibility being the main consideration.

Rachel had a very clear thought process and was a very good communicator. As such, it was easy to feel motivated to do better when working with her.

The day went past very quickly. When it was time to knock off, Rachel packed her bag immediately and the enthusiasm she displayed at work was gone in an instant.

I shrugged and understood that everyone had their quirks after all.

When I went downstairs, I realized that almost everyone had already left the base. Seeing that there was no one else on the first floor, I instinctively looked towards the area where the machinery was.

It was difficult to let it go once one's curiosity was piqued. I just could not understand the reason why the walls at the base were so wide.

"Ms. Stovall!" Suddenly, someone called me from behind. I got a shock and turned around, realizing it was Leedon.

I smiled and asked, "Leedon, you're still around?"

The man nodded and replied cheerfully, "I'm just checking the area before going off. Do you need help with anything?"

"Nope, I'm leaving soon too," I shook my head and replied.

He smiled and went to the office to retrieve some items before getting ready to leave.

Then, we left the base together. Joseph was busy and unable to pick me up, so I got a ride from Leedon.

As there was nothing much that we could talk about, I couldn't help but ask, "Leedon, there are more than ten bases in Lavelian Village. From my observation, the structure where we place our machines are much thicker than that at the other bases. Did we intentionally build it that way?"

Keeping his eyes on the road, Leedon replied, "Actually, all bases are the same. It's just that for the bases that require underground garages to be built, the structures are made thicker for safety reasons!"

I nodded and asked further, "Is there also a garage at the base where we place our machinery?"

The man smiled and shook his head. "Nope. We have a lot of open-air parking lots around the area so there's no need for that. Besides, we expect most of the people visiting the base in the future to be tourists, so having open-air parking lots will be more convenient too!"

Well, he had a point there.

It was already dark when we reached the hotel. As Leedon stayed at Lavelian Village, he left after dropping me off.

When I got back to the hotel room, Nora was already in her pyjamas and looking at her phone.

She asked when she saw me, "Have you had dinner?"

I shook my head and replied, "Not yet. I just got back. How about you?"

"Same. I just ordered two sets of steak and salad," she said, before turning back to her phone.

After a hectic day at work, I was exhausted and sprawled on the bed. I did not feel like moving at all.

When I was about to fall asleep, Nora suddenly came near me and said, "Give me your phone!"

I passed my phone to her and asked, "What do you want it for?"

"I'm sending you the photos I took last night. I spent the whole day editing them. Get ready to be impressed!" She replied and started meddling with my phone.

I could not be bothered with what she was doing as I was simply too tired.

A while later, someone knocked on our door. Nora gave me a nudge and said, "Our dinner is here. Go and open the door!"

I got up and answered the door. It was indeed the hotel waiter with our dinner.

Seeing that the woman was still playing with the phone after the food was laid out, I said, "Nora, stop using the phone, let's have dinner first!"

"Just a while more!"

The grilled steak which Nora had ordered looked delicious. Besides, I was already feeling hungry, so I sat down and started eating first.

After she was done, she ran towards me and said, "OK, I've already sent you the pictures. Take a look! I'm sure you'll be happy with them. I've already shared it on your social media too!"

I took over my phone and while eating the steak, I asked, "What did you share?"

After I opened my social media, I saw that she had shared nine pictures of me which she had taken last night. That dress was already gorgeous enough. With her editing, it looked even more stunning.