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## In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 1739

### Chapter 1739 A Weight Lifted Off

I had no answer to that. While my brows uncontrollably knitted together, I knew deep within that it was a good thing Joseph's wife was even more resilient than I expected, no matter the reason.

Flashing her a gratified gaze in return, I stepped forward and hugged her. "Men are always so ambitious that they leave us waiting. How selfish of them! But everything will be fine. After this busy period, I'll give Joseph a long holiday so that he can spend more time with you and the children."

I patted her on her delicate back though I myself was uncertain whether I was consoling her or myself.

Savannah probably never expected someone she was meeting for the first time to act so intimately, for she reflexively stiffened. When she had ascertained that I had no malicious intentions, she again relaxed.

A hug was undoubtedly an incredible thing, for I felt much more at peace after smelling the faint scent of shampoo wafting off her.

Just when I was about to drop my hands, she hugged me back in return, reaching out to pat me on the back stiffly. "Well, there's no end to doing business. I appreciate your kindness, but there's no choice sometimes, Mrs. Fuller. His sense of responsibility is also his charm. I love him, so I naturally love everything about him. Don't worry. I won't drag him down, Mrs. Fuller. He said that he'd make it up to me. Thus, I'll continue to trust in him and wait. I'll take good care of this family and myself on his behalf."

After she had finished speaking, they dropped their hands from each other in unison.

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With my eyes narrowed a fraction, I questioned tentatively, "Are you not worried?"

Hearing that, Savannah burst into laughter as though I had cracked a hilarious joke. "Why should I be worried?" she asked me in return.

Pausing for a moment, she continued, "I know the kind of person Joseph is, and I believe in him. Most importantly, I believe in my judgment. I wouldn't have chosen the wrong person."

She's right. What is there to be worried about? And what uncertainties are there? Ashton is a man I chose myself, so how could someone else know him better than I do?

"I should have come and visited you earlier." Enlightenment swept across me, banishing the uncertainties and doubts I had toward Ashton.

Ten years of loving each other are more than enough to defy human's innate apprehension. Ashton and Joseph are at the same hurdle in life. Maybe he needs a longer time to resolve the problem, but I must let him know that I'll be there no matter when he comes back.

"Not at all. It's neither early nor late. Everything is destined, so it's just the right time." Savannah wore a tender expression as though every problem would be resolved.

Pursing my lips, I nodded. After exchanging a few more pleasantries with her, I whirled around and entered the elevator with Emery.

Savannah saw me off from her door, her countenance only disappearing from my line of sight when the elevator doors closed.

As the elevator descended, I felt as though a weight was lifted off me as something within me received an attestation.

It was already one o'clock in the morning when I returned home. In order to stop dwelling upon things too much, I decided to sleep the moment my head hit the pillow. But when I walked past the corridor, I noticed that the light in the study was lit.

Could it be that Ashton came back?

I entered the study with questions lingering in my mind. Pushing open the door and sweeping a gaze around, I spotted Shaun in the room.

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He was sitting in front of Ashton's computer, and I almost didn't see his petite body because of the angle.

When he heard the door opening, he immediately got down from the chair. Standing at the side, he greeted deferentially, "Mrs. Fuller."

Joseph previously found out that Nora had contact with him. Now that we're in a weak position, it's indeed the best time to steal information so as to curry favor with her. Everyone makes their own choices, so it doesn't really matter. A child who has been drifting about merely wants someone he can depend on for eternity.

"Why are you still not in bed at this hour?" I didn't ask about his motive directly. As I spoke, I walked over to the desk and picked up the open document on it, scanning it casually.

It was Fuller Corporation's list of projects in recent years. It was publicly available, so it was no big secret.

"I'm not sleepy yet. The faster I learn to do business, the sooner I can help Mr. Fuller out. Then Summer won't be sad that she can't see him every day."

## In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 1740

Chapter 1740 The World Of A Child

Shaun's answer wasn't what I expected. I shifted my gaze to him, but his face was solemn, and he didn't look as though he was lying.

A wealth of warmth suffused me, and a smile blossomed on my face out of the blue. I was happy on Summer's behalf that she had such a thoughtful and considerate brother.

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Good things really do come at a turning point in time. Does this also mean that everything about Ashton will also soon usher in a change?

“That’s a matter for the adults. You’re still young, so you merely need to study hard and grow up healthily. Audrey has feelings of sorrow, and you can have your own feelings as well. You don’t need to live for any of us. Do you understand me?”

I then patted him on the shoulder in gratification. Although I was moved, I still had to guide him on the right path.

Shaun pursed his lips tightly without saying anything in response, so I wasn’t sure whether I got through to him.

Ah, it doesn’t matter. There’s still plenty of time, so there’ll certainly be time to teach him slowly in the future. He’s a boy, so I’ll wait for Ashton to come back and call the shots. “Anyway, just do whatever you want to do in the future. You don’t need to deliberately please anyone. Most importantly, make sure that you’re happy. Got it?”

“But I want to do this. I want to make Summer happy. Can I not do that, Mrs. Fuller?” Shaun gazed at me stubbornly.

Faced with such an innocent question, I couldn’t help but feel ashamed.

Perhaps I’m really too sensitive. He’s just a child who knows how to be grateful, so I truly shouldn’t use the yardstick of the adult world to evaluate his every action. A child’s world is pure and without ulterior motives. They don’t know what it means to pander to someone. They only know who is good to them, repaying the person in the same manner. He only wants the girl who gave him a family to be happy. There’s nothing wrong with that.

“Of course you can.” Smiling, I shook my head and put the document in my hand back on the desk. Then I ruffled his hair. “You can continue reading if you want to do so, but promise me that you’ll go to bed right away if you feel sleepy. Also, you can’t stay up later than three o’clock in the morning. Can you do that?”

In a rare moment, a trace of delight crept onto his features. He nodded firmly. “Yes.”

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After saying that, he sat back down and continued reading the documents. His serious mien rendered him very much like an adult.

I silently walked over to the door. Glancing back over my shoulder, I sighed helplessly.

He's still a kid at the end of the day. Not only are the few documents inadequate in explaining the intricacies of business, but it's even uncertain whether he can make sense of all the figures at such a young age. It's futile that he wants to delve into the adult world.

Clocking his enthusiasm, I couldn't bear to rain on his parade.

I only hope that he'll learn his limits and back down later. It's too tiring for someone of his age to study all that. Not everyone is as talented as Gregory and finds it effortless.

That night, I finally had a good night's sleep and only woke up at half-past eight in the morning. After preparing breakfast in a hurry, I rushed over to the hospital.

It was already ten o'clock when I arrived at the ward. John was so hungry that he wailed as soon as he caught sight of me, "Ah, I'm dying! Letty, you actually want to starve me to death, don't you?"

Good Lord! He's really blasé that he's still in the mood to tease me when his right hand is already in such a condition. Oh well, what can I do? No matter what, he has all the power since he's the patient here. Hence, I had no choice but to mollify him, saying, "Sorry, my bad! I overslept. Here, I brought your favorite chicken soup. Besides, there are tacos, pancakes, and also super delicious casserole. Hurry up and eat!"

Narrowing his eyes, John swept his gaze over the spread. He then arched an eyebrow and regarded me shrewdly. "You cooked all this?"

I bit my lower lip and nodded guiltily. "Yup. You're picky about food, so you would've long since gone on a hunger strike if I were to cook the same thing every day."

For some inexplicable reason, John snickered. Then he picked up the fork and took a forkful of casserole, bringing it up close and scrutinizing it. "This dish needs to bake for a long time. Considering its golden color, it must have baked for at least twenty minutes, no?"

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Without even thinking about it, I nodded in agreement. "Yup! I baked it for almost half an hour."

Shaking his head, John put down the fork. The smile playing on his lips was peculiar, making me feel awkward for some unknown reason.

## In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 1741

### Chapter 1741 Just Get A Divorce

Only after a long time had passed did I realize that it took half an hour to bake a dish of macaroni and cheese, so it would only take longer for a casserole. Worse still, I said I had overslept just now, so I would definitely make something simple. As such, that dish shouldn't appear.

Argh! He saw right through me, yet he said nothing. Anyway, what else can I say when he's smirking in such a manner? Feeling deflated, I admitted, "All right, stop laughing at me. I'll tell you the truth. It was Mrs. Kingsley who prepared all these dishes. I only made the chicken soup. I was in a rush, but I was worried that it wouldn't be enough for you. Anyway, Mrs. Kingsley made you this hearty spread sincerely. And it makes no difference whoever cooked them..."

A sliver of guilt crept into me as I spoke. Fearful that John would start getting picky again, I shot daggers at him and threatened, "Are you not going to eat, then?"

Timidly shrinking back, John picked up the fork again. "No, no, of course not. If I don't finish this, would I still be able to eat Mrs. Kingsley's and your cooking again in the future? I'm no fool."

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At that, I breathed a sigh of relief. It looks like a patient isn't all that difficult to handle, after all.

I watched him eat for some time before it dawned upon me that I hadn't seen any sign of Emma. While opening another lunchbox, I asked, "Where's Emma? Why hasn't she returned?"

"She went home." John didn't even bother lifting his head.

"No, she didn't. I didn't see her." I thought he was referring to the Fuller residence.

"I'm speaking of her parents' house." John swallowed the taco in his mouth before he explained, "It's hectic at my father-in-law's company these days, and she's their only daughter. It'll seem unreasonable if she doesn't go back and help out."

"So, that's what the two of you did back when you both went out together every so often?"

"Yeah." When John spoke of that, his gaze dimmed. The spoonful of chicken soup in his hand remained suspended in mid-air as he lamented, "In order to locate you back then, I took their only daughter abroad. Since we're back now, I naturally have to help out whenever possible."

For a moment, words eluded me. Love and marriage are never a matter between two people. Instead, everything is closely related.

Receiving no response from me, John instantly changed the subject. "Ashton kicked you out of the company?"

"How did you know that?" I instinctively exclaimed. It wasn't until after I had said that did I realize my slip of the tongue and hastily changed my tune. "It's nothing. Anyway, I wasn't going to interfere in the matters of Fuller Corporation any longer. Furthermore, there'll only be incessant bickering when two people with differing opinions work together. It's better to split and go our different paths."

"Then why don't you two just get a divorce and go your separate ways?" John suddenly retorted out of nowhere.

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I didn't know whether he truly felt that way or was deliberately teasing me, so I took it to mean the latter. Chuckling, I tried to brush it off, countering, "That's not the same at all. Family and career don't necessarily have to be linked together. Isn't it nice to both shine in our respective fields before going home to each other at the end of the day? If everything we've got to say is the same, then only one can speak while the other listens. As time goes by, we'll inevitably lose interest in each other. Ashton has always been more visionary than me, so perhaps this time—"

"I didn't know when you got so good at lying to yourself." John didn't even allow me to finish speaking, his eyes that could effortlessly steal the hearts of many young maidens fixated right on me. "Have you forgotten Uncle Louis' identity? Did you think that I wouldn't know about Ashton trafficking drugs if you don't say anything?"

Then, he continued, "What kind of people are involved in that? They are all heinous and callous people who only have money in their eyes. Once you have a foot in it, you can never get out for the rest of your life. You are well aware of Chanaea's stance toward drugs, right? No matter how smart Ashton is, he will make mistakes. At that time, you'll also become a fugitive with him. Don't be a fool, Letty. Put away your hopes toward someone like him."

I didn't dare look him in the eye. I merely hung my head silently without uttering a single word.

As an independent person, I naturally had the right to give my all to the man I love. Regardless of how irrational it appeared, it was my own choice.

## In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 1742

Chapter 1742 The Last Time

But having lived thus far, I knew my life was no longer just mine. I couldn't simply disregard John's feelings after accepting his infinite care.

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In the end, John was afraid that he would upset me, so he eased off before I could even respond to him. "Think about it carefully. I've never really stopped you from making your own choices, but it's different this time. No matter the conflicts between the two of you in the past, Ashton was at least a decent person with good family background. Now, however, he's cold-blooded and vicious. He keeps getting himself involved in illegal activities, challenging the government. That's only courting death!"

After saying that, he continued, "You've got to understand something, Letty. We do our best to continue living in order to see more of the world and experience the love and beauty in this world, not to plunge into hell and be an emotionless machine with only profit in our eyes. I understand that you're reluctant to accept the reality because you're waiting for him to come to that realization like me. However, people are different. Although I was lower than pond scum, I never touched drugs. Your waiting is entirely meaningless."

For some reason, Ashton's words of "not smart enough" flashed across my mind when I heard John's last few words. Now that I thought about it, the reference to that remark was rather vague. Was he referring to Joseph, or was he deliberately giving me a hint with words that carry a double meaning?

When I realized that I had zoned out, I immediately snapped back to reality. Alas, it was already too late. John wore a dark expression on his face, his very being exuding his chagrin at my inattentiveness.

Everyone had their bottom lines, and respecting him meant staying far away from his bottom line.

Of course, I was no saint either, for I had driven him through the roof more than once. Even if our relationship never suffered any ill effects, it still imperceptibly consumed our ardor. If I were to be wilful and selfish forever because of my love for Ashton, I would only end up like Rebecca.

Ashton, this is the last time I'm going to try with you.

Looking at John, I made my greatest resolution to date. "Let me try for the final time. There's still one thing I'm uncertain about when it comes to him. When I know for sure, I promise to give you a definite answer."

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Exasperated beyond words, John relented. "I hope that answer will be to my satisfaction."

A bitter smile tugged at my lips, and I said nothing to that. If only there were a choice that would satisfy everyone! But in reality, there's nothing such as the best of both worlds. Ultimately, there has to be a resolution between a lover who insists on walking his own path and a family member who stays through thick and thin!

As I slowly walked out of the hospital, my mind remained fixated on the issue with Ashton.

He can never be rid of the accusations Nathaniel made about him, but it may not have necessarily tainted his heart. I would never believe that the man—who was willing to go against his moral code and his good friend's dying wish for my sake, and in doing so, suffer the weight of his conscience for more than ten years—would be so foolish as to insist on walking that path when he knows full well that he'd lose me if he did so. It must be because Nathaniel is too cunning, so he has no choice but to use a different way to deal with him. If that's the case, it means things that seemingly make no sense are actually normal instead. Then everything can be explained. But how can I prove that?

Engrossed in my thoughts, I didn't even notice that the stairs had ended. Stepping a leg hard onto the ground, I felt as though I was stepping on air.

At that scare, I lifted my hand and patted my chest. Phew! Fortunately, it was just a step. If I were on the road, I might have lost my life before I even realized it!

Just as I was exulting in the fact that I missed a brush with death, an extended Lincoln slowly came to a stop at the other side of the road. The car door swung open and Nathaniel alighted from the car. From afar, one couldn't find any flaws in his countenance that bore a close resemblance to that of Ashton. Instead, they would presume that he was sure to be a natural gentleman. No one would suspect that beneath the hypocritical facade lay an open Pandora's box. Anyone who drew close to him would only bring infinite calamity upon themselves. He was nothing more than a plague.

I stared at him coldly, having no plans to maintain my superficial calmness. "What kind of fright have you prepared for me today, Mr. Hall?"

Nathaniel stopped before me and flashed me an innocent smile. "You think I've got nothing to do every day and that I'm merely racking my brains to think of ways to make your life difficult?"

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## In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 1743

Chapter 1743 An Abandoned Factory

“Well, that can’t be the case. I’ve got self-consciousness and knew that I don’t have that much sway when I’m just someone of no consequence.” I regarded Nathaniel placidly.

A fleeting smile flashed across his eyes. He then shifted sideways and made a path for me. “Get in.”

He spoke in a matter-of-fact tone, seemingly all too sure that I wouldn’t dare decline.

However, I simply wanted to irritate him. “I’m sorry, but I’m very busy now. I’ve got no time to play your twisted games with you.”

After saying that, I strode away. I initially thought that he would hound me relentlessly, but he unexpectedly made no move to stop me. He merely stood there and watched me leave without a single word. Even when I had climbed into the Fuller family’s car, he didn’t come over.

“What exactly is his motive?” I couldn’t help griping, with the car window separating us.

The car had started moving, but he still had no intention of leaving.

While I was waiting for his next move with my eyes narrowed, he lowered his head and snickered for some reason. In the next second, he spun around and strode toward the hospital lobby.

At that instant, I lost control of my body.

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“Stop!” I roared, urging the chauffeur to stop the car. Getting out of the car at lightning speed, I sprinted toward Nathaniel as though I had lost my mind. Before he could enter the hospital, I blocked his path, holding my arms wide open.

Nathaniel’s gaze brimmed with amusement as though he was looking at his favorite toy. As our gazes locked, stark fear enveloped me.

“I’ll put my life on the line and kill you if you make a move against John again!” I had no idea where my courage came from. All I knew was that I had to say something to stop him from getting anywhere near the person closest to me.

At that, the mirth in his eyes intensified. He looked down at me with the gaze of a victor. The look in his eyes made it clear that he was an experienced hound, while I was merely a newly weaned puppy. A threat from the weak was only a clown fooling around, so it posed no danger to him.

Anyhow, I’ve got nothing other than this life of mine! This is all I have. Even if it’s futile, I’ll still try and give it my all!

“Why would I want your life?” Nathaniel schooled his expression, his voice turning a tad indifferent that his emotions were indiscernible. “Can we leave now?”

My hands reflexively clenched into fists. Argh! He’s really a b\*stard through and through!

Alas, I had no other choice. I couldn’t allow anyone else to get hurt anymore before I knew what other tricks he had up his sleeve.

I clenched my jaw hard before I finally yielded and stalked toward the Lincoln.

As soon as I sat down, Nathaniel got in as well.

After closing the door, the chauffeur promptly started the engine and drove away from the hospital.

The irritation within me made it so that everything grated on my nerves. What’s the use of having a long car? It still moves like a snail in the city area, wasting time on commute!

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Every second I spent with Nathaniel made me exceedingly uncomfortable, and I only hoped the horrible drive would end as soon as possible.

The car left the city center and drove to an abandoned factory in the outer suburbs.

The place was dozens of kilometers away from the city center, so there were no signs of anyone living nearby. The four-story abandoned factory was the size of roughly three football fields. When the wind swept past, the sound echoed everywhere.

After getting out of the car, Nathaniel headed straight in, not at all bothered about whether I was following him.

The so-called road was also a small path with flattened weeds from repeated walking. It was just the right size for a person. As I was wearing high heels, I struggled to walk. In no time, the distance between us grew.

Fortunately, he merely stopped at the neighboring building and went no further.

The floor structure of the building was circular, with a massive space in the middle, allowing one to look right down and see the situation below. Nathaniel stood at the very edge as he gazed down.

As I headed in his direction from the landing, my eyes narrowed, and I imagined a sudden gust of wind sweeping past and knocking him down. It doesn't matter whether he dies right away or becomes crippled, for everything would then end!

"Falling from such a height won't result in death." Nathaniel had his back to me, yet he saw right through me.

My steps halted, and I stopped a meter away from him. "Don't be so sure of that."

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## In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 1744

### Chapter 1744 Be My Dog

If he were to fall head down, he'd end up in a vegetative state even if he didn't die. There's no doubt about that.

Nathaniel didn't bother pursuing that matter. Instead, he calmly changed the subject. "I've got some good news for you. Ashton has been searching for Joseph since last night."

Indeed, that's good news for me. But why would he possibly be so kind to tell me that? Could it be that he discovered that Ashton still has a trace of humanity left, so he came up with an even more twisted way to torture us?

"However, he also took quite a lot of ice from me," Nathaniel added before I could respond.

What does that mean? Does Ashton want to give the drugs to Joseph personally? But that will only make things worse for him, no?

Before I could say anything, the sound of a car engine sounded from the ground floor of the building, followed by a flurry of footsteps.

A few seconds later, a man in a black suit and leather shoes was tossed onto the ground from outside, causing dust to fly all over the place.

A tall figure blocked the man's body, but the figure in the shadows soon entered our lines of sight.

Only after I had made out Ashton's familiar features did I belatedly realize that the person who was flung in earlier was likely Joseph.

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Taking a closer look proved my guess right. However, Joseph was trembling all over, his face rapidly losing color. He was a strong man who could usually go against five men at once, but he didn't even have the strength to get to his feet right then. Hugging himself sickly, he curled into a ball on the ground. His eyes were so sunken that only the whites seemed to remain. On the whole, his condition was so pathetic that nausea would set in at a single look.

In the blink of an eye, Joseph got addicted to drugs. His eyes abruptly popped open, and he trembled even more violently. As he began sniffing all the faster, he lost his mind completely. Disregarding the suit he was wearing, he rolled on the ground agonizingly like a dog and begged for his next hit like the tens of thousands of addicts out there.

"Give it to me... Boss, please give me some ice! I can't take it anymore! I'm going to die! I really can't hold out any longer... I've done so many things for you, Ashton! Are you just going to watch me die?"

Not in the least bit affected by the heart-wrenching scene before him, Ashton merely watched as Joseph was all covered in dust before he drawled, "Of course not."

After saying that, he took out a packet of ice from his pocket and threw it at the person on the ground. It hit Joseph's face hard before bouncing onto the dusty floor.

The instant Joseph saw it, his eyes lit up as though he was a dog that had been starving for days and had finally found food. He excitedly yet carefully hid it in his arms, afraid that someone would snatch it away.

Watching his reaction coldly, Ashton strolled over and slowly crouched before him. In a voice as calm as ever, he asserted, "Be my dog, and you'll get however much ice you want. Do you understand me?"

What? A dog is merely a creature with no dignity or spine. It carries out its master's commands as it obeys anyone who feeds it! They're close friends who have been through thick and thin, yet Joseph deserves to be doomed forever in Ashton's eyes now just because he offended Rebecca once and brought him trouble?

I couldn't fathom Ashton's thoughts, but I instinctively frowned. That packet of ice is enough to kill Joseph!

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In the beginning, Joseph was still immersed in his delight for having obtained “food.” When he realized what Ashton wanted him to do, he suppressed the effects of the drugs and gaped at the man in disbelief, his entire being exuding defiance.

He’s the head of the family with a wife and children pinning their hopes on him, an outstanding man with a higher IQ and EQ than the average person! How could he possibly live like a dog? Although he has already behaved in such a manner just now, Ashton shouldn’t be taking advantage of him at this time, not even giving him any room to breathe. He’ll drive him crazy!

Despite three floors separating us, their confrontation on the concrete floor far beneath my feet seemingly had the temperature around me plummeting.

## In Love, Never Say Never Chapter 1745

Chapter 1745 Addicted To Ice

It was rare to find someone who could resist Ashton’s terrifying pressure. After two minutes of silence, a teary-eyed Joseph finally gritted his teeth and gave a dip of his head.

No one could comprehend the immense pressure that he was feeling at that moment. His body had surrendered although his pride did not allow it.

“Very well,” Ashton said plainly. “Clean yourself up and go plead Ms. Larson for forgiveness.”

Joseph was no longer the same person as before. With an indifferent expression, he got up holding the ice in his hands. He knelt in front of Ashton, hung his head low, and said in a low voice, “I’ll take care of it, Mr. Fuller. Thank you for bringing me these.”

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Lowering his gaze and as if he was omnipotent, Ashton stood up and said impatiently, "This is the first and also the last time. If this happens again, I'm sure you know what the consequences are."

At that moment, I felt as if I saw Nathaniel in him.

Despite being the one responsible for destroying everything, he behaved as if he was a god who had come to save the weak.

"I do." Joseph looked as though he had aged by two decades. Gasping for breath weakly like an old man, he stared listlessly at the muddy ground in front of him. "I will become your most impressive dog."

"Enough!" I could no longer stand the sight of it. I sprinted downstairs and before anyone realized what was going on, I swung my hand and gave Ashton a slap. "You b\*stard!"

Somehow, Ashton had become quick-tempered. The slap seemed to have awoken the rage in him. As he stared at me with his burning eyes, the throbbing veins on his face seemed to presage that he was about to explode.

I was afraid that he would break ties with me and completely change into another person because of that. After all, I was not emotionally prepared for it.

Swallowing a lump in my throat, I turned around to help Joseph up. "Come with me!"

However, Joseph tugged my arm and refused to get up. "I'm fine, Mrs. Fuller. Please don't put Mr. Fuller in a difficult position."

"I'm saving you!" When I saw how he was unable to differentiate who had his best interest at heart, I turned red with anger. "Wake up, Joseph! What Ashton has given you will only harm you. If you continue to follow him, you will only fall deeper into the abyss!"

The moment he heard my words, Joseph sat back on the ground, pitiful and powerless. "This is my choice."

I furrowed my brows in disbelief. I was briefly stunned. In an act of desperation, I tried to pull him up. "No, you're not being rational now. Whatever you say or decide just doesn't make sense. You have to leave with me!"

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Perhaps I wasn't trying to fight with either Ashton or Nathaniel anymore. I probably couldn't get past myself. I couldn't allow myself to see a second friend abandon me under physical and mental duress.

Unfortunately, whatever little strength I had wasn't enough to move Joseph's well-built body once he put his weight on the ground.

When despair finally got the better of me, I released him and let out a dejected sigh. Lowering my head toward the ground, I suddenly felt my head spin.

Am I dreaming? Or is this all just an illusion? How did things escalate out of control as if there is no way out?

An awkward silence descended upon the scene. Neither of us intended to say a word. As for Nathaniel who was upstairs, he too didn't take any action. I wasn't sure if he and Ashton knew of each other's presence and that this was all just an act to feel each other out.

Nevertheless, one thing was for certain. Regardless of whether Ashton was good or evil, he had shown all his cards. Getting Joseph addicted to ice was a sign of him walking toward the path of darkness.

There was no better person to run a cigarette business than a cigarette addict. The only thing Ashton was conscious about was not getting himself addicted. He had chosen to let Joseph take his place instead as a slave to ice.

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